New York State Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman

Dear New Yorkers:

Victims have rights -- rights to information, to notification and, in some cases, compensation.

New York State, for more than fifty years, has worked to insure these rights are protected. Law enforcement and prosecutors are required to make sure that victims and their survivors are treated fairly and respectfully during the criminal justice process. Those rights continue even after the offender is sentenced.

My office is committed to protecting the rights of crime victims and their families. This brochure highlights some of those rights, and provides contact information for other resources for crime victims. If you have questions about how these rights apply to you, please don't hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,

Eric T. Schneiderman

www.ag.ny.gov
1-800-771-7755
For the Hearing Impaired
TDD 800-788-9898

Resources

Office of the Attorney General
800-771-7755
www.ag.ny.gov/intergov-affairs/victim-rights

New York State Office of Victim Services
800-247-8035
www.ovs.ny.gov
e-mail - ovsinfo@ovs.ny.gov

Child Abuse and Maltreatment Hotline
800-342-3720

New York State Domestic Violence Hotline
800-942-6906
www.opdv.ny.gov

New York State Office for the Aging
Senior Citizen Hotline
800-342-9871

CRIME VICTIMS Bill of Rights

NEW YORK STATE OFFICE
of the
ATTORNEY GENERAL

CRIME VICTIMS BILL OF RIGHTS

Victims have the right to:

- **A free copy of the police report**, even if there was no physical injury.

- **Payment waiver of fees** for replacing driver's license, permit, registration and license plates which were lost or stolen as a result of a crime.

- **Have law enforcement and the District Attorney inform employers** that the criminal case may require work absences. They can also explain the circumstances of the crime to creditors.

- **Not to be penalized by an employer when** appearing as a witness in a criminal proceeding, consulting with prosecutors or exercising other rights under the law. A violation of this law by an employer is a B misdemeanor. Employers, however, may withhold wages in these situations.

- **File for victim compensation and assistance** with the New York State Office of Victim Services. Victims of physical injury or relatives of murder victims are entitled to out-of-pocket expenses incurred as a result of the crime. These expenses may include the repair or replacement of damaged property, loss of earnings or support, medical and counseling bills, crime-scene cleanup or funeral expenses. Crime victims may also be eligible for transportation expenses incurred for necessary court appearances. Kidnapping, stalking and unlawful imprisonment victims may be eligible for an award to cover loss of earnings or support, unreimbursed costs for counseling, rehabilitative training and the costs of damaged essential personal property and security devices. Claims must be filed within one year of the crime or within one year of the victim's death. You can obtain a claim form from the police, the District Attorney, a hospital emergency room, the Office of Victim Services or from the Office of the Attorney General. Assistance is also available from other programs such as rape crisis centers and domestic violence and child abuse programs. Ask the District Attorney's office for referrals.

- **Be notified of criminal proceedings.** Victims who provide a current address and telephone number to the District Attorney have the right to be notified of the accused's: arrest; first appearance before a judge; release from jail while the criminal proceeding is pending; entry of a guilty plea, trial and sentencing; maximum and minimum terms of imprisonment if the offender is sentenced to prison and parole hearing date.

- **Freedom from intimidation, threats or harassment**. Intimidating a victim or a witness is a felony, apart from any charges the accused may already face. If you are threatened or your property is damaged by anyone connected to your case, you should contact the District Attorney's office and law enforcement immediately.

- **Notice of discharge, release or escape of offender from a correctional facility**. The District Attorney has a form to be completed in order to stay informed. The New York Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) system provides up to date information about the custody status of offenders via the telephone or internet. Crime victims and other New Yorkers can call 888-VINE-4NY (888-846-3469) or go to www.vinelink.com to secure information about incarcerated defendants. By providing an inmate's identification number or date of birth, which you can obtain from the District Attorney, you can learn sentencing and release information. You may also register with VINE for automatic notification by telephone when the inmate is released.