

Victim

Assistance Program

If you are an innocent victim of a crime, the South Carolina Bill of Rights for Victims and Witnesses states that you have:

The Right to...

- Treatment with Dignity and Compassion
- Protection from Intimidation And Harm
- Knowledge of the Criminal Justice Process
- Reparation
- Preservation of Property and Employment
- Due Process in Criminal Court Proceedings
- Special Recognition for the Very Young, the Elderly, the Handicapped and others

We are able to provide these services through funding by the Victims Bill of Rights Implementation Bill. These funds are generated from criminal assessments and surcharges. These funds are not tax dollars.

SC Constitutional Amendment
Passed January 22, 1998 at 1:50 PM

"Section 24. (A) To preserve and protect victims' rights to justice and due process regardless of race, sex, age, religion, or economic status, victims of crime have the right to:

- (1) be treated with fairness, respect, and dignity, and to be free from intimidation, harassment, or abuse, throughout the criminal and juvenile justice process, and informed of the victim's constitutional rights, provided by statute;
- (2) be reasonably informed when the accused or convicted person is arrested, released from custody, or has escaped;
- (3) be informed of and present at any criminal proceedings which are dispositive of the charges where the defendant has the right to be present;
- (4) be reasonably informed of and be allowed to submit either a written or oral statement at all hearings affecting bond or bail;
- (5) be heard at any proceeding involving a post-arrest release decision, a plea, or sentencing;
- (6) be reasonably protected from the accused or persons acting on his behalf throughout the criminal justice process;
- (7) confer with the prosecution, after the crime against the victim has been charged, before the trial or before any disposition and informed of the disposition;
- (8) have reasonable access after the conclusion of the criminal investigation to all documents relating to the crime against the victim before trial;
- (9) receive prompt and full restitution from the person or persons convicted of the criminal conduct that caused the victim's loss or injury including both adult and juvenile offenders;
- (10) be informed of any proceeding when any post-conviction action is being considered, and be present at any post-conviction hearing involving a post-conviction release decision;
- (11) a reasonable disposition and prompt and final conclusion of the case;
- (12) have all rules governing criminal procedure and the admissibility of evidence in all criminal proceedings protect victims' rights and have these rules subject to amendment or repeal by the legislature to ensure protection of these rights.



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Important Numbers

Dorchester County Sheriff's Office.....832-0300
.....563-0300

After Hours, non emergency.....873-5111
.....563-3511

Victim Assistance Office.....832-0321
.....563-0321

S.C. Office of Victim Assistance.803-737-8100

First Circuit Solicitor's Office.....871-2640

Dorchester Children's Center.....875-1551

Dorchester County Mental Health.....873-5063

Elder Support Line.....723-3313

Dorchester County Commission on
Alcohol & Drug Abuse.....871-4790

People Against Rape.....745-0144

My Sister's House.....744-3242

Trident United Way.....821-5000

Salvation Army.....851-2368

Law Enforcement Victim Advocate

A Law Enforcement Victim Advocate (LEVA) is employed with a Sheriff or Police Agency and provides assistance to victims of crime and their families.

A Victim Advocate is someone trained and dedicated to serve those who are victims of crime, family members of victims of crime, and witnesses to crime.

A Law Enforcement Victim Advocate is often one of the first to respond to a crime scene to assist victims and survivors.

During this critical time, victims may experience a wide range of feelings and emotions. As an Advocate, we can assist victims of violent crimes in many ways.

- Provide emotional and moral support.
- Refer victims to appropriate service agencies providers.
- Ensure victims' legal rights are protected.
- Advise victims of case status and progress, maintain contact with and provide support to victims and/or family members through-out the criminal justice process, as needed.
- Provide applications and information to victims concerning South Carolina Crime Victims Compensation; explain the purpose, procedures, and policies, and assist in completion of the forms.
- Upon request, may intervene on behalf of victims with creditors, employers, etc.
- Conduct on-the-scene crisis intervention.
- Act as a liaison between victim, police officers, investigators and community-based agencies.
- Help prepare victims for court and provide court advocacy and accompaniment.
- Increase the community's awareness of the victim assistance program to encourage timely reporting and assistance.

When a crime has been committed, one of the major concerns of the Dorchester County Sheriff's Office is the well being of the victim.

We have three full time Victim Advocates who provide services during our regular office hours 9:00:am to 5:00 pm. No appointment is necessary, walk-ins are welcome. For your convenience, we will schedule an appointment for you in order to prevent a possible waiting time. Advocates are also available for emergency services twenty-four hours a day, may be reached only through our law enforcement division. You may request an officer to contact the advocate if you feel we can help.

Any time we can be of service to you, please do not hesitate to call.

Office Phones

(843) 832-0321

Upper County

(843) 563-0321

Fax (843) 832-0346

Victim Assistance Coordinator

Martha Bateman (843) 832-0321

Press 1 (Ext 5286)

Victim Advocates

Margie Page (843) 832-0321

Press 3 (Ext 5288)

Kimberly Carter (843) 832-0321

Press 2 (Ext 5287)

Upper county call 563-0321