



Victim Impact Statement Guidelines for Children and Youth

What is a victim impact statement?

A victim impact statement is a written statement describing how the crime hurt you and how the crime made you feel.

What is the reason for a victim impact statement?

A victim impact statement is your chance to tell the judge, Crown attorney, defense counsel and accused, in your own words, how the crime has affected or is still affecting you. The judge is required by law to consider your victim impact statement, if you provide one, before sentencing the accused.

Do I have to write a victim impact statement?

No. Writing a victim impact statement is voluntary. You can also change your mind about writing a victim impact statement any time before the offender is sentenced.

Who will see my victim impact statement?

You provide your victim impact statement to the victim services regional coordinator whose job it is to make sure the statement gets to the right people at court on time. Your victim impact statement will be provided to the judge, Crown attorney and defense counsel. It will also be shared with the accused.

The victim impact statement is only used if the accused person is found guilty of the crime involving you. Victim Services will keep a copy of your victim impact statement. If the offender is sentenced to jail, certain officials who make decisions about the offender's release may request a copy of your victim impact statement from Victim Services. The media also could report on what you say in your victim impact statement.

When should I write my victim impact statement?

You should speak to the victim services regional coordinator about when your victim impact statement may be needed.

Will I have to attend court when my victim impact statement is read?

Maybe. The defense counsel has the right to question you about what you put in your victim impact statement. This does not happen very often, but is possible. You will be told if this is to happen.

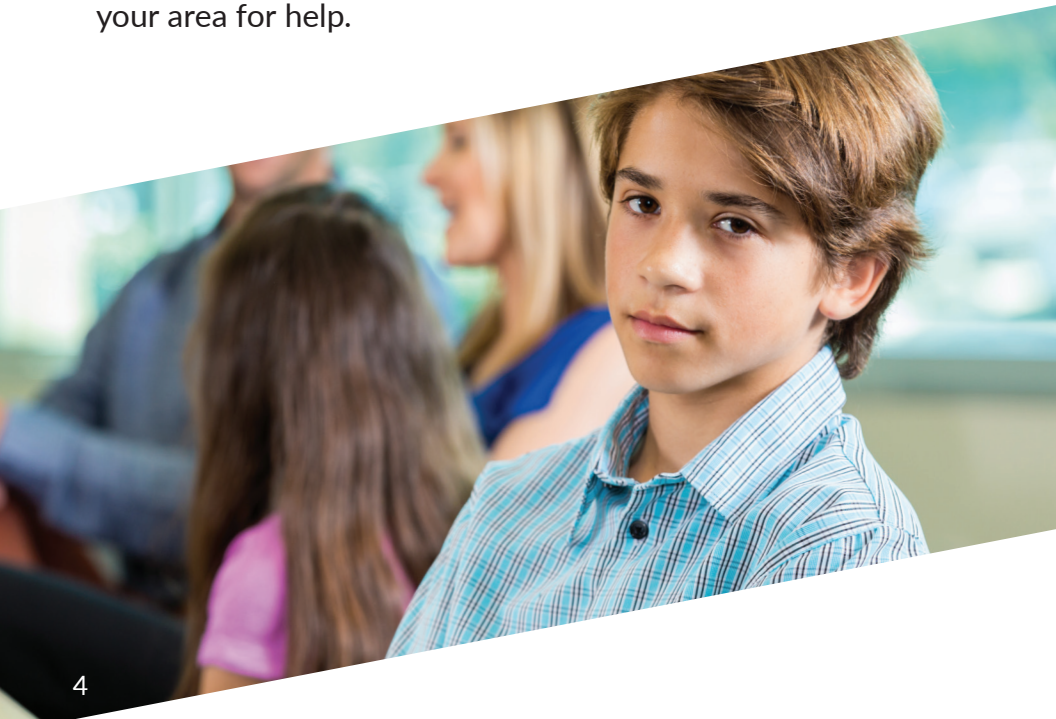
You also have the right to read your victim impact statement in court if you want. If you think you might want to do this, please let the victim services regional coordinator or Crown attorney know.

Can someone else write my victim impact statement for me?

In most cases the victim of a crime writes the statement. In some cases a parent or guardian will write the victim impact statement on behalf of the child. You can speak to the victim services regional coordinator if you want someone else to write the victim impact statement for you.

Can someone help me write my victim impact statement?

You can have a family member, friend or someone else that you trust help you with your victim impact statement. You can also contact the victim services regional coordinator in your area for help.



How do I complete the victim impact statement?

You can obtain the instructions and form for writing a victim impact statement from Victim Services or their website at www.victimserviceshelp.ca. Not all sections of the form have to be completed, you can complete whatever sections you feel apply to you. You can write as much or as little in each section as you wish and it should be in your own words. Be sure to sign and date the last page.

You can write about how you have been impacted emotionally (your feelings), physically (your body), and financially (your or your family's money). Below are some questions to help you think about what to include.

How have you been affected emotionally?

Think about how you have been feeling since the crime happened.

- Have there been changes in your eating or sleeping habits?
- Have you had nightmares?
- Has there been a change in your mood?
- Do you have any worries or fears?
- Have there been changes in your schoolwork, school attendance or grades?
- Have any of your relationships with family or friends changed?
- Have you gone to counselling due to what happened?
- Has there been a change in how you feel about yourself?
- Were there things you enjoyed doing before that you do not do anymore because of what happened to you?

Have you been affected physically?

Think about how you were hurt or any medical problems you have had since the crime.

- What are some of the physical injuries you have suffered?
- How long did the injuries take to heal or how long will it take to heal the injury?
- What medical treatment did you get or will you need in the future?
- How have the injuries changed your day to day activities?

Have you been affected financially?

Think about money you or family may have had to pay out, or lost as a result of the crime.

- Did you or any of your family members miss time from work?
- Was there ambulance, medical, dental or other treatment costs?
- Were there any costs for prescription, medication, physiotherapy, chiropractic treatment etc.?
- Was any of your property or personal belongings damaged, lost or destroyed?

Important points to remember before writing your victim impact statement

- Do not write about what happened. Write about how it has made you feel.
- Do not write about how you feel about the person who hurt you.
- Do not write about what you think should happen to the person who hurt you.

It can be difficult to have to think about how you have been affected by the crime. If you feel like you want to talk to someone about your feelings please have your parent or guardian call Victim Services for assistance.



Contact Information

Parents and guardians

If you have any questions about the victim impact statement call Victim Services at the following locations:

St. John's	709.729.0900
Carbonear	709.945.3019/3046
Marystown	709.279.3216
Clareville	709.466.5808
Gander	709.256.1028/1070
Grand Falls-Windsor	709.292.4544/4548
Corner Brook	709.637.2603/2465
Stephenville	709.643-6588/6618
Port Saunders	709.861.2147
Happy Valley-Goose Bay	709. 896.0446/3251
Nain	709.922.2360

Victim Services Program

Department of Justice and Public Safety

4th Floor East Block

Confederation Building

P.O. Box 8700

St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

(709) 729-7970

victimservices@gov.nl.ca

victimserviceshelp.ca

Available in alternate format

