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5 - My rights to support and assistance

I am a victim of crime. Who do I contact for support and assistance?

If you are a victim of crime, you can go to a Crime Victim Support Office (Oficinas de Asistencia a las Víctimas del delito).

Crime Victim Support Offices are a free, public multidisciplinary service to address victims' needs, run by the Ministry of Justice.

There are Offices in all the [autonomous communities](#), in nearly all provincial capitals as well as other cities.

The Crime Victim Support Offices will provide you with comprehensive, coordinated and specialist support as a victim of crime, meeting your specific legal, psychological and social needs.

If you are a victim of terrorism, you can contact the National High Court's Terrorism Victim Information and Support Office (Oficina de Información y Asistencia a Víctimas del Terrorismo de la Audiencia Nacional), although you may go to the Crime Victim Support Office in your province if you wish. The Crime Victim Support Office will then coordinate with the National High Court's Terrorism Victim Information and Support Office.

The care and support offered by Crime Victim Support Offices is provided in a series of phases:

- Reception and orientation phase: the orientation phase is when the Office provides you with comprehensive information about the actions you must take, the issues you have to deal with and the possible consequences. This phase generally takes place through an interview, either face-to-face or over the phone, where you will explain your problems and needs. Based on your explanation, you will be given guidance, the possibility of interventions from other resources will be assessed and referrals will be made, if necessary.
- Information phase: as a victim, starting from the first contact with the authorities and officials, even before filing a complaint, you have the right to receive information that fits your personal circumstances and conditions and also the nature of the crime you have experienced and the damages suffered. This information concerns certain aspects such as:
 - How you can make a complaint and the procedure for filing it.
 - The specialist services and psychosocial and care resources available, regardless of whether a complaint is filed, and how to access them.
 - The care and support measures (medical, psychological or material) available and the procedure for obtaining them, including, when appropriate, information concerning the possibilities of obtaining alternative accommodation.
 - How you can obtain advice and legal defence and, where appropriate, the conditions under which it may be obtained free of charge.
 - Accompaniment for you, throughout the proceedings, to the trial, if you require this, and/or to the different criminal authorities.
 - Possibility for you to request protection measures and, where appropriate, the procedure for doing so.
 - Advice on economic rights related to the proceedings, particularly regarding the aid and compensation to which you may be entitled based on the damages caused by the crime and, where appropriate, which procedure should be used to claim them.
- The procedure you must follow to exercise your rights as a victim of crime if you live outside Spain.
- The contact details of the authority responsible for handling your proceedings and the channels for communicating with them, and information on the date, time and location of the trial as well as the content of the accusation against the offender.

- The restorative justice services (e.g. mediation) available, in cases where this is legally possible.
- The cases in which you can be reimbursed for legal expenses and, where appropriate, the applicable procedure for claiming them, etc.
- Intervention phase: the intervention by the Crime Victim Support Offices takes place in different areas:
- Legal interventions: the Offices will provide you with the legal assistance you need and, specifically, they will give you information about the type of assistance you can receive in the context of judicial proceedings, the rights you can exercise as part of the proceedings, the way and the conditions in which you can access legal advice and the types of services or organisations you can contact for support.

The legal assistance will in all cases be general regarding the way in which the proceedings are carried out and the way to exercise different rights, as your lawyer is responsible for the guidance and legal aid in each case.

- Medical and psychological interventions: the psychological care offered by the Offices consists in assessing and treating your situation to reduce the crisis caused by the crime, to cope with the judicial proceedings resulting from the crime and accompaniment throughout the proceedings and reinforcement of your strategies and abilities, enabling help from your surroundings.

The Offices will create a psychological support plan in the event of you being a particularly vulnerable victim or in need of special protection.

- Economic interventions: regarding economic aid to which you are entitled if you have been the victim of a violent crime or crime against sexual freedom, the Offices mainly play an informational role and can assist with handling claims.
- Social and care interventions: in this area, the Offices will be coordinated in the care they provide you and, where appropriate, they will refer you to the social services, care institutions or organisations available to ensure safe accommodation, immediate medical care and any financial aid you might be entitled to, with particular attention given to needs arising from situations of invalidity, hospitalisation, death and those caused by a possible situation of vulnerability.
- Monitoring phase: the Offices will monitor your case, especially if you are a vulnerable victim, throughout the entire criminal process and for an appropriate period of time after the process ends. In this phase, the Offices will analyse your legal, medical and psychological, social and care and economic situation following the crime at different periods. The appropriate time for monitoring will be determined based on your situation.

If you are a victim of terrorism, the main functions of the National High Court's Terrorism Victim Information and Support Office are the following:

- to provide you with information on the status of the judicial proceedings that may affect you based on the crime committed;
- to advise you on everything related to the criminal and administrative proceedings that may affect you;
- to offer you personal accompaniment to the trials held regarding the terrorist acts that may affect you;
- to provide you with emotional and therapeutic support, without prejudice to the competencies of the Ministry of the Interior;
- to promote the protection of your safety and privacy as victim of the crime in your participation in the judicial proceedings;
- to inform you about the main compensations for terrorism victims, in all cases referring you to the Ministry of the Interior's Directorate-General for the Support of Victims of Terrorism;
- to notify you of everything related to the enforcement of the prison sentence, until the sentence has been served in full, particularly in cases where the convicts have been granted benefits or released.

For victims of terrorism, the Ministry of the Interior's Directorate-General for the Support of Victims of Terrorism will act as a one-stop shop for any proceedings that may be initiated by the people and families affected by terrorist action before the Central State Administration, referring any requests made to the competent body and assuming the relationship with the person concerned.

Furthermore, this Directorate-General will collaborate with the competent bodies of the Central State Administration and the other public administrations concerning assistance and support for victims of terrorism to ensure comprehensive protection for victims.

The Directorate-General for the Support of Victims of Terrorism will be responsible for handling, managing and

drafting decisions on aid and compensation for those affected by crimes of terrorism.

Victim support hotline

During the reception or orientation phase, you may be attended in person or via telephone at the Crime Victim Support Offices.

For certain crimes like gender-based violence, in Spain there are telephone services for assistance and guidance, e.g. the 016 Telephone Service for Information and Legal Advice concerning Gender-Based Violence (Servicio telefónico de información y asesoramiento jurídico en materia de violencia de género).

In the case of particularly vulnerable victims, such as minors, there are specific services such as the ANAR (Aid for At-Risk Children and Adolescents) Foundation Hotline (Servicio de atención telefónica de la Fundación ANAR)), aimed at children and young people, adults and relatives of minors and relatives in the case of missing minors.

The 016 Telephone Service for Information and Legal Advice concerning Gender-Based Violence provides free, professional assistance 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The data of persons who use this service are guaranteed to remain confidential at all times.

Assistance is offered in 51 languages. Specifically, 24-hour assistance is offered in Spanish, Catalan, Galician, Basque, English and French, and via a tele-translation service for calls in German, Portuguese, Mandarin, Russian, Arabic, Romanian and Bulgarian. Assistance in the other languages is offered via a tele-translation service.

The accessibility of the service for people with hearing and/or speech impairments is guaranteed via the following means:

- text telephone (TTY) on 900 116 016;
- Telesor service via the Telesor website (<https://www.telesor.es/>). An Internet connection is required in this case;
- mobile telephone or PDA. In both cases it is necessary to install a free application by following the steps indicated on the Telesor website.

This service offers assistance for anyone with queries related to specific cases of gender-based violence: female victims of gender-based violence, people who are close to a female victim of gender-based violence (relatives, friends, neighbours, etc.), professionals attending to a female victim of gender-based violence or who are aware of a situation of this kind of violence, etc.

The information provided refers to the resources and rights available to you as victim of this kind of crime, concerning employment, social services, financial support and information, assistance, reception and legal advice resources.

In the event of receiving an emergency call, it is immediately diverted to the 112 emergency number of the respective autonomous community.

If you are an underage victim of gender-based violence, any calls you make to the 016 Service will be diverted to the ANAR Hotline for Aid for Children and Adolescents (900 20 20 10).

The ANAR (Aid for At-Risk Children and Adolescents) Foundation Hotline (900 20 20 10) is a free, confidential and anonymous service, available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, which mainly consists of three aid lines:

- The ANAR Hotline for Aid for Children and Adolescents, the main aim of which is to offer child or adolescent callers the necessary support and guidance when they have problems or are in a situation of risk.
- The ANAR Hotline for Adults and Families, aimed at adults who need guidance on issues related to minors.
- The ANAR 116 000 Hotline for cases of missing minors (the European Union's harmonised number of social value for dealing with these cases).

This service will divert the calls you make to the 016 Service if you are an adult female and victim of gender-based violence or an adult who is aware of a case of this kind of violence.

Is victim support free?

Yes. Access to crime victim care and support services, such as the Crime Victim Support Offices, is free and confidential; it is not necessary to file a complaint first.

What types of support can I receive from state services or authorities?

You can go to the Crime Victim Support Offices found in all the [autonomous communities](#), in nearly every provincial capital and even in other cities.

The Crime Victim Support Offices will provide you with comprehensive, coordinated and specialist victim support as a victim of crime, meeting your specific legal, psychological and social needs.

In particular, the Crime Victim Support Offices will provide you with information about the specialist services and psychosocial and care resources available, regardless of whether you file a complaint, and about how to access these services.

They will also provide you with information about the care and support measures (medical, psychological or material) available and the procedure for obtaining them, including, where needed, information concerning the possibilities of obtaining alternative accommodation.

In addition, they will advise you about how you can make a complaint and the procedure for filing it, as well as the possibility of obtaining legal advice and defence and, where appropriate, the conditions under which you may obtain these free of charge.

The Crime Victim Support Offices will be able to refer you to specialist legal, psychological and social services, depending on your needs, such as e.g. municipal, social welfare, health, education and employment services; associations, foundations and other non-profit entities; psychosocial services from the Justice Administration; and, in the event of you being a victim of gender-based violence, to the Units for Coordination against Violence against Women (Unidades de Coordinación contra la Violencia sobre la Mujer) and Women Units (Unidades sobre la Mujer) in each autonomous community and province.

What types of support can I receive from non-governmental organisations?

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can offer support to victims of specific crimes by means of establishing personalised pathways according to each victim's needs and characteristics. The assistance function mainly includes legal advice, information about the different resources and aid available and psychological and emotional support.

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