

[Home](#) > ... > [Your Rights](#) > [Victims of Crime](#) > [Victims' Rights - By Country](#) > 2 - Reporting a crime and my rights during the investigation or trial

2 - Reporting a crime and my rights during the investigation or trial

You are a party to court proceedings if you request punishment or compensation for a criminal offence. You may also be questioned for the purpose of hearing evidence.

If the prosecutor has decided not to prosecute, you have the right to bring charges yourself.

How do I report a crime?

You can report a crime to the police at the crime scene, at a police station or, in the case of minor offences, online or by phone. You have the right to receive a written confirmation of your crime report.

How do I find out what's happening with the case?

The police will provide you with contact details for following up on the case.

Am I entitled to legal aid (during the investigation or trial)? Under what conditions?

You have the right to the assistance of a legal counsel for reporting a crime, being questioned and at the trial. The counsel must be a lawyer, public legal aid attorney or licensed legal counsel.

Low- and middle-income earners may be entitled to state-funded legal aid. In such cases, the counsel's fee will be paid by the state in part or in full. You can apply for legal aid to a public legal aid office or through an electronic service. You can also ask law firms to apply for legal aid on your behalf.

The court can order legal counsel and a support person for you in the case of domestic violence, sex offences or serious offences against your life, health or liberty. In such cases, the state will pay for the fee regardless of your income.

Can I claim expenses (for taking part in the investigation/trial)? Under what conditions?

If you are summoned to appear before the court in order to clarify the facts in the case, you are entitled to receive travel expenses incurred in your attendance at court from the State. You may receive a daily allowance, travel expenses and compensation for financial loss.

Can I appeal if my case is closed before going to court?

A complaint about the prosecutor's decision not to prosecute can be submitted to the Prosecutor General, who has the right to serve a new indictment.

Can I attend the trial?

Yes, you may attend the trial as a party to the proceedings. You are a party to court proceedings if you request punishment or compensation for a criminal offence. You may agree with the prosecutor's summary penal order or request some other penalty. You may seek compensation from the defendant yourself, or the prosecutor may have

pursued the claim on your behalf.

What is my official role in the justice system? For example, am I or can I choose to be: a victim, witness, civil party or private prosecutor?

You are a party to court proceedings if you request punishment or compensation for a criminal offence. You may also be questioned for the purpose of hearing evidence.

If the prosecutor has decided not to prosecute, you have the right to bring charges yourself.

What are my rights and obligations in this role?

You may be obliged to appear in court in person if this is necessary to clarify the facts in the case. In this case, you are entitled to compensation from the state for the costs incurred.

During the trial, you must always tell the truth.

Can I make a statement during the trial or give evidence? Under what conditions?

If you are a party to the proceedings, you have the right to give evidence. At the main hearing, you will be able to present your claim and its grounds, give evidence and make a final statement, in which you can state your opinion regarding the defendant's guilt and the penalty to be imposed.

What information will I receive during the trial?

You will be summoned to the main hearing if your presence is necessary to clarify the facts in the case or if you have told the court that you intend to present claims that are not pursued by the prosecutor.

You have the right to be informed, at your request, of the time and place of the court hearing as well as the verdict given in a criminal case.

Will I be able to access court files?

Yes. If you are a party to the proceedings, you have the same right to access court files as the accused. As a rule, you have the right to be informed about the content of trial documents, even those that are not in the public domain.

■ Last update: 09/07/2025

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