

# Victim Impact Statement



## What is a Victim Impact Statement?

When you have been a victim of a crime that someone has been charged with and there is a finding of guilt, you are eligible to write a Victim Impact Statement. A Victim Impact Statement is a voluntarily written statement completed by a victim of a criminal offence. A victim may include:

- someone directly affected by the crime
- a parent or guardian (if the victim is a child)

As a victim, you may notify Victim Service Coordinator that you wish to complete a Victim Impact Statement. Since writing a statement is voluntary, you always have the choice to not write one, even if a request is made by the court. If you choose, the Victim Impact Statement can be read aloud in court. The court must be made aware that this is the wish of the victim prior to the sentencing hearing.

## What can I put in my Victim Impact Statement?

A statement is your opportunity to tell the judge about how you have been impacted by a crime. It allows you, in your own words, to tell the court of any

- physical,
- emotional/psychological,
- financial impacts that the crime has had on your life.

The Victim Impact Statement should not include:

- facts of the case,
- your personal opinion of the offender,
- complaints about police or court procedure,
- suggestions on sentencing. In certain circumstances, the offender may have committed more than one crime and you may have been the victim of more than one crime. However, you should only comment on how the particular crime for which the offender has been found guilty has affected you.

## What happens to my Victim Impact Statement?

Once filed with the nearest Victim Services Coordinator, and a finding of guilt is made, the Victim Impact Statement is then given to:

- the court,
- crown prosecutor,
- offender or defence attorney for the offender.

The statement is provided before sentencing and is taken into consideration by the court.



### **Sentencing hearing:**

You, as a victim, do not have to appear at the sentencing hearing unless requested to do so by the court. You should be prepared to answer any questions about the Victim Impact Statement that may be asked by the court. At any time, the Judge or crown prosecutor may ask you questions about what has been written in the statement.

### **Contacting Victim Services in Newfoundland and Labrador:**

If you have been the victim of a crime and would like more information about Victim Services or writing a Victim Impact Statement, you can contact any of the following locations:

Gander: (709) 256-1028

Grand Falls-Windsor:(709) 292-4544

Corner Brook: (709) 637-2614

Port Saunders: (709) 861-2147

St. John's: (709) 729-0900

Marystown: (709) 279-3216

Carbonear: (709) 945-3019

Happy-Valley-Goose Bay: (709) 896-0446

Clarenville: (709) 466-5808

Nain: (709) 922-2360

Stephenville: (709) 643-6588

### **How to Contact Us:**

If you would like further information on this subject, or any of PLIAN's services including our Lawyer Referral Service, please contact our office at:

Public Legal Information Association of NL

31 Peet Street, Suite 227

St. John's, NL A1B 3W8

(709) 722-2643

(709) 722-0054 (fax)

[info@publiclegalinfo.com](mailto:info@publiclegalinfo.com)

[www.publiclegalinfo.com](http://www.publiclegalinfo.com)

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