



Writing a Victim Impact Statement

Writing a Victim Impact Statement (VIS) is your opportunity as a victim of a crime to tell the court how the crime has affected you. Writing a VIS for the court is voluntary.

You can get some help to write your VIS from a family member, friend or counsellor, as long as it is in your own words and you write about the impact the crime has had on you.

There are a number of different ways of writing a VIS, depending on what is easiest for you. The VIS can be written in paragraphs or dot points, in letter style or using headings such as physical injuries and emotional impact. You may also be able to attach relevant reports to the VIS.

You can only write about what has changed in your life as a result of the offences for which the offender has been convicted.

Impacts of the crime you may wish to tell the court about could include:

- Physical injuries, impact on health, medical treatment
- Emotional impact and wellbeing
- Psychological or mental health impact
- Changes in your behaviour, attitudes, or how you think about things
- Changes in your normal coping skills
- Changes in your social life or impact on relationships with others
- Impact on your financial or housing situation; education or employment

These are just a few suggestions to think about. You may write about how the crime impacted on you at the time of the offence and/or any ongoing effects on your life. It may assist to think about what life was like before compared to now. The thoughts, feelings and experiences must be your own as the victim of crime, rather than those of others.



The VIS is not an opportunity to express your feelings towards the offender, and it is not a letter to the offender. It is also best to avoid writing about the facts of the case and court outcomes in your VIS.

It is important to speak with the prosecutor about what you can and can't include in your VIS and what can be attached to your VIS.

Please try to get the VIS to the prosecutor at least one week before the sentence date. This gives the prosecutor time to let you know if any changes need to be made.

The VIS must be on A4 paper and may be up to 20 pages long. Statements commonly range from being a short paragraph to a few pages long. Be aware that your VIS will be read by the prosecutor, judge, defence and offender. Your VIS may also be read out loud in court by you or your representative if you wish. Think about the impact for you if reading the VIS at court.

The Witness Assistance Service (WAS) Officer at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) can assist with further information about writing a VIS and can help you arrange court support on the day of sentencing if required.

If you need to discuss your Victim Impact Statement or need help with writing it, please do not hesitate to call the WAS or the ODPP Solicitor on (02) 9285 8606 or Toll Free on 1800 814 534.
