



About the Witness Assistance Service (WAS)

The Witness Assistance Service (WAS) is part of the NSW Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP). The ODPP prosecutes all the serious crimes in NSW.

WAS Officers provide support and assistance to victims and witnesses in cases prosecuted by the ODPP, such as adult or child sexual assault, personal violence or where the victim has died.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WAS Officers

Every region in NSW has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WAS Officer available to assist you. You can contact the ODPP to find which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WAS Officer is covering your area.

Our WAS Officers have professional qualifications, training and experience to assist victims and witnesses and their families going through the prosecution process.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WAS Officers can assist you with:

- Understanding the court process
- Keeping you informed and updated about the court case
- Understanding your rights and entitlements
- Making referrals for counselling and support
- Talking with ODPP lawyers
- Preparing for court
- Arranging court support
- Providing information about writing a Victim Impact Statement

Getting in touch

Main contacts

Witness Assistance Service

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WAS Officers at the ODPP can be contacted by calling:

 **Toll free**
1800 814 534

 **Sydney**
(02) 9285 8606

Ask to speak to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander WAS Officer.

Other useful contacts

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Contact Line at Victims Services

1800 019 123

Indigenous Women's Legal Contact Line

1800 639 784

Warringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Centre

1800 686 587

LawAccess NSW

1300 888 529

(You can ask to speak to an Aboriginal worker)

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How crime can affect you

Crime can have a big impact on victims and their families. It can also have a big impact on the community. Everyone reacts differently to a crime. Some common effects include:

- Increased concern about your safety
- Finding it hard to concentrate
- Trouble sleeping
- Depression
- Anxiety and worry
- Going over things in your mind again and again
- Problems due to financial loss
- Sadness at the loss of a family member, friend or community person
- Conflict within the community

If these effects continue to be a problem for you it might be helpful to speak to a counsellor. WAS can help arrange a referral to a counsellor.