



Services and support groups providing court support

Witness Assistance Service

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NSW Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

A dynamic prosecution
service, recognised for its
excellence and leadership

Witness Assistance Service (WAS)

The Witness Assistance Service (WAS) is a specialist service within the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution (ODPP) providing assistance and support for victims of crime and vulnerable witnesses including children in ODPP prosecutions in the Local Court, District Court, Supreme Court and Children's Court. WAS Officers are professionals employed by the ODPP and are qualified in areas such as social work, psychology and social sciences.

WAS Officers can help with assessing your particular needs for giving evidence at court and arranging for adjustments at the court, in consultation with the ODPP Prosecutors. WAS can help you prepare for giving evidence at court, including visiting the courthouse and remote witness CCTV facilities.

WAS can also help you arrange court support and provide court support for children and vulnerable witnesses where this is required.

The WAS cannot provide court support in all ODPP prosecution matters however a number of services and support groups provide court support for victims of crime and their families and WAS can assist with referrals if necessary.

Contacts

Ask to be put through to the ODPP office that you have contact with.

 **Sydney Head Office**
(02) 9285 8606

 **Free Call
(outside Sydney)**
1800 814 534

Going to court and giving evidence

If you would like information about going to court or preparing to give evidence at court visit one of these websites:

 **ODPP**
odpp.nsw.gov.au

 **JusticeJourney**
lawlink.nsw.gov.au/vs

Government organisations

NSW Health Sexual Assault Services (SAS)

There are over 50 specialist Sexual Assault Services throughout NSW which are part of the NSW Health Area Health Services Network. These specialist sexual assault services employ qualified professionals to provide counselling and support for sexual assault victims (child and adult) including court preparation, court support and writing or assisting with VIS.

NSW Health SAS are key interagency partners with NSW Police Force and the ODPP in implementing the *NSW Police, Health and ODPP Interagency Guidelines for Responding to Adult Victims Sexual Assault (2006)*. WAS contributes to the training program for specialist SAS workers conducted by NSW Health Education Centre for Violence.

Contacts



NSW Health Sexual Assault Services

health.nsw.gov.au/kidsfamilies/protection/Pages/health-sas-services.aspx



Sexual Assault Information

health.nsw.gov.au/sexualassault/Pages/default.aspx



Non-Government organisations

Child and Adolescent Sexual Assault Counsellors (CASAC Inc)

CASAC consists of 21 community based services state-wide and is funded by the Department of Community Services.

These services provide counselling and support services to children and adolescents who have experienced sexual assault and also to their non-offending family members and/or carers. This can include court preparation and court support.

Contacts

For details for the closest CASAC contact Rosebank Sexual Abuse Service on:



(02) 9601 3790



info@rosebank.org.au

Court Support Scheme Community Restorative Centre (CRC)

CRC is a Sydney-based agency that works with prisoners, ex-prisoners, their families and anyone else affected by the criminal justice system.

Established in 1982 the CRC's Court Support Scheme is funded by State and Federal Governments through the Legal Aid Commission. Volunteers can assist with information on court procedures, court support, referrals and contact with other services at court. The service is aimed at defendants and witness in court proceedings, victims of crime, friends and family of these groups and anyone who is affected by the NSW judicial system.

Criminal Justice Support Network (CJSN)

The Criminal Justice Support Network (CJSN) provides support and information for people with an intellectual disability who are in contact with the criminal justice system including court preparation and court support (for both victims and offenders). CJSN is a service of the Intellectual Disability Rights Service and is funded by the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care. The service is coordinated and staffed with paid professionals and has a number of volunteers. Regional Coordinators are based in Sydney 02 9318 0144, Hunter area 02 4921 8826 and Southern (Illawarra and Shoalhaven) area 02 4236 0044.

The Domestic Violence Intervention Court Model (DVICM)

The Domestic Violence Intervention Court Model (DVICM) is an integrated criminal justice and community social welfare response to domestic violence. The DVICM aims to improve safety for victims of domestic violence offences in contact with the criminal justice system and ensure perpetrators of domestic violence offences are held to account for their actions. The DVICM is funded through the Department of Justice and the Attorney General.

Objectives of DVICM

- Providing efficient and seamless support to victims of domestic violence, through the entire prosecution process
- Improving the quality of the prosecution process to get better criminal justice system outcomes
- Finding the balance between individual victim concerns and criminal justice system responsibilities to uphold law
- Providing integrated offender victim and children's programs aimed at enhancing victim's safety and reducing repeat offending

Contacts

CRC's services are free and confidential.



Office
(02) 9288 8700

Contacts



24 Hour Help Line
1300 665 908



Fax Number
(02) 9318 2887



info@idrs.org.au



idrs.org.au

Witness Preparation

Where the matter is appropriate for prosecution DVICM will provide witness preparation and ensure victim safety and support is addressed.

The DVICM has been trialled in two locations - Wagga Wagga and Campbelltown to date.

Enough is Enough

Enough is Enough receives funding through NSW Health Victims Support Fund. They provide support and counselling for all victims of crime, including road trauma, addiction and co-operative justice education. Court support can be arranged by this support group with prior notice.

Homicide Victims Support Group (HVSG)

HVSG is funded through NSW Health and is a 24-hour information and support service when someone has been murdered. HVSG is a support groups for family members who have lost a family member through homicide. The service employs a coordinator and a number of professional counsellors and also provides a range of court support services which are provided by both the counsellors and a group of volunteers. WAS contributes to the training program for volunteers in this service.

Homicide Survivors Support After Murder Group


Court support for family victims in homicide matters can be arranged by this support group.


Mission Australia Court Support Service


This service is a designated court support service funded through the NSW Health Victims Support Fund and coordinated by Mission Australia. A range of court support services are provided by paid coordinator and group of trained volunteers at a number of courts.

The service is available to all victims of crime and prosecution witnesses. The service is based in Sydney and also provides some limited outreach support services. WAS contributes to the training program for the volunteers in this service.

Contacts


 (02) 9542 4029


 **Fax Number**
(02) 9542 4036


 team@enoughisenough.org.au

 enoughisenough.org.au

Contacts


 (02) 8833 8400


 **Toll Free**
1800 191 777

 **Fax Number**
(02) 8833 8425


 info@hvsgnsw.org.au


Contacts


 0415 619 590

 homsurvivors@optusnet.com.au

Contacts

 (02) 9356 0604

 **Fax Number**
(02) 9356 0605

 courtsupport@missionaustralia.com.au

The Salvation Army Sydney Court Chaplains

The Salvation Army officers based at the Downing Centre District and Local Courts in Sydney.

Court Chaplains are available to provide court support to victims, witnesses, offenders and their families. The chaplains also provide spiritual comfort and support as required.

Victims and Witnesses of Crime Court Support (VWCCS)

VWCCS Inc is a volunteer court support service which provides a range of court support services for both victims and witnesses. These services are provided by a group of trained volunteers at a number of courts in Sydney.

The service is auspiced under Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre and is based at The Green Room Level 1 Downing Centre Courts Sydney; Level 2 Parramatta Children's Court and Bidura Children's Court.


Victims of Crime Assistance League (VOCAL)

Provide support, guidance, referral, and strategies for victims of any crime including car related crime injuries, victims of road trauma, court preparation, community education and referral. Hunter VOCAL receives funding from the Attorney General's Department of NSW through Victim Services. Families, victims of crime or Crown witnesses can be provided with court preparation and court support. Court support is provided by volunteer court companions.

Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services (WDVCAS)

Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services are locally-based, independent services for women and children seeking help and information about how to get protection from the court from domestic violence. Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services are funded by Legal Aid NSW and are managed by local agencies throughout NSW. The Program provides services before court, at court and after court.

Contacts


 **Office**
(02) 9287 7499

 **Mobile**
0411 188 400

 **Mobile**
0407 944 908

Contacts


 **Mobile (Mon - Fri)**
0417 259 867


 **Office (Mon - Fri,
8:30am to 1pm)**
(02) 9287 7671

 info@vwccs.org.au

 vwccs.org.au

Contacts


 (02) 4926 5826

 **Fax Number**
(02) 4926 5866

 ceo@vocal.org.au

Contacts

For information on the nearest service, contact:

 1300 888 529



Other court support options for victims and witnesses

Victims of crime and prosecution witnesses often have a family member, relative, friend, counsellor or a support worker who may be able to go to court with them and be their support person while giving evidence at court.

Some courts also have refreshment and support services provided by local groups at individual courts such as the Sisters of Charity at Darlinghurst Supreme Court in Sydney. These groups are often able to provide some emotional support for victims or witnesses who may be in need at court.

Information about the role of a court support persons

JusticeJourney Website

lawlink.nsw.gov.au/vs > Be Courtwise

Supporting Victims and Witnesses at Court

Information for Court Support Persons is an information package available through WAS



1800 814 534



(02) 9285 2502





ODPP
New South Wales



Sydney (02) 9285 8606
WAS 1800 814 534



175 Liverpool Street
Sydney NSW 2000



enquiries@odpp.nsw.gov.au



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