



## 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 WAS Officers

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

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

#### Aboriginal WAS Officers can assist you with:

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

## Getting in touch

### Main contacts

#### Witness Assistance Service

Aboriginal WAS Officers at the ODPP can be contacted by calling:



**Toll free**

1800 814 534



**Sydney HO**

(02) 9285 8606

Ask to speak to an Aboriginal WAS Officer.

### Other useful contacts

#### Aboriginal & 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)

#### 24hr Victim Access Line

1800 633 063

#### Victims Services and JusticeJourney website

[lawlink.nsw.gov.au/vs](http://lawlink.nsw.gov.au/vs)



## 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.

