

## RIGHTS OF CRIME VICTIMS

As defined in the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Article 56, Subchapter A, Crime Victims' Rights, a victim of a violent crime is someone who: (1) has suffered bodily injury or death as a result of criminally injurious conduct, or who has been the victim of a crime involving sexual assault, kidnapping, or aggravated robbery; (2) is the close relative (spouse, parent, brother, sister, or adult child) or (3) is the guardian of a victim. As a victim of violent crime, you have the following rights:

- The right to receive adequate protection from harm and threats of harm arising from cooperation with prosecution efforts.
- The right to have the magistrate take your safety and that of your family into consideration when bail is being considered.
- The right, if you so request, to be informed of relevant court proceedings and of those court proceedings that have been canceled or rescheduled and to be informed of appellate proceedings.
- The right, if you so request, to information about procedures in the criminal investigation of your case by law enforcement officials and about general procedures in the criminal justice system, including plea bargaining, restitution, appeals, and parole, from the prosecutor's office.
- The right to receive information about the Texas Crime Victims' Compensation fund that provides financial assistance to victims of violent crimes and, if you so request, referral to available social service agencies that may provide additional help.
- The right to provide information to a probation department conducting a pre-sentence investigation on the impact of the crime.
- The right to have a medical health provider pay for medical examinations for victims of sexual assault and on request, the right to counseling regarding AIDS and HIV infection and testing for sexual assault victims.
- If you so request, the right to be notified of parole proceedings by the Victim Services Section of the Pardons and Paroles Division, the right to participation in the parole process by submitting a Victim Impact Statement or other information and the right to be notified of the inmate's release.
- The right to be present at all public court proceedings, if the presiding judge permits.
- The right to a safe waiting area before and during court proceedings.
- The right to prompt return of any property that is no longer required as evidence.

- If you so request, the right to have the prosecutor notify your employer that the need for your testimony may involve your absence from work.
- The right to complete a Victim Impact Statement, detailing the emotional, physical and financial impact that the crime has had on you and your family and to have that statement considered by the judge prior to sentencing and/or entry of a plea bargain and by the parole board prior to taking any parole action.

## NOTICE TO ADULT VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

**IT IS A CRIME FOR ANY PERSON TO INTENTIONALLY CAUSE YOU ANY HARM, EVEN IF THAT PERSON IS A MEMBER OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU TELL THE OFFICER IF YOU OR ANY OTHER HOUSEHOLD RESIDENT HAVE BEEN INJURED, OR IF YOU FEEL YOU ARE GOING TO BE IN DANGER AFTER THE OFFICER LEAVES.**

### WHAT SHOULD YOU DO NEXT?

- Request an **Emergency Protective Order (EPO)**: This order can be requested through the District Attorney's Family Criminal Law Division at 713-274-0212. If an arrest is not made, call the investigator assigned to the case. This order is valid for up to 90 days.
- Register through **VINE** by calling 1-877-894-8463 or [www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com). Registration is free, anonymous, and is a computer-based telephone program that provides victims of crime information about offender custody status and related court events. (See VINE section of brochure for more details).
- Apply for a **Protective Order** if necessary. A Protective Order must be issued directly to the offender. It orders him/her to stop committing violence against you, to stay away from you and your family, to stop any communication, direct or through others, that is threatening or harassing. This order can be valid for up to 2 years. *Refer to Legal Resources section* \*
- Call the **Houston Police Department Family Violence Unit** at 713-308-1100 for Investigative Services.
- Call the **Houston Police Department Victim Services Division** at 713-308-0080 for legal referrals, crisis counseling, U Visa information and questions regarding Crime Victim's Compensation.
- Make a Safety Plan.

## VICTIM INFORMATION AND NOTIFICATION EVERYDAY (VINE)

Call VINE 24 hours a day for information on county jail status and court events. Make Texas VINE part of your safety plan. The suspect/offender will **not** know you have registered with Texas VINE. However, do not depend on Texas VINE, or any single program, for your protection. Please Call Toll Free 1-877-894-8463.

For more information visit [www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com)

## WHAT IS A PROTECTIVE ORDER?

A Protective Order is a legal remedy for the use and protection of victims of family violence, sexual assault and stalking. Family Violence means the intentional use or threat of physical force by a member of the family or household. Family includes individuals related by blood or marriage, i.e. spouses ex-spouses, aunts, uncles, cousins, brothers, sisters, parents, children, etc. Household means a unit composed of persons living together in the same dwelling, whether or not they are related to each other.

A protective order can deter violence and provide the police and courts additional authority to intervene in family violence, sexual assault, indecent assault and stalking cases, and to punish those who commit family violence, but it is not a shield that truly stops the next violent act from occurring.

## SAFETY PLAN

### PREPARE FOR FUTURE INCIDENTS

- Plan an escape route out of your home & teach it to your children
- Have a code word for children & family/friends to call police
- Tell children not to get in the middle of violence
- Talk with professionals about technology safety (computers, cell phones, etc.)
- Keep phone with you at all times and know your location
- Find a safe place to stay (family/friend's house)

## IF YOU ARE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED

- ASAP - Go to a hospital and have a Sexual Assault Kit Examination Performed.
- Seeking medical attention will help determine if you have any injuries, help collect evidence within 120 hours, test for STI's and pregnancy.
- As time passes, evidence can be destroyed. Try not to change clothing, shower or bathe.

- Counseling can help you process feelings about assault and determine your options.

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

### Hotlines (24 Hours)

<b>Emergency</b>	<b>911</b>
Adult & Child Protective Services	800-252-5400
Bay Area Turning Point (South)	281-286-2525
Brazoria County Women's Center	800-243-5788
Crisis Hotline	832-416-1177
Crisis Hotline (Teens)	832-416-1199
Familytime/The Door	281-446-2615
Houston Area Women's Center	713-528-2121
HAWC Rape Crisis Line	713-528-7273
Human Trafficking Resource Ctr	888-373-7888
Katy Christian Ministries	281-693-7273
Montgomery Co. Women's Center	936-441-4044
Mothers Against Drunk Driving	877-623-3435
National Domestic Violence	800-799-7233
TTY	800-787-3224
Star of Hope Mission (Family)	713-222-2220
Star of Hope Mission (Men)	713-227-8900
The Bridge	713-472-0753
TX Forensic Nurse Examiners Ctr	281-306-6893

### **General**

<b>Non-Emergency</b>	<b>713-884-3131</b>
Children's Assessment Center	713-986-3300
Casa Juan Diego (Immigrants)	713-869-7376
Covenant House (18-20)	713-523-2231
DAYA	713-981-7645
Family Services of Houston	713-861-4849
Harris Ctr for Mental Health & IDD	713-970-7000
HPD Victim Services Division	713-308-0080
Mental Health Association	713-522-5161
Montrose Center (LGBT) (Main)	713-529-3211
NW Assistance Ministries	281-885-4672
TDCJ-Parole Division	713-685-7100
The Empowered Survivor	281-406-3417

### **Legal Resources**

Attorney General Child Support	800-252-8014
Victim Compensation	800-983-9933
Harris County District Atty. FCLD	713-274-0212
Victim Witness Division	713-274-0250
Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse	713-224-9911
Houston Volunteer Lawyers	713-228-0732
Lone Star Legal Aid	713-652-0077
Immigrant Resource Hotline	1-833-468-4664

**NO ONE DESERVES TO BE HURTI**

