

claims against the accused

A victim of crime may have a claim against the accused for:

- Compensation for personal injuries and loss of income;
- Compensation or reparation for property loss or damage and associated expenses; or
- Civil law damages.

For further information on making a claim against the accused contact one of the following:

- Office of the Assessor of Criminal Injuries;
- Victim Support Services or Child Witness Services; or
- A private lawyer, Legal Aid WA or the Law Society's Law Access Service.

claims for expenses

If you incur expenses attending court you may be eligible to claim them. You must check with the Paralegal assigned to your case if you can be reimbursed before incurring an expense. It is important you keep all your receipts to attach to your claim form.

If the trial is not taking place at your local court, please contact the Paralegal assigned to your case. He or she will make arrangements for any long distance travel and accommodation on your behalf. All arrangements for travel must be made by the Paralegal and the costs will be covered by this office.

For further information on claiming witness expenses refer to the Guidance Notes for Submitting a Claim for Witness Fees and Expenses provided with your summons. If you have not been provided one with your summons please contact the Paralegal assigned to your case.

further information

If you do not understand any of the words used in this brochure please refer to the glossary contained in your copy of our 'About the ODPP' brochure.

If you would like this in an alternative format, such as an audio file, Braille or larger print version, contact the Paralegal assigned to your case and a copy will be made available to you.

How to contact us

Our contact details are as follows:



**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS
FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Level 1
International House
26 St Georges Terrace
PERTH WA 6000
Telephone: (08) 9425 3999
Facsimile: (08) 9425 3600
Freecall: 1800 264 144

Email: dpp@dpp.wa.gov.au
Website: www.dpp.wa.gov.au

Other Useful Contacts

Child Witness Service and Victim Support Service

Level 2,
District Court of WA
500 Hay Street
Perth WA 6000
Telephone: (08) 9425 2850
Facsimile: (08) 9425 2167

Freecall: 1800 818 988

Criminal Injuries Compensation

Level 12
International House
26 St Georges Terrace
PERTH WA 6000
Telephone: (08) 9425 3250
Facsimile: (08) 9425 3271

Further information on both these services can be found on the following website:

www.justice.wa.gov.au



**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
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information for parents or guardians of child victims or witnesses

the prosecution process and the ODPP

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions for Western Australia (ODPP) prosecutes all state criminal cases in the District and Supreme Courts of Western Australia. It prosecutes the case against an accused on behalf of the State. It cannot provide you or your child with legal advice, counselling or support services.

Your child's case will be assigned to a Prosecutor and a Paralegal. The Prosecutor will prepare the case and present the State's case in court. The Paralegal helps the Prosecutor by keeping you informed of the progress of the case and helping you with arrangements to attend court. If your circumstances alter – for example you change address - you must contact the Paralegal assigned to your case and provide your new contact details.



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the prosecution process and you

As the parent or guardian of a child who is a victim or witness to a crime, you will want to support your child through the difficult process of going to court. Ensuring he or she is adequately prepared as a witness can reduce emotional stress and enable the child to better participate in court proceedings.

The Child Witness Service (CWS) will play a vital part in helping your child cope with giving evidence in court or preparing a victim impact statement. CWS is a free service provided by the State Government to support child victims and witnesses throughout the prosecution process, and help keep you informed on the progress of the case.

The CWS aims to:

- Reduce the trauma experienced by a child witness through his or her involvement in the legal process;
- Work with the WA Police and ODPP to ensure a child witness and his or her family is kept fully informed about the progress of the court case;
- Help a child witness prepare a victim impact statement, even if the child is not required to give evidence;
- Liaise with a counsellor or provide assistance on behalf of a child witness in dealings with other Government agencies;
- Research the needs of child witnesses; and
- Heighten the awareness of professionals to the issues, needs and problems faced by child witnesses.

The CWS does not provide counselling, but can provide a referral to relevant agencies. Further contact details for the CWS are at the end of this brochure.

attending court

The CWS are trained to help your child feel comfortable by familiarising them with the layout of the court room, court procedures and the role of people attending court.

If you have any concerns about you or your child's safety when attending court, or at any other time throughout the prosecution process, you should immediately contact the Police Investigating Officer or the Prosecutor assigned to your case.

special witness status

Children who are victims or witnesses are eligible for special witness status. The DPP prosecutor will apply to the court for this status to be granted in most cases. Special witness status allows your child to give evidence in one of the following ways:

- Pre-recorded before trial (the recording is then played at trial meaning your child does not have to attend in person);
- On the day of the trial from a remote room via CCTV (Closed Circuit Television); or
- On the day of the trial in court, but from behind privacy screens.

Contact the Prosecutor assigned to your case or the Child Witness Service for further information.

victim impact statements

A victim impact statement provides you with the opportunity to tell the court how the crime has affected your child. This will also help the Judge when deciding the sentence. Victim impact statements can include:

- Details of any injury or loss your child suffered as a direct result of the crime; and
- Details of the effect the crime has had on your child.

A victim impact statement cannot comment on what sentence should be given to the accused.

If you would like to prepare a victim impact statement, contact the Child Witness Service.