



The Victim Bill of Rights exists to ensure crime victims and witnesses are informed, present, and heard at important stages in the criminal matter involving them. For a complete listing, please refer to the *Victim Bill of Rights (M.G.L. c.258B)*. <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartIII/TitleIV/Chapter258B/Section3>

Below are some of the rights afforded to victims and witnesses:

- Be informed about how a criminal case moves through the system, what your role is in the process, and what will be expected of you and why
- Be informed of rights and services available to victims and witnesses in the criminal justice system
- Be informed about how to access social services, community supports, and financial assistance that may be available to you
- Be updated on significant developments in the case
- Be present at all court proceedings
- A safe waiting area or room provided by the court which is separate from the defendants and the defendant's family and friends
- Speak with the Prosecutor or Victim Witness Advocate about the Commonwealth's sentence recommendation to the court
- Give a Victim Impact Statement to the court at sentencing about the emotional, physical and financial effects of the crime and about your opinion about the sentence to be given
- Apply for Victim of Violent Crime Compensation to see if you are eligible for certain out of pocket expense such as medical, counseling funeral costs, lost wages due to a disability caused by the crime
- Certain protections by law enforcement from harm or threats of harm caused by your cooperation with the court process
- Submit or decline to participate in interviews with the defense team before trial, or to set reasonable conditions on the conduct of any such interview if you choose to be interviewed