




Government
of Canada
Office of the Federal
Ombudsman for Victims
of Crime

Gouvernement
du Canada
Bureau de l'ombudsman
fédéral des victimes
d'actes criminels

Heard. Respected.
VICTIMS FIRST.



**EMPOWERING
VICTIMS AND
SURVIVORS
OF CRIME**

Office of the Federal Ombudsman
for Victims of Crime

Canada

WHO WE ARE

Created in 2007, the Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime (OFOVC) works to provide a voice for victims of crime at the federal level, and to ensure that the federal government meets its commitments to victims of crime.

WHAT IS AN OMBUDSMAN?

An Ombudsman is chosen by the Government to independently review people's complaints about government programs or services. An Ombudsman can help find ways to resolve problems by recommending solutions or proposing changes to laws, programs or policies.

WHO WE SERVE

The OFOVC serves Canadians who have suffered physical or emotional harm, or financial loss as the result of a criminal offence in Canada, as well as Canadians who have been victimized in another country.

We also support spouses, relatives, or dependents of victims, and welcome any questions about the rights of victims in Canada.

WHAT WE DO

Our mandate allows the OFOVC to:

1. Assist victims

- Answer questions about victims' rights under federal law, including the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* (CVBR)
- Review complaints related to federal laws, policies, programs and services for victims and survivors of crime
- Provide information about the services and programs available in Canada

2. Raise awareness

- Inform Canadians about who we are and what we do
- Ensure that policy makers are aware of victims' needs and concerns

3. Provide advice

- Identify issues with federal laws, programs, policies, or services that have a negative impact on victims of crime
- Make recommendations to the federal government on how it can make its laws, policies and processes more responsive to the needs of victims of crime

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS UNDER THE CANADIAN VICTIMS BILL OF RIGHTS?

The Government of Canada passed the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* (CVBR) in 2015. This was an important step in protecting victims' rights and in giving victims of crime a stronger voice in the criminal justice system.

The CVBR gives victims of crime the right to:

1. Information

- Victims have the right to ask for and get information from criminal justice employees during the police investigation, trial, sentencing or corrections phases. They also have the right to information about the services and programs available to them, including restorative justice.

2. Protection

- Victims have the right to have their security and privacy considered during the criminal justice process.

3. Participation

- Victims have the right to express their views and have those views considered when decisions that affect their rights under the CVBR are made by authorities in the criminal justice system.

4. Seek Restitution

- Victims have the right to ask a judge to consider making a restitution order. If restitution is ordered but not paid, it can be entered as a civil court judgment in provincial court.

Complaint resolution

If you believe your rights as a victim have not been respected by a federal department, you can submit a complaint to them directly. If you are not sure to which department to address your complaint, the OFOVC can help.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint or feel that you have not been treated fairly, you can contact the OFOVC. Every attempt is made to address complaints quickly and informally.

HOW TO REACH US

Website: victimsfirst.gc.ca

Telephone (toll-free): 1-866-481-8429

TTY (Teletypewriter): 1-877-644-8385

Email: victimsfirst@ombudsman.gc.ca

Mail:

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P.O. Box 55037
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1A1

Twitter: @OFOVC

Facebook: [Facebook.com/OFOVC](https://www.facebook.com/OFOVC)

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