Information for Witnesses

Victim Support Scotland

Victim Support Scotland is here for anyone affected by crime in Scotland. We're here for you, throughout your time in court. Find out more about what we do and what you can expect from today.



We are here to support people going through the court process who are both:

- **a witness for the prosecution**
- **and have Special Measures in place**

We also must have received your referral from Victim Information and Advice (VIA) at least 10 days ago.

For witnesses who meet all of these criteria, here are some of the ways we can help you while in the Witness Room. **We can:**



- **Sit with you while you wait to go into the court room if you are nervous, worried or upset.**
- **Explain the court process and what will happen to you today.**
- **Give you more information about the agencies involved in your case and the best people to go to with questions. We may be able to speak to agencies for you.**
- **Help with practical matters, such as finding your way around the court building.**
- **Provide information on Special Measures, which can help you give your best evidence.**
- **In some cases we may also be able to sit with you in court, while you give your evidence.**

Following your time in court today, we can call you to check in on you and discuss any further needs you might have.

If you are not sure whether you have been granted Special Measures, speak to a court official or the Crown Office on 0300 020 3000 or email enquirypoint@copfs.gov.uk

If you don't have Special Measures in place, there are other ways we may be able to support you.

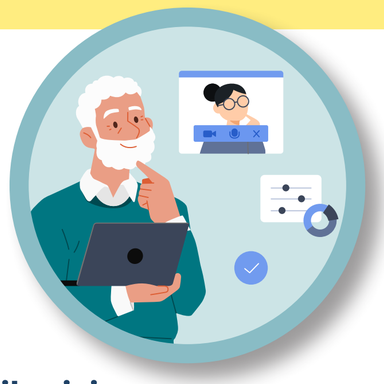
To find out more:

1. Look for help on our website: **www.victimsupport.scot/self-referral/** and fill in a self-referral form
2. Call our support helpline: **0800 160 1985**
3. Speak to one of our volunteers on our webchat: **www.victimsupport.scot**

FAQs

People often have questions about the process of being a witness. Here are some of the questions we get asked most often.

- **Why don't I have Special Measures?** This is decided by the Crown Office directly and is not something Victim Support Scotland has any influence over.
- **Do I have a lawyer?** The Procurator Fiscal (PF) is acting for the crown (and you). You can ask to speak to the PF before the case starts if there is a pressing issue.
- **Can I see my witness/ police statement?** Yes, in most circumstances you can ask to see your statement when you check in, just ask at the reception desk. Your statement will be given to you about 30 minutes before the case starts. However, if your evidence is part-heard, you will not be able to have access to it.
- **Is there a lunch break?** Yes, usually the court adjourns at 1pm; you will be told when you can leave the waiting area but you must be back before 2pm (or will be advised accordingly).



- **Will I see the accused while giving evidence?** If you haven't been granted Special Measures, you will see the accused. However, the accused is not allowed in the witness room.
- **How long will I wait?** There are no set times for trial within the court building, so be prepared that you may have to wait all day.

For more information and support use this QR code to access our website