




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

Canada

WHO WE ARE

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

WHAT IS AN OMBUDSPERSON?

An Ombudsperson is a person chosen by the government to independently review complaints about government programs or services. An Ombudsperson can recommend solutions or propose changes to laws, programs or policies.

WHO WE SERVE

We serve Canadians who have suffered physical harm, emotional harm or financial loss as the result of a criminal offence, whether in Canada or another country. We also support their spouses, relatives and dependents.

We welcome questions from anyone about victims' rights in Canada.

WHAT WE DO

To carry out our mandate, we focus on three areas:

1. We help victims by...

- answering questions about victims' rights under federal law, including the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* (CCRA) and the *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* (CVBR)
- reviewing complaints related to federal government departments, agencies laws, policies, programs and services for victims and survivors of crime
- providing information about victims' services and programs in Canada

2. We raise awareness by...

- ensuring policy-makers are aware of victims' rights, needs and concerns
- telling Canadians who we are and what we do

3. We provide advice by...

- identifying federal laws, programs, policies and services that have a negative impact on victims of crime
- making recommendations to the federal government on how to make its laws, policies and programs 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 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 them considered when authorities in the criminal justice system make decisions that affect their rights.

4. Seek restitution

- Victims have the right to ask a judge to consider making a restitution order (a requirement for financial payment). If restitution is ordered but not paid, victims can seek a civil court judgment in provincial court.

Resolving complaints

If you believe that a federal department has not respected your rights as a victim, you can submit a complaint to it directly. If you are not sure where to direct your complaint, we can help.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, or if you feel that you have not been treated fairly, you can contact us. We will make every attempt 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@ombuds.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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