

THE EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF CRIME

Many victims and witnesses are emotionally affected by crime. Although everyone reacts differently, victims and witnesses report some common behaviors, such as:

- ◆ Anger.
- ◆ Feelings of panic and anxiety.
- ◆ Increased concern for their personal safety and that of their family.
- ◆ Nightmares and a change in sleep patterns.
- ◆ Depression, difficulty in handling everyday problems, trouble concentrating and feeling overwhelmed.
- ◆ Feelings of self-doubt, shame, and guilt.
- ◆ Reliving what happened.

Everyone copes with emergencies and tragedy differently, and all of these responses are normal reactions to a very abnormal event. Many people continue to have these responses for some time after the crime. You may want to talk about what happened with a counselor, clergy member, friend, family member, or other victims. The TIGTA Victim/Witness Coordinator can assist you in finding appropriate support services.

We encourage you to contact the TIGTA Victim/Witness Coordinator listed in this brochure.

IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

TIGTA SPECIAL AGENT

Name _____

Phone _____

TIGTA VICTIM/WITNESS COORDINATOR

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

U.S. ATTORNEY VICTIM/WITNESS COORDINATOR

Name _____

Phone _____

CRIME VICTIM COMPENSATION PROGRAM

Name _____

Phone _____

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

TIGTA OI Victim/Witness Brochure (Rev. 12-2005)

Department of the Treasury

VICTIM AND WITNESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



Treasury
Inspector General
for
Tax Administration

INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS AND WITNESSES OF CRIME

As a Federal Law Enforcement agency, the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) is concerned about the problems often experienced by victims and witnesses of crime. We know that as a victim or witness you may experience anger, confusion, frustration or fear as a result of your experience.

This brochure provides information that will help you deal with the problems and questions that often surface during an investigation and provides you with a better understanding of how the Federal criminal justice system works.

We have included a description of victims' rights under Federal law, as well as information and services available to you as a Federal victim and/or witness. We encourage you to contact your TIGTA Victim/Witness Coordinator if you have any questions. The coordinator's name and telephone number are on the back of this brochure.

We know that the days and months ahead may be difficult for you and your family. We hope the resources described in this brochure help you. At the same time, we need your cooperation throughout the investigation.

To the extent it is appropriate, you will be kept informed of the status of the investigation. Throughout the investigation, your TIGTA Victim/Witness Coordinator is the person you should contact.

IF YOU ARE THREATENED OR HARASSED

If anyone threatens you or you feel that you are being harassed because of your cooperation with the investigation, contact your TIGTA Victim/Witness Coordinator immediately. He/She is available to discuss additional protective measures which can be taken, if necessary.

IF YOUR PROPERTY IS BEING HELD AS EVIDENCE

We will make every effort to return it to you as soon as it is no longer needed for evidentiary purposes.

IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE WITH YOUR EMPLOYER OR CREDITORS

During the course of the investigation, we will contact your employer if cooperation in the investigation causes absences from work and we will contact any creditors if cooperation in the investigation affects your ability to make timely payments.

IF YOU NEED FINANCIAL HELP OR SUPPORT SERVICES

States have crime victim compensation programs to help cover some expenses resulting from violent crimes. Your state program may pay for medical health care costs, lost wages and support, and funeral and burial expenses not covered by insurance or other benefits. Contact your state compensation program to find out if you are eligible for benefits. For more information, contact the TIGTA Victim/Witness Coordinator.

The TIGTA Victim/Witness Coordinator can also tell you about available victim assistance programs. These programs offer a variety of services to help crime victims, such as counseling and treatment.

IF AN ARREST IS MADE

You may be notified if a suspected offender is apprehended. Following the arrest, the TIGTA Victim/Witness Coordinator will make every effort to keep you informed of the status of the investigation.

Once we have filed your case with the U.S. Attorney's Office, the attorney assigned your case will contact you. Each U.S. Attorney has a Victim/Witness Coordinator to help answer your questions and assist you with your concerns during the prosecution of the crime.

YOUR RIGHTS AS A CRIME VICTIM

As a Federal crime victim, you have the following rights:

- ◆ The right to be reasonably protected from the accused.
- ◆ The right to reasonable, accurate, and timely notice of any public court proceeding, or any parole proceeding, involving the crime or any release or escape of the accused.
- ◆ The right not to be excluded from any such public court proceeding, unless the court, after receiving clear and convincing evidence, determines that testimony by you would be materially altered if the victim heard other testimony at that proceeding.
- ◆ The right to be reasonably heard at any public proceeding in the district court involving release, plea, sentencing, or any parole proceeding.
- ◆ The reasonable right to confer with the attorney for the Government in the case.
- ◆ The right to full and timely restitution as provided in law.
- ◆ The right to proceedings free from unreasonable delay.
- ◆ The right to be treated with fairness and with respect for your dignity and privacy.

Child victims, or victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, identity theft, or telemarketing fraud have additional rights and/or require additional assistance. For further information, contact your TIGTA Victim/Witness Coordinator.