GLOSSARY

Arraignment: The court hearing in which the defendant is formally charged with a crime and enters a plea of guilty or not guilty.

Bail: An amount of money which is sometimes imposed by the court to ensure the defendants appearance at future court hearings. A defendant held in custody is required to post bail in order to be released. Bail can be posted either at court or at the House of Correction.

Continuance: A postponement of a case marked for trial or hearing to a later date.

Default: A defendant's failure to appear at a required legal proceeding.

Defendant: A person formally charged with a crime.

Felony: A crime punishable by incarceration in the state prison for a period of years.

Grand Jury: A group of 23 people that hear evidence presented by a prosecutor to determine if a formal criminal charge (indictment) shall be issued in a case.

Misdemeanor: A crime punishable by a fine or incarceration in the House of Correction for a maximum of 2 1/2 years.

Pre-Trial Conference: The hearing in which the prosecutor and the defense report the status of the case to the court.

Probation: The defendant is placed under the supervision of a probation officer and is required to fulfill certain conditions set forth by the court for a specified period of time.

Restitution: In some cases, the Judge may order the defendant to pay the out-of-pocket expenses that you may have incurred as a result of the crime. Advocates are available to assist you in documenting your losses.

Sentencing Recommendations: When a defendant has pled guilty or has been found guilty after trial, the Judge will consider (but is not required to accept) the recommendations made by the prosecutor, defense attorney and the victim and/or family through Victim Impact Statements.

Subpoena/Summons: A Court Order which requires your appearance at court. Failure to appear under court order is considered as a Contempt of Court. It is imperative that you inform your advocate or prosecutor immediately if you cannot appear as ordered. Please be sure to keep your advocate informed of any changes in your address or telephone number.

Victim Assistance Program

Office of Plymouth County
District Attorney

Timothy J. Cruz

VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

HOTLINE
508-583-3306

PLYMOUTH COUNTY RESOURCES

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
Police 911
Brockton Family & Community 508-583-5200
..... 1-800-281-6498
SafeLink 1-877-785-2020
So. Shore Women's Center 781-582-0078
Womansplace Crisis Center 508-588-2041

SEXUAL ASSAULT
Womansplace Crisis Center 508-588-8255

CHILD AT RISK
HOTLINE 1-800-792-5200

PARENTAL STRESS
HOTLINE 1-800-632-8188

MADD **.....781-585-1888**

MOVA **.....617-586-1340**

VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

OFFICE OF PLYMOUTH COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

TIMOTHY J. CRUZ

32 Belmont Street
P.O. Box 1665
Brockton, MA 02303

Phone: 508-584-8120
Fax: 508-586-3578

Victim Witness Hotline
508-583-3306

A MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

As your District Attorney, my primary mission is to ensure public safety in our neighborhoods, and provide for the protection of our citizens.

Without the assistance and cooperation of victims and witnesses, the successful prosecution of criminal cases cannot be achieved.

When you report a crime and testify in court, you help to ensure the safety of the entire community.

The Victim Assistance Program within my office was established to assist victims and witnesses throughout the criminal justice process.

Victim Witness Advocates are available in every court to provide information, assistance and referrals.

They will ensure that victims, family members and witnesses of crime are afforded their rights under the law.

Your participation is a valuable and essential contribution in protecting our community.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Timothy J. Cruz
District Attorney
Plymouth County

VICTIM WITNESS PROGRAM

The Victim Assistance Program is committed to assisting victims and witnesses of crime in Plymouth County. Advocates are available to provide information and guidance through the criminal justice process, and to protect victim's rights under the law. If you are a victim or a witness to a crime and need assistance, please call us now at 508-584-8120. Our Advocates are specially trained to assist the social, physical and emotional needs of all victims and witnesses in Plymouth County.

VICTIM'S RIGHTS

The Victim Bill of Rights was enacted to give support and protection to victims and witnesses. Services which are mandated by the Victim Bill of Rights include:

- Notification of all court dates, appearances and the final disposition of the case
- A secure waiting area during court proceedings (where available)
- The right to confer with the prosecutor prior to the start of trial, prior to a case being dismissed, and prior to a sentencing recommendation
- The right to confer with the probation officer prior to his filing of a full pre-sentence report on the defendant with the court. You have the right to inform the probation officer of the impact that this particular crime has had on you and your family
- Notification of the time and place of sentencing
- Assistance with preparing and presenting a Victim Impact Statement to the court, either orally or in writing
- Information and assistance regarding:
  - Requesting restitution
  - Witness fees
  - Social Service referrals and other support services
  - Employer and creditor intercession services

SUGGESTIONS FOR WITNESSES

At some point, in the criminal justice process, you may be called to testify in court. The Assistant District Attorney and Victim Advocate will meet with you prior to trial. The following are helpful suggestions for witnesses.
If you are testifying in court, **REMEMBER:**

1. YOU ARE SWORN TO TELL THE TRUTH: Always be honest when testifying. Telling the truth requires that a witness testify accurately about what he or she knows. As a witness in a case, it is your responsibility to tell the truth.

2. DO NOT GUESS: If you honestly do not know the answer to a question, please state so.

3. UNDERSTAND THE QUESTION: If you do not understand a question which is posed to you, please ask the attorney to repeat it or to clarify it for you.

4. TAKE YOUR TIME: Give the questions the thought they require.

5. ONLY ANSWER THE QUESTION THAT IS ASKED: Do not volunteer information.

6. SPEAK IN A LOUD VOICE: What you have to say is very important. The jury needs to hear you. Keep in mind, most microphones in the courtroom are for recording purposes only, they will not amplify your voice.

7. GIVE AUDIBLE ANSWERS: The court reporter needs to accurately record your answers. Do not nod your head.

8. IF AN OBJECTION IS RAISED: Remain silent, the Judge must make a ruling of law. If the Judge deems the question admissible, you will be instructed to answer.

9. DRESS APPROPRIATELY: The courtroom is a formal setting and it is important for all witnesses to dress neatly and appropriately.

10. STAY CALM AND BE COURTEOUS: Do not lose your temper, fence or argue with either attorney. Answer all questions, whether they are posed by the Commonwealth or the defense politely, and to the best of your recollection.