

## Emotional Impact

Many victims are emotionally affected by violent crime. While everyone reacts differently, many victims report some type of trauma. Everyone copes with emergencies and tragedy differently. There is no time limit to how long the trauma may last; many people continue to be affected long after the incident has occurred. Some common reactions may include:

- Anger
- Panic or anxiety
- Increased concern for personal safety and that of loved ones
- Nightmares, sleep disturbance
- Depression, feeling overwhelmed
- Self doubt, shame and guilt
- Continuously reliving the incident, flashbacks

## Limited Confidentiality Statement

The ATF Victim/Witness Specialists are here to assist you as you go through the criminal justice process. However, you should know that they work as part of a team with the ATF Agent and personnel from the U.S. Attorney's Office. Discussions that you have with a Victim/Witness Specialist may not be considered completely confidential. There are times when information you provide may need to be shared with the other team members. This is especially important if you share information regarding your safety, a medical emergency, when the information relates to child abuse and/or when the nondisclosure of the information could interfere with the investigation or prosecution of the case.



Please Remember, ATF Special Agents and Victim/Witness Specialists are here to help provide you with referrals and practical assistance.

### Important Contact Numbers

#### ATF Victim/Witness Specialist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Main office number: **888-267-2570**

Direct number: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: [www.atf.gov/contact/victim-witness-assistance-program](http://www.atf.gov/contact/victim-witness-assistance-program)

#### ATF Special Agent

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Investigation Case Number: \_\_\_\_\_

#### U.S. Attorney's Office Victim/Witness Specialist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Crime Victim Compensation

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: [www.nacvcb.org](http://www.nacvcb.org)

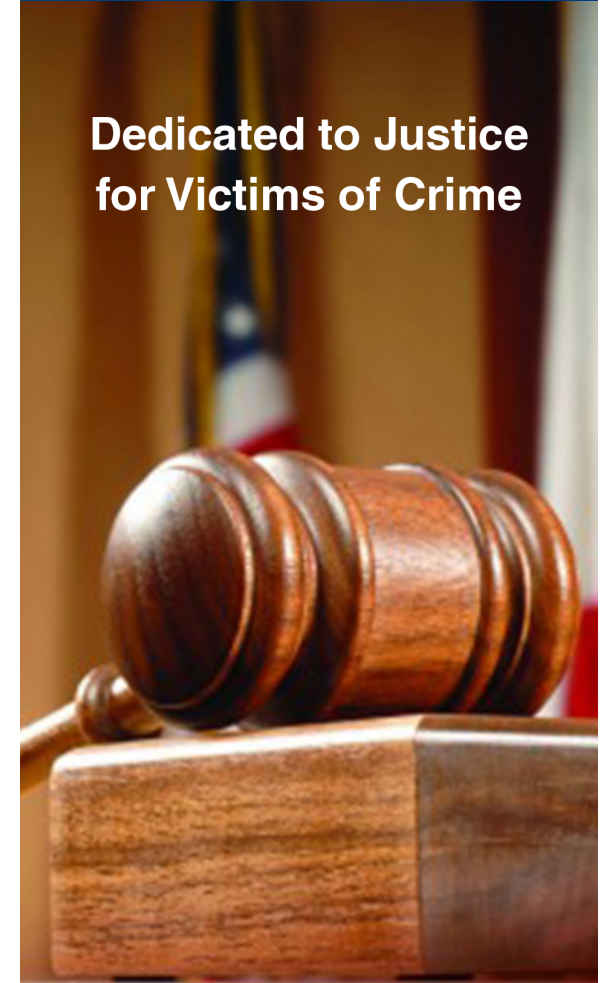
#### Emergency Phone Numbers

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\_\_\_\_\_  
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# ATF Victim/Witness Assistance Program

Dedicated to Justice  
for Victims of Crime



# Victim/Witness Assistance Program

## Introduction

*The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is responsible for investigating and reducing federal crimes involving firearms and explosives, acts of arson, and illegal trafficking of alcohol and tobacco products. Part of ATF's responsibilities includes providing information and assistance to victims of those crimes. Crime can have a devastating effect on victims and their families, and they may need help to cope with the impact of the violent crime. ATF Victim/Witness Specialists are available to assist you and to coordinate with other agencies in providing you with support, information, and resources that can effectively meet your needs.*



*A federal investigation can be both complex and lengthy. It may involve several agencies from federal and local law enforcement. This brochure provides information to help answer some of the questions and issues that often arise during an investigation. It describes your rights under federal law and the types of services that may be available to you. Please contact your ATF Victim/Witness Specialist if you have any questions.*



## Victim Rights and Restitution Act under Federal Law United States Code 42 § 10607:

ATF Victim/Witness Specialists and Agents will make their best effort to ensure you are afforded your rights as outlined in United States Code 42 §10607. During the investigative stage crime victims have several rights, among which is to be treated with fairness, dignity, respect and privacy.

Additional rights during the investigative stage include:

- ♦ The right to be informed of the place to receive emergency medical and social services, public and private programs that provide counseling, treatment, and other support to the victim;
- ♦ The right to receive reasonable protection from a suspected offender and persons acting in concert with or at the behest of the suspected offender;
- ♦ The right to know the status of the investigation of the crime to the extent it is appropriate and will not interfere with the investigation;
- ♦ The right to notification regarding the arrest of a suspected offender; and
- ♦ The right to have any property being held for evidentiary purposes be maintained in good condition and returned to the victim as soon as it is no longer needed for evidentiary purposes.

## Threats or Intimidation

Your safety is of utmost importance. If anyone threatens you, or you feel that you are being intimidated because of your cooperation with this investigation, or if you believe you are in imminent danger, contact your local law enforcement agency immediately. In addition, you should contact the ATF Case Agent and inform them of the situation. There are legal penalties for harassment and other threats; it is imperative that you report any incident as soon as possible.

## Support Services for Victims of Crime

All states have crime victim compensation programs that may help cover specific expenses resulting from violent crimes. Victim compensation is available for victims of both federal and state violent crimes. Your state program may pay for medical and mental health care costs, lost wages and funeral / burial expenses not covered by insurance or other benefits.

The ATF Victim/Witness Specialist may be able to provide additional assistance such as referrals to other types of programs and services: information for emergency housing, mental health counseling, support groups, and credit counseling services.

If the offender in your case is convicted or pleads guilty, the court may order the offender to make restitution payments which may help cover expenses and losses caused by your victimization.

## If an Arrest Is Made

As the investigative agency ATF will make every effort to notify you when a suspect is apprehended. If criminal charges are filed, you will be notified by the U.S. Attorney's Office of any court related case events. Each U.S. Attorney's Office has a Victim/Witness Specialist to provide you with further assistance through the judicial process.