

The Purpose...

The purpose of the Victim Witness Division is to.....

- Provide more consideration and personal attention to victims and witnesses.
- Sensitize criminal justice professionals, the media, and the community to the needs of victims of crime.
- Assure that victims and witnesses are informed of the progress of the case in which they are involved.
- Advocate for victims and their families by connecting them with local resources that will aid them in their recovery process.
- Provide an advocate to all victims at all stages of the criminal justice process.
- Provide information and advocacy during post sentencing hearings.
- Petition for and provide advocacy during Civil Protection Orders.
- Assist victims with applying for Victims of Crime Compensation.

Eight Ways We Can Help....

If you are a victim or witness of a crime in Fayette County, the following services are available to you through the Victim Witness Division...

1. 24 hour crisis response services through hospital, law enforcement and personal request.
2. Information regarding the status of a criminal case.
3. Explanation of and orientation to the criminal justice process.
4. Referral to local resources.
5. Assistance with applications for Victims of Crime Compensation and restitution.
6. Accompaniment by an advocate to all court proceedings.
7. Petitioning for Civil Protection Orders.
8. Notification and assistance with post sentencing hearings.

Victim Witness

Fayette County Prosecutor's Office
Victim Witness Division
133 South Main St.
Washington C.H., Ohio 43160
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"Fayette County Victim Witness Division serves all federal crime victims".

Victim Witness Division

JUVENILE COURT

**Fayette County Prosecuting Attorney,
Jess C. Weade
Victim Witness Division**

Fayette County
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133 South Main Street, Lower Level
Washington CH, Ohio 43160

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Explanations of Stages in Juvenile Court

Complaint

- Crime is alleged to be committed
- Investigation takes place by law enforcement
- If a crime is deemed to have been committed, a complaint is filed in the Juvenile Court

Initial Hearing

- First stage where juvenile enters his/her plea, either an admission or denial.
- If a “denial” plea is entered, the case is then set for a pretrial conference or an adjudicatory hearing.

Pretrial Conference

- Prior to this stage, an advocate will attempt to contact the victim regarding their victimization and relay pertinent information to the prosecutor.
- Attorneys discuss the matters with the Judge.
- Plea negotiations take place.

Witness Prep/Pretrial

- In preparation for an adjudicatory hearing, it may be necessary to meet or talk with the Assistant Prosecuting Attorney to discuss the facts of the case.

Adjudicatory Hearing/Trial

- If admission does not occur at the Initial Hearing or Pretrial Conference, the matter will be set for an adjudicatory hearing, also known as trial.
- Juveniles have constitutional rights including the right to an attorney and the right to subpoena witnesses. The state must prove the alleged delinquent is responsible beyond a reasonable doubt. However, all trials are to the court, not to a jury.

Disposition

- This is the sentencing stage at which point the victim has the opportunity, through a victim impact statement or at times in person, to appear before the Judge and express their opinions regarding the case.

Terminology/Definitions

- **Delinquent:** According to Ohio Law any child who violates any law or any ordinance, that would be a crime if committed by any adult.
- **Unruly:** 1. Any child who does not subject him/herself to the reasonable control of his/her parents, teachers, guardians, or custodian by reason of being wayward or habitually disobedient. 2. Any child who is a habitual truant from home or school. 3. Other reasons set forth in the Ohio Revised Code.
- **Adjudication:** The determination of the juvenile offender’s responsibility
- **Admit:** The equivalent to guilty in adult court
- **Deny:** The equivalent to not guilty in adult court
- **Felony:** Possible commitment to Department of youth Services for a minimum of 6 months to 1 year until the age of 21; possible probationary period to include court ordered restitution if appropriate.
- **Misdemeanor:** Possible probationary period to include court ordered conditions including restitution if appropriate, and possible commitment to the Juvenile Detention Center for a period of time.

What Should I know...

- Bring your subpoena.
- Tell the truth. Don’t guess or make up answers. If you don’t remember, say so. Honesty is the best policy.
- Dress neatly. Avoid chewing gum, laughing, or making light comments.
- Be polite and courteous.
- Be patient as there may be delays in your testifying before the Court.
- Be attentive during proceedings. Listen carefully to the questions asked. Do not rush or give answers without thinking. If you do not understand the question, ask that it be explained.
- **Think** before you speak.
- Speak clearly and loudly enough so the Judge can hear you. Do not nod your head for a yes or a no.
- Answer only the questions asked of you. Do not exaggerate, give your conclusions or opinions. Tell the facts that you have observed or know to be true.
- If you are asked if anyone has talked with you concerning the case, say yes, even if you talked only to the police officers and attorneys.
- Do not speak when others are speaking.
- Prior to testifying try to remember the scene and what happened. Do not try to memorize your testimony—just remember the facts.
- Both the Prosecutor and the Defense Attorney will be questioning you. Be courteous and do not argue with either attorney. **Never lose your temper.** Above all, **ALWAYS TELL THE TRUTH!**



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