

TIPS FOR TESTIFYING

The following suggestions may help you when you are ready to testify at trial as a witness for the prosecution:

- Review the facts of the case in your mind before you are called to testify. Don't be afraid to say that you are unable to remember something.
- Be courteous and respectful to the judge and the attorneys, even during cross examination.
- Dress neatly and appropriately.
- Be yourself.
- Listen carefully and answer only the question being asked. If you don't understand a question, ask for an explanation.
- An attorney may object to a question, so wait until the judge rules on the objection before you answer.
- Don't volunteer information, and don't give your personal opinions unless you are asked to do so.
- Don't guess, and never make up an answer if you are not sure. It is better to say "I don't know" or "I don't remember."
- Don't talk to other victims or witnesses about your testimony.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Victim/Witness Unit will keep your information confidential, but victims must keep in mind that anything you say that could affect the criminal case might be shared with the Assistant DA assigned.

THE MEDIA

You don't have to speak to the media about what happened to you if you don't want to. The Victim/Witness Unit staff can help shield you from the media if you wish and will support your decision, but we can't address them on your behalf.

GRIEVANCES

You have the right to file a complaint if your rights as a victim have been violated. If your complaint can't be resolved in a timely manner by the DA's Office, you may contact the Office of the Victim Advocate at the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

COURTHOUSE AND PARKING MAP



Free Parking, County lot, across from Norristown Post Office
If the free lot is full, you may park at these other lots, at your own expense:

- Main & Cherry Streets, public garage
- DeKalb & Lafayette Streets, SEPTA public garage, Norristown Transportation Center
- Barbadoes Street between Ann & Penn Streets, behind McDonalds

COURTHOUSE DIRECTORY

DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

610-278-3090
 4th Floor

Victim/Witness Unit (Adult)

610-278-3144
 4th Floor

Victim/Witness Unit (Juvenile)

610-278-6292
 One Montgomery Plaza, 7th Floor

Courtrooms

Plaza Level, Floors 1, 3, 5

Coffee Shop/Vending Machines

Plaza Level

Pay Phone

Plaza Level

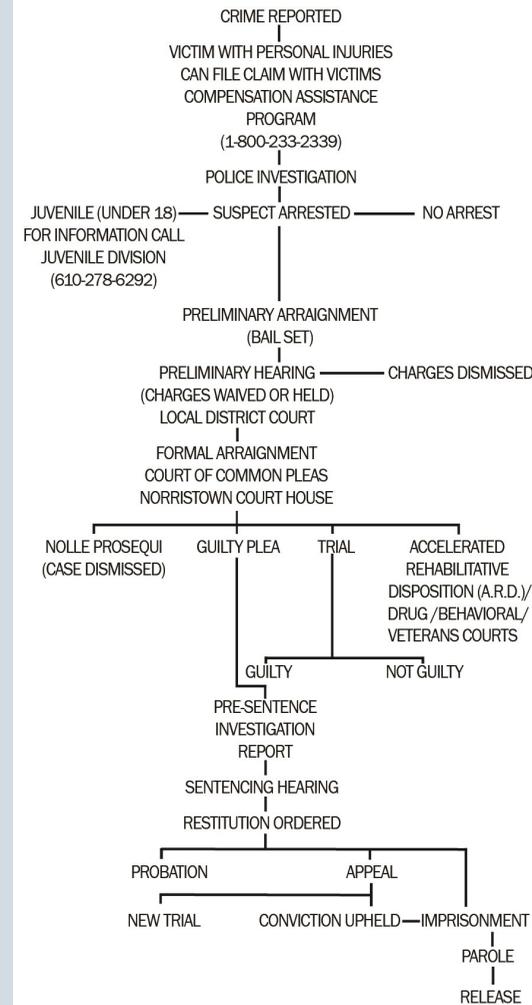
Restrooms

Plaza Level, Floors 1, 2, 3, 5

Child Care

610-292-4956
 One Montgomery Plaza, 1st Floor

What are the steps of a Criminal Case?



Important Case Information

Defendant's Name

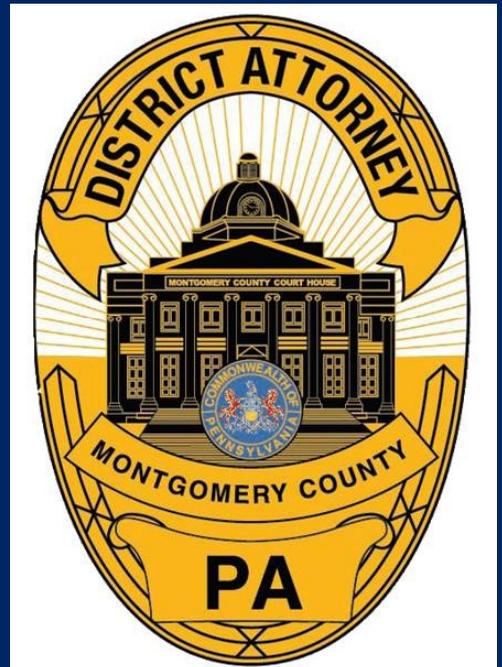
Docket Number

Assistant DA Assigned

Assistant DA's Phone Number

MONTGOMERY COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

VICTIM/WITNESS UNIT



Courthouse—4th Floor
P.O. Box 311
Norristown, PA 19404-0311

Phone: 610-278-3144
Fax: 610-278-3232

www.montcopa.org/da

Message from the District Attorney

As District Attorney, I am dedicated to seeking justice for victims by prosecuting those who commit crimes. The District Attorney's Office not only fairly and effectively enforces the law,



but we also help victims of crime, their families and witnesses during their involvement with the criminal justice system. Our Victim/Witness Unit is available to help you. This brochure outlines your rights and responsibilities as a victim as well as how our office can help. More information is available online at www.montcopa.org/da or by calling 610-278-3144 (adult division) or 610-278-6292 (juvenile division).


District Attorney

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CRIME VICTIMS

1. To provide a valid address and telephone number and to provide timely notice of any changes in the status of such information to police and the DA's Office.
2. To provide any other required information to all agencies responsible for providing information and notification to the victim.
3. To submit Restitution Forms that are truthful and honest and include copies of all bills, receipts and estimates.
4. To provide updated restitution information if the original amounts submitted to the DA's Office change.
5. To maintain a neat appearance, proper dress and appropriate demeanor respectful of the Court.
6. To **ALWAYS** tell the truth.

Crime Victims Have Rights!

BASIC BILL OF RIGHTS FOR VICTIMS IN PENNSYLVANIA Act 155 of 1992

The right to be told...

- about basic services available to you
- about certain court events, including information on bail, escape of offender, release of an offender
- about the details of the final disposition of a case

The right to receive...

- notice of the arrest of the offender
- information about restitution and assistance with compensation
- accompaniment to all criminal proceedings by a family member, a victim advocate or support person

The right to provide input...

- into the sentencing decision and to receive help in preparing an oral and or/ written victim impact statement decisions
- into post-sentencing decisions

For a more detailed list of your rights as a crime victim in Pennsylvania, please contact the District Attorney's Office Juvenile Division Victim/Witness Unit at 610-278-6292 or the Adult Division at 610-278-3144 or go online to www.montcopa.org/da (Click on "Victim/Witness Services") or www.pacrimevictims.com.

HOW THE VICTIM/WITNESS UNIT CAN HELP YOU

The Montgomery County Victim/Witness Unit was established to assist victims and witnesses of crime during their involvement with the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems. Our mission is to ensure that victims and witnesses are restored physically, emotionally and financially to the fullest extent possible; that criminal offenders are held accountable for their actions and that all Montgomery County citizens can live safely. We are committed to empowering victims to choose their own level of participation and to carrying out our mission with dignity, compassion and respect for every victim.

Services provided are...

- Advocacy
- Capital Case Notification
- Case Status
- Court Accompaniment
- Courtroom Orientation
- Enrollment in Inmate Status Notification Program
- Property Return
- Restitution
- Supportive Counseling
- Victim Compensation Assistance
- Victim Impact Statements
- Victim Rights Notification
- Victim/Witness Intimidation

HOW TO ENROLL TO BE NOTIFIED OF AN INMATE'S RELEASE FROM CUSTODY

The PA-SAVIN Program (Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification) can notify you by telephone and/or e-mail of any changes in the custody status of a county or state inmate.

- For a county inmate: call the Victim/Witness Unit at 610-278-3144 or enroll 24/7 by calling 866-9PA-SAVIN (866-972-7284) or go online to www.pacrimevictims.com and click on "Notifications."
- For a state inmate: call the Office of the the Victim Advocate at 800-332-4472 or 800-563-6399 or TDD 877-349-1064 or contact PA-SAVIN as mentioned above.

RECOVERING YOUR LOSSES

Restitution

As part of the sentence, the judge can order the offender to pay restitution to you, based on information you provide. If restitution is not ordered, you may want to talk to a private attorney about filing a civil suit.

Crime victims will be mailed a Restitution Form asking for detailed information about stolen or damaged property, medical, dental, counseling or medication bills, or funeral expenses you had as a result of the crime. There will also be information about writing an impact statement to the judge about how the crime has affected you and those around you. Complete the form and return it to the Victim/Witness Unit in a timely manner. If you have questions, contact the Restitution Coordinator in the Adult Division at 610-278-2928 or in the Juvenile Division at 610-630-2252, ext. 3024.

VICTIMS' COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

This program eases the financial impact of a crime on victims and their families. You may be eligible for financial help for various expenses: medical and counseling bills, lost wages, loss of support, relocation, funeral, crime scene cleanup and in some cases, stolen cash.

You can file a VCAP claim in several different ways...

- Contact the Adult or Juvenile Victim/Witness Unit in the District Attorney's Office as mentioned above under "Restitution."
- Contact an advocate at the appropriate community-based agency as referred to by the Victim/Witness Unit.
- File online at www.pacrimevictims.com.
- Contact VCAP directly at 800-233-2339 (in PA) or 717-783-5153 (outside PA).
- Once you have a claim number and a PIN, you can check the status of your claim on the website above.