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## Victims' rights - by country

You are considered to be the **victim of a crime** if you have suffered physical or material damage or emotional distress as a result of an incident deemed to be a crime under applicable national legislation. Family members of someone who has died as a result of a crime who have suffered damage as a result of that person's death are also considered victims of a crime.

As a victim of a crime, you have certain legal rights before, during and at the end of the criminal procedure.

The first two stages of the criminal procedure in Romania are: the criminal investigation and the trial. During the criminal investigation, the criminal investigation bodies, under the supervision of the public prosecutor, investigate the case, gathering evidence in order to find the offender. At the end of the criminal investigation, the police send the case to the public prosecutor's office, together with all the data and evidence collected in the file. After receiving the file, the case prosecutor examines the case and decides whether it is to proceed to the next phase, i.e. trial, or whether the file should be closed.

Once the file comes before the court, the panel of judges examines the facts and hears the persons involved in order to establish the guilt of the accused.

Once guilt has been established, the offender receives a sentence. If the court considers that the accused is not guilty, then he or she is released.

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## 1 - My rights as a victim of crime

### What information will I get from the authority after the crime occurred (e.g. police, public prosecutor) but before I even report the crime?

The judicial bodies and any other State institutions with which you interact will provide you with information on the victim support services within the Directorates General for Social Work and Child Protection (Direcții Generale de Asistență Socială și Protecție a Copilului – DGASPCs) and the NGOs providing such services that you can contact.

You will receive that information both orally and in writing, by means of a form which you must sign and which includes at least the address of the victim support service within the jurisdiction of the institution providing the information and a list of its responsibilities.

The first judicial body (police/public prosecutor) you go to or, where appropriate, the victim support services, at the time of first contact, will inform you of your rights and the support and protection services that you can receive.

You will receive information on:

the type of support you can receive and who can provide it, including basic information on access to medical assistance, psychological counselling and alternative accommodation;

the criminal investigation body with which you can file a complaint;

the right to legal assistance and the institution you can contact for that purpose;

the conditions and procedure for receiving free legal assistance;

your rights during criminal proceedings (including protective measures as a threatened witness);

the conditions and procedure for receiving financial compensation from the State;

the right to use the services of a mediator;

if you live in another EU Member State, information on how to file a criminal complaint or apply for financial compensation from the State in that Member State, and information on how you can be heard by the Romanian judicial authorities without being present in Romania.

The information will be provided to you in a language that you can understand. You will also receive a form with all this information, which you must sign. You may be accompanied by a person of your choice when you first contact the authorities.

If you file a complaint with the judicial body, you will receive a written acknowledgment of your report. The complaint may be filed in writing or orally. You can also ask another person to report the crime for you, but you need to provide that person with a written power of attorney. The written power of attorney, which must be signed by you, will be attached to the case file.

### I don't live in the EU country where the crime took place (EU and non-EU citizens). How are my rights protected?

If you are a foreigner and have been a victim of crime in Romania, you are entitled to all the rights of Romanian citizens who have been victims of crimes.

If you do not speak Romanian, you are entitled to an interpreter free of charge, who will assist you during your interaction with the authorities. This means that you will be able to file your complaint and receive the information you are entitled to at the time of reporting the crime in a language that you understand.

If you live in another Member State, you can file the criminal complaint or apply for financial compensation in that Member State. Furthermore, you can be heard by the Romanian judicial authorities without being present in Romania.

If you are a victim of human trafficking, you can receive accommodation in special shelters, where you will be protected. During the criminal proceedings, you will receive information about the proceedings in a language that you understand; you can also receive psychological counselling and medical assistance.

The Romanian authorities will do their best to help you return to your home country as soon as possible and will provide secure transport to the Romanian border.

If you are a foreigner, you can claim financial compensation from the State if you have been the victim of any of the following crimes: attempted murder and attempted aggravated murder, as set out in Articles 188 and 189 of the Criminal Code; bodily injury, as set out in Article 194 of the Criminal Code; intentional

crimes resulting in the victim's bodily injury, and domestic violence, as set out in Article 199 of the Criminal Code; rape, sexual intercourse with a minor or sexual assault, as set out in Articles 218 to 220 of the Criminal Code; human trafficking or child trafficking, as set out in Articles 210 and 211 of the Criminal Code, terrorism or any other intentional violent crime.

You are also entitled to free legal assistance if you have been a victim of attempted murder, attempted aggravated murder, bodily injury, an intentional crime resulting in bodily injury, rape, sexual assault, sexual intercourse with a minor or sexual corruption of minors. The spouse, the children and dependants of persons deceased as a result of murder, aggravated murder and intentional crimes resulting in the victim's death are also entitled to free legal assistance.

#### **If I report a crime, what information will I receive?**

When you report a crime, the police officer who takes your report will explain to you what will happen next. You will be informed of your rights and the services you can receive. The police are obliged to draw up a written report indicating what information they have provided to you.

You will receive information about:

your rights during the criminal proceedings;

the organisations you can approach for assistance and the services they provide;

how you can receive protection;

the conditions and the procedure for receiving financial compensation from the State;

the conditions and the procedure for receiving free legal representation;

the conditions and procedure for receiving free legal assistance;

the right to use the services of a mediator;

if the defendant is deprived of his/her liberty or receives a custodial sentence, your right to be informed about his/her release;

if you live in another Member State, information on how you can apply for financial compensation from the State in that Member State, and information on

how you can be heard by the Romanian judicial authorities without being present in Romania.

Subsequently, during the proceedings, you can receive information on the progress of the investigation and, if the prosecutor decides not to refer the case to court, a copy of that decision. In order to receive that information, you will need to submit a request to the police officer or the prosecutor handling your case, indicating a postal address in Romania or an e-mail or electronic messenger address where you can be contacted.

If the prosecutor decides to refer the case to court for trial, you will be summoned to court.

If you are to be heard in court, you will also be informed of your rights and obligations, as follows:

the right to be assisted by a lawyer or, if applicable, to receive free legal representation;

the right to use the services of a mediator in such cases as permitted by law;

the right to propose evidence to be submitted, to raise objections and make submissions in accordance with the law;

the right to be informed about the progress of the proceedings;

the right to file a preliminary complaint, where this is necessary (for certain types of crime, you will need to submit an application in the form of a preliminary complaint in order for the case against the offender to proceed). The judicial bodies will provide clarifications on this matter where required. By submitting a preliminary complaint, you are requesting the continuation of criminal proceedings against the offender. A preliminary complaint is different from the complaint you file with the police or the public prosecutor to report a crime that has been committed against you.

the right to become a civil party in the proceedings;

the obligation to report to the judicial bodies whenever you are summoned;

the obligation to notify any change of address;

the right to be informed about any release of the offender, where the offender is sentenced to prison or remanded in custody.

#### **Am I entitled to free interpreting or translation services (when I contact the police or other authorities, or during the investigation and trial)?**

Yes. You are entitled to translation and interpreting services throughout the criminal proceedings.

#### **How does the authority ensure that I understand and that I am understood (if I am a child; if I have a disability)?**

The judicial body may order that interviews of victims who require protection under the law be conducted via or in the presence of a psychologist or another person specialising in victim counselling.

Victims with speech or hearing impairments will be interviewed in the presence of persons who can communicate using sign language. In such cases, you may also communicate in writing.

#### **Victim support services**

In order to receive appropriate support and protection, victims will be assessed individually. Victims are assessed by victim support services or private providers of social services. Where appropriate, those services cooperate with public or private healthcare providers, with the victim's consent.

Support and protection services provided both to victims of crimes and to their family members may consist of:

information on the victim's rights;

psychological counselling, advice concerning the risks of secondary and repeat victimisation or of intimidation and retaliation;

advice relating to financial and practical issues arising from the crime;

social insertion/reinsertion services;

emotional and social support for social reintegration;

information and advice relating to the victim's role during criminal proceedings, including preparation for participation in the trial;

referral of the victim to other specialised services, where appropriate: social services, healthcare services, employment services, education services or other services of general interest provided under the law.

Support and protection services can be provided in:

day centres, which mainly provide information, counselling, emotional and social support for social reintegration, psychological counselling, legal counselling, financial advice, social insertion/reinsertion services, etc.;

residential centres, which provide appropriate interim accommodation for victims in need of a safe place due to an imminent risk of secondary and repeat victimisation, intimidation and retaliation.

Victims of domestic violence or human trafficking can be accommodated in residential reception centres where, for a limited period of time, they and the minors in their care receive family assistance, protection against the offender, medical care and care services, food, accommodation, psychological counselling and legal assistance free of charge.

#### **Who provides victim support?**

There is a victim support service within each General Directorate for Social Work and Child Protection (DGASPC).

Victim support can also be provided by private social service providers.

If you are a victim of domestic violence, you can contact the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (Agenția Națională pentru Egalitate de Șanse între Bărbați și Femei) and the Directorates General for Social Work and Child Protection (DGASPCs).

If you are under 18 years of age and have been a victim of crime, you can contact the National Authority for the Protection of Children's Rights and Adoption (Autoritatea Națională pentru Protecția Drepturilor Copilului și Adopție - ANPDCA) and the Directorates General for Social Work and Child Protection (DGASPCs).

If you have been a victim of human trafficking, you can contact the National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons (Agenția Națională împotriva Traficului de Persoane - ANITP) within the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Ministerul Afacerilor Interne - MAI).

The Ministry of Justice is the Romanian assisting authority responsible for the financial compensation procedure for victims of intentional violent crimes committed in the territory of a Member State, other than that where the victim legally resides.

There are also a number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which provide various types of victim support. The institution you contact will direct you to the relevant NGO.

#### **Will the police automatically refer me to victim support?**

Yes, the judicial bodies must refer you to such services.

#### **How is my privacy protected?**

Information, support and protection are provided to victims of crime in a manner that ensures confidentiality of their personal data and of any information on the victim's private life and the difficulty the victim is facing. Support services are provided on an anonymous basis and do not require the conclusion of a contract with the beneficiaries.

Data concerning victims of crimes are stored for one year. They may be used for victim support and protection activities or supplied to judicial bodies at their request. The stored data will be deleted when the one-year period has expired.

If you receive victim support and protection, your identification data will be kept throughout the period during which such measures apply and for three months after that period has ended.

The location of accommodation centres for victims of domestic violence and human trafficking is secret.

Both during the criminal investigation and during the court proceedings, if the judicial bodies deem that your privacy or dignity may be affected because of any information you provide or for any other reason, they may take a number of measures, on their own initiative or at your request, to protect your confidentiality and privacy, such as:

protecting your identity details;

interviewing/hearing you via audio-visual means, with your voice and image being distorted, without you needing to be present, where the other measures do not suffice;

keeping the court session private throughout your interview.

Moreover, during the proceedings, the court may prohibit the publication of any texts, drawings, photographs or images that could reveal your identity.

The court may also declare the court session private if a public hearing could affect your dignity or privacy.

#### **Do I have to report a crime before I can access victim support?**

You do not need to file a complaint with the criminal investigation bodies in order to have access to information, support and protection provided to victims of crime.

#### **Personal protection if I'm in danger**

##### **What types of protection are available?**

Both during the criminal investigation and during the court proceedings, you are entitled to protective measures, when the judicial bodies deem that you may be in danger.

It is very important for you to know that, if the judicial bodies deem that you may be in danger because of any information you provide or for any other reason, they may take, either at your request or on their own initiative, certain measures to ensure your protection, such as:

providing surveillance or security at your home or temporary housing;

providing escort and protection to you or to the members of your family during travels;

protecting your identity details (personal data may be omitted from the file in order to protect your identity by keeping it secret);

interviewing/hearing you via audio-visual means, with your voice and image being distorted, without you needing to be present, where the other measures do not suffice (in this way, you do not have to appear before the police officer, the prosecutor or the judge and you will not be in the same place as the offender);

keeping the court session private throughout your interview.

Moreover, during the proceedings, the court may prohibit the publication of any texts, drawings, photographs or images that could reveal your identity.

Furthermore, if you are a witness in the criminal proceedings or, even where you are not involved in the case, you provide information which helps the judicial bodies to solve cases related to serious crimes or to prevent significant damages from occurring, you can ask the police officer or the prosecutor who conducts the investigation to place you under the witness protection programme. This programme includes a number of measures such as:

secret identity, including participation in hearings with your voice or image being distorted;

police protection of your home and police escort when you are invited to report to the criminal investigation bodies;

relocation;

change of identity, including a change in appearance, if required.

If you enter the witness protection programme, you will be able to receive additional assistance such as:

reinsertion in a different social environment;

acquiring new professional qualifications;

a new job;

financial support until you find a new job.

If necessary, your first-degree relatives (such as your children or parents) and your spouse may enter the witness protection programme as well.

If you have not entered the witness protection programme during the criminal investigation, you may apply to the court to be included.

Additional protection is available, depending on the type of crime:

If you are a victim of domestic violence, you can ask the police to remove the offender immediately from your shared home by means of a temporary protection order, which will remain in force until the court has issued a protection order. Alternatively, as a victim, you can be accommodated in a centre for victims of domestic violence. Such accommodation is available only in urgent cases or with the approval of the centre's management. Once admitted to the centre you can receive accommodation, food, medical care, psychological counselling and legal assistance free of charge.

If you are a victim of human trafficking, you can be accommodated in a centre for victims' protection. In accordance with the law, accommodation is available for a period of maximum 90 days, but the court may extend your stay until the end of the proceedings. Court sessions in cases concerning child trafficking

are private. Furthermore, in such cases, minors under 14 years of age will be heard in the presence of a psychologist and a representative of the General Directorate for Social Work and Child Protection.

If you believe you are in danger, you should inform the police officer, the prosecutor or the judge and provide as much information as possible.

The measures set out above are available both at the criminal investigation stage and during the court proceedings.

#### **Who can offer me protection?**

You will be protected by the Romanian Police.

#### **Will someone assess my case to see if I am at risk of further harm by the offender?**

In order to avoid secondary victimisation, you will be assessed as soon as possible after your identification, so that the number of statements and medical /psychological/social assessments is kept to a minimum.

Victim support departments/providers of victim support services will offer you advice on the risks of intimidation and retaliation. In order to avoid the risk of intimidation and retaliation, you can be temporarily accommodated in residential centres.

If you are still in danger after the criminal trial has ended, the judicial bodies will consider whether you should be included in a witness protection programme, unless you are already part of such a programme.

If you have been a victim of human trafficking, violence in close relationships, organised crime, terrorism or other categories of crime, you will be deemed a vulnerable victim and will receive the protection provided for by law for threatened or vulnerable witnesses.

#### **Will someone assess my case to see if I am at risk of further harm by the criminal justice system (during investigation and trial)?**

Yes, your case can be assessed. For instance, if you have been a victim of certain categories of crime (domestic violence, rape, sexual assault etc.), you will be heard only by a person of the same gender, should you so request.

A second interview of the victim will take place only if this is strictly necessary for the purpose of the criminal proceedings, so as to avoid further harm.

To avoid secondary victimisation caused by repeated interrogation of the victim by the judicial bodies, the laws on criminal procedure also require that an injured party who has reported a crime should be heard immediately or, when this is not possible, after they have submitted the complaint, without undue delay.

Victims of crimes are offered separate waiting rooms in court.

#### **What protection is available for very vulnerable victims?**

If you are a vulnerable victim, you may benefit from the protective measures set out above in the answers relating to witness protection.

#### **I am a minor – do I have special rights?**

If you are a child and have been a victim of exploitation, violence, abuse, negligence, maltreatment or any other crime, any person, including you, can report the crime to the police.

Minors are considered vulnerable victims from the beginning, and the authorities will inform you about the protective measures you can receive.

Child victims of violence will be assessed and provided support and protection under the law by the specialised departments of the Directorates General for Social Work and Child Protection that are responsible for intervention in cases of abuse, negligence, trafficking, migration and repatriation.

Minors can receive assistance from the National Authority for the Protection of Children's Rights and Adoption.

An abused or neglected child or a child who has experienced any form of violence may be temporarily placed with another family, with a foster parent or in a special centre, as an emergency measure.

If you are called to appear before the criminal investigation bodies and you are under 14 years of age, you must be accompanied by your parents or guardian. If your parents or guardians are also involved in the criminal proceedings or may have an interest in influencing your statement, you will be interviewed in the presence of a relative or another person appointed by the police officer/prosecutor/judge.

Moreover, the judicial bodies may decide that a psychologist should attend to help you during the interviews. You can ask the judicial bodies to help you with this.

The interview must be recorded. If that is not possible, it must be specified in your statement, giving the reasons.

You can be heard by the same person in specially designed/adapted rooms, if possible.

In the investigation of certain categories of crime, interviews may be conducted by a person of the same gender as the victim. You may also be accompanied by a person of your choice.

You are entitled to a legal representative throughout the proceedings. If you have no legal counsel, the court will assist you in finding one. If your family cannot afford to pay for the counsel's services, you are entitled to free legal assistance.

In cases concerning human trafficking crimes, minors under 14 years of age will be heard in the presence of at least one of their parents or another legal representative. Furthermore, a psychologist and a representative of the General Directorate for Social Work and Child Protection must also be summoned.

#### **My family member died because of the crime – what are my rights?**

In this case, you are a victim of crime and are entitled to all the support and protection services set out above, including information, psychological counselling, legal assistance, referral to healthcare services, social insertion/reinsertion services etc.

The spouse, the children and dependants of a person deceased as a result of murder and aggravated murder as set out in Articles 188 and 189 of the Criminal Code, as well as of intentional crimes resulting in the victim's death are entitled to free legal assistance and financial compensation from the State.

Free legal assistance is available also for other categories of crime, if the victim's monthly income per family member is no higher than the gross national minimum basic salary determined for the year when the application for free legal assistance is submitted.

#### **My family member was a victim of crime – what are my rights?**

Please see above.

#### **Can I access mediation services? What are the conditions? Will I be safe during mediation?**

Mediation is possible in the case of crimes that are considered less serious under criminal law. The procedure can be applied only if both you and the offender agree to participate. During the mediation procedure you will be invited to a series of meetings with the offender to see whether reconciliation is possible. A person called a mediator will facilitate the meetings. If at the end of the procedure you have reached an agreement with the offender, you can withdraw your complaint and the case will be closed. If the procedure has not been successful, the criminal proceedings will continue as if no mediation has occurred.

#### **Where can I find the law stating my rights?**

Law No 135/2010 on the Code of Criminal Procedure, as amended (Legea nr. 135/2010 privind Codul de procedură penală)

Law No 678/2001 on preventing and combating human trafficking, as amended (Legea nr. 678/2001 privind prevenirea și combaterea traficului de persoane)

Government Decision No 1216/2001 approving the National Action Plan for combating human trafficking (Hotărârea de Guvern nr. 1216/2001 privind aprobarea Planului național de acțiune pentru combaterea traficului de ființe umane)

Law No 211/2004 on certain measures to ensure the protection of victims of crime, as amended (Legea 211/2004 privind unele măsuri pentru asigurarea protecției victimelor infracțiunilor)

Government Decision No 1238/10 October 2007 approving the national specific standards for specialised assistance services to victims of human trafficking (Hotărârea Guvernului nr. 1238 din 10 octombrie 2007 pentru aprobarea Standardelor naționale specifice pentru serviciile specializate de asistență a victimelor traficului de persoane)

Law No 217/2003 on preventing and combating domestic violence, as amended (Legea 217/2003 pentru prevenirea și combaterea violenței în familie)

Law No 272/2004 on the protection and promotion of children's rights, as amended (Legea 272/2004 privind protecția și promovarea drepturilor copilului)

Law No 682/2002 on witness protection, as amended (Legea 682/2002 privind protecția martorilor)

Law No 192/2006 on mediation and the organisation of the profession of mediator, as amended (Legea 192/2006 privind medierea și organizarea profesiei de mediator)

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## **2 - Reporting a crime and my rights during the investigation or trial**

### **How do I report a crime?**

If you have been a victim of crime, you can report it to the police (or the public prosecutor) orally or in writing. You can also ask another person to report the crime for you, but you need to provide that person with a written power of attorney. The written and signed power of attorney will be attached to the case file. The crime may be reported by one spouse on behalf of the other spouse or by an adult child on behalf of parents. If a child that is still a minor reports a crime, the report may be made by a representative of the child or with the consent of such a representative.

If you choose to report the crime orally, you have to go to a police station. The police officer accepting your report will write it down in a record and will ask you to sign it. Written reports must also be signed.

Your report has to include your name, occupation, home address and a detailed description of what happened. If you know who the offender is, you have to provide all the information you have about him/her, as well as any evidence related to the incident. During the investigation of the crime, you can also give additional information in the case.

If you do not speak or do not understand Romanian, you can file the report in a language you understand and the judicial body will have it translated. In this case, you may ask that any summons you receive should be issued in a language you understand.

If you are a victim of domestic violence, you can ask for a provisional protection order to be issued by the police or ask the competent court to issue a protection order. This means you have to fill in a standard application, which is submitted to the district court (*judecătoria*) with jurisdiction over your place of residence. The application can be submitted in person or, if you agree, by a person from social services dealing with violence in the family, or by a public prosecutor or police officer.

### **How do I find out what's happening with the case?**

Following your report, the police bodies will forward the case to the public prosecutor, where it will be assigned a sole number.

Once you report the crime, you can check the progress of your case by making a written request to this end, while indicating an address in Romania or an e-mail or electronic messenger address where the authorities should send the information.

If the prosecutor decides to bring the case to court, you are entitled to consult the file at the premises of the court during court proceedings. In addition, you will be called to appear before the court.

### **Am I entitled to legal aid (during the investigation or trial)? What are the conditions?**

If you are an injured party, you are entitled to receive legal assistance or to be represented.

a) Throughout the criminal proceedings, you are entitled to be assisted by a legal counsel of your choice paid by you. If the offender is convicted, you will be able to recover the expenses incurred for your legal counsel from the offender.

b) If you so wish, you may be represented throughout the criminal proceedings, unless your presence is compulsory or the prosecutor, the judge or the court deems it necessary, as applicable (e.g. for hearing purposes).

c) In certain cases, legal assistance during criminal proceedings may be provided free of charge:

if the prosecutor or the judge deems that you are not able to take care of your own defence and you have no paid legal counsel;

if you are a minor and have not yet acquired full legal capacity (by way of marriage or judicial decision);

if requested, if you have been the victim of any of the following crimes: attempted murder and attempted aggravated murder, bodily injury, intentional crimes resulting in the victim's bodily injury (the Criminal Code defines the meaning of bodily injury), rape, sexual assault, sexual intercourse with a minor and sexual corruption of minors;

if requested, if you are the spouse, parent or another person dependant on the victim who has died as a result of murder, aggravated murder or of another intentional crime;

if requested, if you are the victim of crimes other than the aforementioned and if your monthly income determined per family member is no higher than the gross minimum national wage. The application for free legal assistance should be filed with the tribunal under whose jurisdiction you are residing.

In such cases, free legal assistance is available only if you have reported the crime with the police or the public prosecutor within 60 days from the occurrence of the crime, or, if applicable, within 60 days of the date on which you became aware of the crime. If you were unable to report the crime, the 60 days runs from date marking the end of the circumstances that prevented you reporting it.

If you wish to receive free legal assistance, you need to lodge an application with the prosecutor or the court, as applicable, which will take the required actions. Free legal assistance is available to you until the end of the criminal proceedings.

### **Can I claim expenses (for taking part in the investigation/trial)? What are the conditions?**

You can claim reimbursement of your legal expenses. The court will decide what part of your expenses has to be reimbursed and by whom.

If you participate as an injured party or as a civil party in the proceedings (if your civil action is allowed) and the defendant is found guilty (even if, for certain reasons, he/she is not convicted to serve a sentence), he/she will be ordered to pay your legal expenses.

### **Can I appeal if my case is closed before going to court?**

If the public prosecutor decides to close the case without bringing it to court, you can appeal against his/her decision within 20 days of receiving a copy of such decision. Your appeal has to be submitted to the superior prosecutor.

If the superior prosecutor dismisses your appeal, you may appeal against the superior prosecutor's decision before the preliminary chamber judge of the court of jurisdiction.

### **Can I be involved in the trial?**

You can be involved in the criminal proceedings as follows:

### **As a victim (injured party)**

If you have suffered an injury caused by a crime, you may participate in the proceedings as a victim and you are entitled to a number of procedural rights, as detailed below.

### **As a witness**

If you do not wish to participate in the criminal proceedings as an injured party, you should inform the judicial body handling your case, which, if so deemed necessary, may still call you to be heard as a witness. If you are called to be heard as witness, you must be present and declare everything you know about the incident.

### **As a civil party**

If you wish to claim compensation for the damages caused by the crime, you have to file a civil claim, thus becoming a civil party in the criminal proceedings. In general, court hearings are open to the public and you can attend the hearings irrespective of your role in the proceedings. However, the court may decide to hold private hearings when there are sufficient reasons for this decision. In this case, you will be able to attend only if you are an injured party or a civil party.

Your presence in the courtroom is mandatory only when you are called for an interview (e.g. as a witness).

### **What is my official role in the justice system? For example, am I or can I choose to be a: victim, witness, civil party or private prosecutor?**

If you have been a victim of crime, you may have one of the following roles in the justice system:

#### **Victim (injured party)**

If you have suffered an injury caused by a crime, you may participate in the proceedings as a victim and you are entitled to a number of procedural rights, as detailed below.

#### **Civil party**

If you wish to claim compensation for the damages caused by the crime, you may file a civil claim, thus becoming a civil party in the criminal proceedings.

#### **Witness**

If you do not wish to participate in the criminal proceedings as an injured party, you should inform the judicial body handling your case, which, if so deemed necessary, may still call you to be heard as a witness. In this case, you will be called for an interview and you will be asked to provide detailed information on the incident. Your presence during the interview is compulsory whenever you are called for this purpose.

### **What are my rights and obligations in this role?**

If you participate in the criminal proceedings as *injured party/civil party*, you have a number of procedural rights:

#### **During the criminal investigation:**

you are entitled to claim compensation for the damages caused by the crime. For this purpose, you need to become a civil party in the criminal proceedings or to file a separate civil action. You can become a civil party at any time of the criminal investigation.

In order to become a civil party in the proceedings, you must either request it orally before the police officer or the prosecutor or submit a written application to the police officer or the prosecutor handling the case. The application should specify what compensation you claim, the reasons and the related evidence. During the first interview, the prosecutor or the police officer will inform you that you can become a civil party in the proceedings.

you are entitled to claim reimbursement of the legal expenses. The court will decide what part of your expenses has to be reimbursed and by whom.

If you participate as an injured party or as a civil party in the proceedings (if your civil action is allowed) and the defendant is found guilty (even if, for certain reasons, he/she is not convicted to serve a sentence), he/she will be ordered to pay your legal expenses.

you are entitled to receive information on the progress of the investigation, as well as, if the prosecutor decides not to refer the case to court, a copy of such decision. For this, you will need to submit a request to the police officer or the prosecutor handling the case and to indicate an address in Romania, an e-mail or electronic messenger address to receive the information. If the prosecutor decides to refer the case to court for trial, you will be summoned to court.

you are entitled to interpreting and translation services, if you do not speak or understand Romanian. Throughout the criminal proceedings, you will be provided with an interpreter free of charge, if you do not speak Romanian.

throughout the criminal proceedings, you are entitled to be assisted by a lawyer. In specific cases, (e.g. when the prosecutor deems that you are not able to take care of your own defence or you are a minor and have not yet acquired full legal capacity, when you are a victim of certain crimes, when your income is below a certain limit etc. - please see the answer to the previous question), you are entitled to free legal assistance.

you are entitled to be represented throughout the criminal proceedings, unless your presence is compulsory or the prosecutor, the judge or the court deems it necessary, as applicable (e.g. for hearing purposes).

you or your counsel can consult the file. However, the consultation of your file will be subject to specific rules, which will be communicated by the prosecutor's office registry.

you are entitled to be called for an interview by the police officer or the prosecutor handling the case. During the interview, you may ask to be accompanied both by your legal representative, if any, and by a person of your choice whose presence during the interview you may deem helpful. The judicial body can dismiss your request only on reasonable grounds.

When you report a crime that has been committed against you, the judicial body must hear you right away. If this is not possible, you should be heard as soon as possible after reporting the crime.

If you are a victim of domestic violence, rape or other types of sexual assault, ill-treatment of minors, harassment, sexual harassment, as well as in any other cases where you feel the need to protect your privacy, you may ask to be heard by a person of the same sex as you. The judicial body can dismiss your request only on reasonable grounds.

you are entitled to submit evidence and any other claims related to the settlement of the case. You can do this during your interview or in a separate application submitted to the judicial body handling your case.

If the offender has been remanded in custody and then released, you are entitled to be informed of his/her release. During your first interview, you will be informed of this right and will be asked whether you wish to be informed of the offender's release.

You can appeal against the acts undertaken in relation to your case. The appeal should be submitted to the case prosecutor, where the act was undertaken by a police officer, or to the superior prosecutor, where the act was undertaken by your case prosecutor.

If you appeal against the prosecutor's decision to close the criminal case and your appeal is dismissed, you can appeal against this decision before the preliminary chamber judge.

#### **During the trial:**

you are entitled to claim compensation for the damages caused by the crime. For this purpose, you need to become a civil party in the criminal proceedings or to file a separate civil action.

If you have participated in the criminal investigation as a civil party, you may retain the same status during trial.

If you have not participated in the criminal investigation as a civil party, you may still become a civil party in the trial before the commencement of the inquiry.

When you are called for the first court hearing, you will be informed of this.

You may request to become a civil party in the trial orally before the court or submit a written application to this effect. The application should specify what compensation you claim, the reasons and the related evidence.

you are entitled to claim reimbursement of the legal expenses. The court will decide what part of your expenses has to be reimbursed and by whom.

If you participate as an injured party or as a civil party in the proceedings (if your civil action is allowed) and the defendant is found guilty (even if, for certain reasons, he/she is not convicted to serve a sentence), he/she will be ordered to pay your legal expenses.

you are entitled to interpreting and translation services, if you do not speak or understand Romanian. Throughout the criminal proceedings, you will be provided with an interpreter free of charge, if you do not speak Romanian.

throughout the criminal proceedings, you are entitled to be assisted by a lawyer. In specific cases, (e.g. when the prosecutor deems that you are not able to take care of your own defence or you are a minor and have not yet acquired full legal capacity, when you are a victim of certain crimes, when your income is below a certain limit etc. - please see the answer to the previous question), you are entitled to free legal assistance.

you are entitled to be represented throughout the criminal proceedings, unless your presence is compulsory or the prosecutor, the judge or the court deems it necessary, as applicable (e.g. for hearing purposes).

you or your counsel can consult the file. However, the consultation of your file will be subject to specific rules, which will be communicated by the court's registry.

you are entitled to be heard during court proceedings. The court will call you to appear at the hearing and you will be asked questions related to the crime. You will be also asked to recount everything you remember about the incident.

you are entitled to ask questions to the defendant, witnesses and experts when they are heard.

you are entitled to make objections and conclusions on criminal matters in the case.

you are entitled to submit evidence and any other claims related to the settlement of the case.

If the offender has been remanded in custody or convicted to serve a penalty, you are entitled to be informed of his/her release. If you have not requested to be informed of the offender's release at your first interview during the criminal investigation when you were informed of this right, you may still request it during the trial either orally before the court or in writing.

When a ruling is available, it will be notified to you and you are entitled to appeal against it.

An injured party or a civil party or a witness in the criminal proceedings also has a number of obligations arising from the need for the judicial bodies to find out the truth in the case and for the offender to be held liable:

the obligation to appear before the police officer, the prosecutor or the judge whenever you are called to make statements.

the obligation to declare everything you know in relation to the incident; you should be aware that if you commit misrepresentation before the judicial bodies, you can be accused of and convicted for perjury. As the spouse or close relative of the suspect/defendant, you can decline to make statements. You may also decline to answer if the questions are related to professional secrecy that you are required to keep, where that is legally binding on judicial bodies

the obligation to inform the judicial bodies about any change of address so that they can call you and send you any future notices on the proceedings.

you must display civil behaviour and show respect for the solemnity of the hearing. Otherwise, the court may order you to be removed from the courtroom.

Both during the criminal investigation and during court proceedings, you are entitled to protective measures if the judicial bodies deem that you might be in danger or if you are the victim of certain crimes that might affect your privacy or dignity.

It is highly important for you to know that, if the judicial bodies deem that you might be in danger or that your privacy or dignity might be affected due to the information you provide or due to other causes, they may take, either if you request it or on their own initiative (*ex officio*), certain measures to ensure your protection, such as:

providing surveillance or security to your home or temporary housing;

providing escort and protection to you or to the members of your family during travels;

protecting your identity details;

hearing you via audio-visual means, with your voice and image being distorted, without there being a requirement for your presence, where the other measures do not suffice;

keeping the court session private throughout your interview;

When so deemed necessary for your protection during the court proceedings, the judge may decide that the hearing should be private. You may also ask the judge to declare the hearing private.

Moreover, during court proceedings, the court may forbid any publication of texts, drawings, pictures or images that might reveal your identity.

If you are a *witness*, you are also entitled to other special means of witness protection. If you consider yourself in danger, you should inform the police officer, the prosecutor or the judge and provide as much information as possible.

#### **Can I make a statement during the trial or give evidence? What are the conditions?**

Yes. If you have chosen to participate in the trial, both the prosecutor/ police officer and the judge may hear you as an injured party/ as a civil party.

The prosecutor or the police officer will call you to be present at the premises of the police/ prosecutor's office in order to be interviewed and, during the trial, you will be called to be heard in the proceedings.

#### **What information will I receive during the trial?**

During the criminal investigation, you can receive information on the progress of the case and a copy detailing the prosecutor's decision related to the advisability of referring the case to court. For this, you will need to submit a request to the police officer or the prosecutor handling the case and to indicate an address in Romania, an e-mail or electronic messenger address to receive the information.

During the trial, you will be called at the first hearing and informed that you can become a civil party in the proceedings. You will receive no further calls for the next hearings. By attending court hearings or consulting the file, you will be informed about the progress of the case and the next hearing dates.

However, you will be called whenever you must be interviewed.

Once available, a copy of the ruling will be delivered to you.

If you do not understand Romanian, the ruling minutes (a report of the court's judgement without extensive reasoning) will be delivered to you in a language you understand. The reasoning will be provided to you in Romanian and you may resort to the available interpreting services in order to have it translated.

#### **Will I be able to access court files?**

Yes, you or your counsel can consult the file. In order to do this, you need to go to the registry of the prosecutor's office or of the court which keeps your file and submit an application in this respect.

However, the consultation of your file will be subject to specific rules, which will be communicated by the registry.

You are entitled to receive information on the conditions and the procedure governing the admission to the witness protection programme.

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### **3 - My rights after trial**

#### **Can I appeal against the ruling?**

The trial concludes with a court decision (sentence), which may result in: the conviction or acquittal of the defendant, the waiver or postponement of sentencing or the termination of the criminal proceedings. The decision will be announced during a public court hearing. If you have participated in the trial as a victim and/or civil party, you will receive a copy of the court's decision by post.

If you are not satisfied with the court decision, you can appeal against it. You can file an appeal only if you have participated in the trial as a victim or civil party.

You can also appeal as a witness, but only in relation to the reimbursement of legal expenses and indemnities you are entitled to.

If you are a victim or civil party, the deadline for submitting the appeal is 10 days after receiving a copy of the decision minutes.

If you have acted as a witness, you can file an appeal right after a decision on legal expenses and indemnities has been handed down, but no later than 10 days from the ruling that settled the case or from the notification of the ruling on legal expenses or indemnities, as applicable.

The appeal has to be made in writing and signed. Appeals are submitted to the same court whose decision you are appealing against.

After receiving the appeal, the court will forward it to the higher court competent to deal with it. The copy of the court's decision will include information about when and where you can file your appeal.

#### **What are my rights after sentencing?**

The sentence will enter into force after all the opportunities for appeal have been exhausted. After the sentence enters into force, your role in the proceedings is over. If you have been placed under a special witness protection programme during the proceedings, you can continue to benefit from it until the court decides that you are no longer in danger.

#### **Am I entitled to support or protection after the trial? For how long?**

Some support measures are granted during the trial or for a fixed period of time, while others are granted on the basis of the victim's specific needs.

Free legal assistance for victims of crime is granted for the full duration of the trial.

If you are a victim of human trafficking you can benefit from a recovery and reflection period of up to 90 days, during which you have the right to psychological counselling, medical and social assistance, medicine, food and, on request, accommodation in protected centres or homes and you will be informed of the applicable judicial and administrative procedures.

If you are a foreigner for whom there are serious grounds for believing you have been the victim of human trafficking, you also benefit from a period of recovery and reflection of up to 90 days, during which you are granted, at the request of a judicial body, permission to remain in the territory of Romania and may be accommodated in dedicated facilities. You may also be granted a temporary permit to reside in Romanian territory during or after the recovery period. In the case of victims of domestic violence, the protection order is issued for a maximum duration of 6 months.

In the case of a witness included in a witness protection programme, the protection measure may also continue after the trial has finished, but when it does finish the scheme will be reviewed in order to adapt it to the new situation. The term of such protection will be decided by the court.

#### **What information will I be given if the offender is sentenced?**

If the offender is sentenced, you can have access to the following categories of information: the type and the duration of the penalty (the sentence is handed down in public session and will be delivered to you subsequently), information in case of escape, release on any terms, provided that you have requested such information.

#### **Will I be told if the offender is released (including early or conditional release) or escapes from prison?**

Yes, you will be informed of the offender's release or escape from prison, if you have requested so when asked by the judicial bodies. Please see the answer above.

#### **Will I be involved in release or parole decisions? For example, can I make a statement or lodge an appeal?**

Your role in the criminal proceedings will be over when the court's decision (convicting or acquitting the defendant, waiving or postponing penalty enforcement or terminating criminal proceedings) becomes final.

You will not be involved in the offender's release or conditional release procedure.

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### **4 - Compensation**

#### **What is the process for claiming damages from the offender? (e.g. court case, civil claim, adhesion procedure)**

You can claim damages from the offender by becoming a civil party in the criminal proceedings. You should take this course of action before the commencement of the preparatory inquiry. The judicial bodies must inform you of this right. You may bring a civil action in the criminal proceedings either orally or in writing. However, you must specify the damages claimed, the reasons and the evidence underlying your claim.

This claim may be lodged either with the prosecutor's office or with the court that will deal with the substance of the case.

The court sentence will also include the damages ordered by the court against the offender.

If you are not a civil party in the criminal proceedings, you may still lodge a separate action with the civil court in order to claim damages.

#### **The court ordered the offender to pay me damages/compensation. How do I make sure the offender pays?**

As long as there is a judgement in place ordering the offender to pay damages, he/she must do so without the need for you to take any further action. If the offender fails to pay, you may seek the enforcement of the judgement.

In order to do this, you must submit the judgement awarding you compensation to a bailiff. The bailiff will act for the enforcement of the court decision and will tell you what to do next.

#### **If the offender does not pay, can the state pay me an advance? Under what conditions?**

The state can pay you compensation under certain conditions.

If the offender is insolvent or is missing, the state can pay you compensation, provided that you lodge an application for financial compensation. You should lodge the application within one year. The date on which the term begins to run depends on the solution ordered by the judicial bodies.

If the offender is unknown, you should lodge the application for financial compensation within 3 years from the perpetration of the offence, unless you have obtained full compensation from an insurer.



You may submit an application for an advance payment of the financial compensation. In order to do this, you should first submit the application for financial compensation as mentioned above. The advance payment may be requested in the application for financial compensation or subsequently within 30 days. You are entitled to an advance payment provided that you are in a precarious financial position.

If your application for damages/compensation is dismissed, you must refund the advance money received. The application for financial compensation should be lodged with the tribunal under whose jurisdiction you reside.

#### **Am I entitled to compensation from the state?**

Yes. Please see the answer above.

#### **Am I entitled to compensation if the offender is not convicted?**

If the criminal court does not award relief in respect of the civil claim, you may lodge a separate action with the civil court in order to claim damages.

If the criminal court rules that there is no offence or that it has not been committed by the person against whom you have lodged the complaint, you will not be entitled to damages/compensation either in criminal court or in a separate civil action, since the ruling of the criminal court acquires the force of *res judicata* before the civil court.

If you are not a civil party in the criminal proceedings, you may lodge a separate action in civil court during the criminal trial or even when it is over, subject to the general limitation periods.

#### **Am I entitled to an emergency payment while I wait for the decision on my compensation claim?**

Yes, under certain conditions You may submit an application for an advance payment of the financial compensation. Please see the answer to the question on advance payments.

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## **5 - My rights to support and assistance**

### **I am a victim of crime; who do I contact for support and assistance?**

You can apply to the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection (**DGASPC – Direcția generală de asistență socială și protecția copilului**) under whose jurisdiction you have domicile or residence (i.e. where you currently live), and directly to a private or public social service provider, in which case the provider is required to inform the relevant General Directorate in writing.

You may contact various institutions, according to the category that your case comes under:

#### **National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (ANES – Agenția Națională pentru Egalitatea între Femei și Bărbați)**

It offers various types of services, such as:

free and anonymous helpline for victims of domestic violence - 24/7 Call Centre - 0800 500 333  
specialised social services at the Emergency Reception Centres for Victims of Domestic Violence  
advice, information and guidance for victims of domestic violence.

Contact:

Address: 5 Intrarea Camil Petrescu, Sector 1, Bucharest

Telephone: +40 21 313 0059

Email: [secretariat@anes.gov.ro](mailto:secretariat@anes.gov.ro)

<http://www.anes.gov.ro/>

<http://anes.gov.ro/informatii-utile-pentru-victime/>

#### **National Agency against Human Trafficking (ANITP – Agenția Națională împotriva Traficului de Persoane) within the Ministry of Internal Affairs.**

*The network of courts of appeal includes 15 regional centres. Each centre is attached to a court of appeal.*

They offer various types of services, including:

A citizen helpline that is available around the clock for information and notification of any potential cases of human trafficking: HelpLine 0800 800 678 (national toll-free number) or +40 21 313 3100 (for calls from abroad). Working hours: Mon to Fri, between 08:00-16:00

informing the relevant authorities about any potential cases of human trafficking

providing assistance to victims through the 15 regional centres.

Contact:

Address: Str. Ion Câmpineanu 20, 5th floor, Sector 1, Bucharest

Tel.: +40 21 311 89 82 / 021 313 31 00

Fax: +40 21 319 01 83

Email: [anitp@mai.gov.ro](mailto:anitp@mai.gov.ro)

Website: <https://anitp.mai.gov.ro/english/>

#### **National Employment Agency (ANOFM – Agenția Națională pentru Ocuparea Forței de Muncă) within the Ministry of Labour and Social Justice**

ANOFM provides professional employment and training services through its territorial structures for registered persons seeking employment, including those who were victims of crimes, particularly to victims of trafficking in persons.

Contact:

Str. Avalanșei 20-22, Sector 4, Bucharest, postcode: 040305

Tel.: +40 21 303 98 31

Fax: +40 21 303 98 38

Email: [anofm@anofm.ro](mailto:anofm@anofm.ro)

Website: <https://www.anofm.ro/>

#### **General Inspectorate of Romanian Police (IGPR – Inspectoratul General al Poliției Române)**

It has territorial structures exclusive to the border counties that can provide support at ANITP's request to help victims take part in specific stages of a criminal trial.

The police can inform you of your rights as a victim.

IGPR's specialised structures can also provide physical protection during a trial.

#### **National Authority for the Protection of Children's Rights and Adoption (ANPDCA – Autoritatea Națională pentru Protecția Drepturilor Copilului și Adopție) within the Ministry of Labour and Social Justice**

ANPDCA is the institution responsible for monitoring the application and enforcement of regulations to protect children's and adoptive rights, as well as coordinating work carried out by public or private providers in this field.

The child protection system is decentralised, as the DGASPCs or General Directorates for Social Work and Child Protection (*Dirjeciile Generale de Asistență Socială și Protecția Copilului*) report to the county councils or to the local municipalities within Bucharest.

DGASPCs provide various services, such as: evaluating cases of violence against children and providing/facilitating plan-based response services, complex evaluation for children with disabilities, complex evaluation for other persons with disabilities, the non-emergency social care ambulance, the social care helpline, social services for preventing domestic violence and human trafficking, specialised social services across a range of institutions.

Contact: <http://www.copii.ro/>

#### Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

*In the field of human trafficking, accessible by clicking on:*

[Asociația de Dezvoltare a Practicilor Alternative pentru Reintegrare și Educație – ADPARE](#) (Association for the Development of Alternative Practices for Reintegration and Education), Bucharest

[Fundatia Ușă deschisă](#) – Open Door Foundation, Bucharest

[Asociația Generație Tânără România](#) – (Association of the Younger Generation), Timișoara

[People to People Foundation](#) – Oradea: (email: [office@people2people.ro](mailto:office@people2people.ro))

[Micu Bogdan Foundation](#) – Brașov: (email: [office@fundatiamicubogdan.ro](mailto:office@fundatiamicubogdan.ro))

*In the field of prevention and countering domestic violence, accessible by clicking on:*

[TRANSCENA Association](#)

[ANAISS Association](#)

[PRETUIESTE VIATA \(Value Life Foundation\)](#)

[SENSIBLU Foundation](#)

[Network for preventing and combating violence against women](#)

[Rețeaua "Rupem tăcerea despre violența sexuală" \(Breaking the silence on sexual violence\)](#)

[NECUVINTE \(No Words Association against domestic violence\)](#)

["Touched" Association Romania](#)

*In the field of protection of children's rights:*

**Save the Children (*Salvați copiii*)**

Address: Intr. Ștefan Furtună 3, Sector 1, Bucharest, postcode: 010899, Romania

Tel.: +40 21 316 61 76

<https://www.salvaticopiii.ro/>;

**Social Alternatives (*Alternative Sociale*)**

Șoseaua Nicolina 24, Bl. 949, parter, postcode 700722, Iași

Telephone: +40 332 407 178

<https://www.alternativesociale.ro/>

#### Victim support hotline

People who have suffered injuries as a result of crime can also contact the police by dialling the single national emergency number - 112.

Free and anonymous helpline for victims of domestic violence - 24/7 call centre - 0800 500 333.

Telverde of the National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons: 0800 800 678 - national toll-free number and 0040213133100 - for calls from abroad.

Working hours: Mon to Fri, between 08:00-16:00

Child helpline: 116111 (freephone number). Working hours: Mon to Sun: 08.00 – 00.00.

#### Is victim support free?

Pursuant to applicable Romanian law, the victims of crime are entitled to protection and assistance free of charge.

#### What types of support can I receive from state services or authorities?

See the replies above.

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