Victims' rights - by country

Nīderlande

You will be considered a **victim of crime** if you have suffered damage, e.g. you have been injured or your property has been damaged or stolen, etc., as a result of an incident, which constitutes a crime according to national law. Both juridical and natural persons can be victims. As a victim of crime, from January 1, 2011, the criminal procedural law grants you certain individual rights before, during and after court proceedings (trial). Until January 2011 the rights of the victim are described in an instruction of the Board of the Procurators-General.

Criminal proceedings in the Netherlands includes investigation and trial. During the investigation the police under the supervision of the public prosecutor investigate the case to find the offender and collect evidence. If there is sufficient proof that the alleged offender has committed the crime the public prosecutor may impose him/her a sanction or bring the case to court for trial. The court, after examining the collected evidence, decides whether the offender is guilty and convicts or acquits him/her.

The following factsheets will take you through the different steps of the procedure, describing your rights during the investigation of the crime, during the trial or after the first trial. Also, read more about the help and support you can get.

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1 - My rights during the investigation of a crime

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How and where can I report a crime?

If you have suffered from a crime or you have learned that a crime has been committed you can **report** it to the police officer at the nearest police station or you can write a letter to the public prosecutor. There is no specific form you need to follow.

You can also prepare a written document authorising another person to report the crime for you. Such a written authorisation will not provide the person you have authorised with any additional rights apart from the right to report the crime instead of you. Electronic reporting is also available on a national scale at http://www.politie.nl/.

You can file your report in any language but the police or the public prosecutor may require you to submit the report in Dutch. You can use the assistance of an interpreter but you need to pay for his/her services.

There are no deadlines for reporting a crime.

When you report a crime the police will draft a written record with all the relevant information on the case, including your personal data (name and address) and the facts you know about the incident. You will be asked to present an identification document (passport, drivers licence or identity card) and sign the record.

For some specific crimes like insult or stalking you need to submit a special complaint asking the police or the public prosecutor to start proceedings. For such crimes proceedings can only be started if you explicitly request so, i.e. without your complaint the police or the public prosecutor will not open proceedings even if they have learned about the offence from other sources.

How can I follow up on what the authorities do after I report a crime?

The police officer will assign an administrative number to the record drafted on your report. You will receive this number so that you can follow the progress on your case. You will also receive a copy of the record, which you can use, for example, when you contact your insurance company.

When the police send the case to the public prosecutor it will receive another number, which is the number of the registered criminal case.

At the police station you can check the progress of your case only by using the administrative number given by the police. At the Public Prosecution Service you can check how your case is proceeding using either the number given by the police or the registered criminal case number given by the public prosecutor.

From 2011 there will be 10 victim information counters operational across the country, to which you can also address your questions concerning the case. At these counters representatives of the police, the public prosecutors office and Victim Support Netherlands will inform you and support you in exercising your rights.

When you report a crime the police officer accepting your report will ask you if you wish to receive further information about your case. If you confirm that you wish to be kept informed the police and the public prosecutor will notify you on a regular basis about any important developments. You can also check yourself how your case is proceeding by asking at the police station or at the Public Prosecution Service.

How can I be involved in the investigation of the crime?

When you report a crime you have to tell the police officer everything you know about the incident. The police will then investigate the case to collect evidence and find the offender. Usually, the information provided in the report is sufficient at this stage. However, if a more extensive investigation is necessary the police may call you for one or more additional interviews.

As a victim you do not need to prove anything in relation to the crime. However, if you have evidence you wish to present (e.g. documents) you could give them to the police officer or the public prosecutor in charge of your case. You can request the performance of certain investigative actions but the public prosecutor will decide whether these are necessary for the investigation. From January 1, 2011, you can request the public prosecutor to add certain documents to the case-file. The public prosecutor can only refuse this on certain legal grounds, such as the interests of the investigation. In case of refusal, you can object to the prosecutor's decision before the court within 14 days.

If the suspect is present at the interview you can ask the judge to pose certain questions to him/her. The suspect has the same right and can ask the judge to pose certain questions to you.

If necessary, the judge can also invite you to participate in a reconstruction of the crime. All other investigative actions at this stage will be conducted without your participation.

If the crime you have suffered from is a serious one you will be allowed to speak before the court during the trial and explain the consequences of the crime on your life. This is called a Victim Impact Statement. In such cases you can make a written statement during the investigation and deliver it to the public prosecutor. Such a written statement can be done as a preparation for your speech in court but you can also use it instead of speaking before the court, if you wish so. If you find it difficult, you may ask the local office of Victim Support Netherlands to help you with drafting your statement.

If you wish to claim damages from the offender you have to submit a **civil claim**. When you report the crime, the police officer will explain to you how this can be done and will ask you whether you wish to file such a claim. Your answer will be indicated on the police record. If you have stated that you wish to file a civil claim, when the public prosecutor decides to bring the case to court he/she will send you a template of the civil claim, which you can fill in. If you find it difficult, you may ask the local office of Victim Support Netherlands to help you with the template. You need to enclose all relevant documents (e.g. medical certificates, receipts for medical or psychological consultations, etc.). In particular, you need to enclose evidence showing the expenses you have made in relation to filing the civil claim. If the offender is convicted, the court will order him/her to reimburse you for these expenses.

Your civil claim has to be delivered to the public prosecutor. It is recommended that you give the claim to the public prosecutor at least two weeks before the court hearing. The law allows you to deliver your claim during the hearing or even make an oral claim before the court but in this case the court may reject it finding it too complicated to deal with without having examined it in advance.

As a victim (civil claimant or not) from January 1, 2011, you can examine all the documents in the case file. The public prosecutor can deny access to certain documents if he/she believes this would violate privacy rights or hamper the investigation. You can appeal against such a denial before the court within 14 days after you have been informed about it.

What are my rights as a witness?

During the investigation you will probably be asked to appear before a judge as a **witness**. In this case you are obliged to show up and tell the judge everything you know about the offence

If you have hearing or speaking problems the interview will be done in writing. If you cannot read or write you will receive additional assistance.

I am a minor. Do I have additional rights?

If you are a child and you have to be interviewed as a witness you can ask to have this interview at the place you live or another location outside the police station. Police officers especially trained to work with children will interview you. Your interview will be taped to avoid its repetition on a later stage. If necessary, you can be placed in a safe house.

You will also receive assistance from the Office for Advice and Reporting of Child Maltreatment.

What information can I obtain from police or victim support organisations during the investigation of the crime?

When you report the crime you have suffered from, the police officer will advise you to contact the local office of Victim Support Netherlands and will give you a brochure explaining the services provided by this organisation. If you want to receive support and information you can contact Victim Support Netherlands yourself. But if you do not object the police will give your details to Victim Support Netherlands and they will then contact you within a few days after the report. This is not the case with minor offences such as the theft of bicycles.

When you report a crime the police will ask you whether you want to receive financial compensation for damages you suffered. If you state that you wish to be compensated this will be recorded and after the offence has been cleared up, the police will contact the offender with your request for compensation. When the calculation of the damages is simple and the offender does not disagree and is willing to directly transfer the complete sum, you will receive the compensation through an account of the state. If these conditions do not pertain, you can bring a civil claim into the criminal procedure.

The police officer will also explain you how you can submit a civil claim if you wish to claim compensation from the offender for the damages you have suffered. If you state that you wish to claim damages from the offender the police will make a note in the record on your case. When the investigation is over and the public prosecutor decides to bring the case to court he/she will send you a template of the civil claim, which you can fill in. If you find it difficult, you may ask the local office of Victim Support Netherlands to help you with the template.

If you want to be informed about the progress of the investigation you need to notify the police officer when you report the crime. Once you have notified the police officer you will receive information about important developments in your case. The public prosecutor will also inform you about his/her decision to bring the case to court.

You can also check all the documents in your case with the exception of those which the public prosecutor has decided to keep confidential.

If the crime you have suffered form was a serious one you have the right to make a victim impact statement. In this case, during the investigation the public prosecutor will ask you whether you wish to make such a statement and will explain to you your right to speak before the court.

From 2011 there will be 10 victim information counters operational across the country, to which you can also address your questions concerning the case. At these counters representatives of the police, the public prosecutors office and Victim Support Netherlands will inform you and support you in exercising your rights.

Can I receive legal aid?

For legal advice you can always approach Victim Support Netherlands free of charge.

You can also use the assistance of a lawyer, who can also represent you if you authorise him/her to do so. The costs of legal aid are for your account: **legal aid is only partly free of charge** depending on your income.

To receive legal aid you need to go to the nearest Legal Services Counter where you will obtain some initial information and a referral to a lawyer. If you are a victim of a severe violent or sexual crime you could qualify for free legal aid. The Legal Services Counter can inform you on this.

When you have insurance for legal aid costs, it depends on the clauses whether the costs will be reimbursed.

How can I get protection, if I am in danger?

If you are afraid of repercussions due to your report you can ask the police to keep some of your personal details out of the police record. To avoid revealing your address you can leave the address of the police station or the address of your lawyer's office for further communication. During the investigation of the crime your personal details will continue to be kept secret.
If you have been called for an interview as a witness by the judge of instruction and you are afraid of the offender you can ask not to be interviewed in the presence of the offender or outside the court. The judge will keep your identity secret and will not allow the offender to be present at the interview. His/her lawyer will be allowed to be present and to ask questions.
Other protection measures are available depending on the crime you have suffered from.
If you have suffered from domestic violence you can ask for accommodation in a safe house for maltreated persons. You will also be referred to the Support and Advice Office for Domestic Violence, which has branches in 35 Dutch cities. If you are a child your case will also be forwarded to the regional Office for Advice and Reporting of Child Maltreatment. Depending on the seriousness of the crime you can also ask the police to request the mayor to order the offender to stay out of his/her home for ten days.
For victims of human trafficking there are facilities available for safe housing. The police can refer you to such a facility and will also report to CoMensha if you are a victim who wishes to consider contributing to the prosecution of suspects of human trafficking.
If you have suffered from a sexual offence you will be received and interviewed by specially trained police officers, with good social skills, sensitive to victim-issues and knowledgeable about all the social services available to victims in these cases. You can ask to be interviewed outside the police station. Your interview will be conducted by two police officers and will be taped unless you object to the taping. The police officers will offer you accommodation in a safe house and will explain what other assistance is available to you. If a medical examination is needed you can ask that a person of the same sex performs it.

What services and assistance can I be given during the investigation of the crime?

You can turn for assistance to Victim Support Netherlands irrespective of the crime you have suffered from. All services provided by Victim Support Netherlands are free of charge.
You can also get medical or psychological help but you have to pay for it unless it is covered by your insurance. Victim Support Netherlands can assist you in getting such help, if necessary. You can add the amount paid for medical or psychological assistance to your civil claim. Citizens of the 27 EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland can benefit from the European Health Insurance Card.

Are there opportunities to reach settlement/conciliation or to start mediation between the offender and myself?

When you report a crime the police officer will ask you if you want to claim financial compensation from the offender for the damages you have suffered. For less serious crimes, when you are claiming only property damage and the case is not a complicated one (e.g. only one victim and one offender, clear evidence, no dispute about the value of the damage, etc.) the police will encourage the offender to pay financial compensation to you as soon as possible. If the offender agrees to do so and pays the entire compensation the public prosecutor may close the case.
In all cases, you as a victim can request a **meeting with the offender** to talk about the incident and the consequences of it. The offender is free to decide if he /she wants to participate in such a meeting. Meetings between the victim and the offender are usually organised by the organisation Victim in Focus. Holding such a meeting cannot result in an agreement between you and the offender and cannot oblige the offender to compensate you for the damages caused by the offence. It does not affect the investigation and the case will not be closed but the public prosecutor will take into account that such a meeting has taken place when he/she continues with the prosecution.
Finally, if you want to mediate with the known offender you could approach an independent mediator to start mediation.

How will my case continue after the end of the investigation?

After the completion of the investigation the police officer will forward the case to the public prosecutor and the latter will decide how to proceed with it. The public prosecutor has several options: to bring the case to court, to propose an agreement to the offender, or to close the case without going to court.
When you have indicated that you wish to receive financial compensation for damages the public prosecutor will take that in account in his/her decision to close the case without going to court.

Can I appeal if my case is closed without reaching the court?

If the public prosecutor decides to close the case without bringing it to court, you as a victim can appeal against the decision. You can also appeal against the public prosecutor's decision to prosecute if you believe that the offender should be prosecuted for a more serious crime than the one chosen by the prosecutor. You have to submit your appeal before the Court of Appeal.
If you decide that you no longer wish your case to be prosecuted you can send a letter to the public prosecutor stating that you want your case to be closed. The public prosecutor will consider your request, but he/she is free to decide whether to close the case or proceed further with the prosecution.

I am a foreigner. How are my rights and interests protected?

If you are a foreigner who has suffered from a crime in the Netherlands you can benefit from all the rights explained above. You also have some additional rights to facilitate your participation in the procedure.
If you do not speak Dutch you will be provided with an interpreter free of charge when you are called for an interview at the police or when you appear as a witness before the judge. You can also make a request to the public prosecutor or the judge to have some documents from the case file translated if you believe these documents are important for your case.
You have some additional rights if you are a foreigner and you are a **victim of human trafficking**. These rights depend on your willingness to cooperate with the authorities investigating the case. If you agree to cooperate you will receive a residence permit for a period of three months and will be allowed to work in the country. The permit is usually given within 24 hours after you report the crime. Depending on how your case is proceeding, you can request an extension the residence and work permit.

More information:

Code of Criminal Procedure (Wetboek van Strafvordering) – in Dutch
Act of December 17, 2009 to change the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Criminal Code and the Act on Compensation for Violent Crimes to strengthen the position of victims in the criminal procedure (Wet van 17 december 2009 tot wijziging van het wetboek van strafvordering, het wetboek van strafrecht en de Wet schadefonds geweldsmisdrijven ter versterking van de positie van het slachtoffer in het strafproces)
Legal Aid Act (De wet op de Rechtsbijstand) – in Dutch
Foreigners Act (Vreemdelingenwet) – in Dutch
Youth Care Act (Wet op de jeugdzorg) – in Dutch and English
Instruction on Care of Victims (Aanwijzing slachtofferzorg) – in Dutch
Instruction on Domestic Violence (Aanwijzing huiselijk geweld) – in Dutch
Instruction on Detection and Prosecution of Sexual Abuse (Aanwijzing opsporing en vervolging inzake seksueel misbruik) – in Dutch
Instruction on Detection and Prosecution of Child Maltreatment (Aanwijzing opsporing en vervolging inzake kindermishandeling) – in Dutch

Notes:

1. Victim impact statement

The Victim Impact Statement is a description of the impact of the crime on your life. You may describe the medical, psychological and social consequences of the victimisation and the way they affect your everyday life but you cannot comment on the collected evidence or on the penalty to be imposed on the offender.

Your Victim Impact Statement can be presented in writing during the investigation and/or orally before the court during the trial. It can also be read out loud, partly or as a whole, by the public prosecutor or the judge.

You have the right to present a Victim Impact Statement only if you have suffered from specific crimes. The crimes, for which such a statement is allowed, are crimes punished by eight years imprisonment or more as well as some other offences like child pornography, lechery with unconscious or mentally disturbed minors, incitement of minors to lechery, lechery with persons between 16 and 18 of age, lechery abusing a relation of authority, forcing minors or pupils to prostitution, trafficking in human beings, threatening with a crime, stalking, maltreatment leading to severe injury or death, participation in fights leading to severe injury or death, death by negligence, bodily injury by negligence, extortion, death or severe injury by negligence in motor traffic.

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2 - My rights during the trial

How can I be involved in the trial?
What are my rights as a witness?
I am a minor. Do I have additional rights?
Can I receive legal aid?
How can I get protection, if I am in danger?
How can I claim damages from the offender or receive compensation from the state?
Are there opportunities to reach settlement/conciliation or to start mediation between the offender and myself?
I am a foreigner. How are my rights and interests protected?
More information

How can I be involved in the trial?

If you have indicated that you wish to be informed about the progress of your case you will receive a notification about the date and place of the court hearing. You can be present during all public hearings. If the judge decides to hold a non-public hearing you have to ask him/her for permission to attend. If the suspect is a juvenile, court hearings are always non-public, but victims and bereaved relatives are allowed to be present, unless the court decides differently. Your presence in the courtroom is not obligatory unless you have been called for an interview as a witness.

When you have missed the opportunity to file a civil claim during the investigation you can still do it during the trial. You can deliver a written claim to the court or make an oral claim during the hearing. In any case your claim must be made before the speech of the public prosecutor.

If you have presented a civil claim you will be allowed to speak after the public prosecutor and explain your claim. You can present new evidence supporting your claim. In practice, such new evidence can be only in the form of documents because you will not be allowed to bring witnesses or experts.

You cannot directly question the defendant, the witnesses or the experts but you or your lawyer may ask the judge to pose certain questions to them. From January 1, 2011, you have the right, both as a civil claimant and as a victim, to consult the case file, but this can be refused by the public prosecutor on certain important grounds, such as the interests of proper procedure. You can appeal to the court against such a refusal.

If you have suffered from a serious crime you have the right to speak before the court to explain the consequences of the incident on your life. This is called a Victim Impact Statement. The court will usually allow you to speak for 10-15 minutes. You have to make the statement yourself. The court will not allow another person to make the statement instead of you. However, if you have given a written statement during the investigation you may decide not to speak during the hearing. Sometimes your statement is read out loud, partly or as a whole, by the public prosecutor or the presiding judge.

During the trial you can use a lawyer but you have to pay for his/her services. You can add these expenses to your civil claim. If you have a low income you can receive legal aid, which is partly free of charge.

What are my rights as a witness?

If you have been called for an interview as a **witness** you have to go to the court and attend the court hearing. If you have serious reasons preventing you to go to the court you have to inform the, public prosecutor who has called you in advance and he/she will decide whether your presence is mandatory. In court the presiding judge may also decide that your presence is not essential.

If you feel uncomfortable speaking in public you can ask the judge to hold a non-public hearing.

During the interview the judge will first ask you to state your name, date of birth, occupation, place of residence and any relation to the defendant. Then you will be asked to swear that you will tell the truth and to give your testimony. After your testimony you may have to answer some additional questions. For more information about your rights as a witness please consult the brochure *Being a Witness in a Criminal Trial*.

I am a minor. Do I have additional rights?

If you are a child and you have to be interviewed during the hearing the court can conduct the interview in a non-public session. Also, if your interview during the investigation has been taped you may not be asked to appear before the court as a witness.

Can I receive legal aid?

You can use the assistance of a lawyer during the trial proceedings, and he/she can also represent you if you authorise him/her to do so. The costs of legal aid are for your account: **legal aid is only partly free of charge** depending on your income.

To receive legal aid you need to go to the nearest Legal Services Counter where you will obtain some initial information and a referral to a lawyer. If you are a victim of a severe violent or sexual crime you could qualify for free legal aid. The Legal Services Counter can inform you on this.

How can I get protection, if I am in danger?

You can receive special protection if you are a witness and you are afraid of possible repercussions as a result of your testimony. In this case a judge will interview you during the investigation and you will not be required to appear before the court during the trial. Your identity will be kept secret and your personal data will be available only to the judge and will be omitted from the documents in the case file.

How can I claim damages from the offender or receive compensation from the State?

When you report a crime to the police they will ask you whether you want to receive monetary compensation for damages from the offender if he will be found. If you want that, the police are obliged to try and settle the damages for you by inviting the offender to pay for the damages directly (through a government account). If this does not succeed you can receive **compensation from the offender** by submitting a civil claim. You can claim both property and psychological damages. Property damages include costs for medical services, lost profit, damaged property, etc. Psychological damages include the pain and suffering caused by the offence.

The civil claim is usually prepared and submitted during the investigation, but if you have missed this opportunity you can submit it in writing or orally during the court hearing before the speech of the prosecutor. Together with your claim you have to present all documents you consider relevant to the case (e.g. medical certificates, receipts from consultations, etc.). In your claim you can also include all expenses you have made in relation to your participation in the procedure.
If the court finds the offender guilty it will order him/her to pay you compensation. Compensation is usually financial and the court will specify the exact amount you will receive. In practice, you will get full compensation for all your property damages together with a certain amount to cover your psychological damages that the court finds fair.
When the court orders the suspect to pay the damages you claimed with your civil claim, it will often also impose a compensation order that will be executed by the Central Fine Collection Agency and will be transferred to your account. From January 1, 2011, the state will fully compensate your damages if you are a victim of a violent or sexual crime and the convicted offender has not done so within eight months. The state will then take regress on the offender.
As a victim of violent crime you can also apply for **financial compensation from the State**. Your application has to be submitted to the Compensation Fund for Violent Crime within three years of the crime. Please consult the factsheet on compensation to victims of crime in the Netherlands (available in English, Dutch and multiple other languages) of the European Judicial Network.

Are there opportunities to reach settlement/conciliation or to start mediation between the offender and myself?

During the trial there are no opportunities for mediation or any other form of conciliation between you and the offender. Outside the criminal procedure you can request to have a 'victim-offender conversation' organised by SIB (Victim in Focus).

I am a foreigner. How are my rights and interests protected?

If you are a foreigner you have all the rights explained above but you also have some additional rights to facilitate your participation in the trial.
If you have filed a civil claim you can use the assistance of an interpreter when explaining your claim during the hearing. Interpretation will not be free of charge, but you can add the expenses to your claim so that the offender can be ordered to cover them if convicted.
If you are not a civil claimant, you will have the right to use the assistance of an interpreter free of charge from January 1, 2011. You must ask the public prosecutor for interpretation assistance before the start of the trial.

More information:

Code of Criminal Procedure (Wetboek van Strafvordering) – in Dutch
Act of December 17, 2009 to change the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Criminal Code and the Act on Compensation for Violent Crimes to strengthen the position of victims in the criminal procedure (Wet van 17 december 2009 tot wijziging van het wetboek van strafvordering, het wetboek van strafrecht en de Wet schadefonds geweldsmisdrijven ter versterking van de positie van het slachtoffer in het strafproces)
Legal Aid Act (De wet op de Rechtsbijstand) – in Dutch
Act on Compensation for Violent Crimes (De wet Schadefonds Geweldsmisdrijven) – in Dutch
Youth Care Act (Wet op de jeugdzorg) – in Dutch
Instruction on Care of Victims (Aanwijzing slachtofferzorg) – in Dutch
Instruction on the Right to Speak and the Written Victim Impact Statement (Aanwijzing spreekrecht en schriftelijke slachtofferverklaring) – in Dutch
Instruction on Domestic Violence (Aanwijzing huiselijk geweld) – in Dutch
Instruction on Detection and Prosecution of Sexual Abuse (Aanwijzing opsporing en vervolging inzake seksueel misbruik) – in Dutch
Instruction on Detection and Prosecution of Child Maltreatment (Aanwijzing opsporing en vervolging inzake kindermishandeling) – in Dutch

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3 - My rights after the (first) trial

Can I appeal against a sentence or if the defendant is declared not guilty?
Is further appeal possible?
What rights do I have after the court sentence enters into force?
More information

Can I appeal against a sentence or if the defendant is declared not guilty?

The trial will end with the court convicting the defendant or declaring him/her not guilty. Only the public prosecutor and the defendant can appeal against the conviction/acquittal or against the imposed penalty.
If you have filed a civil claim for compensation of damages the court will make a decision on your claim. If the defendant is convicted the court may order him /her to pay you compensation but may also reject your claim. If the public prosecutor or the defendant appeals against the conviction the higher court will examine your claim as part of the case so you do not need to submit your own appeal.
The only case when you can file your own **appeal** is when you have submitted a civil claim, the court has not granted you the requested amount, and neither the public prosecutor nor the defendant has appealed against the court decision. The rejected amount must be higher than 1.750 Euro. Your appeal has to be submitted to the Court of Appeal within **three months** following the date of the court decision. You are obliged to use a lawyer to represent you before the court.
Irrespective of whether you have filed a civil claim or not, when you have suffered from a serious crime and you are entitled to make a Victim Impact Statement you can make this statement before the Court of Appeal if the public prosecutor or the defendant has appealed against the conviction/acquittal. Your right does not depend on whether or not you have made such a statement during the first trial. The public prosecutor will contact you to explain to you your rights related to your participation in the appeal procedure.

Is further appeal possible?

If the Court of Appeal has rejected your civil claim you have no more opportunities to appeal. However, the public prosecutor or the defendant may submit an appeal to the Supreme Court against the decision of the Court of Appeal. In this case you will receive a notification that an appeal has been filed to the Supreme Court. You cannot appear and speak before the Supreme Court but your lawyer is entitled to submit a **written statement**, which the court will examine.
If criminal courts in any stage have found your civil claim inadmissible (in the criminal trial) you can bring this claim to the civil court.

What rights do I have after the court sentence enters into force?

When the court sentence enters into force your role in the proceedings is generally over. Dutch law does provide victims of severe crimes with the right to be informed about the release of the offender. You have to indicate that you want this to the public prosecutor responsible for your case.

If necessary, you can continue to benefit from the special protection measures undertaken earlier, e.g. accommodation in a safe house. You can also continue to receive the assistance provided by Victim Support Netherlands or even contact the organisation for the first time at this stage.
You can also consult a lawyer, but you have to pay for his/her services. Legal aid applies only until the end of criminal proceedings so once the court sentence enters into force you will have to pay the full amount of the lawyer's fee irrespective of your income.
If the court has approved your civil claim (without also imposing a compensation order) you can obtain the compensation for damages with the help of a bailiff. In most cases together with approving your claim the court will order the offender to pay you the awarded compensation with a compensation order that will be executed by the Central Fine Collection Agency and will be transferred to your account. From January 1, 2011, the state will fully compensate your damages if you are a victim of a violent or sexual crime and the convicted offender has not done so within 8 months.

More information:

Code of Criminal Procedure (Wetboek van Strafvordering) – in Dutch
Act of December 17, 2009 to change the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Criminal Code and the Act on Compensation for Violent Crimes to strengthen the position of victims in the criminal procedure (Wet van 17 december 2009 tot wijziging van het wetboek van strafvordering, het wetboek van strafrecht en de Wet schadefonds geweldsmisdrijven ter versterking van de positie van het slachtoffer in het strafproces)
Legal Aid Act (De wet op de Rechtsbijstand) – in Dutch
Act on Compensation for Violent Crimes (De wet Schadefonds Geweldsmisdrijven) – in Dutch
Youth Care Act (Wet op de jeugdzorg) – in Dutch and English
Instruction on the Right to Speak and the Written Victim Impact Statement (Aanwijzing spreekrecht en schriftelijke slachtofferverklaring) – in Dutch

1. Victim impact statement

The Victim Impact Statement is a description of the impact of the crime on your life. You may describe the medical, psychological and social consequences of the victimisation and the way they affect your everyday life but you cannot comment on the collected evidence or on the penalty to be imposed on the offender.

Your Victim Impact Statement can be presented in writing during the investigation and/or orally before the court during the trial. It can also be read out loud, partly or as a whole, by the public prosecutor or the judge.

You have the right to present a Victim Impact Statement only if you have suffered from specific crimes. The crimes, for which such a statement is allowed, are crimes punished by eight years imprisonment or more as well as some other offences like child pornography, lechery with unconscious or mentally disturbed minors, incitement of minors to lechery, lechery with persons between 16 and 18 of age, lechery abusing a relation of authority, forcing minors or pupils to prostitution, trafficking in human beings, threatening with a crime, stalking, maltreatment leading to severe injury or death, participation in fights leading to severe injury or death, death by negligence, bodily injury by negligence, extortion, death or severe injury by negligence in motor traffic.

You are also allowed to present a Victim Impact Statement if you are a relative of a victim who has died as a result of the crime.

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Lūdzu, ņemiet vērā, ka šai lapai nesen tika atjaunināta oriģinālvalodas nl
versija. Mūsu tulkotāji pašlaik gatavo versiju valodā, kuru esat izvēlējies.

4 - Help and support for victims of crime

Victim Support Netherlands
CoMensha Foundation
Supportpoints Domestic Violence
Byway Foundation
Legal Assistance Counter

Victim Support Netherlands

Victim Support Netherlands offers practical, emotional and legal support to victims of crime, disasters and traffic accidents as well as some legal assistance for victims joining the criminal procedure as civil claimants.

Victim Support Netherlands
offers victim support, primarily of a non-legal nature, and some legal assistance for victims joining the criminal procedure as civil claimants
provides assistance in claim settlements and legal procedures
helps victims of various crimes including car accidents, confrontation with violence (abuse, threats), robbery, sexual violence, domestic violence, etc.
has 75 regional offices (bureaus) throughout the Netherlands
CONTACTS:
Website: http://www.slachtofferhulp.nl/
For contact details of the regional offices (bureaus) of Victim Support Netherlands click here.

CoMensha Foundation

CoMensha Foundation has regional and local networks for reception and assistance of victims of human trafficking providing information and various forms of support. It functions as the central coordinator for registration of and support to victims of human trafficking.

CoMensha Foundation
has regional and local networks for reception and assistance of victims of human trafficking corresponding to the respective police areas
provides information and advice to victims
offers help with the finding of safe place or shelter
provides assistance for obtaining social support
CONTACTS:
Website: http://www.mensenhandel.nl/

Support Points Domestic Violence

At these support points victims, perpetrators and others involved in domestic violence can acquire professional advice about steps to be taken to stop the violence. They are front offices for all organisations working together to stop domestic violence.

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CONTACTS:
Website: http://www.huiselijkgeweld.nl/
Byway Foundation
Byway Foundation consists of ´experts by experience´ who voluntarily assist women and children who are victims of domestic violence or stalking by ex-partners. It focuses on female victims.
Byway Foundation has the following aims
to informing female victims and others involved
to reduce or take away the taboo around domestic violence
to influence policies, regulations and legislation so that the interests and needs of female victims and their children are better represented and served
prevention by education for girls, women and their social environment about the signals of partner-violence and stalking
CONTACTS:
Website: http://www.stichtingzijweg.nl/
Legal Assistance Counter
The staff of the Legal Assistance Counters helps everybody who addresses them with a legal question.
The staff of the Legal Assistance Counters helps everybody who addresses them with a legal question. Often you get a direct answer. When this is not possible because of the complexity of the matter they will refer you to as specialist organisation.
CONTACTS:
Website: http://www.juridischloket.nl/
For contact details of the regional offices of Legal Assistance Counter click here.
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1 - My rights as a victim of crime

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

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3 - My rights after trial

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4 - Compensation

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5 - My rights to support and assistance

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