

FACT SHEET

Services for Victims of Crime

A range of services currently exist across the NT to support victims of crime. The services are a mix of NT Government and non-government agencies with some providing specialised services for particular crime victims.

The new Crimes Victims Services Unit will coordinate Territory government services to victims and complement the services provided by external agencies, like Victims of Crime NT (VOCNT).

CURRENT SERVICES:

The Witness Assistance Service

The Witness Assistance Service (WAS) within the Office of the Director for Public Prosecutions offer support to victims of crime, witnesses and their families throughout the criminal justice process.

WAS operates in Alice Springs, Darwin and also within the Bush Court Circuit.

WAS support can include: helping victims understand the court and legal process, being with victims in court, helping victims prepare victim impact statements, organising interpreters, keeping victims and witnesses informed about the progress of a case, informing victims of welfare, health, counselling, legal services, and financial assistance available to them.

Community Justice Centre

The Community Justice Centre, operated by the Northern Territory Government, offers post-court conferencing.

Post Court Conferencing allows victims to tell offenders of the impact of their crime in a non-adversarial setting.

Conferencing also gives offenders the opportunity to address and restore the harm they have caused the victim.

Victims of Crime NT

VOCNT is a community organisation with funding from the NT Government and which runs a valuable volunteer program.

VOCNT provides information and support to victims of all crime. VOCNT is accessible 24 hours a day seven days a week and includes a personalised crisis support and referral service and a call-out service in Darwin and Palmerston.

VOCNT administers the NT Government's Break-in assistance scheme – a scheme that provides up to \$250 to assist in the clean-up and securing of a home following an unlawful entry.

VOCNT is also an advocacy body for victims on the rights and needs of victims. VOCNT works with Government, other agencies, the media and the general public to ensure victims are recognised and have access to support and resources.

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In recognition of the level of service provided by VOCNT the NT Government has boosted funding to the organisation by \$70,000 annually – taking their funding to over \$200,000 per year plus accommodation and office equipment.

New Crime Victims Services Unit

The new Crimes Victims Services Unit will act as the central Government body to coordinate services for victims of crime. The unit will:

- Administer the new Crime Victims Assistance Scheme, including the upfront financial assistance scheme
- Administer the Victims Register
- Oversee the operation of the Charter of Victims Rights
- Administer the provision of counselling services
- Provide advice and referrals to victims of crime and assist them to complete applications for assistance

Community based organisations across NT

There are several Non-Government Organisations across the NT providing support and services for victims of crime. These include:

- Central Australian Women's Legal Service Inc
- Top End Women's Legal Service
- Katherine Women's Information and Legal Services
- Legal Aid services across Territory
- Aboriginal Family Violence Legal Units in Katherine, Tennant Creek, Alice Springs and NPY region
- Ruby-Gaea – Darwin Centre Against Rape
- Women's refuges and other crisis accommodation.

NT Government Agencies

The NT Government provides a range of service for victims across the Territory, through agencies other than the Department of Justice.

NT Police

NT Department of Health and Community Services, including SARC in Darwin and Alice Springs and Health Centres in communities.

Also funded by NT

Sex Assault Counsellors in Katherine and Tennant Creek.

Domestic Violence counsellors in Nhulunbuy, Katherine, Tennant Creek, Darwin, Alice Springs and Jabiru.