



## Victim's Right to be Heard at Sentencing

As the victim of a violent crime, **you have the right to be heard at the sentencing** or change of plea hearing. Whenever a victim has the right to be heard, the victim may exercise their right in any reasonable manner the victim chooses. When preparing your statement for the hearing, consider organizing it by the emotional, physical, and financial effects of the crime.

**You will not be placed under oath or subject to cross-examination** when you present your statement. Your statement is not limited to the impact of the offense and no part of your statement should be stricken or edited. If you choose to prepare a statement in writing, you may read it aloud or have a representative of your choice read it on your behalf. Additionally, you can request that the prosecutor send a copy to the Prison Review Board (PRB).

The judge will consider the information you provide when deciding what sentence to hand down.

**Some things you may want to include in your statement are:**

- Describe how the crime has affected your lifestyle and / or the lifestyle of those close to you.
- If you or your family member(s) were injured, discuss the physical impact of the crime.
- Describe the physical or emotional injuries you or members of your family have suffered.
- Describe any medical treatment you have received or expect to receive in the future.
- Discuss how the crime affected your ability to earn a living and how it has affected you financially (did you have to move, experience job loss, do you require professional care, etc.).

If you have questions or would like more information about presenting a statement, contact your victim/witness coordinator or speak with the prosecutor handling your case.

**Crime Victims Assistance Line**  
**1-800-228-3368**

**[www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov](http://www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov)**

Individuals with hearing or speech disabilities can reach us by using the 7-1-1 relay service.