

beacon

Hertfordshire victim care centre

YOUR RIGHTS under the Victims' Code of Practice

As a victim or witness of crime you are entitled to information and support from the police, victim care services and other organisations.

This leaflet outlines your rights under the Victims' Code of Practice, as well as details of how to access free advice and support in Hertfordshire.

— David Lloyd —
**Police and Crime
Commissioner**
for Hertfordshire



HERTFORDSHIRE
CONSTABULARY

Prevention First

catch
22



You have a right to:

Understand and be understood

You have the right to information you understand in a language you speak.

Have your crime recorded

You have the right to have details of your incident recorded by the police as soon as possible. You have the right to support when you are providing your account to the police.

Be provided information

You have the right to receive written confirmation when reporting a crime and to be told where to find information on the criminal justice process and how to obtain support available to you.

Be referred to services that support victims

You have the right to be offered support when your crime is reported which will include an assessment of your needs. If eligible, you have the right to be offered a referral to specialist support services and to be told about additional support available at court.

Compensation

You have the right where eligible, to be informed about how to claim compensation for any loss, damage or injury caused as a result of a crime.

Investigation and prosecution

You have the right to be given updates on your case and be told when important decisions are made. You also have the right to ask for decisions to be reviewed by the relevant service provider at certain stages of the justice process.

Victim personal statement

You have the right to make a Victim Personal Statement (VPS) and to be provided with information about it. A VPS is an opportunity to tell the court how the crime has affected you and is considered when sentencing the offender.

Trial, trial process and your role as a witness

You have the right if your case goes to court to be told the time, date and location of any hearing and the outcome of those hearings promptly. You have the right if you are required to give evidence to be offered appropriate help before the trial and where possible meet the prosecutor before giving evidence.

Outcome of your case and any appeals

You have the right to be told the outcome of your case and, if the offender is convicted, to have the sentence explained. If the offender appeals against their conviction or sentence, you have the right to be told about the appeal and its outcome.

Expenses and property

You have the right to claim certain expenses if you are required to attend court and give evidence. If any of your property was taken as evidence, you have the right for it to be returned to you as soon as possible.

Information following a conviction

You have the right, where eligible to be automatically referred to the Victim Contact Scheme, which will provide you with information about the offender and their progress in prison, and if/when they are eligible for parole or release. You also have the right to make a new Victim Personal Statement, in which you can say how the crime continues to affect you.

To make a complaint

You have the right to make a complaint to the relevant service provider if you believe that you have not received your rights. If you remain unhappy, you can contact the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

Information and support:

Beacon is Hertfordshire's Victim Care Centre and is comprised of the police Victim Service Team and Catch22, who provide practical and emotional support to victims and witnesses of crime.

If you have reported your crime to the police then you will be contacted by the Victim Service Team who will advise you of:

- Your crime reference number
- What happens next
- The services available to you

You can contact the Victim Service Team by calling **03000 11 55 55** (8am-8pm) and selecting option 1.

Beacon also provides free help and support to victims of crime, through Catch 22. Their independent case managers can provide you with:

- Emotional support; someone to talk to about what happened and how it's impacted you
- Practical support, information and assistance
- Signposting to, or contact with, other agencies that can provide specialist help

You can contact the independent case managers at Beacon by calling **03000 11 55 55** (Monday to Friday 8am-6pm, except Wednesdays 8am-8pm) and selecting option 3.

You can also contact Beacon by email at info@hertfordshirebeacon.org or visit hertfordshirebeacon.org for more information.

Feedback

We're always listening. Anytime you want to give feedback about the service you have received from Beacon, simply visit bit.ly/echo-beacon and tell us your thoughts. Your feedback is completely anonymous and will help shape the service Beacon offers.

