



**Los Angeles
Center for
Law and Justice**

Know Your Rights

A Survivor's Guide

Basic information about the rights of crime victims in
Los Angeles

Contact Us:

Phone: (323) 980-3500
Email: services@laclj.org
Services are by appointment only.

LACLJ **secures justice** for survivors of domestic violence and
sexual assault and **empowers** them to create their own future

Learning about Trauma

Trauma is a normal response to danger.

Trauma is a normal response to an experience that is dangerous, like domestic violence
or sexual assault. Trauma can affect your body, mind or spirit, but you do not have to
suffer.

What can I do to protect myself from the effects of trauma?

- Talk to trusted friends or family
- Call a hotline to talk anonymously
- Take care of yourself: eat healthy, drink water, exercise, get enough sleep
- Remind yourself that the way you are feeling is a normal response to what has
happened to you.

Crisis Hotline: 1-800-273-8255 (24/7)

Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 (24/7)

Human Trafficking Hotline: 1-888-539-2373 (24/7)

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Victim Advocates

You have the right to a support person.

There are different types of victim advocates:

- LACLJ Community Care Advocate (CCA)
- Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART)
- Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)
- District or City Attorney Victim Advocate

Victim advocates can help with:

- Going with you to court and/or to make a report
- Helping you think about plans to help keep you safe
- Paperwork for CalVCB, Medi-Cal, etc.
- Connecting you with other services
- Case status notification
- Restitution assistance

DA Victim Advocate: (213) 257-2173

L.A. City Attorney Advocate: (213) 978-4537

Incident Reports

You have the right to report the crime to law enforcement.

- You have the right to make an incident report at the time of the crime, or any time
after the crime. This is your choice.
- You don't have to report alone. An advocate, family member or friend can go with
you.
- An incident report might lead to criminal charges being filed against the offender.
- An incident report allows you to make an official record of what the offender has
done, which can be helpful if you need to show to others that you were a victim of a
crime.

**You know best about whether to report. Talk to a victim advocate or your attorney if
you need help deciding.**

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V.I.N.E.

You can get up-to-date information about an offender's custody status and criminal case information.

VINE gives offender and criminal case information to survivors.

VINE is free of charge, confidential (the offender will not know that you are signed up) and available in multiple languages, TTY, etc.

Register by phone: 1-877-411-5588

Register on line: www.vinelink.com

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Marsy's Law

Victims have rights in the criminal process.

Some rights are automatic, like the right to protection, a fair process, to keep your information private, and the right to refuse to talk to the offender's attorney.

Some rights you have to ask for, like the right notice of hearings and to be heard at hearings. Ask in advance and in writing.

**The prosecutor is NOT the victim's attorney.
LACLJ can help you protect your rights in the criminal case.**

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Emergency Protective Orders

You can request an Emergency Protective Order (EPO).

You can get an EPO from law enforcement when you make a report at the scene of the incident or at the station. To get an EPO, law enforcement calls a judge who is on call 24/7 to make these orders.

An EPO is good for 5 to 7 days and may give you some protection and/or a move-out order while you are taking some time to decide your next steps.

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Restraining Orders

You have the right to ask for a restraining order, even if you did not make an incident report.

These orders are made by a judge after you prepare special forms and the court holds a hearing. You will need to go to the hearing and tell your story to the judge. The offending person has the right to go to the hearing and tell their side. An order can last 1-5 years.

A Domestic Violence restraining order can include orders like:

- Stay away, no-contact and move-out orders
- Child custody, visitation, and support orders
- Orders to protect pets

Your LACLJ legal team can help guide you through your specific case and may be able to represent you at the hearing.

What are some benefits of a Restraining Order?

- They can be enforced by the police
- It can help prove the abuse to others, like an employer, landlord, or government agency

What are some risks of a Restraining Order?

- You may see the offender in court
- The judge may not grant all of your requests
- Restraining orders are not permanent

You understand your own situation best. Trust your judgment about what is safest for you and your family.

California Victim Compensation Board (CalVCB)

You have the right to ask for reimbursement of costs caused by the crime.

You do not need a police report or a conviction against the offender to apply for CalVCB. But you will need some proof that you have been a victim of crime.

CalVCB can help with many costs, such as: lost income, counseling, medical and dental services, relocation expenses, and more.

CalVCB will ask for receipts, crime reports, and bills and other proof of your expenses. They will also ask for your insurance information. CalVCB will not pay for expenses that can be paid in another way, like through insurance.

**Apply on-line: online.victims.ca.gov
LACLJ can help you with your CalVCB application.**

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Restitution

Convicted offenders who caused money losses must pay the victim back.

Victim: gives copies of bills and receipts related to the crime to the prosecutor or probation office to use as evidence.

Prosecutor: gives your evidence to the court.

Court: decides how much the offender will pay.

Restitution applies to felony cases and some misdemeanor cases.

There is no time limit to ask for restitution.

Your LACLJ legal team can help you ask for a Restitution Order.

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Safe at Home

You can keep your address private.

Safe at Home gives a mailing address to the survivor that is different from their home address so they can keep their home address private.

You can sign up for Safe at Home at LACLJ.

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Immigration

You have the right to apply for lawful status in the U.S. if you are a victim of a crime like domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking.

- Some types of relief require you to cooperate with law enforcement.
- You may also be able to include your undocumented children in your petition, whether they live in the U.S. or abroad.
- After applying for immigration relief, you and the undocumented children in your household may be eligible to get public benefits like cash assistance, food stamps and full-scope MediCal.
- Gather all potential evidence of the harm you suffered in a way that is SAFE and LEGAL and keep it in a safe place.
- Take photos of evidence that won't be available at a later time
- Do NOT leave the U.S. until reviewing your options with a reputable immigration attorney

Your LACLJ legal team can help you in your immigration matters.

If you are not an LACLJ client, get help from a reputable immigration attorney immediately if you have any undocumented children close to age 21, OR any undocumented siblings close to age 18, OR an upcoming immigration court hearing.

AVOID dishonest immigration consultants, usually known as "notarios," who may charge you high fees and put you at greater risk for removal. Instead call: LACLJ (323-980-3500) or Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (1-800-399-4529) or Neighborhood Legal Services of LA County (1-800-433-6251) to find out about free legal services for survivors. If they can't help you, they can refer you to a reputable immigration attorney.

**If someone you know is detained by ICE, encourage their family members to call the Raids and Rapid Response Network:
888-624-4752.**