

## Glossary

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**Arraignment:** The court hearing in which the defendant is formally charged with a crime and enters a plea of guilty or not guilty.

**Bail:** An amount of money which is sometimes imposed by the court to ensure the defendants appearance at future court hearings.

**Continuance:** A postponement of a case marked for trial or hearing to a later date.

**Default:** A defendant's failure to appear at a required legal proceeding.

**Pre-Trial Conference:** The hearing in which the prosecutor and the defense report the status of the case to the court.

**Victim Impact Statement:** As a victim of a crime you have the right to offer a verbal or written statement to the court after the defendant has been found guilty at trial or has admitted sufficient facts.

**Restitution:** In some cases, the Judge may order the defendant to pay the out-of-pocket expenses that you may have incurred as a result of the crime. Advocates are available to assist you in documenting your losses.

**Probation:** The defendant is placed under the supervision of a probation officer and is required to fulfill certain conditions set forth by the court for a specified period of time.



## Assistance

### The Victim Assistance Program

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The Plymouth County  
District Attorney's Office

166 Main Street  
Brockton, MA 02301

508-584-8120

[www.plymouthda.com](http://www.plymouthda.com)

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**TIMOTHY J. CRUZ**  
Plymouth County District Attorney

The Plymouth County  
District Attorney's Office



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## A Message from the District Attorney:



As your District Attorney, my primary mission is to ensure public safety in our neighborhoods, and provide for the protection of our citizens.

Without the assistance and cooperation of victims and witnesses, the successful prosecution of criminal cases cannot be achieved.

Victim Witness Advocates are available in every court to ensure that victims, witnesses and family members are afforded their rights under the law.

Sincerely,

Timothy J. Cruz  
District Attorney

This project was supported by the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance through a Victims Crime Act of 1984 (VOCA) grant from the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

## The Victim Assistance Program

The Victim Assistance Program is committed to assisting victims and witnesses of crime in Plymouth County.

Advocates are available to provide information and guidance through the criminal justice process, and to protect victim's rights under the law.

If you are a victim or a witness to a crime and need assistance, please call us now at: **508-584-8120.**

Our Advocates are trained to assist with the social, physical and emotional needs of all victims and witnesses in Plymouth County.

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### Receiving a Summons

A summons is a court order that directs you to appear in court at a stated time and place.

If you receive a summons please call the District Attorney's office prior to your court appearance at the telephone number indicated on your summons.

## Victim's Rights

The Victim Bill of Rights was enacted to give support and protection to victims. Services which are mandated by the Victim Bill of Rights include:

- ◆ Notification of all court dates, appearances and the final disposition of the case.
- ◆ A secure waiting area during court proceedings.
- ◆ The right to confer with the prosecutor prior to the start of trial, prior to a case being dismissed, and prior to a sentencing recommendation.
- ◆ The right to confer with the probation officer prior to his filing of a full pre-sentence report on the defendant with the court.
- ◆ Notification of the time and place of sentencing.
- ◆ Assistance with preparing and presenting a Victim Impact Statement to the court, either orally or in writing.
- ◆ Information and assistance regarding: Requesting restitution; Witness fees; Social Service referrals and Employer and creditor intercession services.



Assistance