

# Help for victims of crime

A special issue from Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security

English Express

## Anyone can become a victim of crime

### Laws protect people

Canada has many laws to protect people. For example, it is against the law to break into someone's home or to assault someone.

Some people break the law. They commit crimes.

### Meet the Chans

The Chans own a store. Two people robbed their store. The Chans became victims of crime.



Anyone can become a victim of crime. On these pages, you will read about help for victims of crime. You will read more about the Chans on pages B, C and D.

### Some examples of crimes

■ family violence  
Example: hitting a child or a spouse



■ assault  
Example: hitting someone

■ sexual assault  
Example: forcing someone to have sex



■ breaking and entering  
Example: breaking into someone's house



■ human trafficking  
Example: bringing people to Canada, taking away their passports, and forcing them to work with no pay



## Police protect us

In Canada, police protect people. Police cannot break the law. They cannot take bribes.



Here are some things that police do in Canada:

- ✓ protect people and property
- ✓ prevent crimes
- ✓ investigate crimes
- ✓ arrest suspects
- ✓ lay charges against suspects
- ✓ testify at trials



Police also help at community events.



Calgary Police Service

### 3 main types of police

Police in your area might be:

**1** local police  
(For example: Calgary Police Service)



**2** RCMP  
(Royal Canadian Mounted Police)  
—usually in rural Alberta and in some cities



**3** First Nations police



### Don't be afraid to call

#### If it is an emergency

■ Call 9-1-1. The 9-1-1 operator will call the police. The police will come as soon as they can.

**Note:** In Alberta, a few areas do not have 9-1-1. In these areas, call the number for the local police or RCMP, not 9-1-1.

#### If it is NOT an emergency

■ Call or visit a police station or RCMP detachment. You can take someone with you. You can also ask for an interpreter.

## Victims of crime can get help

Alberta has many victim services programs. They give free help to victims of crime.

After a serious crime, the police might call victim services workers to come right away. Or the police might give you a phone number to call.

### What can victim services workers do?

- ✓ They can talk to you about your feelings.
- ✓ They can go with you to a trial.
- ✓ They can refer you to other people or programs.
- ✓ They can help you fill out forms.

Don't be afraid or ashamed to ask for help. You can call victim services programs at any time. Call the police and ask for programs in your area. Or you can find a program at:

[www.victims.alberta.ca](http://www.victims.alberta.ca)

### Strong feelings are normal

After a crime, you might feel angry, afraid, worried, confused or helpless. It might be hard to trust people. These feelings are normal.

Also, you might not sleep well. You might gain or lose weight. You might have aches and pains.

I feel so angry about the robbery. Why did this happen to us?



Talk to someone about your feelings. For example: friends, family or victim services workers.

## People in this story



Ming and Mei Chan own a small store.



A man and a woman rob the Chans' store.



Paramedics give medical help.



Police officers investigate the crime.



Victim services workers help the Chans after the robbery.



The Crown prosecutor works for the Alberta government. She prepares a case against the robbers. She is not the victims' lawyer.

The defence lawyer works for the accused (robbers).



The judge works for the public. At a trial, he listens carefully to all of the evidence. Then he makes decisions about the case.

## The robbery



**1** A man and a woman come into the Chans' store.



**2** The man and woman rob the store. They steal some money.



**3** The man knocks Mei down as he runs out of the store.

Our store was robbed. My wife is hurt! Send an ambulance and the police.



9-1-1 operator



**4** Ming calls 9-1-1. The 9-1-1 operator sends help.

## A few minutes later



**5** An ambulance arrives. The paramedics help Mei.

We are victim services workers. We are here to help you.



**7** Victim services workers arrive. They will help the Chans for many months.



**6** The police arrive. Ming tells them about the robbery. The police write down his story (witness statement).



**8** The police talk to Ming. They explain what will happen in the next few days. They give Ming:

- the name and phone number of the investigating officer
- a police file number

The paramedics take Mei to the hospital.



## After the robbery

### Two days later



**9** The Chans go to the police station and talk to the victim services workers.



**10** The Chans can apply for money from the Alberta government's Victims of Crime Fund.

### Two weeks later



**11** The Chans make their store safer.



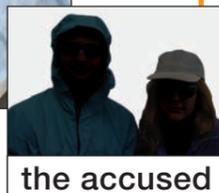
**12** The police arrest 2 people.



**13** The victim services workers bring important information to the Chans.



**14** The accused say they are not guilty. So there will be a trial.



the accused



**15** The victim services workers give important forms to the Chans.



**16** The Chans feel better after they talk to the victim services workers.

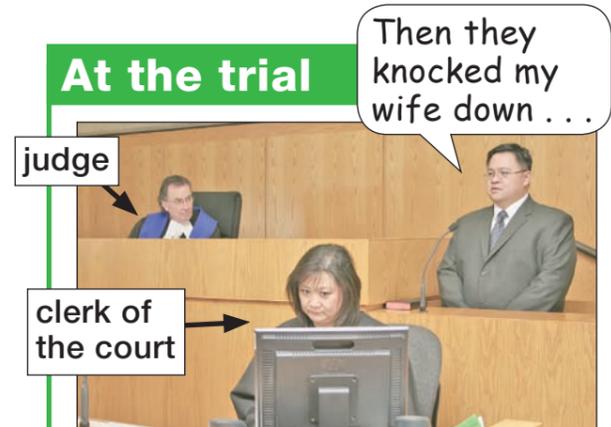
## 6 months later

### Before the trial



**17** The Chans are nervous about the trial. A few weeks before the trial, victim services workers show the Chans a courtroom.

### At the trial



**18** The Chans are witnesses. They saw the robbers. The Chans testify at the trial. They promise to tell the truth.



Crown prosecutor



defence lawyer

**19** The Crown prosecutor asks the Chans questions.

The defence lawyer asks questions too. He is the lawyer for the accused.

At the end of this trial, the judge decides that the accused are guilty. Now the accused are called offenders.

### The sentencing



**20** The judge will decide how to punish the offenders. The punishment is called a sentence.

Ming and Mei choose to read their Victim Impact Statements in court. Then the judge gives his sentence.

## Forms to fill out

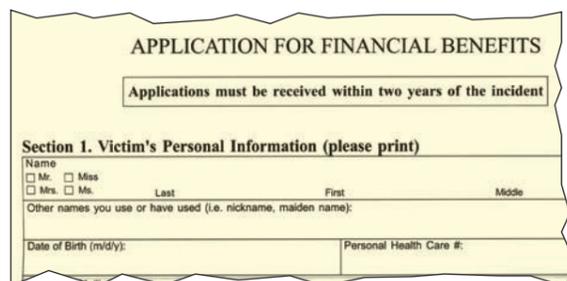
### 1 Financial Benefits form

The Alberta government gives money to victims of violent crime. You can apply for money if you are a victim. For example:

- You have emotional problems after the crime. You feel afraid and very angry.
- A family member is killed.

Why does Mei apply for benefits? Because she was injured in a crime. Her arm was broken.

**Note:** Usually, you must apply within 2 years of the crime.



APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL BENEFITS

Applications must be received within two years of the incident

Section I. Victim's Personal Information (please print)

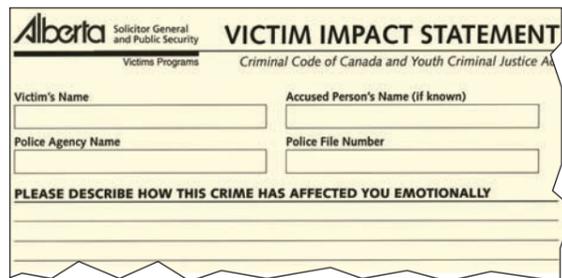
Name  
 Mr.  Miss  
 Mrs.  Ms. Last First Middle  
 Other names you use or have used (i.e. nickname, maiden name):

Date of Birth (m/d/y): Personal Health Care #:

### 2 Victim Impact Statement

You can fill out a Victim Impact Statement after the police charge someone with the crime. Write down how the crime is affecting you and your family.

Use your own words. You can write in any language. You can ask someone to help you.



Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT  
 Victims Programs Criminal Code of Canada and Youth Criminal Justice Act

Victim's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Accused Person's Name (if known): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Police Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Police File Number: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW THIS CRIME HAS AFFECTED YOU EMOTIONALLY

If you want, you or someone else can read your statement out loud in court. Or the judge can read it silently.

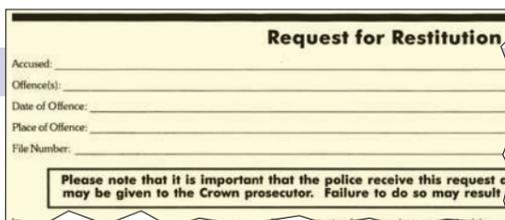
In his statement, Ming talks about being angry and nervous after the robbery.

### 3 Request for Restitution form

You can fill out a Request for Restitution form. Give it to the police as soon as you can.

Restitution means that the offender pays money to you or makes repairs. For example:

☞ Mei fills out the form. She wants the offenders to pay for her new glasses.



Request for Restitution

Accused: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Offence(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Offence: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Place of Offence: \_\_\_\_\_  
 File Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please note that it is important that the police receive this request as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in the Crown prosecutor not being able to recover the costs of this worker.

☞ Mei can't work for 2 weeks after the robbery. She hires someone to replace her at the store for 2 weeks. Mei asks the offenders to pay the costs for this worker.

## Inside a courtroom in Alberta



- ✓ Alberta has many types of courtrooms. They do not all look the same inside.
- ✓ Many people are at a trial. For example: a judge, lawyers, the accused, witnesses, news reporters and people from the community.

- ✓ In a courtroom, be respectful and polite. Wear good clothes to a trial. For example: clothes you might wear to a job interview.
- ✓ Do you need an interpreter? Talk to the victim services workers or the Crown prosecutor's office.

## More help

### The Alberta Association of Sexual Assault Centres

You can find a list of sexual assault centres at: [www.aasac.ca](http://www.aasac.ca)

### Child Abuse Hotline

Call 1-800-387-5437 (free).  
 In Alberta, you must report child abuse. Your call is confidential.

### Kid's Help Phone

Call 1-800-668-6868 (free).  
 Children and youth can call 24 hours a day. For example, they might call about abuse, drugs or family problems.

## Free booklets

### Victim of Crime Handbook

This handbook is for immigrants and refugees. It talks about help for victims of crime. You can get this booklet in different languages—Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Khmer, Kiswahili, Kurdish, Punjabi, Somali, Spanish, Tigrigna, Vietnamese.

### Victims of Crime Protocol

This handbook has very detailed information for victims of crime. It is also a good reference for teachers and agency workers.

☞ You can print copies of these handbooks. Go to:  
[www.victims.alberta.ca](http://www.victims.alberta.ca)

☞ You can also order copies of these handbooks.

In Edmonton: Call 780-427-3460.  
 Outside Edmonton: Call 310-0000, then enter 780-427-3460 (free).

## How to order this special issue

☞ Educational programs for adults, public libraries and agencies in Alberta can order extra copies of this special issue from Victims Programs, Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security.

In Edmonton: Call 780-427-3460.  
 Outside Edmonton: Call 310-0000, then enter 780-427-3460 (free).

☞ You can also read this special issue on the Internet. Go to:  
[www.victims.alberta.ca](http://www.victims.alberta.ca)

Special thanks to the Advisory Committee and other reviewers, and to the volunteers in the photos. The robbery in this special issue is fictional and is for illustration purposes only.

*English Express* is for adults who are improving their English reading skills.

**Help for victims of crime** is a special issue of *English Express*. It was sponsored by Alberta Solicitor General and Public Security, Victims Programs, in co-operation with Alberta Advanced Education and Technology.

**Help for victims of crime**

April 2008 ISSN0825-5466

ISBN978-0-7785-7195-7

Alberta