

Victoria Police Manual – Policy Rules

Victim support

Context

Victoria Police is often the first point of contact for a victim following a crime and as such members play an essential role in providing support and assisting victims through the criminal justice system. The *Victims' Charter Act 2006* provides legislated standards for the treatment of victims of crime by the criminal justice system. These include:

- recognising the impact of crime on the victim
- recognising that all persons adversely affected by crime should be treated with respect by all investigatory and prosecuting agencies, and should be offered information to enable them to access appropriate services
- reducing the likelihood of secondary victimisation by the criminal justice system.

Given the primary role Victoria Police plays in investigating and prosecuting crime, it is essential that employees comply with the requirements of the *Victims' Charter Act* and ensure that victims are treated with courtesy, respect and dignity.

These Policy Rules apply when interacting with victims of:

- all crimes against the person
- indictable crimes involving vehicle collision
- stalking

Refer to s.3, *Victims' Charter Act* or **VPMG Victim support** for the definition of victim.

Application

Policy Rules are mandatory and provide the minimum standards that employees must apply. Non-compliance with or a departure from a Policy Rule may be subject to management or disciplinary action. Employees must use the **Professional and ethical standards** to inform the decisions they make to support compliance with Policy Rules.

These Policy Rules apply to:

- Operational members

Rules and responsibilities

1. Responsibilities of the investigating member

- The investigating member must provide victims with information about the support services and entitlements available to them. This information is included in the Victims' Guide and the Notice to Victim [Form L1].
- Unless the victim objects, the investigating member must ensure that the:
 - investigation process is explained to the victim
 - victim is kept informed of the key stages in the investigation and prosecution; - see **VPMG Victim support** for obligatory information which should be provided in this instance.
- Where the matter will be heard in the Children's Court, the investigating member must inform the victim that it is an offence to publish or cause to be published the name of the accused (s.534, *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*); see **VPMG Victim Support** for further detail.
- Where a victim has requested to be notified of the progress of the investigation and prosecution, the informant is required to record the obligatory information provided, on LEAP. See **VPMG Victim support** for details.

2. Victim impact statements

Where an offender has been charged, inform the victim of their right to complete a Victim Impact Statement (VIS) and have regard to **VPMG Victim support** for the member's role in relation to the VIS.

3. Reported breaches of the Victim's Charter Act

- Where a complaint is made against a member in relation to a breach of the *Victim's Charter Act*, the subject member and their supervisor must address the issue.
- Where a complaint cannot be resolved, the victim may be referred to the Victim's Charter Enquiries and Complaints Line, Victim Support Agency (VSA).

Quick links

- [VPMG Victim support](#)
- [VPMG Crime reporting and investigations](#)
- [Victims of crime operational procedures](#)

Further advice and information

For further advice and assistance regarding these Policy Rules, contact the Victims' Advisory Unit, Operations Co-ordination Department.

Update history

Date of first issue	22/2/10	
Date updated	Summary of change	Force file number
29/08/11	Section 1 – Provided greater clarification about the requirement for members to record obligatory information on LEAP when a victim requested they be notified of key stages in the investigation and prosecution.	058906/09