



Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime

Victims First. Heard. Respect.

The Office of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime marks another step by the Canadian Government to help better meet the needs of victims of crime in matters of federal jurisdiction. The establishment of the office is in response to victim and victim advocates calls for increased voice in the criminal justice system and federal corrections.

Mandate

The mandate of the Federal Ombudsman for Victims of Crime will relate exclusively to matters of federal responsibility and will include:

- facilitating access of victims to existing federal programs and services by providing them with information and referrals;
- addressing complaints of victims about compliance with the provisions of the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* that apply to victims of offenders under federal supervision and providing an independent resource for those victims;
- enhancing awareness among criminal justice personnel and policy makers of the needs and concerns of victims and the applicable laws that benefit victims of crime, including to promote the principles set out in the *Canadian Statement of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime*; and
- identifying emerging issues and exploring systemic issues that impact negatively on victims of crime.

A request for review may be brought to the Ombudsman by:

- a registered victim, regarding requests for review or issues relating to the victim's rights under the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act*, or
- Any victim, victim service organization or victim advocate regarding other matters within federal responsibility.

Addressing the needs of victims of crime in Canada is a shared responsibility between all levels of government. For the most part, delivery of victim services is undertaken by the provinces and territories as they have responsibility for the administration of justice. The Ombudsman will not encroach on the jurisdiction of the provinces, nor require them to implement or expand programs.

The Ombudsman must commence a review at the request of the Minister of Justice or the Minister of Public Safety. Additionally, the Ombudsman may commence a review on receipt of a request for a review or on the Ombudsman's own initiative.

The Ombudsman may issue reports, including recommendations on specific matters, to the Minister of Justice or the Minister of Public Safety, depending on the issue.

Although the Ombudsman's recommendations would not be binding, the government will seriously consider the recommendations. The Ombudsman may request a response from the government that indicates what action is contemplated or being taken with respect to the report's recommendations or explains why the recommended action will not be taken.