

Network of Support and Co-operation for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences





Women's Room – Center for Sexual Rights

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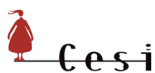
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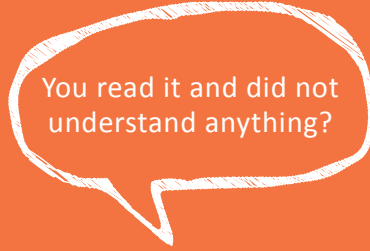
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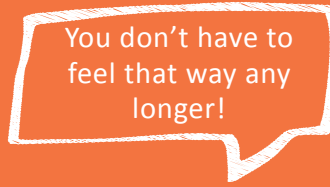
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Hiç kimse, suç fiilinin kurbanı veya şahidi olmaya hazırlanmamıştır, bu nedenle destek son derece önemlidir!



This is how you feel when you receive a letter from court or when someone says you have the right to ask to be questioned via audio/video device?



Turn to us with confidence!

Introduction

This Publication was created with the aim to introduce the **“Network of Support and Co-operation for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences”** and to provide information of available services where victims and witnesses of criminal offences (and domestic violence misdemeanor offences) can turn for help and support. Apart from answering the question whom to contact for help and support, the Publication contains information about the services accessible for victims and witnesses of criminal offences (and domestic violence misdemeanor offences), the rights of victims of criminal offences and the importance of systemic and standardized help and support.

Organized provision of support to victims and witnesses in courts in the Republic of Croatia started already in 2008 through the establishment of Victim and Witness Support Departments within the county courts. Nowadays, Victim Support Departments work in county courts of Zagreb, Osijek, Vukovar, Zadar, Split, Rijeka and Sisak. Besides the courts where they were established, the departments provide support in municipal and some Misdemeanor courts (in cases of domestic violence).

Expanding the organized system of supporting victims and witnesses of criminal offences started in 2018 through establishing **“Network of Support and Co-operation for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences”** and including civil society organizations in that system from the territory of 13 counties where there were no Victim and Witness Support Departments established. The main aim of such support system for victims and witnesses of criminal offences is to ensure accessibility of services which are free of charge, efficient and standardized in every county regardless of victim’s or witnesses’ place of living or place where the criminal or misdemeanor procedure is conducted.

Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and the Council from 25 October 2012 on establishment of minimal standards for rights, support and protection of victims of criminal offences and on the replacement of the Council Framework 2001/220/PUP is the key international document, which is obligatory for the Republic of Croatia. Its objective is to ensure that the victims of criminal offences receive adequate information, support and protection and to enable them to participate in a criminal proceeding. All activities which are implemented within the work of **“Network of Support and Co-operation for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences”** are in accordance with the Directive as well as with the provisions of Criminal Procedure Law and the National Strategy on Development of the Support System to Victims and Witnesses in the Republic of Croatia in period 2016-2020.

The Ministry of Justice and Public Administration of the Republic of Croatia, being the competent body for co-ordination of the support system to victims and witnesses, financially supports the work of the **“Network of Support and Co-operation for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences”**.

Program Manager

Anamaria Drožđan-Kranjčec, mag. iur.

IF YOU ARE A VICTIM OR A WITNESS OF CRIMINAL OFFENCE OR MISDEMEANOR OFFENCE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, YOU ARE SURELY FACING MANY QUESTIONS AND DILEMMAS...

WHAT CAN I DO?

SHOULD I HIRE A LAWYER?

WHAT WILL BE MY FIRST STEP?

HOW TO REPORT A CRIMINAL OFFENCE?

HOW LONG WILL THE COURT PROCEDURE LAST?

WHO TO TURN TO FOR HELP?

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

HOW CAN I REALIZE MY RIGHTS?



IF YOU ARE A VICTIM OR WITNESS OF A CRIMINAL OFFENCE OR A MISDEMEANOR OFFENCE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, YOU MAY HAVE TO COPE WITH NUMEROUS CONSEQUENCES:

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES (e.g., mood changes, depression, fear, anxiety, panic attacks, sleep disturbances, eating disorders, problems with concentration, feeling distracted, etc.).

PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES (e.g., gynecological consequences, bodily injuries, long-term consequences that do not appear immediately after violence such as migraine and other frequent headaches, back pain, incontinency and similar problems).

SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES (e.g., mistrust by social environment, isolation, loss of close ones, loss of job and the like).

BECAUSE OF ALL LISTED ABOVE, THE HELP AND SUPPORT ARE OF EXTREME IMPORTANCE.

No person is ever prepared to become a victim or witness of criminal offence; therefore, the support is of crucial importance. There is no “right way” to react on crime i.e., traumatic experience that happened to you. Everyone reacts differently and everyone needs a different form of help and support.

Participation in the court procedure for victims and witnesses can be a stressful and uncomfortable experience. By providing assistance during court proceedings, we tend to reduce discomfort, fear and stress, and to ensure victim’s trust in the judicial system and more effective realization of the legal rights of victims of criminal offences.

“

A victim was glad that she could ask someone questions without restraint and fear.

Notice by confidential person

Network of Support and Co-operation for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences

1.

WHAT IS THE NETWORK OF SUPPORT AND CO-OPERATION FOR VICTIMS AND WITNESSES OF CRIMINAL OFFENCES?

The Network of Support and Co-operation for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences is a network of 11 civil society organizations which provide assistance and support for victims and witnesses of criminal offences (and misdemeanor offences of domestic violence) from the territory of 13 counties where Victim and Witness Support Departments were not established.

2.

WHAT SERVICES ARE PROVIDED BY MEMBERS OF THE NETWORK OF SUPPORT AND CO-OPERATION?

- Provision of emotional and practical support, technical and practical information and information about rights,
- Provision of psychological and legal counseling,
- Provision of support to victims and witnesses who did not report the criminal offence and providing support after the completion of court proceedings,
- Provision of support to victims and witnesses by accompaniment to the court,
- Provision of support to victims and witnesses of criminal offences by accompaniment to police, prosecutors' office and/or social welfare centers.

Services of the Network of Support and Co-operation for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences are **available regardless of whether you reported the criminal or misdemeanor offence. Besides, services are also available for a certain period of time after the court proceeding is concluded.**

3.

IS THE SERVICE FREE OF CHARGE FOR ITS BENEFICIARIES?

Yes, all services of the “Network of Support and Co-operation for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences” are **completely free of charge** for all beneficiaries who turn to us for assistance and support.

4.

HOW CAN I CONTACT YOU FOR HELP AND SUPPORT?

For assistance and support you can turn to us via phone, email and in person in the premises of our organizations.

For more information, please, visit www.mrezapodrskeisuradnje.com

“

It meant a lot to the injured party that she had someone by her side because until now she was alone each time and felt embarrassed.

Notice of confidential person



5.

WHOM I CAN TURN TO IN MY COUNTY FOR HELP AND SUPPORT?



BJELOVAR – BILOGORA COUNTY AND KOPRIVNICA – KRIZEVCI COUNTY



ASSOCIATION "HERA" KRIZEVCI - FOR THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

- I.Z.Dijankovečkog 5, 48 260 Križevci
- 048 / 271 - 335
- info@udruga-hera.info
- www.udruga-hera.info
- every day from 8 am to 4 pm

BJELOVAR – BILOGORA COUNTY AND POZEGA – SLAVONIJA COUNTY



CENTER FOR SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY „DOLPHIN”

- Braće Radića 13, 34 550 Pakrac
- 034 / 411 - 780 098 / 1617 - 623
- delfin.zamir@gmail.com
- www.delfin-pakrac.com
- every day from 8 am to 4 pm

SLAVONSKI BROD – POSAVINA COUNTY



INFORMATION LEGAL CENTER

- Juraja Dobrile 34, 35 000 Slavonki Brod
- 035 / 448 - 533
- info@ipc.com.hr
- www.ipc.com.hr
- every day from 8 am to 4 pm

DUBROVNIK – NERETVA COUNTY



DEŠA DUBROVNIK - REGIONAL CENTER FOR COMMUNITY BUILDING AND CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT



Fraňa Supila 8, 20 000 Dubrovnik



020 / 311 - 625



zip@desa-dubrovnik.hr



www.desa-dubrovnik.hr



every day from 8 am to 4 pm

ISTRIA COUNTY



CGI POREČ - CENTRE FOR CIVIL INITIATIVES POREČ



Partizanska 2d, 52 440 Poreč



095 / 3500 - 733



podrskacgi@gmail.com



www.cgiporec.hr



every day from 8 am to 4 pm

KARLOVAC COUNTY AND LIKA – SENJ COUNTY



WOMEN'S GROUP KARLOVAC „STEP“



Ulica Vladka Mačeka 6, II floor, 47 000 Karlovac



047 / 600 - 392



podrska.korak@gmail.com



www.grupakorak.hr



every day from 8 am to 4 pm

KRAPINA – ZAGORJE COUNTY



CENTER FOR EDUCATION, COUNSELING AND RESEARCH SOS TELEPHONE AND COUNSELING FOR WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE IN KRAPINA-ZAGORJE COUNTY



Trg Svete Jelene 6, 49 210 Zabok



049/ 492 - 688



zrtveisvjedoci@cesi.hr



every day from 8 am to 4 pm

MEDIMURJE COUNTY AND VARAZDIN COUNTY



VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT SERVICE

- 📍 Graberje 33/II, 42 000 Varaždin
- ☎ 095 / 1160 - 066
- ✉ varazdin@pzs.hr
- 🕒 every day from 8 am to 4 pm

VIROVITICA – PODRAVINA COUNTY



SOS VIROVITICA - S.O.S. - COUNSELING, EMPOWERMENT, CO-OPERATION

- ☎ 033 / 721 - 500
- ✉ sos.vt@email.t-com.hr
- 📍 www.sosvt.hr
- 🕒 every day from 8 am to 4 pm

SIBENIK – KNIN COUNTY



ASSOCIATION ZVONIMIR

- 📍 Domagojeva 12, 22 300 Knin
- ☎ 022 / 662 - 554 📱 091 / 2015 - 125
- ✉ zvonimir@zvonimir.hr
- 📍 www.zvonimir.hr
- 🕒 every day from 8 am to 4 pm

VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT DEPARTMENTS

Victim and Witness Support Departments are not a part of the “Network of Support and Co-operation for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences” which is consisted of civil society organizations, but they are a vital part of system for supporting victims and witnesses in counties where the Network of Support and Co-operation has no activities.

Departments with their head offices in county courts work also in competent municipal courts.

OSIJEK



COUNTY COURT IN OSIJEK

- Europska avenija 7
- 031 / 228 - 500
- podrska-svjedocima@zos.pravosudje.hr

RIJEKA



COUNTY COURT IN RIJEKA

- Žrtava fašizma 7
- 051 / 355 – 645
- podrska-svjedocima-ri@pravosudje.hr

SISAK



COUNTY COURT IN SISAK

- Trg Ljudevita Posavskog 5
- tel: 044 / 524 – 419
- podrska-svjedocima-sk@zssk.pravosudje.hr

SPLIT



COUNTY COURT IN SPLIT

- Gundulićeva 29a
- tel: 021 / 387 – 543
- podrska-svjedocima-st@pravosudje.hr

VUKOVAR



COUNTY COURT IN VUKOVAR

- Županijska 33
- 032 / 452 – 529
- podrska-svjedocima-vu@pravosudje.hr

ZADAR



COUNTY COURT IN ZADAR

- Borelli 9
- 023 / 203 – 640
- podrska-svjedocima@pravosudje.hr

ZAGREB



COUNTY COURT IN ZAGREB

- Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinskog 5
- 01 / 4801 – 062



MUNICIPAL CRIMINAL COURT IN ZAGREB

- Ilica 207
- 01 / 3477 – 333
- podrska-svjedocima-zg@pravosudje.hr

“

The injured party thanked me for being there and asked why I was not present the first time, because some things would have been clearer for him.

Statement of a confidential (male) person

6.

WHAT ARE THE RIGHTS OF VICTIMS OF CRIMINAL OFFENCES?

A victim of criminal offence has certain rights guaranteed by the **Criminal Procedure Law**. The court, prosecutors' office and police are responsible, when undertaking the initial action in which the victim participates, to inform the victim about her/his rights in a way that is comprehensible for her/him.

The role of the Network of Support and Co-operation for Victims and Witnesses is to assist you in interpreting the rights and providing assistance in realizing these rights.

A victim has the following rights:

1. the right to access the services for supporting victims of criminal offences,
2. the right on effective psychological and other professional assistance and support by body, organization or institution for helping victims of criminal offences,
3. the right on protection from intimidation and revenge,
4. the right to the protection of her dignity during witness testimony,
5. the right to have a hearing without unjustified postponement after submission of criminal charge and to have further hearing only to the extent which is necessary for the purpose of criminal proceeding,
6. the right on accompaniment of the confidential person when undertaking actions in which she/he participates,
7. the right that medical examinations are kept to a minimum and are carried out only when strictly necessary for the criminal proceedings,
8. the right to submit a motion for prosecution and private lawsuit in accordance with the Criminal Code, the right to participate in the criminal procedure as an injured party, the right to be informed of dismissal of criminal charges and withdrawal of state attorney from criminal prosecution and the right to undertake criminal prosecution instead of the state attorney,
9. the right on information provided by the state attorney about undertaken actions in connection with her/his charge and submission of reclaim to senior state attorney,
10. the right to be informed upon her/his own request, without unjustified postponement, about release from custody or escape of the defendant, the release of the convicted person from prison, and measures that have been undertaken for her protection,

11. the right to be informed upon her/his own request about any decision that validly completes criminal procedure,
12. other rights laid down by law.

A victim of criminal offence where the prescribed sentence is longer than five years, if suffering the consequences of the criminal offence, has the right to professional help of counselor from budgetary resources when submitting claim for indemnification.

A victim of criminal offence, committed intentionally, has the right to financial compensation from state budget in accordance with a special law.

A victim of criminal offence against sexual freedom and a victim of criminal offence of human trafficking has, along with rights enjoyed by all victims, also the right:

1. to speak with a counselor before questioning, financed from the state budget,
2. on attorney, financed from the state budget,
3. to be questioned by person of the same sex in police and state prosecutors' office and, if possible, in case of repeated questioning, to be questioned by that same person,
4. to withhold answer to questions which are not in connection with the criminal offence and relate strictly to the private life of the victim,
5. to request to be questioned via audio/video device,
6. on confidentiality of personal data,
7. to request exclusion of the public from the hearing.

A child as a victim of criminal offence has, along with rights enjoyed by all victims, also the right:

1. on attorney, financed from the state budget,
2. on confidentiality of personal data,
3. on exclusion of the public.

The court, the state attorney, the investigator and the police are required to treat the child in an especially respectful manner, keeping in mind their age, personality and other characteristics in order to avoid adverse consequences in their upbringing and development. In dealing with child victims, the responsible organization must be guided by the best interests of the child.

Besides, in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Law, some victims may realize special protection measures based on **individual needs assessment**. The procedure of individual needs assessment consists of identifying whether there is the victim's need for implementation of special protection measures and, if so, what special protection measures are needed to be implemented in order to protect the victim additionally and in that way reduce the risk of her further re-traumatization or repeated victimization.

In accordance with the Ordinance of the Means of Implementation of Victim's Individual Needs Assessment, every body of pre-trial and criminal proceedings is obliged to conduct individual needs assessment. The needed data may be obtained from social welfare centers and other bodies, organizations and institutions who are providing assistance and support to victims of criminal offences and, in particular, from Victim and Witness Support Departments in county courts, where they have been established.

Bodies that are competent for carrying out individual needs assessment will take into consideration the recommendations of bodies, organizations and institutions **as well as the recommendations of civil society organizations** that provide assistance and support to victims and state that it is needed to assign protection measures for a victim, if those organizations and institutions have already drafted such recommendation based on their work with a victim.

A victim of criminal offence, committed intentionally, has the right to financial compensation from state budget in accordance with **The Act on Monetary Compensation for Victim's of Criminal Offences**. The application for financial compensation should be submitted to the Ministry of Justice and Public Administration, within 6 months from the date when the criminal offence was committed, and exceptionally, when deemed reasonable, within 3 years.

Organizations of the "Network of Support and Co-operation for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences" will **assist you in filling the application** for realizing financial compensation and provide you with information what accompanying documentation is needed.

“

A victim asked whether a confidential person may sit beside her while she is giving her statement and hold her hand, and this was approved.

Statement of confidential person

7.

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

By providing various services, we shall assist you in interpreting and realizing your rights, and reducing stress and discomfort. We shall assist you in the procedure of filing charges related to criminal or misdemeanor offences and in going through the court procedure.

The services available within activities of the “Network of Support and Co-operation for Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences” are:

- Provision of emotional and practical support, technical and practical information and information about rights,
- Provision of psychological and legal counseling,
- Provision of support to victims and witnesses who did not report the criminal offence and providing support after the completion of court proceedings,
- Provision of support to victims and witnesses by accompaniment to the court,
- Provision of support to victims and witnesses of criminal offences by accompaniment to police, prosecutors’ office and/or social welfare centers.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT is such form of communication where the aim is to alleviate emotions which affect bodily functions and cognitive capacity and impede daily functioning and going through court procedure. Providing emotional support is intended to ensure the best possible quality of life of beneficiaries, re-gaining control over one’s own life, better understanding of situation and the course of court procedure, and to facilitate the process of witnessing and ensure continuity of the hearing. Emotional support is a form of communication owing to which the person gains the feeling of being accepted, safety and the possibility of freely expressing their worries, fears, discomfort and other appearing emotions attached to experienced criminal offence or misdemeanor offence, as well as to the process of witnessing and other actions connected to the participation in the court and as a consequence of the survived trauma caused by committed criminal offence or misdemeanor offence (partially taken over from the Rules of Procedure for Victim and Witness Support Departments, NN 133/2015).

PROVISION OF INFORMATION ON THE RIGHTS in the course of filing criminal charges, during criminal procedure and misdemeanor offence procedure, refers to provision of information to beneficiaries about the rights defined by the separate regulations. Provision of practical information to beneficiaries refers to information on filing criminal charges procedure, the course of criminal and misdemeanor offence procedure, and the role of parties in the procedure. Practical information includes also provision of information about the bodies of public administration, bodies of local and regional self-governance, public institutions and civil society organizations that provide various forms of assistance according to the beneficiaries needs (partially taken over from the Rules of Procedure for Victim and Witness Support Departments, NN 133/2015).

PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING is the process of psychological empowerment of the person, which includes support by the expert (psychologist) in working through consequences of a criminal offence reflected in various functional, emotional and social difficulties. Psychological counseling is carried out with the aim of solving problems gradually and enhancing the feeling of psychological well-being.

LEGAL COUNSELING includes provision of legal advices i.e., complete guidance about the method and alternatives in solving, realizing and/or protection of the rights of victims and witnesses of criminal offences (partially taken over from the Law on Free Legal Aid NN 143/13). Legal counseling is carried out by experts (jurists), so that they facilitate realizing rights to victims and witnesses, in accordance with national and international regulations, and they facilitate the access for them to the courts and other public legal bodies in the Republic of Croatia.

One of the rights of victims of criminal offences is the right to **accompaniment by** a confidential person while undertaking actions where she/he participates.

Who is a confidential person?

The confidential person is a person whom you identify to be your “confidential person” when you undertake actions where you participate as a victim of criminal offence. It can be your family member, friend, but also someone from the organization you turned to for assistance and support or the Victim and Witness Support Departments. It is important to take care that the confidential person **IS NOT A WITNESS IN FURTHER PROCEDURE** – in that case, that person cannot be your confidential person.

The confidential person is not your attorney!

The role of the confidential person is:

- provision of emotional support and basic information on the course of action where you participate,

- provision of basic information in order to facilitate your undertaking of actions before competent bodies and institutions (e.g., checking if you know the exact address of the court building or if you are taking certain medications, she/he would remind you to take the relevant therapy and the like),
- during actions where the confidential person participates with you (e.g., reporting police, court hearing) must not in any way influence the course of these actions, as she is with you exclusively for emotional and technical support.

“

„It was priceless for the victim that the whole time in all phases of questioning, waiting for and reading of the verdict the confidential person was by her side. During questioning in the waiting room in the court and in the court room, I was often passing her water or, just by looking at her, sending her encouragement to bear the excruciating and uncomfortable situation. The victim would not have been able to go through that all by herself, she said she would have left the court building because she would not have endured such pressure.“

Notice of confidential person




“

*We deceive ourselves when we fancy that only
weakness needs support. Strength needs it far more.*

Madam Swetchine

**IF YOU ARE A VICTIM OR A WITNESS OF A CRIMINAL OFFENCE
(OR MISDEMEANOR OFFENCE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE),
YOU DO NOT NEED TO GO ALONE THROUGH THE
ENTIRE PROCEDURE ALONE.
WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!**



For all questions and
information, contact
us with confidence!

For more information, please, visit: www.mrezapodrskeisuradnje.com