



## SURVIVOR'S CHARTER

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Reporting domestic violence to the police and taking a case through the justice system can be a difficult and confusing experience. The police and other criminal justice agencies are there to support you and help you to get justice for your experience of domestic violence.

Below is what you should expect from the justice system as a minimum. If you feel that your experience does not reflect these principles then you can complain as your right to justice is not being met.

- ▶ **RESPECTED** – you should be treated with respect by every person you deal with, from the police to the courts.
- ▶ **BELIEVED** – you should feel that you have been believed by any member of a criminal justice agency and that your concerns are taken seriously.
- ▶ **PROTECTED** – you should feel safer once you have spoken to the police or any criminal justice agency and that they have put measures in place to protect you from further harm.
- ▶ **SUPPORTED** – you should feel supported by the criminal justice system and you should be told where you can go to get extra help and support for you and your children.
- ▶ **UPDATED** – you should be kept regularly updated on the progress of your case, and the work of the relevant criminal justice agency, throughout the whole process.
- ▶ **HEARD** – you should be asked by the police if you want to write a statement about how the violence has impacted on you which will be read out in Court.
- ▶ **SAFEGUARDED** – if you have to go to court as a witness you should be offered special measures to keep you safe and away from the perpetrator; for example a separate entrance or video-link when you give your evidence.
- ▶ **INFORMED** – the Witness Care Unit should inform you of any sentence given to the perpetrator within one working day and explain to you what this means.
- ▶ **EMPOWERED** – the criminal justice system is there to help you to be safe but also access justice for the violence you have suffered. The above principles should be adhered to and should help you to be empowered through the process.

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[www.womensaid.org.uk/accesstojustice](http://www.womensaid.org.uk/accesstojustice)