

Victim Witness Assistance Program

The military justice system is designed to ensure good order and discipline within the Army and also to protect the lives and property of members of the military community and the general public consistent with the fundamental rights of an accused. Without the cooperation of victims and witnesses, the system would cease to function effectively.

The Department of Defense and the Army are concerned about the problems that are often experienced by a victim and/or witness of a crime. As a victim or witness, the individual may feel anger, confusion, frustration, or fear as a result of the experience, and then may feel added frustration through the course of an investigation or any criminal proceedings. To lessen the physical, psychological, and possible financial hardships suffered by a victim and/or witness of a crime investigated by military, the Army's Victim Witness Assistance Program is available to do all that is possible to assist a victim and/or witness of a crime. The program is also designed to foster the full cooperation of a victim and/or witness while ensuring they are advised of and accorded the following rights:

- (1) The right to be treated with fairness, dignity, and a respect for privacy.
- (2) The right to be reasonably protected from the accused offender.
- (3) The right to be notified of court proceedings.
- (4) The right to be present all public court proceedings related to the offense, unless the court determines that testimony by the victim would be materially affected if the victim heard other testimony at trial, or for other good cause.
- (5) The right to confer with the attorney for the government in the case.
- (6) The right to restitution, if appropriate.
- (7) The right to information regarding conviction, sentencing, imprisonment, and release of the offender from custody.

Victim Witness Liaison

A Victim Witness Liaison is available to provide victims and witnesses of crimes with additional information regarding the Victim Witness Assistance Program. This individual works in conjunction with law enforcement personnel, legal personnel, and other agencies providing assistance to victims and witnesses. The Victim Witness Liaison also ensures victims and witnesses are informed of their rights and of all significant events involved in the criminal military justice process. The Victim Witness Liaison acts as a facilitator and coordinator for the program and is available to assist you.

The Fort Knox Victim Witness Liaison is Ms. Cheryl Benitez-Metcalf. She is located at the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, Building 1310 and may be contacted at 502-624-1852/3544.