

Victim of a Crime Overseas? What Help is Available?

U.S. Citizens who become victims of crime while abroad have two ways the U.S. Government will help them:

- Overseas: consular officers, agents, and staff work with crime victims and help them with the local police and medical systems.
- In the United States: our office of Overseas Citizens Services will stay in touch with family members in the United States, and help provide U.S.-based resources for the victim when possible.

If you are the victim of a crime overseas:

- Contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate:
 - Consular officers are available for emergency assistance 24 hours/day, 7 days/week.
 - Contact information for U.S. Embassies and Consulates overseas can be found at <http://www.usembassy.gov/>.
 - To contact the Department of State in the U.S. call **1-888-407-4747 during business hours**, and **202-647-5225 after hours**.
- Contact the local police to report the incident and get immediate help. Request a copy of the police report.

Consular Assistance to American Crime Victims:

When an American is the victim of a crime overseas, he or she may suffer from physical, emotional or financial injuries. It can be more difficult because the victim may be in unfamiliar surroundings, and may not know the local language or customs. Consuls, consular agents, and local employees at overseas posts know local government agencies and resources in the country where they work. They can help as follows:

- Replace a stolen passport
- Contact family, friends, or employers
- Obtain appropriate medical care
- Address emergency needs that arise as a result of the crime
- Explain the local criminal justice process
- Obtain information about your case
- Connect you to local and U.S. resources to assist victims of crime
- Obtain information about local and U.S. victim compensation programs
- Provide a list of local lawyers who speak English

They will cannot:

- Investigate crimes
- Provide legal advice or represent you in court
- Serve as official interpreters or translators
- Pay legal, medical, or other fees for you

Resources and Information for Crime Victims upon Return to the United States:

Some U.S. cities and communities offer programs help residents who are victims of overseas crime, including:

- Rape crisis counseling programs
- Shelter and counseling programs for battered women
- Support groups and bereavement counseling for members of murder victims
- Diagnostic and treatment programs for child abuse victims
- Assistance for victims of drunk driving crashes

All U.S. states have victim compensation programs, and many offer benefits to residents who are victims of violent crime overseas. Most programs require the victim to file a report at the time of the incident, and to provide a copy with the application. Programs include financial assistance to pay for:

- Medical costs
- Funeral expenses
- Lost income or loss of support

Information about each state’s compensation program and how to apply for benefits is available from the [National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards](#).

Contact Information for Victim Assistance Programs:

Sexual Assault:

- [RAINN \(Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network\)](#) – Toll-free 24/7 hotline for sexual assault counseling and referrals: 1-800-656-HOPE 1-800-656-HOPE , <http://www.rainn.org>
- [U.S. Department of Justice Violence Against Women Office](#) – Information about local sexual assault victim assistance: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo/help.htm>

Domestic Violence:

- [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#) – Toll-free 24/7 hotline for crisis counseling and referrals: 1-800-799-SAFE 1-800-799-SAFE
- [U.S. Department of Justice Violence Against Women Office](#) – Information about local domestic violence victim assistance: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo/help.htm>

Families and Friends of Murder Victims:

- POMC, Inc. (National Organization of Parents of Murdered Children) – Toll-free 24/7 hotline for crisis counseling and referrals: 1-888-818-POMC 1-888-818-POMC , <http://www.pomc.org>

Victims and Families of Drunk Driving Crashes:

- Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) – Information about local resources for victims and family members: <http://www.madd.org>

General Victim Assistance:

- U.S. Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime – Contact information for non-emergency services in communities throughout U.S.: <http://ovc.ncjrs.org/findvictimservices/>
- National Crime Victim Center – Information for crime victims on the impact of crime, safety planning, legal rights and civil legal remedies, and options for assistance and referrals to local programs. Call toll free (8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. EST) 1-800-FYI-CALL 1-800-FYI-CALL or call TTY for hearing impaired (8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. EST) 1-800-211-7996 1-800-211-7996 .<http://www.ncvc.org>
- National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) – Toll-free 24/7 hotline for information and referral to victim assistance programs: 1-800-TRY-NOVA 1-800-TRY-NOVA , <http://www.try-nova.org>

Overseas Resources:

- Victim Assistance On-line – Information about victim assistance programs in approximately 20 countries: <http://www.vaonline.org>