

*Your loved one
is the victim of
a homicide.*

**Right now,
you are looking
for answers...**

The Maine Office of the Attorney General



This publication was created in collaboration with the Maine Attorney General's Office, Maine Department of Corrections, Maine Victims' Compensation Program, Maine Chapter of Parents of Murdered Children, and the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office.

No one but you and your family know what you are going through right now.

We want you to know that we are here to help you navigate through the criminal justice system and the emotional journey that lies ahead.



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To the loved ones of a homicide victim:

The Maine Attorney General's Office wants you to know how sorry we are for the loss of your loved one.

This handbook is designed to help you understand the services and support that are provided by the Victim Advocates within the Criminal Division of the Attorney General's Office and find information about what you may experience emotionally, mentally, and physically.

The Attorney General's Office recognizes that the criminal justice system can often be confusing and frustrating. As you read through this guide, you may have questions. Please know that we are here to answer those questions and provide you with a better understanding of what you may expect.

The goal of the Attorney General's Office is to ensure that you are treated with the dignity and respect you deserve and that your voice is heard.

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The Maine Attorney General's Office is responsible for prosecuting murder and non-vehicular manslaughter cases. Vehicular manslaughter cases are prosecuted by the District Attorneys. Victim advocates are on call to respond to the state's homicide cases and to provide direct services to family members of homicide victims. You may reach a victim advocate at the Attorney General's Office by calling:

(207) 626-8800.

Crisis Intervention and Support

Provide you with emotional support at the time of the homicide.

Assistance with Immediate Concerns

Assist you with retrieving essential personal items from the crime scene, placement of pets, crime scene clean up, coordination with the funeral home and other issues that may come up.

Employer, School, Landlord and Creditor Intervention

Assist you with addressing problems that are directly related to the homicide.

Referrals

Provide you with referrals to trauma-informed mental health counseling and other community resources for further assistance.

Media Coordination

Provide you with guidance on how to work with the media.

Criminal Justice System

Outline the investigative process and court procedures.

Case Disposition

Notify you of case updates, dates and times of hearings, trials, final disposition, appeals, and post– conviction hearings.

Court Advocacy Services

Provide you with pre-trial courtroom tours and accompany and support you throughout the pre-trial hearings, trial, and post-disposition hearings.

Assistance with Victim Impact Statements

Assist in the preparation of a statement to the Court describing the impact the crime has had on you.

Post– Conviction Services

Ensure you are notified of appeals, post– conviction hearings, and probation violations. You have a right to attend or participate in these hearings.

Property Return Assistance

Facilitate the return of property being held as evidence.

Grief and Loss

The traumatic grief that you may feel in response to the sudden loss of a loved one can be intense. Each person may experience unique feelings toward the situation. These feelings can vary with each family member, and it is important to recognize and respect those differences. While trying to cope with the traumatic death of your loved one, you may experience many different emotional and physical reactions. Sadly, there is no guidebook on how you should feel. Be patient with yourself during this time. You may feel differently every day.

Physical Reactions to Traumatic Grief

Some examples of physical reactions may be, but are not limited to:

Sleeping problems	Nightmares, inability to sleep, or sleeping too much
Health problems	Stomach aches, headaches, chest pain, frequent colds or sensitivity to noise and sudden movements
Trouble with eating	Loss of appetite or overeating
Activity	The feeling that you are unable to stop and relax, or lethargy

Emotional Reactions to Traumatic Grief

Emotional reactions may become very intense at times but are a part of the healing process. There are ways to help deal with the emotional reactions associated with a traumatic event. It may be necessary to talk with a mental health provider about the feelings you are experiencing.

Guilt or self-blame	You may experience guilt. This is often described as survivor's guilt.
Emotionally numb	You may feel like it is too difficult to experience the full magnitude of the pain.
Sensitive	You may feel like you are becoming upset or getting easily angered.
Helpless	You may feel constant worry and stress about the future.
Shock	You may feel hysterical, calm, or numb. You may laugh or even appear to function "normally." This is your body's way of protecting itself from fully experiencing the trauma of this event. Shock can last for several days to weeks.
Fear	You may be fearful for yourself or other family members. You may feel like "if this happened once, it could happen again."
Denial	You may experience fantasies or moments of recognition (<i>where you believe for a moment you just saw your loved one</i>). Even though your mind knows they are gone, emotionally you may have a hard time accepting what has happened. This is another way that your body protects itself from the full impact of the event.

Emotional Reactions to Traumatic Grief

Anger, Rage, or Vengeance	Some experience these feelings more often than others. You may experience violent thoughts involving what you would like to do to the offender. This might be scary for you. It is important to express these emotions appropriately (<i>exercising, writing, or yelling</i>). Be aware that the anger you may feel toward the offender can sometimes be transferred to those around you.
Depression	The sorrow you are feeling about the death of your loved one and how your loved one died can become very overwhelming. It may make you feel very isolated when your mind starts to process the full impact of the loss.
Flashbacks	Memories of your loved one or an event surrounding their death.
Memory disturbances	Short– term memory issues or forgetfulness.
Difficulty concentrating	Disorganized thoughts or the inability to focus.
Difficulty making decisions	Feeling distracted and unable to evaluate situations confidently and clearly. It is recommended that you refrain from making any big decisions immediately (<i>e.g., selling your house or quitting your job</i>).

Coping With Your Loss

During this difficult time, it is very important for you to take care of yourself. Make sure you are eating, sleeping, and drinking plenty of water. It is okay to ask for help. As human beings, we are not equipped to automatically know how to deal with the traumatic death of a loved one.

Some suggested strategies for coping with your loss:

Writing	Keeping a journal or diary can be very helpful. It will be a way for you to keep track of your feelings. You can also write letters to your loved one, express your feelings about your loss, or say goodbye.
Talking	It may be helpful to talk with someone you can trust (<i>such as a counselor, clergy member, or friend</i>).
Counseling	The advocate can refer you to a counselor in your area. Some counselors are specifically trained in traumatic grief.
Exercise	Exercise can be a good way to relieve stress and reduce tension. Try to exercise three times a week.
Crying	Give yourself permission to cry. It is the body's natural way of releasing stress.
Routines and goals	Set a schedule for yourself, such as when you get up, eat or go to bed. Set achievable goals for yourself. It will help you stay focused.
Self-Care	Take time to do something for you, like meditation, gardening, massage, reading, or aromatherapy.
Join a support group or read books on grief	See the Resources section of this handbook to find suggested reading. Ask the advocate for information on homicide support groups.
Create a memorial	Plant a tree or create a memory book or box.

Meaningful Occasions

Holidays, birthdays, and other meaningful occasions can be particularly difficult. It is normal to have mixed feelings about these days. Here are some suggestions that might help:

- Find ways to incorporate memories of your loved ones into your holiday traditions
- Share memories
- Do something that you used to do together
- Allow yourself to be sad
- Look after yourself
- Avoid holding your feelings in

Most importantly, do what feels right for you.

Remember,

Any or all of these are normal reactions to traumatic circumstances.

Frequently Asked Questions

When will I feel “normal” again?

Your “normal” may never be the same as before, but you can create a new normal.

How long will I feel like this?

Everyone’s experience is different. Be patient with yourself and ask for help and support when you need it.

Why haven’t I cried?

Not everyone shows pain by crying. Allow yourself to cry, but do not put pressure on yourself if you do not have the urge to cry.

Why are people avoiding me?

Many people do not know what to say or how to respond to your traumatic loss. (*see Is There Anything I Can Do to Help?*)

Will I need mental health counseling?

When your loved one is the victim of a homicide, it is often very helpful to get professional counseling to assist in dealing with the trauma. It may be more helpful to go to someone who is trained in trauma and loss.

Helping Children with Grief

Just like adults, children respond to grief. Emotional reactions for children are very similar to those of adults. It is helpful to talk with children and young adults about their thoughts and reactions.

What Adults Need to Know

Children may have any of the following reactions:

- Wanting to talk about the person who died
- Having overwhelming thoughts about the person who died
- Sharing with friends their thoughts and images about the death
- Not wanting to be alone
- Being fearful of the dark or having trouble doing things that normally were not a problem
- Needing constant reassurance
- Experiencing sleeping problems
- Loss of appetite



Sometimes children do not express any feelings about the death. It is important to give the child a safe environment to talk openly about the death.

It is important to remember that children watch the adults around them and how they are reacting to the death of their loved one. Your actions will help develop appropriate coping skills for children and young adults. It is important to be aware that as children grow, they may want to revisit the loss and ask new questions.

Sharing positive memories of your loved one with your children is a starting point for many conversations on how the children are feeling. Maintaining positive ways for children to engage physically and mentally, such as by drawing, reading, or writing, is important for healing.

From a Survivor...

“I think that the initial death notification was like waking up from a nightmare that has continued since that morning, and from which the ending cannot change.

During the investigation, throughout the time leading up to the prosecution, and eventually following the conclusion of a successful trial and guilty verdict, we were distracted from the enormity of the grief by our focus on the hope for justice for the taking of our loved ones.

We quickly realized that it was very important that people understood that our loved ones were not lost. They were taken from us at the hands of another.”

Arthur Jette and Deb Cunningham, homicide survivors

Is There Anything I Can Do To Help?

Most friends are anxious to find out what they can do for you.

Suggestions for friends and relatives:

Get in touch	Even if much time has passed, it is never too late to express your concern. Let the family know you care.
Say little in an early visit	In the initial period (before burial), just being there and offering words of affection may be all that is needed.
Avoid clichés and easy answers	“He is in a better place” and “Aren’t you lucky that...” are not likely to help. A simple “I’m sorry” is better.
Be yourself	Show your concern and sorrow in your own way and in your own words.
Keep in touch	Be available.
Attend to practical matters	Find out if you are needed to answer the phone, greet callers, prepare meals, clean the house, care for the children, etc. This kind of help lifts burdens and creates a bond. It might be needed well beyond the initial period.
Accept silence	Do not force conversation if people don’t feel like talking.
Be a good listener	Sometimes what is most helpful is to be able to vent and to have someone just be there to listen. Accept whatever feelings are expressed. Be as understanding as you can be.

Suggestions for friends and relatives:

Do not tell people how they should feel	Try this instead, “I can’t imagine what you are going through.”
Do not ask for details about the death	Listening with understanding is important. They will offer information they are comfortable sharing with you.
Comfort children in the family	Do not assume that a seemingly calm child is not sad. Be a friend to the child. Children do not need to be shielded from the grieving of others.
Allow time to work through the grief	Do not whisk away clothing or hide pictures. Let them decide what they want to do with their loved one’s belongings.
Encourage the postponement of major decisions	Whatever can wait should wait.
When returning to social activity, treat him or her as a normal person	Acknowledge the loss, but do not dwell on it.

Adopted from New Mexico Survivors of Homicide, Inc.

There may be no words to express exactly how sorry you are. Sometimes just your presence is comforting.

It may be very hard to focus on the practical yet essential matters that must be dealt with when a loved one dies. We hope this information will assist you.

Medical Examiner and Funeral Arrangements

Because of the nature of your loved one's death, it is necessary for an autopsy (see Autopsy) to be performed in order to determine the cause and manner of death for use at future legal proceedings. This will be conducted by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME). In order for you to make the necessary arrangements, you should be aware of the following:

- The Medical Examiner may take several days to complete this procedure.
- You will need to contact the funeral home of your choice.
- The funeral home will call the OCME directly to arrange transportation of your loved one to the funeral home.
- The funeral home will make an appointment with you to come into their office to make the funeral arrangements.

The advocate can provide assistance with any of these steps.

Do I Need an Attorney?

The Attorney General's Office is tasked with prosecuting the crimes of murder or non-motor vehicular manslaughter. They cannot assist you with civil matters. You may want to consider hiring a civil attorney for all matters surrounding your loved one's death (see *Important Papers You Will Need to Locate*).

Important papers you will need to locate:

Pre-arranged Funeral Policies	If there has been a pre-arranged agreement, you will need to locate it so funeral arrangements can be made.
Cemetery Plot	If your family does not have a cemetery plot, you may need to contact the cemetery of your choice about purchasing one.
Deeds and Wills	You will need to locate a copy of your loved one's Will. If there is no Will, you may want to contact a civil attorney to see if the estate must go through probate court. Probate courts may be helpful in assisting with questions and concerns surrounding the estate.
Death Certificate	You can obtain a certified copy of the death certificate from the funeral home. You will need several copies of the death certificate for social security, insurance, bank or other matters where proof of death is needed. For a fee, you can also obtain copies from Vital Records.
Marriage, Birth Certificates, and Divorce Decrees	These documents may be kept in the same place as the Will.
Insurance Policies (<i>life, disability, health, travel</i>)	Do not forget that some organizations such as banks or travel clubs may automatically cover the member with some type of insurance. (<i>The advocate may also provide insurance companies with confirmation that your loved one died from a homicide and the beneficiary had no role in this death.</i>)

Important papers you will need to locate:

Stocks and Bonds; Bank Accounts; Annuity Payments	If the deceased possessed stocks and/or bonds, had a sole or joint bank account or accounts, or received annuity payments, you should gather all paperwork in your possession and seek appropriate legal and financial advice pertaining to the disposition of these documents or accounts.
Pensions, IRAs, Union or Other Benefits, Social Security Benefits	You or your children may be eligible for Social Security Survivor benefits. Contact the Social Security Office for more information and assistance.
Military Papers or Veteran's Administration (VA) Benefits	If the deceased was a veteran, you may be eligible for a veteran's burial allowance, widow's pension or VA insurance. Contact your VA Regional Office for assistance.
Mortgages	Sometimes, if insurance coverage was purchased, the mortgage will be paid off at the time of death. Check your papers. The insurance premium is usually paid in the mortgage payment.
Vehicle Registration and Titles	You must contact the Department of Motor Vehicles to have your loved one's information removed from the system. They will request a copy of the death certificate.

The Maine Crime Victims' Compensation Program

was established to help relieve the financial burden that can come from being a victim of a crime. As a family member of a homicide victim, you may be eligible for help with expenses directly related to the crime, which are not covered by insurance or other resources. Victims' Compensation is the payer of last resort. The advocate will help you with the application and will work with the Victims' Compensation Program to facilitate the processing of your claim. As the person completing the application, you are considered the claimant.

Who May Apply?

An immediate family member or domestic partner of a homicide victim, including:

- Parents, stepparents and domestic partners of a parent
- Children or stepchildren
- Siblings or stepsiblings
- Spouses or domestic partners
- A person who contracts for the funeral

A claimant must have an out-of-pocket loss or liability directly related to the crime.

A claimant must cooperate with all reasonable requests of law enforcement officers and prosecutors in the investigation or prosecution of the case.

What Expenses May Be Eligible?

- Funeral and burial costs, including a memorial marker (*Limits apply*)
- Biohazard crime scene cleanup costs (*if there is no insurance available, or to help cover the insurance deductible. Limits apply*)
- Mental health counseling with a licensed therapist for family and household members
- Medication and medication management
- Loss of support for dependents
- Homicide related special benefit for a family or household member who has a major financial loss related to the homicide, such as lost wages or high travel expenses (*Limits apply*)

NOTE: The program cannot award money for property loss or pain and suffering

When Is Someone Not Eligible?

- If the victim was engaged in illegal conduct at the time of their death and that conduct contributed to their death.
- If there are other resources available to cover the costs (*e.g., insurance*).

How Do You Apply?

- The advocate will provide you with an application and assist you in this process.
- A copy of the application is available online at: http://www.maine.gov/ag/crime/victims_compensation/
- Return the completed application to the advocate or send it to the Victims' Compensation Program to be reviewed. Additional information or documentation may be required.

How Long Will It Take?

- You will receive an acknowledgement letter from Victims' Compensation within two weeks of submitting the application. However, the decision to determine if you can be assisted may take several weeks or months, based on the investigation status of the case.
- You can help speed up the process by responding as soon as possible to requests for additional information or documentation.
- Once all the required documentation has been received from law enforcement and other providers, your claim will be presented to the Victims' Compensation board for a decision.
- All claims are unique. Payment will be made once the claim is approved by the Victims' Compensation Board.

How Do You Contact the Victims' Compensation Program?

Maine Victims' Compensation Program
Office of the Attorney General
6 State House Station
Augusta ME 04333-7882
(207) 624-7882
Toll Free: 1-800-903-7882

Guidelines for Working with the Media

It is very possible that your family will be contacted by the media. Reporters may reach out in person, by phone, or through social media.

You need to know that you have the right NOT to speak with the media. If you choose to speak, you should not discuss the facts of the case since you, as a family member, may be given information not available to the public. You should focus your comments on your loved one.

The advocate will work with the media to help ensure your privacy and protection. The advocate will notify you of any press release being issued by the Attorney General's Office or the investigating agency so that you receive all of the case information from the advocate, not from the media.

It is important for you to know that there could be times when the media may obtain information from other sources, over which the advocate or the Attorney General's Office has no control (*e.g., a decision may be released by the Court and the media may receive the information before the advocate does*).

Common concerns that victims express about the media include:

- Interviewing survivors at inappropriate times
- Filming and photographing scenes of the crime
- Searching for the “negative” about the victim
- Inappropriately looking into the victim’s past

As a homicide survivor you have the right to:

- Grieve in private
- Say “no” to an interview
- Select the spokesperson of your choice
- Select the time and location for media interviews
- Request a specific reporter
- Refuse an interview with a specific reporter even though you have granted interviews to other reporters
- Say “no” to an interview even though you have previously granted interviews
- Release a written statement through a spokesperson instead of an interview
- Exclude children from interviews
- Not answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable or that you feel are inappropriate
- Avoid a press conference atmosphere and speak to only one reporter at a time
- Request a correction when inaccurate information is reported
- File a formal complaint against a reporter

You have the right at all times....

... to be treated with dignity and respect by the media. You will often find that the media acts responsibly. The advocate can assist you in dealing with the media and can sometimes play an effective role as a “go-between” for you and reporters. This can minimize the invasion of your privacy. The advocate can also assist you in preparing a statement for the media if you choose to do so.

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Your Loved One is the Victim of a Homicide....

What can you expect?

Initial Crime Scene

The location where the homicide happened becomes a crime scene. It is important that investigators collect as much evidence as possible in order for the case to be successfully prosecuted and for the offender to be held accountable. This may take time.

Unless your loved one was killed in a public outdoor space, the police may get a warrant before they search the area and collect evidence in the case.

The evidence collection process is usually completed within 48 hours, but it could take longer. You will not be allowed to enter the scene until the evidence collection has been completed. If the homicide occurred in the victim's home or the family's home, the advocate or law enforcement will notify you when the scene is released.

Immediate Necessities from the Scene

Advocates will do the best they can to make arrangements for any immediate necessities that you may need from the crime scene before it is released, which may include:

- Medications, if a new prescription cannot be obtained
- Childrens' items such as their favorite blanket, stuffed animal, etc.
- Your clothing or your loved one's clothing that is needed for burial services.

Crime Scene Cleanup

The advocate can help arrange for a company to remove any biohazard from the scene.

If there is property insurance, the insurance company may be responsible for clean-up costs. If there is no insurance, as long as you qualify for the program, Victims' Compensation may pay the bill. (*see Maine Crime Victims' Compensation Program*)

Autopsy

Your loved one's body will be transported from the crime scene or hospital to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) for an autopsy. An autopsy is an essential part of a homicide investigation as it provides the information to determine cause and manner of death.

An autopsy is necessary in order to prosecute any homicide and to hold the offender accountable. If the case goes to trial, the prosecutors **MUST** prove that the person(s) charged with the crime caused the death of your loved one.

Funeral Arrangements

You will need to choose a funeral home to handle your loved one's funeral arrangements. Once the autopsy has been completed, the funeral home will transport your loved one from the OCME to the funeral home. In most cases, this is when you will be able to view your loved one.

The advocate may answer questions from the funeral home about payment through the Victims' Compensation Program, as well as discuss security issues and media presence with the funeral home.

Referrals and Resources

The advocate may be able to provide you with referrals to other community agencies and connect you with other resources that may assist you with issues directly related to the homicide, such as:

- Personal safety
- Emotional/mental health issues
- Housing
- Food
- Clothing
- Access to transportation
- School
- Work
- Financial assistance

Investigation

The advocate will explain to you the process of a homicide investigation, and will notify you of any new developments in the case. The detectives may want to talk with you at various points in the investigation. If you feel you have any important information for the detectives, let the advocate know, and they will coordinate with the primary detective to talk with you.

Placement of Children

In the event of a homicide that results in both parents being unavailable, Child and Family Services will perform an emergency assessment for the purposes of temporary placement of the child or children with a relative or other responsible person. The Department of Health and Human Services may be able to provide other short term emergency services.

Placement of Pets

If there are pets at the crime scene, the advocate may assist in arranging for them to be placed temporarily until you or someone else is available to take them. If no one is available, law enforcement or an advocate will call the town's animal control officer, a local Humane Society or an animal shelter for assistance with placement until someone can retrieve them. The State is unable to pay the bill for the placement of pets.



What Does the Criminal Justice Process Look Like for Me?

If the offender commits suicide, the investigating agency will generate a final report which will be reviewed by a prosecutor at the Attorney General's Office. The advocate can assist you by answering questions about the case, providing information and assisting with the application for the Victims' Compensation Program. The advocate can also help facilitate the return of property collected as evidence.

Please note this process can take a year or longer.

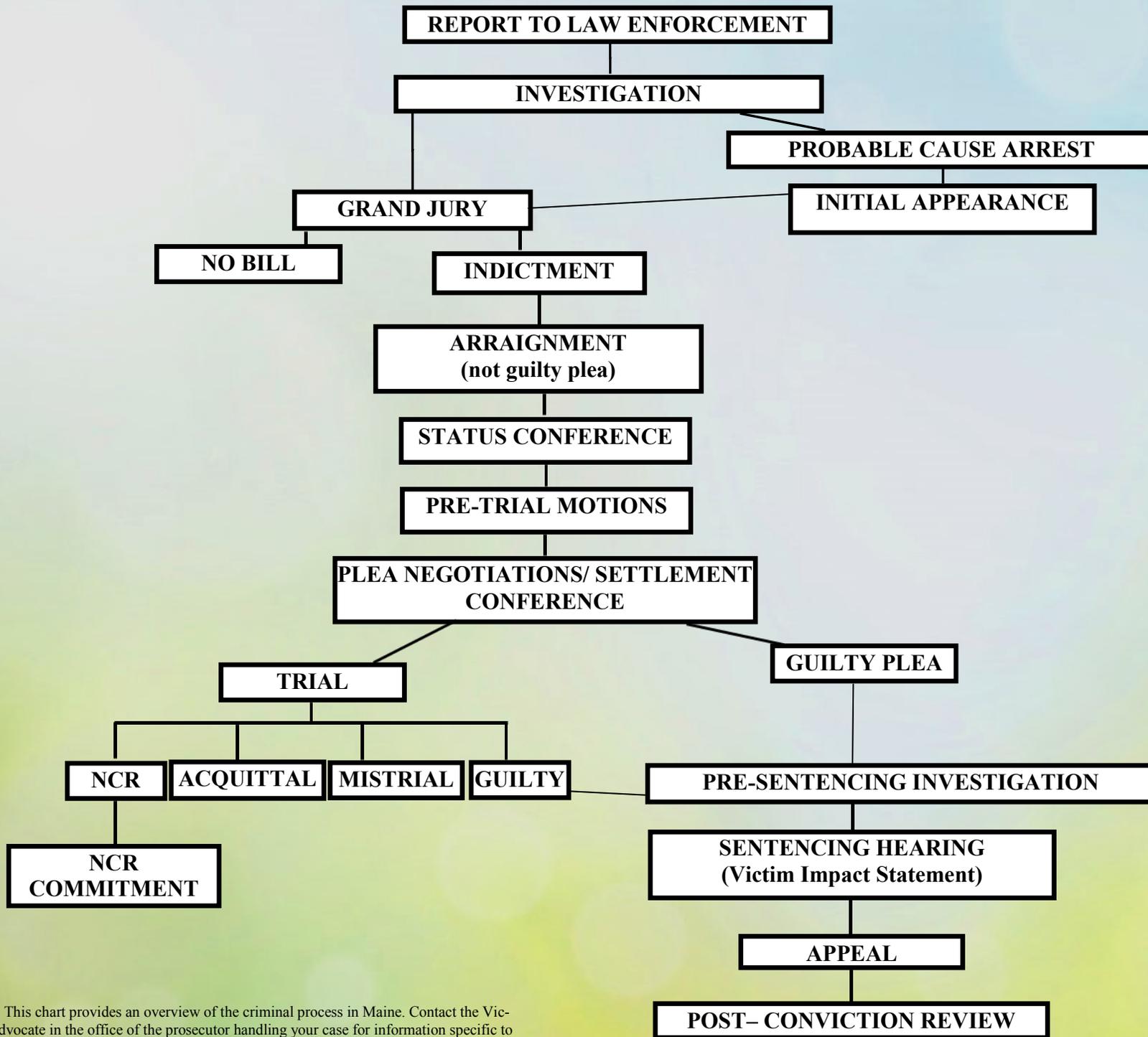
Unsolved Homicides

Statewide, Maine has more than one hundred unsolved homicide cases. These cases comprise murders, suspicious deaths and missing person cases in which foul play is suspected and the case remains unsolved after three years. We recognize the public is imperative in solving these cases. The failure to prosecute murderers for their crimes endangers public safety, undermines public confidence in the criminal justice system and causes unspeakable pain to the loved ones of victims.

The family members of homicide victims suffer greatly at the loss of their loved one. In unsolved homicide cases, this pain may be compounded by the grief, anger and frustration arising from the many unanswered questions surrounding the loved one's death. The Attorney General's Office has an advocate dedicated to working with the families of unsolved homicide cases. We encourage you to use our victim advocate as a resource. The advocate can help you process these feelings, explain the investigative and criminal justice process, update you on the status of the investigation and serve as a bridge between you and the investigating detective. We encourage you to keep the advocate and detective informed of your current contact information and to call when you have questions to ask or information to offer.

The Attorney General's Office recognizes that you may feel overwhelmed and frustrated by the criminal justice process. Our victim advocates are available to answer your questions. You should know that there is no right or wrong way for you to participate in the process. You may choose to attend every hearing, a select few or none at all.

On the following page is a flow-chart which describes the criminal justice system in Maine relating to felony charges.



Note: This chart provides an overview of the criminal process in Maine. Contact the Victim Advocate in the office of the prosecutor handling your case for information specific to that matter.

Courtroom Behavior

There are certain guidelines to follow when you are in the courthouse:

- Dress neatly, take hats and sunglasses off, and remember to show respect in court.
- Shut off all cell phones and electronic devices.
- Leave drinks and food, including gum, outside of the courtroom.
- Stand when instructed to do so by the judge or court officer. This will usually occur when either the judge or jury enter or leave the courtroom.
- Never speak out during court. Save conversation for breaks. Keep gestures, facial expressions and head shaking to a minimum so that you do not distract the jury.
- Never attempt to talk to, gesture to, or photograph a member of the jury.
- Wait until the jury exits before leaving the courtroom.

The Pre-Trial Process

Arrest

In most homicide cases the criminal justice process begins when a crime is committed and a person is arrested for that crime. The investigative agency or the advocate will notify you when an arrest has been made.

Initial Appearance

Generally, within 48 hours of the arrest, the defendant will have their initial appearance in the court located in the county where the homicide took place. Typically the following things will occur:

- A defense attorney will be appointed for the defendant
- The charges will be read to the defendant
- Bail will be addressed
- A harnish bail hearing may be set

A plea is not entered at this time.

Grand Jury

Murder and manslaughter charges must be presented to a grand jury. The grand jury is a panel of between 13 and 23 citizens randomly selected within the county where the crime occurred.

The grand jurors listen to the evidence presented by the prosecution to determine if there is enough evidence to charge the defendant.

The grand jury is a confidential process and is one of the only parts of the process that you are not able to attend. The only people allowed in grand jury hearings are the prosecutors, grand jurors, and the witnesses. Neither the defense attorneys nor the defendant are allowed to attend.

The advocate will notify you when the grand jury has made a decision.

Arraignment

The purpose of the arraignment is to inform the defendant of the crimes charged and discuss bail. It is at this time the defendant will enter a *plea* of not guilty.

The advocate will notify you of when the arraignment will take place and will accompany you to the hearing.

Bail

The Court may set bail in certain homicide cases and deny bail in others. The advocate will notify you if the defendant posts bail. If released on bail, the defendant will have certain restrictions to follow, which may include having no contact with you, your family, or witnesses.

Status Conference

The prosecutors and defense attorneys meet with the judge to schedule dates, set deadlines for filing motions, and to set a date for trial. This is called a status conference. You have the right to attend the conference, but often the judge may choose to hold it in the judge's chambers (*office*). Neither the public nor the defendant are invited into chambers with the judge and the attorneys.

The advocate will notify you of the outcome of the conference.



Pre– Trial Motions and Hearings

A motion is a formal request made in writing by the prosecutor or defense attorney asking the judge to make a decision on a specific issue. Some motions may ask the Court to keep certain information from being introduced at trial. An example of this is when the defense argues police illegally seized evidence. These motions are frequently called “suppression motions.”

Pre-trial motions are scheduled for hearings before the Court. They may be resolved quickly or require days of testimony.

The advocate will notify you of the date of any hearings and will explain to you the issues that will be argued. There may also be the opportunity to meet with the prosecutors on the day of the hearing to further discuss the issues.

Homicide Cases Can Result in the Following Outcomes:

- The defendant is found incompetent to stand trial.
- The defendant is found not criminally responsible by reason of insanity.
- The defendant enters into a plea negotiation and pleads guilty in exchange for an agreed upon sentence.
- The defendant goes to trial and is found guilty or not guilty by a judge or jury.
- The defendant goes to trial, and the jury cannot reach a decision (mistrial).

Incompetent to Stand Trial

In some cases the defense will claim that the defendant is incompetent to stand trial. In order to be competent, the defendant must understand the criminal charges, understand his/her own condition in relation to those charges, and be able to cooperate with the defense attorney. If the defendant is found to be incompetent, the trial may not take place unless or until the defendant is restored to competency. The process can take different paths depending on the individual defendant. A general overview follows:

- The defendant is evaluated for competency by a psychologist or psychiatrist from the State Forensic Service, and sometimes by another mental health professional.
- The Court will hold a competency hearing. After hearing testimony from the experts, the Court must decide whether the defendant is competent.
- If the Court finds the defendant to be competent, the case can proceed to trial.
- If the Court finds the defendant is not competent to stand trial at the time, the case is usually continued to see if the defendant can become competent. The defendant will be committed to a psychiatric hospital or other appropriate facility to see if competency can be restored.

The advocate will explain the process to you and will notify you of any hearings or of any changes in the status of the defendant.

Not Criminally Responsible ("The Insanity Defense")

In some cases, the defendant will plead "not guilty by reason of insanity." This means the defendant is seeking to be found "not criminally responsible" because of a serious mental disease or defect.

This is not the same as competency to stand trial. In competency proceedings, the judge is evaluating the person's mental condition *at the time of the court proceedings*. When a person pleads not guilty by reason of insanity, the issue for the judge or jury is the defendant's mental condition *at the time of the crime*.

If the defendant is found not criminally responsible by reason of insanity, the person is committed to the custody of the Department of Health and Human Services at Riverview Psychiatric Hospital. The purpose of this commitment is rehabilitation rather than punishment.

The advocate will explain the process to you and will notify you of any hearings or of any changes in the status of the defendant.



Plea Negotiations/ Plea Agreement

In most homicide cases, the judge asks the prosecutor and defense if they are able to settle the case without a trial. This is done through plea negotiations between the prosecutor and the defense attorney. If a plea agreement is reached, the defendant agrees to plead guilty in return for a specific sentence. The defendant must admit to having committed the crime, and the judge must approve the plea agreement.

A Plea of Guilty:

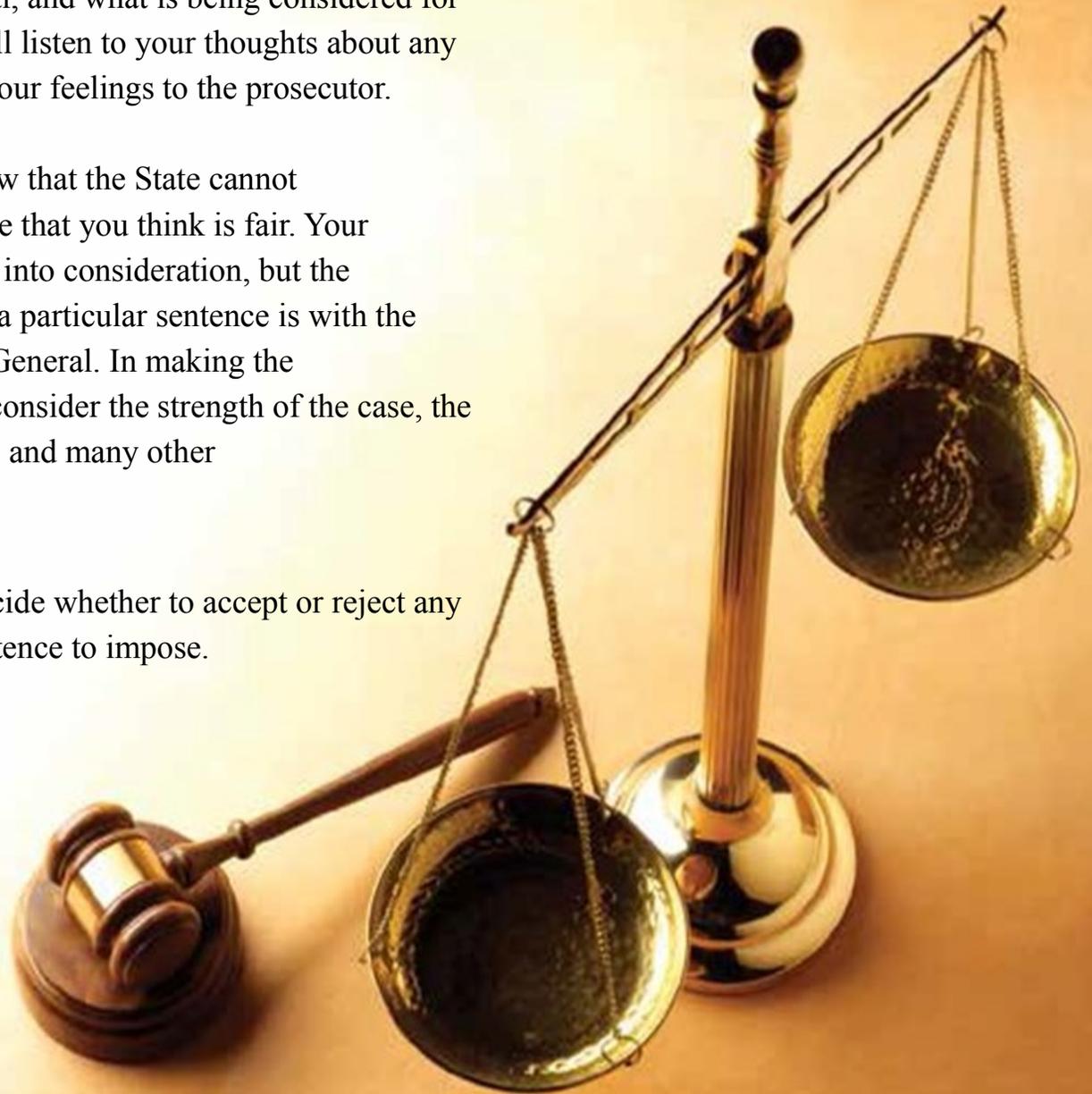
- The defendant has to admit that he/she committed the crime.
- Family and friends don't have to go through a trial at which the victim's life and manner of death are presented in sometimes painful detail.
- A guilty plea eliminates the risk that a jury could find the defendant not guilty. A not guilty verdict means the defendant is set free.
- A guilty plea avoids the risk that the trial ends in a mistrial or a hung jury, which could result in the need for a second trial.
- The defendant's right to appeal after a guilty plea is limited. The appeal process can take several years to complete.

The ME Criminal Justice System

The advocate will inform you if plea negotiations are underway. The advocate will review the strengths and weaknesses of the case, the risks of going to trial, and what is being considered for a plea offer. The advocate will listen to your thoughts about any plea agreement and convey your feelings to the prosecutor.

It is important for you to know that the State cannot always recommend a sentence that you think is fair. Your feelings will always be taken into consideration, but the final decision to recommend a particular sentence is with the prosecutor and the Attorney General. In making the recommendation, they must consider the strength of the case, the admissibility of the evidence, and many other factors.

Ultimately, the Court will decide whether to accept or reject any plea agreement and what sentence to impose.



The Trial

A defendant has the right to a trial by a jury of his/her peers. The defendant also may opt to have a judge decide his/her case. This is called a jury– waived trial.

Jury Selection

If a case is to be tried to a jury, the Superior Court will send out letters to citizens throughout the county where the homicide occurred, informing them they have been selected to participate as potential jurors.

The jury pool is selected in a process called voir dire. The jury pool is brought into the courtroom and asked a series of questions. These questions are designed to determine if the individual jurors have any hardships, conflicts, beliefs or knowledge of the case that may make a juror unable to serve fairly and impartially. At the end of the jury selection process, twelve individuals will be chosen as jurors, and additional persons will be elected as “alternate jurors.” Alternate jurors are selected in the event a juror becomes unavailable during trial.

You are encouraged NOT to attend jury selection. The advocate will let you know when jury selection is complete and when the trial will begin.

Trial

The trial is usually held at the courthouse in the county where the homicide was committed. At the beginning of the trial, the prosecutor and the defense attorney present opening statements to the jury. The prosecutor will call witnesses and introduce evidence to prove the defendant's guilt. The defense attorney may cross-examine these witnesses and challenge the evidence.

At the conclusion of the prosecution's case, the defendant may present defense witnesses and evidence. The prosecutor may cross-examine defense witnesses and challenge defense evidence.

When the defense has rested the prosecution and defense will present closing arguments.

You should know that the defendant is not required to testify, call witnesses or present evidence. The Constitution provides the defendant with the presumption of innocence and requires the prosecution to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

You have the right to attend all or part of the trial. The advocate will notify you of the trial date and will attend the trial each day to provide you with support and information. The advocate will inform you of the evidence that will be presented each day and prepare you for any testimony that may be graphic or disturbing. If you do not attend the trial, the advocate will keep you updated.

Testifying as a Witness

As a family member, it may be necessary for you to testify in the case. The prosecutors will meet with you ahead of time to prepare you for your testimony. Things to keep in mind while you are testifying:

- Be truthful. Just tell the facts, simply, as you know them.
- Listen carefully to the questions. If you do not understand a question, ask that it be repeated or explained.
- Answer only the question asked. Do not try to say everything at once or volunteer information that is not requested.
- If a question cannot be answered truthfully and fully with a “yes” or “no,” you can explain after first answering “yes” or “no.”
- Do not guess. If you do not know an answer, do not be afraid to say so. Do not try to figure out whether your answers will help or hurt the case for either the prosecution or the defense. Just answer questions to the best of your knowledge.
- Be prepared. Do not try to memorize what you are going to say. Try to recall relevant facts.
- When an attorney objects to a question, do not answer the question until the judge rules on the objection and instructs you to answer. If the judge agrees with the grounds for an objection, the objection will be *sustained*. When a judge does not believe the objection has merit, the objection will be *overruled*. If you are confused, ask the judge for direction.
- Remain calm and courteous. Do not lose your temper or become angry, as it may affect your testimony and credibility.
- Speak clearly and loudly. Always face the person questioning you, and speak clearly enough to be heard by the jury. Do not simply nod for a “yes” or shake your head for a “no.”

Jury Deliberations

After all the evidence is presented, the jury will begin to decide on a verdict (jury deliberations). Ultimately, only 12 jurors will go to the jury room to decide the case. The alternate jurors will be dismissed before the deliberations begin. There is no way to know how long a jury will take to reach a verdict. It could take hours, or it could take days.

The advocate and the attorneys will remain at the courthouse while the jury is deciding the case. You are encouraged to stay in or close to the courthouse while the jury is deliberating since the verdict will be announced as soon as the jury has reached a verdict.

Verdict

As soon as the jury has unanimously decided on a verdict, they will notify the Court that they have reached a decision. They may find the defendant guilty or not guilty. If the jurors “hang”, that means they cannot come to an agreement. At that point, the judge will declare a mistrial, and a new trial may be ordered. If the jury finds the defendant not guilty, the defendant is acquitted and set free.

As soon as the jury has decided on a verdict, the Court will notify the prosecutors and the defense attorneys, and the advocate will notify you. There is often very little time between the time the verdict is reached and the time the verdict is announced in court.

The Sentencing Process

If a defendant is found guilty, the Court will schedule a sentencing hearing. A sentencing hearing will take place at a later date in order to give the prosecution and defense time to prepare their arguments for sentencing.

Pre-Sentencing Investigation Report (PSI)

Before the sentencing hearing, the judge may request that the Department of Corrections prepare a pre-sentence investigation report. A probation officer will conduct an investigation of the defendant's background and may want to talk with you to get your input about the impact the crime has had on your life. The officer will prepare a report for the judge, and it will include a sentencing recommendation. Only the judge, the attorneys, and the defendant may review the report.

The advocate will explain the PSI process to you. The advocate also will explain the sentencing process, notify you of the hearing date, and accompany you to the sentencing hearing.



Victim Impact Statement

At the sentencing hearing, you and your immediate family members have the right to make a victim impact statement. This is the opportunity for you to tell the judge how this crime has impacted your life. There are several ways that you can address the Court:

- You can speak from your heart.
- You can read from a prepared written statement.
- You can have the advocate or someone else read your prepared statement.
- You can give your written statement to the advocate to be sent to the Court in advance for the judge to read prior to the hearing.

If you file a written statement with the Court, you should know that it will become part of the court file, and the defendant will have access to it. Therefore, it is important that you do not include any contact information, such as your address, in your statement.

When giving a victim impact statement, it is important to keep in mind that you are addressing the judge, not the defendant.

The advocate will talk with you about writing a victim impact statement.

Sentencing in Maine

A defendant who is convicted of murder may be sentenced to serve anywhere from 25 years to life in prison. This sentence will be served at a Department of Corrections facility. A life sentence means the defendant will remain incarcerated for the remainder of his/her life, with no possibility of release. In Maine, a person convicted of murder is not entitled to probation or parole.

In manslaughter cases, the sentencing range is dependent upon the laws in effect at the time of the crime. A defendant convicted of manslaughter may be placed on probation following the completion of his/her prison term.

A defendant who is sentenced to less than life in prison will be entitled to earned good time credits. The amount of good time credits earned by a defendant is contingent on his/her behavior in prison. Good time credit is determined by the Department of Corrections, not the Court.

Motion for a New Trial

The defendant may file a motion for a new trial based on newly discovered evidence.

The advocate will notify you if the defendant files a motion for new trial and will accompany you to any hearings that may be scheduled.

The Appeal

After being sentenced, the defendant has 21 days in which to file a notice that he/she will be appealing the case to the Maine Supreme Judicial Court, also known as the Law Court. Many defendants who are found guilty of homicide will appeal the conviction. The appeal must be based on legal issues.

After the Law Court accepts the case, the following will happen:

- The appellate attorney (*defendant's appeal lawyer*) will order transcripts of the trial for the judges to review;
- The appellate attorney will submit a brief with the Law Court;
- The State will file a brief in response to the issues the defense raised;
- An oral argument will be scheduled before the seven justices of the Law Court; and
- At the oral argument, both the State and the defense are given 15 minutes to present their side of the case.

During oral argument, the justices listen to the legal issues presented. The defendant is not present, and you do not have a right to speak. After the argument, the Court will issue its decision in writing. If the Law Court affirms the judgment, the conviction remains the same. If the Court reverses the conviction, the prosecutors will review the case and discuss the next steps with you.

The advocate will notify you when the appeal is filed and, if requested, will provide you with copies of the briefs. The advocate will notify you of the oral argument and will accompany you if you choose to attend.

Petition for Post- Conviction Review

The defendant has one year from the time of a final judgment in which to file a petition for post- conviction review. Such petitions generally argue that the trial or appeals attorneys did not provide adequate legal assistance to the defendant. The petitions may be scheduled for hearing. Usually, the judge who presided at the trial will be the same judge who presides over the hearing for post-conviction review.

The advocate will notify you if the defendant files a petition for post- conviction review and will accompany you to the hearing if you choose to attend. The advocate also will notify you as soon as a decision is made.

Property Return

Once the sentencing and the appeal processes are over, you may request to have your loved one's personal belongings that were held as evidence returned to you. The advocate can assist you with this request.

Post-Conviction Victim Notification

The advocate will explain to you the role of the Maine Department of Corrections (DOC) Victim Services and the post-conviction services they provide. (*see Maine DOC Victim Services Division*)

Once your case has been resolved and the defendant has been sentenced, you can request that you be notified of the defendant's potential date of release through the Maine Department of Corrections. The advocate can assist you with this, or you can contact DOC Victim Services.

Maine Department of Corrections (DOC) Victim Services

The DOC Victim Services Division has victim advocates who are available to assist you on specific issues regarding the defendant. See www.maine.gov/corrections/VictimServices/ for details of the victim services available through the Victim Services Division, as well as other resources, publications and information on the Maine prison system.

DOC Victim Services may notify you of the projected release date of the defendant and can assist you if you have any problems such as an inmate trying to contact you.

It is important for you to notify DOC Victim Services of any changes in your address, phone number, and email address if you want to be informed of new developments.

Maine Department of Corrections
111 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0111
(800) 968-6909 or (207) 287-4385
[www.maine.gov/corrections/
VictimServices/](http://www.maine.gov/corrections/VictimServices/)

Victim Offender Dialogue

There are some cases when family members may ask to speak directly with the person who killed their loved one to assist in their recovery and healing.

As a result of these requests, the DOC Victim-Offender Dialogue Program was created. The program is available only at the request of the victim, never the offender. If all parties agree, the DOC Victim Services Division coordinates a facilitated dialogue in a safe environment. The dialogue only occurs after extensive collaboration and preparation. With sufficient structure, preparation, and resources, a facilitated dialogue between victim and offender may offer an opportunity to address the personal impacts of the crime.

The advocate can assist you with further information and requests to participate in the Victim Offender Dialogue program.

GLOSSARY

of Legal and Criminal Justice Terms

Accomplice	A person who helps someone else commit a crime.
Acquittal	The decision by a judge or jury that a defendant is not guilty of a charged crime.
Advocate	An individual employed by a prosecutor's office who informs crime victims of their rights and supports and assists them through the criminal justice process. Also called a Victim/Witness Advocate.
Affidavit	A sworn document containing a summary of the facts.
Allegation	A charge or claim that the prosecutor expects to prove in court.
Appeal	A request by the defendant that the Supreme Judicial Court review the legal decisions of a lower court. The Court can overturn the conviction or can agree with the lower court's decisions.
Arraignment	A court proceeding during which a defendant is informed of the criminal charges filed against him/her.
Arrest	When law enforcement takes an individual into custody and charges him/her with committing a certain crime(s).
Attorney General	The chief law enforcement officer for the state. The Attorney General's Office is responsible for overseeing the investigation and prosecution of all homicide cases, except for vehicular manslaughter cases.
Bail	An amount of money, property, and/or restrictions set by a judge and imposed upon the defendant to ensure future attendance at court proceedings.

Bind-over of a Juvenile	The juvenile court determines whether a juvenile who has been charged with murder or a felony crime should be tried as a juvenile or as an adult. This decision is usually made after a “bind-over hearing”.
Dispositional/ Status Conference	A meeting of the attorneys and the Court. Frequently used to discuss contested issues in the case and to schedule dates for motion hearings and trial.
Double Jeopardy	A constitutional principal which prohibits the State and Federal Governments from prosecuting an individual more than once for the same crime.
Evidence	Testimony, documents, photographs or other items which are presented in court to prove or disprove any fact relevant to a case.
Exhibit(s)	Any item offered and admitted into evidence at trial.
Felony	A crime that is punishable by imprisonment of more than one year.
Fine	Amount of money a defendant is ordered by the judge to pay as part of the sentence.
Grand Jury	A group of 13 to 23 persons who hear the evidence to determine whether there is sufficient evidence to charge a person with murder or a felony crime. Grand juries sit in each county, typically for a day or two each month.
Guilty Plea	When a defendant admits guilt to the Court.
Hearing	A court proceeding in which evidence and arguments on a particular issue are presented to a judge.
Homicide	When one person kills another.

Homicide/Suicide	When one person kills another and then commits suicide.
Hung Jury	When jurors cannot unanimously agree on a verdict of either guilty or not guilty, and the judge declares a mistrial.
Incompetent to Stand Trial	When a defendant's mental condition prevents him/her from understanding the court process and assisting the defense attorney in his/her own defense.
Indictment	If the Grand Jury determines there is sufficient evidence to charge a defendant with a felony crime, they "return an indictment". The indictment is the formal list of criminal charges being brought against that defendant.
Initial Appearance	A defendant's first court appearance typically within 48 hours after arrest. The Court reads the charge(s) but does not take a plea.
Insanity Defense	A defense which argues that the defendant is not criminally responsible because, at the time of the crime, as result of mental disease or defect, the defendant lacked the capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of the conduct.
Judge/ Justice	A public official appointed to preside over legal proceedings and decide questions of law brought before him/her. Judges are also referred to as "the Court."
Judgment	The final decision of the Court in a given case.
Jurisdiction	The subject matter and geographical range of a court's authority over a particular case or issue.
Jury	A panel of citizens selected and sworn to hear evidence and render a verdict in a case.
Jury Deliberation	The process by which a jury reaches a verdict. After all of the evidence is given to the jury, the jury "deliberates" to decide if the defendant should be found guilty.

Juvenile Petition	A document that describes the specific criminal offense that the juvenile is alleged to have committed. Similar to an adult criminal charge, a juvenile petition is the beginning of a prosecution of a juvenile.
Maximum Sentence	The maximum time a defendant serves in prison or is under the supervision of the Maine Department of Corrections.
Minimum Sentence	The minimum time a court can sentence a defendant to serve.
Misdemeanor	A criminal offense considered by law to be less serious than a felony. It is punishable by less than one year of incarceration.
Mistrial	When a trial must be stopped because of a legal error or when jurors cannot unanimously agree on a verdict (a hung jury).
Motion	A formal request made by the prosecution or defense for the judge to make a decision on a legal matter in a case. Two common motions are suppression motions and pre-trial motions.
Objection	A challenge by an attorney to the admissibility of testimony or evidence in court. For example, an attorney may object to evidence as being irrelevant. The Court will decide whether the objection is properly based (sustained) or should be denied (overruled).
Plea	When a defendant pleads guilty or not guilty to a formal charge in court.
Plea Agreement	An agreement whereby the defendant will plead guilty in exchange for an agreed-upon sentence. The judge may accept or reject a plea agreement.
Pre-Sentence Investigation Report (PSI)	A written report prepared by the Department of Corrections prior to sentencing. A Probation Officer from the ME Department of Corrections may interview the defendant and the victims prior to writing the report.
Probable Cause Hearing	A hearing at which the prosecutor has to prove to the judge that there were reasonable grounds to have made an arrest. The defense attorney has a right to cross examine the State's witnesses and present their own witnesses. A defendant can agree to waive this hearing.

Probation	The conditional release of an inmate into the community. Release on probation typically requires checking in with a probation officer, remaining crime-free and complying with specific conditions.
Probation Officer	An officer of the Department of Corrections who is responsible for supervising offenders throughout their probation period.
Probation Revocation	When a person violates any of the conditions of probation, the probation officer may file a motion for probation revocation with the Court. If the Court determines there has been a violation, the person may be sent back to jail or prison.
Prosecutor	The attorney for the State who oversees the case against a person charged with a crime.
Prison	A state or federal confinement facility for persons convicted of felony crimes punishable by more than one year of incarceration. The ME Department of Corrections has six adult facilities and two juvenile facilities. An adult convicted of murder or manslaughter would typically serve his/ her sentence at the Maine State Prison or the Maine Correctional Center.
Restitution	An amount of money ordered by the Court for the defendant to reimburse a crime victim for out- of-pocket expenses, typically medical bills or funeral costs.
Sentence	The punishment in a criminal case set by the judge.
Sentencing Hearing	A hearing which determines the sentence a defendant will serve. After a defendant is convicted or pleads guilty, there may be a sentencing hearing. During the hearing, the prosecution and defense present evidence and arguments in support of their respective recommendations. Victims also may give impact statements. At the end of this hearing, the judge will sentence the defendant.

Sequestration	A court order in which witnesses are kept out of the courtroom during court proceedings so that they do not hear the testimony of other witnesses. The order also may prohibit witnesses from discussing their testimony with other witnesses.
Subpoena	A written, legal document ordering someone to appear in court.
Suppression Hearing	A pretrial hearing in which a criminal defendant seeks to prevent the introduction of evidence alleged to have been seized illegally.
Trial	A formal legal proceeding where guilt or innocence is determined. A trial is typically held at the superior court of the county in which the crime was committed. Twelve jurors are selected to hear the case. Evidence will be presented by the prosecution and sometimes the defense. The jury must find unanimously that the evidence is sufficient to prove guilt, beyond a reasonable doubt.
Testimony	Statements given under oath by witnesses as evidence in court.
Verdict	The formal decision by a jury at the end of a trial.
Victim Impact Statement	A statement written by victims of crime to be read at a sentencing hearing. A victim has a right to speak or submit a written statement at the sentencing hearing which describes the physical, emotional and financial impact the crime has had on their life.
Voir Dire	A process of questioning potential jurors by prosecution and defense attorneys to screen out persons who may be unable to fairly and impartially evaluate the evidence at trial.
Warrant	An order issued by the court which directs law enforcement to arrest a person, search a location, seize an object or do some other specific act.
Witness	A person who has personal knowledge of certain facts of a case and who may be called to testify under oath as to what he or she has seen or heard.

Local Organizations & Agencies

Parents of Murdered Children (POMC), Maine Chapter

For the families and friends of those who have died by violence. Offering support, education, advocacy and prevention. The Maine Chapter of POMC meets at 12:30 pm, on the last Sunday of every month in the lobby-level conference room at the Maine General Medical Center in Augusta, Maine. For more information contact:
mainepomc@gmail.com
Arthur Jette, Chapter Leader
(207) 277-3518

Maine Behavioral Healthcare

Connecting people to quality care. Creating pathways to promote healthier people and communities. We treat the mind and body together at over 30 treatment locations statewide.
www.mainebehavioralhealthcare.org
(207) 761-6644/ Toll-Free: 1-844-292-0111

The Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence (MCEDV)

MCEDV mobilizes and coordinates community action through a statewide network of domestic violence projects. Through these partnerships, we focus our resources on public policy, education, and systems advocacy.
www.mcedv.org

Grief Share

Grief Share is offered around the United States including regularly scheduled sessions in Maine. For current and future offerings of 13-week faith-based sessions go to:
www.griefshare.org
(800) 395-5755
893 Main St, Sanford ME

Local Organizations & Agencies

The Center for Grieving Children (CGC)

Offering free services as long as needed. The Center's mission is to provide loving support that encourages the safe expression of grief and loss and fosters each individual's resilience and emotional well-being.

www.cgcmaine.org

(207) 775-5216

555 Forest Ave, Portland ME

Pathfinders: Support for Grieving Children

Offering a caring, safe environment where children, teens and their caregivers utilize peer support and grief education to creatively express, share and grow through the healing process.

www.pathfindersmaine.org

(207) 973-8269 or 800-350-8269

EM Healthcare Mall

885 Union St, Ste. 220

Bangor ME

Resources for Adults

What to Do When the Police Leave: A Guide to the First Days of Traumatic Loss, Bill Jenkins

Healing Your Traumatized Heart, Alan D. Wolfelt, PhD

A Grief Like No Other: Surviving the Violent Death of Someone You Love, Kathleen O'Hara

Coping with Traumatic Death: Homicide, Bob Baugher & Lew Cox

The Forgiving Place: Choosing Peace After Violent Trauma, Richard R. Gayton & Marianne Williamson

Homicide Survivors: Misunderstood Grievors, Judie A. Bucholz, PhD

No Time For Goodbyes: Coping With Sorrow, Anger and Injustice After a Tragic Death, Janice Harris Lord

When a Child Has Been Murdered: Ways You Can Help the Grieving Parents, Bonnie Hunt Conrad

When Father Kills Mother: Guiding Children Through Trauma and Grief, Jean Harris-Hendricks, Dora Black & Tony Kaplan

Life After Trauma: A Workbook For Healing, Mary Beth Williams & Dena Rosenbloom

Living with Grief after Sudden Death, Kenneth J. Doka

Permanent Heartache: Portraits of Grief, Hope, Survival and Life After Homicide, Marcella Hammett

What Murder Leaves Behind: The Victim's Family, Doug Magee

Resources for Children

Resources

A Terrible Thing Happened, M. Holmes, S. Mudlaff & C. Pillo (Grades PreK-3)

After A Murder: A Workbook for Grieving Kids, The Dougy Center (Grades 1-8)

The Boy Who Sat By The Window: Helping Children Cope With Violence, Chris Loftis (Grades 3-7)

Children Also Grieve: Talking About Death and Healing, Linda Goldman (Grades 1-5)

Just One Tear, L. Mahon (Grades 6-12)

Reactions, Alison Salloum (Grades 3-8)

When Someone You Know Has Been Killed, Jay Schleifer (Grades 6-9)

Breaking The Silence: A Guide to Help Children with Complicated Grief, Linda Goldman (For Parents)

When Dinosaurs Die: A Guide to Understanding Death, Laurie Krasny Brown and Marc Brown (Ages 4-8)

Children Are Survivors, Too: A Guidebook for Young Homicide Survivors, Kathleen A. Aub (Grades 1-8)

Death is Hard to Live With: Teenagers Talk About How They Cope with Death, Janet Bode (Young Adults)

Part of Me Died, Too, Virginia Lynn Fry (Ages 10+)

Straight Talk about Death for Teenagers, Earl Grollman (Ages 12+)

Bereaved Children and Teens: A Support Guide for Parents and Professionals, Earl A. Grollman

Sad Isn't Bad: A Good-Grief Guidebook for Kids Dealing With Loss, Michaelene Mundy (Ages 5-8)

Faith-Based Resources

When the World Breaks Your Heart: Spiritual Ways to Live with Tragedy, Gregory S. Clapper

Healing After Loss: Daily Meditations for Working Through Grief, Martha W. Hickman

God and the Victim: Theological Reflections on Evil, Victimization, Justice, and Forgiveness, Lisa Barnes Lampman, Michelle D. Shattuck

Healing Stories of Grief and Faith: From Denial and Despair to Comfort and Peace, Kathrine Palmer Peterson

Life Beyond the Final Curtain: Death Is Not the End/ How to Cope With Grief: Words of Comfort—A Rabbi's Personal Statement, Samuel Porrath

Good Grief: A Constructive Approach to the Problem of Loss, Granger E. Westberg.

Internet Resources

Parents of Murdered Children and Other Survivors of Homicide, www.pomc.org/maine

National Center for Victims of Crime, www.victimsofcrime.org

Maine Attorney General's Office, www.maine.gov/ag

National Organization for Victim Assistance, www.trynova.org

Office for Victims of Crime, www.ovc.gov

VICTIMS' RIGHTS

In Maine, victims of a crime committed by an adult offender can expect the following:

- To be treated with dignity and respect
- To be assisted by criminal justice agencies
- To be informed about the criminal justice system
- Whenever practicable, to be notified of plea agreements and the right to comment on them
- Whenever practicable, to be notified of all judicial proceedings, including time and place of trial
- Whenever practicable, to be notified of the proposed dismissal or filing of a complaint, information, or indictment before the action is taken
- To have input at sentencing
- To request restitution
- To request compensation from the Victim Compensation Board for un-reimbursed medical and medically related expenses for victims of violent crimes upon request.
- To request to be notified of defendant's release from institutional confinement
- To be provided with a pamphlet containing certain statutes which pertain to victims' rights

Reprinted from the Victims' Rights pamphlet, provided by the Maine Department of Corrections, Victim Services. These rights may be found in Title 17-A, Chapter 48 of the Maine Revised Statutes.

Homicide Victims' Monument



Located at the Holy Family Cemetery in Augusta

“This memorial was erected in honor of our loved ones by the Maine Chapter of Parents of Murdered Children for the families and friends of those who have been murdered.”

To have your loved one’s name inscribed on the monument, please contact your advocate or the Maine Chapter of Parents of Murdered Children (POMC).

mainepomc@gmail.com

(207) 277-3518 Art Jette, Chapter Leader

The cost per name is \$150.00.

