



they are able to help crime victims with autism get their lives back to normal as well as prosecute the criminals who commit crimes against people with autism and other disabilities. You may want to work with your local chapter of the Autism Society or other autism or disability support groups to help offer training on autism and assist victim assistance organizations in improving their services for individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

## **AUTISM SOCIETY**

4340 East-West Highway, Suite 350  
Bethesda, Maryland 20814-3067  
Phone: 301.657.0881 or  
1.800.3AUTISM  
Fax: 301.657.0869  
Web: [www.autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org)

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If you appreciated the information contained in this publication please consider offering support through a donation that will continue the availability of this information to others in need. Help us continue the work so vital to the autism community by making a tax-deductible donation at [www.autism-society.org/donate-home](http://www.autism-society.org/donate-home).

## **RESOURCES**

### **Crime Victim Organizations**

Office for Victims of Crime, U.S. Department of Justice 1-800-851-3420 - [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/)

National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC) 1-800-394-2255 - [www.ncvc.org/](http://www.ncvc.org/)

National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) 1-800-879-6682 - [www.trynova.org/](http://www.trynova.org/)

Childhelp USA National Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-442-4453 - [www.childhelp.org/](http://www.childhelp.org/)

National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233 - [www.ndvh.org/](http://www.ndvh.org/)

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence 1-800-537-2238 - [www.nrcdv.org/](http://www.nrcdv.org/)

Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) 1-800-656-4673 - [www.rainn.org/](http://www.rainn.org/)

### **Autism and Crime**

Autism Society - 1-800-3AUTISM  
[www.autism-society.org/safeandsound](http://www.autism-society.org/safeandsound)

Find local resources for victims of crime at Autism Source™, the Autism Society's on-line referral database [www.autismsource.org](http://www.autismsource.org)

Disability, Abuse & Personal Rights Project  
[www.disability-abuse.com](http://www.disability-abuse.com)

LEAN (Law Enforcement Awareness Network) on Us [www.leanonus.org](http://www.leanonus.org)

Autism Risk and Safety Management  
[www.autismriskmanagement.com/](http://www.autismriskmanagement.com/)

# *If You are the* **VICTIM OF A CRIME**



## BEING THE VICTIM OF A CRIME IS VERY SCARY.

*If you are someone with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and have difficulty communicating, you may be even more worried about reporting the crime to the police, getting help for yourself, making sure the person who committed the crime against you is caught, and getting back to your normal routine.*

You should know that you have rights and that there are people who can help you. Because of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a law that makes services accessible to people with disabilities, and the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), a law that helps to create and improve services to victims of crime, more and more services are available to people who have been the victim of crime, including people with autism and other disabilities.

## CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS

*In most states, all victims of crime have specific rights that are outlined in a state's constitution, laws, and regulations. They typically include the following:*

- **THE RIGHT** to be notified of all court proceedings related to the offense.
- **THE RIGHT** to be reasonably protected from the accused offender.
- **THE RIGHT** to have input at sentencing, usually in the form of a victim impact statement.
- **THE RIGHT** to information about the conviction, sentencing, imprisonment, and release of the offender.
- **THE RIGHT** to an order of restitution from the convicted offender.
- **THE RIGHT** to be notified of your rights.



If you need help to understand and assert these rights, you have the right to “accommodations” under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other laws. If you communicate using pictures or a special communication device, if you need to be in a quiet room without fluorescent lights or loud noises, or if you need frequent breaks when talking to the police or lawyers, you can ask for an “accommodation” based on your specific needs.

### CRIME VICTIMS' SERVICES

In every state there are programs that provide services for crime victims like you. If you do not know what services are available to you, contact your state's Victim Assistance Program. The Victim Assistance Program can connect you with services in your community. Some services may be a telephone hotline, shelter, a counselor, legal help, someone to meet you at the hospital, someone to come with you when you have to go to court, and information and referral to other services that can help you. The Victim Assistance Program will also try to help you find service providers with some knowledge of ASD. In some places, however, a victim assistance organization might need to work as a partner with an autism or disability organization to give you services. This way, you can receive crime victim services that meet your particular needs. It is important that you let the people who love and support you, as well as the professionals, know what you need so that they can help you.

As well as assistance services, programs in your state also assist with “compensation” for crime victims by reimbursing them for expenses they had as a result of a crime (also called “restitution”). Expenses covered may include such things as medical costs, counseling, lost wages, etc. Because of your autism, you may need services that are slightly different or that last longer than someone else—everyone experiences crime differently, and you should think about this when you are seeking “restitution.”

For assistance finding your state's Victim Assistance and Compensation Programs, call the federal Office for Victims of Crime at 1-800-851-3420 (TTY 1-877-712-9279). The Office for Victims of Crime also has an online resource directory available at [www.ovc.gov/help/links.htm](http://www.ovc.gov/help/links.htm).

### WORKING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Crime victim assistance organizations have different levels of knowledge about autism and other disabilities. Some know a great deal while others are just beginning to learn about autism. As someone on the autism spectrum, you may want to volunteer your time and knowledge to help your local victim assistance organizations in understanding the autism spectrum and how to help individuals with autism. The more familiar crime victim professionals are with autism, the better