



# Op Hampshire

## Victim Personal Statements

A well-constructed Victim Personal Statement (VPS) is important and provides the court with supporting information to suitably sentence a defendant if the impact on the victim is clear.

The CPS will need to know that a VPS has been considered and sought even if the victim chooses not to submit one. It is good practice to include something early on at the end of the evidential victim statement because if your suspect is arrested, charged, remanded overnight to court, pleads guilty and is sentenced, this will be the only chance to complete a VPS and it should be readily available at a first hearing.

If the case ends up going to trial then a further more detailed VPS can be compiled later as the impact becomes more apparent or just before trial to show any lasting effects or ongoing issues as a result of the incident.

Although not a requirement, if a close family member, friend or colleague has also been impacted by the crime, a VPS can also be taken from them.

### Issues to consider

There is no shame in admitting to fears and feelings. This is often something that as police officers and staff we struggle with. The whole purpose of a VPS is to demonstrate the impact on you as a human being. The courts do not want a robotic statement as this does not explain the true impact. We are human, we have the same fears, worries and expectations of any member of society and are entitled to the same levels of protection and justice afforded to the public.

A VPS needs to describe the following where relevant:

- Any physical, financial, emotional or psychological injury they have suffered and/or any treatment they have received as a result of the crime.
- Whether they are a repeat victim and any impact this has on confidence?
- What was the impact their next shift? Did or do they feel vulnerable or intimidated. Were they in fear and/or worried? If they no longer feel safe or anxious? Are they nervous about patrolling, alone or otherwise?
- Consider the impact on their family life (including the effect anti-viral drugs has had on intimacy with partners or interaction with children and family following a spit, bite or needle stick injury).
- How the quality of their life has changed on a day-to-day basis. Do they have problems sleeping? Medication? Mobility?
- If they need additional support, for example, if they are likely to appear as a witness at the trial.
- The on-going impact of the crime on their lives.

Should any of the above change further down the line the victim is entitled to complete another VPS prior to trial to update the court.

This is because any of the points above may not be immediately evident straight after the assault and tend to present days, weeks or months after the initial assault.

