

Customer Service Standards

Vulnerable Victims and Intimidated Witnesses – what you can expect

We understand that coming to court to give evidence can be worrying and often traumatic experience. We aim to reduce those worries and trauma by providing:

- an opportunity to visit the courthouse and view facilities before you come to give evidence, (you need to contact the court manager to organise this, or it can be organised through Victim Support)
- separate, comfortable waiting rooms in all main court venues
- reception desks, information points and public counters where you can ask for information
- an information leaflet about the courthouse you are to attend. We will send this to you if you contact us before you are to attend court
- supportive court staff at each court location;

Serving
the community
through the
administration
of justice

We are not responsible for calling witnesses to court or for paying their expenses; this is the responsibility of whoever asked you to attend – e.g. prosecutors, police or solicitors. However, the Northern Ireland Court Service is working with other agencies to improve the quality of the information you are provided with before you attend court

At Court

- If you need the use of a consultation room, please ask a member of staff at reception or speak with a court official. This can also be arranged prior to attending court.
- We can arrange for you to access the building prior to other members of the public being permitted entry (before 9.30 am).
- If you need information, or are to meet someone when you get there, we can arrange to have you met by our security staff and taken to a private waiting area (access can be given before 9.30 am if required).
- In Crown Court cases if the venue poses a particular difficulty there may be an option to transfer the case to another venue. In the first instance, you should make your concerns known to whoever was responsible for bringing you to court;
- Witness waiting areas will be clean, heated, well lit and comfortable
- Refreshment facilities will be available at all main court venues.
- Information on case progression or disposal will be provided to witnesses on request;

Special Arrangements

- Court lists will be on display from 9.30 am on each court day. In special cases where a witness is particularly vulnerable a case may be listed at an appropriate time in the morning or the afternoon to facilitate the witness;
- Use of special equipment e.g. screens, video links etc.
- A designated witness room will be made available at all main court venues.

The Northern Ireland Court Service will work alongside NSPCC and Victim Support to provide you with information and support at each of our main court venues. You can contact them in advance of your attendance at court, either directly or through the Northern Ireland Court Service.

Do you have a suggestion to make?

Tell us what you think of our standards. We always welcome suggestions from our customers. Your comments will help us improve our services.