

## The Support Service for Victims of a Crimed Major Incident, and how to Mobilise it

### Definition

All victims have rights under the Victims Code of Practice<sup>1</sup>, including to information and referral to services to support victims. This is a **legal right** which came into effect in 2006, and is a duty which applies across the criminal justice system to ensure that victims are treated properly. This should be considered separately from general offers of help by third sector or statutory partners - it is a specified legal right which is subject to monitoring and reporting to the Ministry of Justice.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has been funded since 2015/16 provide this support service to victims of all crimes, including acts of terrorism. **These services are already in place and should provide vital, expert, immediate capacity to make sure victims of a crimed major incident are provided with the support they have a right to expect.**

This document outlines what you should expect from the commissioned victim service after a crimed major incident, and the pathways for mobilising and managing this victim response as part of the response and recovery programme.

This service maybe provided by Victim Support, another provider or the PCC directly.

Please note, for victims of homicide there is a separate **National Homicide Service**, commissioned by the Ministry of Justice. Family Liaison Officers should automatically refer all close relatives of the deceased to this service. The service is provided by Victim Support and they can be contacted 24/7 on 0808 178 1665

Victim Support also provide a 24/7 **Supportline** for victims and witnesses of an incident which also offers a contact point for professionals and has established links into other relevant statutory and voluntary sector services. The number is 0808 1689 111

### The Service you can expect is:

- (RESPONSE PHASE) Single number and publicity materials available for distribution within hours by statutory sector to victims of the crime
- Immediate support and assessment of needs of victims by trained workers
- Attendance if requested at Humanitarian Assistance Centre
- Attendance at Humanitarian Assistance Steering Group (HASG) to inform of victim and witness needs and to assist with longer term recovery of the affected area
- Immediate website availability with guidance there for victims/survivors and route through to needs assessment and support
- Meeting immediate practical needs including emergency food, travel and accommodation<sup>2</sup>
- Onward referrals to safeguarding

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/your-rights/victims-code>

<sup>2</sup> This will be subject to prior agreement on use of funds between the provider and Commissioner

- Provide expertise to LRF on the impact of terrorism including national and international learning from victims and victims organisations
- (RECOVERY PHASE) Would expect to be part of the Recovery Group
- Would expect Media team from the commissioned victim service to liaise with LRF Comms, but will also do independent releases/promotion
- Provide weekly updates (depending on scale) to MOJ, PCC and LRF - profiling the number and features of contacts post the event
- Ongoing casework as support worker/advocate/navigator to include:
  - Thorough assessment of needs and risks
  - Recovery plan including provision of support materials/techniques for traumatised victims
  - Onward referrals to the right local service
  - Ongoing contact for as long as it takes for victim to reach level of recovery
  - Support during the coroner’s inquest or criminal trial process
- Provision of drop in surgeries if required for self-referrals (eg after 7/7 and Jo Cox’s murder); attendance at any vigils, concerts etc to provide visible support

**Referrals process - how to work with the victims service**

The service provider is:	Victim Support
The provider’s contact details in the event of a crimed major incident is:	Supportline - 0808 1689 111 (has the details of the local managers)
The LRF lead who will mobilise the victim service is:	
The PCC office lead for victims is:	Stewart Atkinson
The timescale for mobilising the provider is:	12 hours

Systems will already be in place for daily referral of all recorded victims to the victim service - this applies where victims are identified and noted by police, although the normal referral system may break down in a case of major emergency. It is recommended that the LRF takes the following additional steps to ensure that victims still receive their right to referral to support services, and to demonstrate a victim-focussed response:

- Victim service provider to produce contact cards within 48 hours with details on how to self-refer to local support service, and police and health partners to distribute these
- LRF Communications lead to ensure all communications include details of how to self-refer to victim services
- Depending on the incident, consider additional advertisements in local media - after the Manchester Arena Attack local radio adverts led to “spikes” in self referrals from people experiencing trauma after being caught up in the incident
- Make sure all partner and third sector agencies have a short referral form in place for anyone in need of support after the incident. This needs to set out the contact details for the victim service (telephone/email/website)