

Witness Assistance Service (WAS)

The WAS operates statewide and provides services for victims and witnesses. It operates within the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP). A WAS professionally qualified worker is located in each of the ODPP offices.

The service is available to victims and witnesses of crime involved in cases that are being prosecuted by the ODPP.

WAS can accept referrals once police have finished their investigation and charges have been laid against the alleged offender.

Police should notify WAS if victims/witnesses require specialist and/or support services if the victims and/or witnesses are:

- a child or young person under 18 years of age
- a person with a disability
- an elderly person
- a person who speaks a language other than English
- a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background, and/or
- any person experiencing trauma difficulties about attending court.

The service provided by WAS aims to minimise the re-traumatisation of the victim while going through the criminal proceedings. The service includes:

- providing information about the legal process
- services available
- rights and entitlements
- updates on the progress of the matter as required
- referral to other services
- court preparation and familiarisation

- coordinating court support
- supporting victims during conferences with ODPP lawyers
- assistance with victim impact statements, debriefing and post court follow-up.

There is a Witness Assistance Service Officer at each of the offices of the ODPP.

Head Office Sydney	(02) 9285 8606
Parramatta	(02) 9891 9800
Campbelltown	(02) 4629 2811
Penrith	(02) 4721 6100
Gosford	(02) 4337 1111
Dubbo	(02) 6881 3300
Wollongong	(02) 4224 7111
Newcastle	(02) 4929 4399
Wagga Wagga	(02) 6925 8400
Lismore	(02) 6627 2222
TOLL FREE	1800 814 534
(Outside Sydney)	
TTY	(02) 9285 8646

For toll free callers wanting to speak to a regional WAS officer please ask the Head Office switchboard operator to put you through to the regional office where the WAS officer is located.

TTY: (02) 9285 8646

FAX: (02) 9285 2528 (Head office)

EMAIL: WAS@odpp.nsw.gov.au

Or please visit www.odpp.nsw.gov.au/victims-witnesses/going-to-court-and-being-a-witness for further information.