

CHARTER OF RIGHTS FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

WHAT WE HEARD REPORT



DEVELOPING THE ACT'S FIRST CHARTER OF RIGHTS FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

A Charter will ensure all victims of crime are treated properly at every point in the criminal justice system.

To develop the Charter we wanted to understand what Canberrans believe victim rights are, and how agencies and services can support victims to access them.

WHY REFORMS ARE NEEDED

Justice and victim support agencies are committed to enhancing safety, assisting victims of crime and achieving justice for the Canberra community.

All victims of crime matter. Many people who experience crime show resilience and strength. It can also be a time of vulnerability and trauma, and victim rights can help people navigate and be included in the justice process.

THE CONVERSATION

We held a conversation online, face to face and directly with stakeholders from 22 June to 27 August.

Although there are many common reactions to crime, each individual is different and have their own experience so we appreciated hearing from a range of people throughout this consultation.

WHO ENGAGED

Most community members who responded to the online survey were female (78%), had experienced crime (72%), and had experienced the ACT justice system as a victim or a family member of a victim (70%).

More than half of the AMC detainees who responded to the the online survey self-identified as having experienced crime as a victim (56%).

More than 50 organisations and agencies participated in the discussion, representing a diverse range of issues.

We spoke with Canberra's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTIQ and disability communities, and those supporting children and young people, because we want to ensure the Charter meets everyone's needs. We also spoke with community organisations and service providers, Canberra's legal sector and justice agencies.

Key insights from the community

Choice about interacting with justice processes

- 1 People have different reactions to crime and want to decide for themselves what support they need, and what involvement they want in their case.
- 2 Choice is especially important for diverse community members who may feel particularly vulnerable.

Being properly informed and kept up-to-date

- 3 To enable choice, people want access to information about justice processes in different formats and at different times.
- 4 Support services and justice agencies also want the right information so they can best help victims navigate justice processes.
- 5 People often prefer to get information and updates from one key contact.

Opportunities to be heard

- 6 People often want to be included in the conversation when key decisions are being made about their case.
- 7 There is strong support for legal advice to improve victims' access to entitlements.

Personalised complaint processes if a right is not met

- 8 People often want support to make a complaint, the process needs to be clear and accessible, and some people prefer to make an anonymous complaint.
- 9 In response to a complaint people want a personal conversation or acknowledgement and changes to agency practice.

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WHAT'S NEXT?

The ACT Government is planning the implementation of the Charter of Rights for Victims of Crime based on what we heard.

If you haven't already, you can register to receive project updates by emailing jacslpp@act.gov.au.

To find out more about the Charter and other initiatives, policies and projects in Canberra visit www.yoursay.act.gov.au or follow ACT Government on Facebook or Twitter.

Key Timings

Step 1 – June 22 to 27 August 2018

Community consultation on YourSay, at several stakeholder forums and individual meetings with victims of crime.

Step 2 – December 2018

What We Heard Report released, summarising key themes from community consultation.

Step 3 – September 2018 to June 2019

ACT Government plans the implementation of the Charter of Rights for Victims of Crime.

Step 4 – July 2019

Implementation of the Charter of Rights for Victims of Crime.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

1015

Invitations to give feedback were extended to 1015 victims of crime

17

We attended 17 community meetings to hear the diverse preferences of ACT community members

157

We had 157 responses to our online surveys

15

We received more than 15 written submissions from a range of organisations and people

100

We had more than 100 victims of crime give their views via an online survey, individual face to face meeting, or written submission

25

25 legal and community sector stakeholders participated in a public forum

The ACT Government extends a warm thank you to everyone who gave their views during community consultation and who supported people to have a say.

In particular, thank you to those who have been impacted by crime and provided personal insights on what is working well and what can be improved in the justice process.

The ACT Government is committed to introducing the Charter of Rights for Victims of Crime and your experiences are an important contribution to shaping this.