

## WHAT OTHER RIGHTS DO I HAVE THAT MAY HELP ME AS A CRIME VICTIM?

### You have the right to an interpreter if English is NOT your primary language:

- The court shall require an interpreter (at the state's expense) for any court proceeding involving a party who speaks a language other than English as their primary language and has a limited ability to read, speak, or understand English.
- If you are scheduled to appear in a court proceeding for which interpreters are needed at state expense, you or your attorney should submit a request for an interpreter to the local Language Access Coordinator (LAC). Written requests should be submitted electronically by completing the Request for Spoken Foreign Language Court Interpreter Form.
- Requests for interpreters should be submitted at **least 10 business days prior** to the scheduled court proceeding.
- If you have not requested an interpreter prior to the court date, you should notify the courtroom clerk or magistrate that you need an interpreter as soon as you arrive for the court proceeding. If the LAC does not have sufficient time to find a qualified court interpreter, your proceeding will be continued.

<https://www.nccourts.gov/programs/office-of-language-access-services/do-you-need-a-court-interpreter>

### You have the right to hire an attorney:

- The District Attorney is not your attorney. The District Attorney is representing the interests of the state and since your interests as a crime victim and the interests of the state are closely aligned, the district attorney is interested in including your voice as proceedings begin and move forward. However, they must balance the victim's needs with that of the community at large and the safety of the general public.
- You may hire your own attorney to ensure you have representation that focuses exclusively on your rights and needs as a crime victim. Your attorney will not participate in the prosecution of the accused.

## **You have rights regarding Rape Kit Testing:**

"The Survivor Act" for sexual assault victims for whom a forensic examination was performed after the assault are provided rights to be informed on requirements that include specific timelines for various aspects of processing by agencies involved and specific protocols for how all unprocessed kits shall be tracked. For more information on the Survivor Act:

<https://ncdoj.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Survivor-Act-Law-Fact-sheet.pdf>

- These requirements are designed to assure the timely processing by health providers, law enforcement, and the State Crime Lab of the resulting "rape kits".
- The results of the testing eventually become part of the evidence in the case and are uploaded to CODIS, a nationwide law enforcement database.
- The law now also requires law enforcement agencies to establish review teams to survey their entire untested SAECK inventory to determine a priority submission order for testing.
- The Public Protection Section of the Attorney General Office can address questions and provide additional information by email at [publicprotection@ncdoj.gov](mailto:publicprotection@ncdoj.gov), or by calling (919) 716-6780.
- Victims have the right to **opt in** to participate in receiving regular updates regarding the status of the testing through a tracking system and portal developed by the Attorney General Office in 2018. To access information about the portal:

<https://www.sexualassaultkittracking.ncdoj.gov/SexualAssaultKitTracking/>