



Information to non-residents becoming victims of crime in Sweden

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EMERGENCY

In urgent emergency situations call 112 which is the single emergency telephone number for the European Union. Calls are answered in Swedish, English and in some areas they may be answered in German, French, Finnish and Spanish. Do not hang up if someone does not answer straight away. Be prepared to answer questions. What has happened? Where? What phone number are you calling from? The SOS operator will ask further questions that are necessary for you to quickly receive the help you need. All questions are designed for you to get help as quickly as possible. 112 should be used only to raise the alarm in emergency situations when it is urgent.

THE POLICE

If you have been the victim of a crime in Sweden or if you are the guardian of a child who has been subjected to crime you should report the crime, preferably as soon as possible. This is important in order to benefit from insurance policies and to be able to receive compensation from the state. This may be done at the closest police authority, which you can find in the telephone book. It is possible to make a report over the telephone. An investigation is led either by the police or in serious cases by the prosecutor.

The police will take a first statement but you are normally asked for an interview within the course of the investigation. Bring a friend or someone else who can help you make yourself understood and support you. Make sure you ask for the full name and telephone number to your investigating officer. If you plan to leave the country, you should tell the police. You are entitled to receive a copy of the police report free of charge.

INFORMATION

The police should provide you with relevant, reliable, understandable and continual information. In general, the police should tell you how the judicial procedure in Sweden runs, about available assistance and the various forms of compensation available. There are a number of websites with information in English about the legal system in Sweden, see under Useful websites.

HEALTH CARE

It is important that you have your injuries documented. Ask for a certificate from the doctor! Every EU citizen has the right

to acute health care free of charge within the European Union. To be entitled for urgent treatment for accident or unexpected illness, you must bring form E 111 with you to prove you are covered by sickness insurance in your own country. The form only covers temporary stays with a maximum of 1 year (or, exceptionally, 2 years if you are on secondment). When going to a hospital or the health care centre, you have to pay a smaller amount.

TO BECOME A VICTIM OF CRIME

After being subjected to either theft or an act of aggression, violating your personal integrity, it is natural to feel confused and have feelings of guilt. As a non-resident in a foreign country, you might feel more vulnerable than you would if you are resident in the country where the victimisation took place. Crime victims have the right to respect and recognition from society. Rights should apply equally regardless of age, sex, sexuality, race, disability, occupation religious belief or political opinion of the person concerned. According to the Treaty establishing the European Community, discrimination on grounds of nationality shall be prohibited within the scope of application of the treaty.

THE RIGHT TO UNDERSTAND AND BE UNDERSTOOD

If you do not understand or speak Swedish you have the right to an interpreter during trial and most often during investigation.

EMBASSIES

Most Ministries of Foreign Affairs in the European Union provide information about their embassies and the kind of help their consular services can offer. This assistance varies from one member state to another. Consult their websites. See under Useful websites.

DO YOU NEED SOMEONE TO TALK TO?

The police should be able to provide you with contact details on organisations and authorities that offer help. The National Association for Victim Services (BOJ) runs a nationwide telephone line which is open between 9-16.00 on weekdays. The telephone number is 0200-21 20 19. You will be automatically connected to your nearest local centre. On this number you will be given a possibility to talk to someone familiar with the problems of victims and you will be given emotional and practical support.

You are entitled to have a support person in the judicial procedure which may accompany you to the police or to the court hearing. If you do not know a suitable person who can go with you (family or friend), you may receive help from the social services, a victim service or a women's shelter.

DAMAGES

As an injured party you may submit a claim for damages. The claim will generally be considered within the criminal trial. You should ask the police or the prosecutor for assistance. The prosecutor is under an obligation to assist you with the claim unless it is very complex. Questions on how to claim may also be answered by the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority. (*Brottsoffermyndigheten*)

CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION

If you have been subjected to a crime in Sweden and the person who has subjected you to crime is unknown or has no ability to pay damages and if you have no insurance policy covering the injuries, you may have the right to criminal injuries compensation from the state (*brottskadeersättning*). The crime must have been reported to the police and you must submit a written application. An application must be received no later than two years after the crime has taken place, the case has been closed or after the legal proceedings have been completed. Information on criminal injuries compensation is available in a number of languages. The telephone service at Brottsoffermyndigheten will give you more information. The telephone number is 090 -70 82 00.

LEGAL SUPPORT

If you have been subjected to a sexual offence, a violent offence or another crime punishable by a prison sentence and/or when the injured party is in a great need for assistance, you are entitled to a legal representative; counsel for the injured party, (*målsägandebiträde*) free of charge in the procedure. His/her duty is to safeguard the general legal needs of the victim. The counsel may prepare the injured party for questioning and will assist the injured party in claiming for damages. The counsel has an unconditional right to be present during the questioning, throughout the procedure.

If the parents of a victimised child are not expected to be able to protect the interests of the child because they or someone who is closely related to the child is suspected of a crime against the child, a special legal representation for children (*särskild företrädare för barn*) may be appointed free of charge by the District Court.

LEGAL ADVICE AND LEGAL AID

According to the Legal Aid Act, you have the right to legal advice for two hours in all legal matters at a lawyer's office according to a fixed fee. The fee may be reduced if you have insufficient financial resources. Legal advice may be needed if for example the police and the public prosecution authorities can not help you with your claim for damages or if you need help in negotiations with an insurance company.

To be eligible for legal aid, legal advice is required. It has to be applied through a lawyer.

Nationals of all member states in the European Union have the same rights to legal aid as Swedish citizens. The Legal Aid Authority will provide you with information about how to apply for legal aid. The application form can be provided from either the National Courts Administration or the Legal Aid Authority.

EXPENSES

If you have witnessed you will be reimbursed for necessary travel and accommodation expenses, and other expenses such as income losses in connection to the trial. The same applies to injured parties.

INSURANCE POLICIES

If you have become a victim of crime you should check your travel insurance. The Scandinavian countries have a common alarm central: SOS International, situated in Copenhagen, to which also a number of insurance companies in other member states are connected. The operators can assist you with a number of questions in emergency situations. The telephone number is +45 70 10 50 50.

IN THE COURT

It is considered as a social duty to witness. As a witness you are required to give evidence under oath. This does not apply to injured persons (crime victims).

Some courts have special waiting rooms for injured parties and witnesses. Many courts in Sweden offer Witness Service, which means that a person will be available in the court to explain the judicial procedure and to provide you with support and practical information in order for you to give evidence in the best possible way. Please inform the court well in advance if you have a valid reason for not attending the trial.

ARE YOU AFRAID OF THE OFFENDER OR TO APPEAR IN COURT?

Tell the police as soon as possible. You have the possibilities to various forms of legal representation. Also stronger measures of protection are available if you are under serious threat. The court has the possibility to decide that someone who has intimidated a witness should not participate during questioning.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

A number of NGO:s provide help and support to victims of crime. This includes, for example counselling and assistance with contacting authorities and insurance companies. Most people working for these organisations are volunteers and they may act as support persons in the procedure. The Swedish Association for Victim Support is the national organisation for local support service.

THE CRIME VICTIM COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT AUTHORITY

The Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority is a national governmental authority working for the needs and interest of crime victims.

This leaflet provides a summary information to victimised non-residents in Sweden. For more information please turn to the respective authorities. The leaflet has been developed within the framework of the project "Assistance to cross-border victims in the European Union –an action plan", a project carried with support from the Grotius II criminal programme.

The point of departure has been the Council Framework Decision of 15 March 2001 on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings.

DISCLAIMER

The European Commission disclaims any liability regarding the contents of this document. The responsibility for the accuracy of the information rests with the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority.

USEFUL WEBSITES

A great deal of information is available on the Internet and computers are available at public libraries and tourist offices and to some extent at the police stations.

General information about the judicial system in Sweden:
www.sweden.se

Information on giving evidence in criminal cases in trial:
www.dom.se

Comprehensive information to crime victims in English is found on the website of the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority. It is also published as an information leaflet "Information to victims of crime", available at police stations or from the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority:
www.brottsoffermyndigheten.se

Under the Dialogue with Citizens website of the European Union you can visit "Sweden". Under Useful addresses you will find a number of different help telephone lines to for example the police, embassies etc:
www.europa.eu.int

Most Ministries of Foreign Affairs in the European Union provide information about their embassies and the kind of help their consular services can offer. They might be found under:
www.europa.eu.int/abc/governments/index_en.htm

The Swedish Association for Victim Support

E-mail: boj.riks@boj.se

Website: www.boj.se

Tel: 0200-21 20 19 (day or night)

The National Organization for Women's Shelters and Young Women's Shelters in Sweden

E-mail: info@roks.se

Website: www.roks.se

Tel: 08-442 99 30

Terrafem

(On call for immigrant women and girls in a number of languages)

E-mail: info@terraferm.org

Website: www.terraferm.org

The Legal Aid Authority

Tel 060-13 46 00 or 13 46 10.

E-mail: registrator@rhm.dom.se

or rattshjalpsmyndigheten.rhm.dom.se

Website: www.rhm.dom.se

For further information, please contact:

The Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority

Box 470, 901 09 UMEÅ

SWEDEN

Telephone: 090-70 82 00 Fax: 090 -17 83 53

E-mail: registrator@brottsoffermyndigheten.se

Website: www.brottsoffermyndigheten.se