

Our guiding principles

Person-centric

Victims' needs, rights, experiences, and voices are at the heart of everything we do. We prioritise the trauma-informed principles of choice, safety, trust, collaboration and empowerment in our engagement and advice, recognising intersecting identities that shape each victim's unique experience of harm.

Rights-based

We empower people to know and claim their rights. We put human rights and victims' rights at the core of what we do, including our policies and processes and how we operate.

Strengths-based

We leverage and amplify the inherent strengths of victims and organisations, making decisions which empower victims, individuals and organisations to overcome challenges with confidence. We emphasise the strength of culture, and the human capacity for resilience, resistance, courage, thriving, and ingenuity rather than minimising people to their trauma and victimisation.

Knowledge-driven and evidence-based

Victims' needs, rights, experiences, and voices are at the heart of everything we do. We prioritise the trauma-informed principles of choice, safety, trust, collaboration and empowerment in our engagement and advice, recognising intersecting identities that shape each victim's unique experience of harm.

Genuine relationships with collective responsibility

We cultivate genuine relationships and foster authentic connections with government, victim support and the community sector.

Beck O'Connor



Our opportunities and risks

✓ Honouring victim voices that elevate systemic change

Engaging directly with services, agencies, and individuals with lived and living experience is an opportunity to acknowledge and build on the positive reforms underway. By honouring the diverse voices of victims and ensuring their experiences are at the heart of decision-making, we will build more inclusive and responsive justice and victim support systems.

✓ Increase awareness and transparency with victims' rights to improve compliance

A legislative review of the Charter of Victims' Rights provides the opportunity to understand its current application, awareness and effectiveness, and consider whether its scope should be expanded.

✓ Strengthening partnerships with government, community and victims

Collaboration and engagement, with a focus on partnering, will build a shared understanding of our role and opportunities to share knowledge, resources, and strategies for positive system change.

✓ Grow the evidence base into the experiences of victims of crime in the criminal justice system

Research, data and engagement with services, agencies and people with lived and living experience will enable us to build the evidence base necessary to drive systemic change.

✓ Supporting and developing our people

By supporting and developing our people, we will elevate their capacity and capability to meet the needs of Queensland's diverse communities, strengthen partnerships, and inform change. Clear alignment between our guiding principles and our internal culture will enhance transparency and trust within and outside the OVC.

⚠ Potential risks

Protecting the rights of those impacted by crime requires realistic investment, collaboration, clear communication and courageous reform.

Victims' Commissioner's recommendations will have regard to the potential for unintended consequences to ensure that our recommendations achieve their intended positive impact on all victims' experiences, including those facing increased risk of harm or disadvantage.

Our office acknowledges the increased risk of harm and disadvantage faced in the justice system by Aboriginal people, Torres Strait Islander people, women, children, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disability, LGBTI identified people, older people and individuals with multiple intersecting identities and needs. Building trust and driving positive systemic change requires time, careful planning, consultation, continuous evaluation, and resource allocation.

Without intentional investment in our people, we risk undermining the safety, morale, wellbeing and capacity of staff to meet the complex needs of victims. Careful planning, resource allocation, and continuous evaluation will mitigate these risks and ensure the sustainability of our efforts.

Protecting Rights, Transforming Justice

A Strategic Plan for Queensland 2024 - 2029

Our vision

Victims are respected, seen and heard in a justice system that anticipates their needs.

Our purpose

To ensure our justice and victim support systems uphold the dignity and rights of all victims of crime, within a culture of safety, transparency and accessibility.

Our commitments

- ✓ We champion the transformation of responses to victims of crime by promoting trauma-informed practices across all systems—ensuring that victims are seen, heard and helped.
- ✓ We lead by example and advocate for active participation of victims in key decisions, system reforms, and the design of services.
- ✓ We will inspire a justice system that is responsive to victims' needs, upholds their rights and is informed by their lived experiences.
- ✓ We amplify the voices of victims of gendered violence to improve understanding of their unique needs, and to bolster efforts to end violence against women.

Our values

Bravery

We lead with courage

Compassion

We connect with empathy

Advocacy

We raise the standards

Respect

We listen to understand and collaborate

Integrity

We take action with honest purpose

We pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestors of this land, their spirits and their legacy. The foundations laid by these ancestors—our First Nations peoples—give strength, inspiration and courage to current and future generations towards creating a better Queensland.

We recognise all victims of crime, their advocates, supporters and families.



Our objectives

1 Promote and protect victims' rights in Queensland

We will...

Lead efforts to promote and protect the rights of all victims at the systemic and individual level across all government and victim support systems, ensuring these rights are embedded and that victims are treated with respect and dignity.

How we will do it:

- Provide and promote an accessible feedback, enquiry and Charter of Victims' Rights complaint function.
- Increase awareness, transparency, and compliance with the Charter of Victims' Rights.
- **Review the Charter of Victims' Rights** to ensure it meets the needs of victims in a contemporary, relevant and appropriate way.
- Develop and implement a **Charter of Victims' Rights training module** for government and victim support sector professionals, workers and volunteers, to increase understanding and application of victims' rights.
- Develop public awareness campaigns for the Charter of Victims' Rights and pathways through the justice system.
- Report, make recommendations and highlight successes of government and non-government agencies adherence to the Charter of Victims' Rights.
- Promote the development of a coordinated **victim advocacy approach** that guides, informs, and empowers victims through every stage of the justice system, and which explores the evidence base and models for victim legal advocacy.

We'll know we've succeeded when...

- ☆ Victims and their families feel informed and empowered, understand their rights, and actively participate in decisions that affect their lives and well-being.
- ☆ All government and victim support systems proactively uphold victims' rights, anticipate their needs, and incorporate their views in decisions that impact them.

2 Advocate for trauma-informed and empowering responses

We will...

Advocate for a justice and victim support system that prioritises safety, trust, choice, collaboration, and empowerment, when interacting with victims, ensuring their needs and views are central to decision-making and service design.

How we will do it:

- Advocate for government and non-government agencies to embed trauma-informed principles to protect the safety and wellbeing of victims, staff, and stakeholders and encourage victim participation in the justice process.
- Promote our **Trauma-Informed Framework** across all government agencies to reduce re-victimisation.
- Promote options for victims to share their experiences of justice and victim support systems, to ensure their insights shape continuous improvements and systemic reforms.
- Develop trauma-informed **resources for victims** and those that support them, that are relevant, contemporary, and designed in a value-add and respectful way.
- Provide **evidence-based recommendations** to break down barriers in communication, information sharing, and access to resources necessary for a victim's choice and control.
- Actively seek the practice knowledge and expertise of community and support services to ensure trauma informed approaches are grounded in real-world insights and best practices.

We'll know we've succeeded when...

- ☆ Trauma-informed principles are fully integrated across all government agencies, resulting in a reduction in re-victimisation and stronger trust between victims and the justice and victim support system.
- ☆ Communities and frontline services are recognized for their work, re-enforcing the importance of community-led, and trauma-informed approaches in victim support.

3 Increase participation, action and truth-telling

We will...

Create safe, supportive spaces where victims can influence key decisions, policies, and reforms that affect them, ensuring the justice and victim support system evolves to facilitate participation, and is held accountable for upholding victims' rights.

How we will do it:

- Establish the **Lived Experience group**, comprised of individuals with experience of systemic harm, ensuring that victims have a direct and sustained role in shaping policy, practice, and reform initiatives alongside the Victims' Commissioner.
- Establish the **Partnership group** that brings together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and advocates to address specific systemic barriers and institutional racism faced by First Nations victims of crime.
- Co-develop with the community services sector and promote a robust, evidence-based **Victim Participation Framework** for justice and victim support agencies to actively involve victims in public forums, consultations, and co-development opportunities.
- Develop and implement resources to support victim advocates and those embarking on a victim advocacy journey.
- Lead by example - all government agencies, including our office, to publicly report on victim contributions to policy reform and recommendations.

We'll know we've succeeded when...

- ☆ Justice and victim support services genuinely incorporate victims' views into decision-making, action comes from consultation, and where transparent reporting shows how victims' contributions have led to concrete policy improvements and systemic equity.
- ☆ Victims feel safe to report crimes, are informed about their options and rights, and are supported to seek justice and healing.

4 Be transformative, positive disruptors

We will...

Champion bold and innovative reforms, challenging outdated practices and driving transformative change in the justice and victim support system to create a more equitable, compassionate, and harm-reducing approach.

How we will do it:

- Provide **expert advice** and make recommendations to government on legislative reforms and policy changes that impact victims of crime.
- Promote policies, practices, and environments which reduce harm for both victims and criminalised individuals across all systems, that are grounded in evidence, compassion, and cultural safety.
- Promote restorative justice, and other innovative models that support recovery and healing for victims.
- Leverage **research and data** to advocate for further justice alternatives to reduce trauma, support recovery, and healing.
- Ensure that reforms and practice improvements aimed at supporting victims of crime are continuously monitored and appropriately evaluated and results shared publicly.
- Establish Australia's first **Sexual Violence Review Board**.
- Explore how government and philanthropic support can enable, evaluate and sustain existing new and innovative victim service delivery approaches.

We'll know we've succeeded when...

- ☆ Advice and recommendations from our office lead to increased choice, justice options and improved experiences for victims.
- ☆ Evidence regarding the experiences and needs of victims is collected, openly published, and informs improvements across justice and victim support systems.

5 Collaborate, cooperate and learn

We will...

Build and strengthen partnerships between government agencies, community organisations, and victims of crime to facilitate a unified, coordinated justice response.

How we will do it:

- Lead **education and awareness campaigns** that foster a compassionate and informed society, one that fully recognises the impact of crime and actively advocates for the rights and well-being of victims.
- Establish and enhance partnerships across sectors and geographic jurisdictions to facilitate the sharing of knowledge, resources, and strategies, driving systemic change and innovation.
- Define a **victim navigator strategy** that offers responsive, long-term, and trauma-informed advocacy for victims of serious violent crime, ensuring they are guided through the complexities of the justice system and beyond.
- Support community leaders to understand the needs of victims, to drive community-led, locally-focused initiatives for victims and their families.
- Develop, disseminate and promote resources for agencies, services, and community leaders, that are clear, accessible and tailored to the diverse needs of their community.
- Continuously **measure the impact** of our collaboration, education, and resources to ensure we meet the evolving needs of victims.

We'll know we've succeeded when...

- ☆ Local communities understand the important role they play in actively promoting and protecting the rights of victims.
- ☆ A victim navigator strategy is implemented with adequate resources, leading to coordinated justice responses, increased victim satisfaction and reduced system re-traumatisation.