

What to expect at court

Arriving at court

When you arrive at court you may need to walk through security, and your bag may be scanned. This will be attended by Sheriff's Officers. Sheriff's Officers provide security for courthouses across NSW for the safety of people in the court.

Safety at court

In most courts, everyone enters the court by the same entrance. It is possible that you may see the accused or their family somewhere in the court complex. If you are feeling unsafe or threatened you should let the Police Officer in Charge, prosecutor, Sheriff's Officer or support person know. In some cases there may be a safe location for you to wait before court

Court breaks

The court has scheduled morning tea and lunch breaks – so you will have a chance to take a break during your evidence, but if you feel you need extra breaks you can ask the Judge or Magistrate.

Courtroom rules

- Remember to bow to the Judge or Magistrate when you go in or leave the court.
- Switch off mobile phones before entering the courtroom.
- Be polite and maintain a respectful manner in court.
- Sit quietly in the courtroom.
- Take off your hat, cap or sunglasses.
- Do not eat, drink, chew gum or smoke inside the courtroom.
- The correct way to address a Judge or Magistrate is 'Your Honour.'

Planning your day at court

What do I wear?

Wear clothes that are neat, tidy and comfortable as you will be wearing them all day. Bring something warm, as courtrooms can be cold.

Plan how you will get to court

Check timetables for public transport or driving routes to the court, so that you arrive with plenty of time.

Pack a bag

Take something to read or do, as you may have to wait for while before going in to court. It is also a good idea to bring something to eat and drink, as the day may be long.

Emotional support

Think about whether you would like to bring along a family member or friend to wait with you at court.



I have questions, who do I ask?

Remember you can talk to the police, prosecutor, court staff or your support person if you have any worries or questions.

Witness expenses

Expenses are paid to witnesses who attend court to give evidence. This can help with travel costs, loss of earnings and meals/snacks while you are in court. Speak to the Police Officer in Charge or the Witness Assistance Service about how to claim for these allowances.

Dealing with the media

Court cases are generally open to the public and the media unless the court is closed. The media may be interested in your case and may try to talk to you about it. If you would like information about dealing with the media, contact Victims Services for the booklet *A guide to the media for victims of crime*.

Checklist – Going to court

- I am going to Court on..... (date) at(time)
- I am getting to court by(car/train/bus/someone is driving me).
- I am meeting..... (name of person) once I get to court.
- I have someone coming to court with me. That person is

I have packed a bag and have:

- Something to eat and drink
- Something to do
- Warm clothing
- Documents I've been asked to bring