

NO PERSON HAS THE RIGHT TO INTERFERE WITH VICTIMS OR WITNESSES

It is against the law for any person to ask a victim to stay quiet, lie or not show up in court. Simply saying, "Please don't tell anyone about what I did to you" is a crime.

It is also against the law for a person to bribe or threaten a victim or witness to stay quiet, lie, or not show up to court.

Remember...

Tampering can come in many forms! For example, each of the following statements could be part of a new crime:

- "If you don't (go to court) (call the police), I will be good from now on."
- "I know where you live."
- "I know where your family lives."
- "You think things are bad now."
- "I will pay the rent."
- "I will buy you a car."
- "I will buy the kids presents."
- "You can stay at my mom's house."
- "Please don't go to court."
- "Let's keep this between us."

Even actions that someone else might view as harmless could be victim or witness tampering if the perpetrator or their friends or family are trying to silence you.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF THIS IS HAPPENING TO YOU?

Trying to stop somebody from going to court or telling the truth in court is against the law. If this is happening to you, you shouldn't have to put up with it. The following can help you:

*Prosecuting Attorney's Office
Contact Information Can Be Located At
<http://mops.mo.gov/ProsAttySearch.htm>*

Missouri Victim Assistance Network
1-800-698-9199

Missouri Office for Victims of Crime
1-866-334-MOVC

National Crime Victims' Helpline
1-800-FYI-CALL

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-7233

National Sexual Assault Hotline
1-800-656-4673

To find local advocates go to:

<http://www.dps.mo.gov/dir/programs/cvsu/victimservices/>

Remember...

If you need immediate help or if you are in an emergency,
call 9-1-1 right away!

If someone tries to stop you from reporting a crime or testifying in court, you may be a victim of "victim or witness tampering."

IT HELPS TO KNOW THE LAW ON VICTIM & WITNESS TAMPERING



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WHAT IS “VICTIM OR WITNESS TAMPERING”?

It is against the law for somebody to try to ask you to:

- Not report the crime
- Hold back information about your case;
- Lie in court; or
- Not show up for court.

If a person caused you to do one of these things, it may be **victim or witness tampering**.

If a person tried to get you to do one of these things, but you told the truth in court anyway, s/he may still be guilty of **victim or witness tampering**.

All of these statements are victim tampering:

- “Please don’t tell anyone.”
- “Please don’t go to court.”
- “I will file for sole custody of the children if you tell the truth in court.”
- “I will give you money if you don’t go to court.”

Keep in Mind... It is helpful to keep a list of the dates & times that you are contacted. This may be key evidence in the case.

Power & Control: Perpetrators often try to use manipulation to keep control of their victims & witnesses .

WHAT DOES “VICTIM OR WITNESS TAMPERING” LOOK LIKE?

Some forms are obvious.

Victim & Witness Tampering can come in many forms. It is against the law to:

Ask a Victim Not to Report the Crime or Assist in Prosecution. This is victim tampering.

Physically Hurt You: Nobody should harm you to scare you from telling the truth.

Threats: Nobody should threaten:

- “If you tell the truth in court, I will hurt you!” or
- “I will call Children’s Division and lie so they will take your kids!”

Some forms are less obvious

For example

Gifts: Sending money or jewelry to persuade you not to tell anyone or testify.

Bribery and Promises: Saying “Please don’t tell the truth about what I did in court!” or “If you keep quiet, I’ll start paying child support.”

Stalking: Trying scare you from telling the truth by repeatedly showing up at your home or job or other places you go.

Blackmail: Saying “If you tell the truth in court, I will tell everybody your secret.”

Veiled Threats: Saying “You better not tell about that or I’ll get you (or your family).” or “I wouldn’t do that if I were you!”

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO BE SAFE!

- Even actions that someone else might view as harmless could be victim tampering if the perpetrator or their friends or family are trying to silence you.
- It could be as simple as an intimidating gesture toward you at home, in the courtroom or the theft of your mail.

If somebody is doing something to make you feel scared about going to court, then report it!

LET US HELP!

Sometimes, people don’t report these crimes because they don’t want to be a “snitch.”

Victim & Witness Tampering are against the law. Getting help for these crimes is the right thing to do.

You deserve to be protected!

Friends, Family & Advocates: Make a list of people you can trust to help you during this difficult time.