

SENTENCING:

Sentencing may occur quickly, if a pre-sentencing investigation (PSI) is not ordered. If a PSI is ordered, a sentencing date will be scheduled approximately eight weeks after either a conviction or change of plea hearing.

Victims are encouraged to use this time to write an **impact letter** to the judge explaining how the crime has affected them. The Victim Witness staff will accompany victims to the sentencing if they wish to attend.

GLOSSARY:

Defendant – A person who is accused of and/or arrested for breaking the law.

Defense Attorney – The person whose job it is to help the defendant in court.

Evidence – The facts involved in the crime, presented by all witnesses at the trial.

Impact Letter – A letter to the judge from the victim, family, friends, etc. concerning how this crime has affected the victim.

Information – An official document filed with the court by the Prosecuting Attorney setting forth the crimes allegedly committed.

Personal Recognition – The defendant's agreement to appear in court for further hearings.

Plea Bargain – An agreement between the defendant and the Prosecuting Attorney as to what charge the defendant will plead guilty and what sentencing recommendation the Prosecuting Attorney will make to the court.

Pre-Sentencing Investigation (PSI) – A complete investigation, contacting all parties involved, by a Department of Corrections caseworker, who reports to the court with recommendations for sentencing.

Prosecuting Attorney or Deputy Prosecuting Attorney – The person elected by the people of the county to represent the State and prove that the defendant committed the crime. Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys are assistants of the Prosecuting Attorney.

Subpoena – A written order to be at the court proceedings at a certain date and time.

Testify – To tell the truth in the courtroom about what happened.



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Chelan County Victim Witness
A Division of Chelan County Prosecutor's Office

Understanding the Criminal Justice System



The Victim Witness Unit
A Division of Chelan County
Prosecutor's Office
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