



Stephen M. Wagstaffe, District Attorney
SAN MATEO COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
VICTIM SERVICES DIVISION

400 County Center, 3rd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063
Phone: (650) 599-7479

1050 Mission Rd
South San Francisco, CA 94080
Phone: (650) 877-5454

Victim Services Division

The Victim Services Division is here to help victims and their families in the aftermath of a crime. Our team provides comprehensive supportive services including crisis intervention, court support, resources and referrals, information about victim's rights and assistance with the California Victim Compensation Board application (CalVCB).

The CalVCB program may be able to assist with out-of-pocket expenses relating to a crime, including medical and mental health counseling bills. Please contact a Victim Advocate for more information and assistance with completing the CalVCB application.

Coping after a traumatic event

- Talk about what happened. Talking about the event can help you begin to make sense of what happened. You might talk with friends, family members, clergy, or a mental health clinician or take part in a therapy or support group.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Eat well-balanced and regular meals (even if you don't feel like it).
- Exercise mentally and physically.
- Don't feel bad about how you're feeling. Your reactions may feel odd or unusual, even if they are common. Try not to criticize yourself for having them.

What are common reactions after a traumatic event?

Even though the traumatic event may be over, you may begin experiencing, or may later, experience physical, behavioral, cognitive or emotional reactions. Immediately after the event, shock and denial are normal feelings. Longer term reactions can include unpredictable emotions, flashbacks, strained relationships and even physical symptoms like headaches or nausea. The reactions to a traumatic event may last a few days or longer, depending on the individual or the severity of the event.

Although everyone reacts differently to a traumatic event, here are some common and typical reactions:

Physical: fatigue, headaches, digestion problems

Behavioral: changes in sleeping or appetite, withdrawal from activities or loved ones, neediness or a fear of being alone

Cognitive: difficulty concentrating, flashbacks, difficulty making decisions

Emotional: fear, panic, feeling unsafe, guilt, anger, helplessness, depression, anxiety

Helping someone after a traumatic event

- Listen carefully.
- Offer support. It is okay to say that you are sorry and that you want to help.
- Respect requests for privacy.
- Do not take things personally. He/she may be angry or may be dealing with other emotions. It is not about you.
- Do not minimize the trauma.