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For additional resources relating to the protection, enforcement, and advancement of crime victims' rights, please visit NCVLI's website at www.ncvli.org.

Victims have a right to have counsel represent their rights and interests in a criminal case. Counsel for crime victims can be critical to the full implementation and enforcement of victims' rights;<sup>1</sup> counsel can also improve victims' experiences navigating the criminal justice system and increase the likelihood of positive outcomes for victims.<sup>2</sup> Victims' rights are personally held and independent of the government's interests when prosecuting a case; indeed, in some instances, a victim's rights and interests may directly conflict with the prosecution's interests, obligations, and/or strategy. Although prosecutors can and do advocate for victims' rights, they are not substitutes for victims' counsel.<sup>3,4</sup>

Some jurisdictions expressly recognize victims' right to counsel in their constitutions, statutes, and/or procedural rules.<sup>5</sup> The following chart identifies such provisions,<sup>6</sup> as well as state laws and rules that expressly afford victims the right to be informed of their right to counsel.<sup>7</sup>

There are many other provisions of law that recognize victims' right to counsel that are not included in the chart. For instance, some jurisdictions recognize victims' right to counsel in specific proceedings and/or with respect to the exercise of specific rights;<sup>8</sup> some afford victims the right to assert their rights through a "representative," a term that can include counsel. Further, provisions that impliedly recognize the right to counsel are not covered in this chart, such as those that expressly afford victims the right to assert and seek enforcement of their rights<sup>11</sup> and those that expressly afford victims standing to assert their rights through legal filings. The provisions are not covered in this chart, such as those that expressly afford victims the right to assert their rights through legal filings.

Victims' right to counsel is also an aspect of victims' right to due process, <sup>13</sup> which requires fundamental fairness for victims within the criminal justice system and a meaningful opportunity to be heard regarding the protection of their rights. <sup>14</sup> As the United

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States Supreme Court has long recognized in the context of a criminal defendant's rights, counsel plays a critical role in a person being meaningfully heard regarding their rights. 15, 16

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Caitlin K. Cervenka & Christine M. Crow, Lawvering in the #metoo Era, 109 Ill. B.J. 30, 35 (2021) (observing that victims' attorneys "will be the only actor[s] primarily dedicated to ensuring victims can fully enjoy and assert their rights without undue compromise or coercive influence and may represent survivors in support of their preindictment rights and in defense of their rights in court"); Margaret Garvin & Douglas E. Beloof, Crime Victim Agency: Independent Lawyers for Sexual Assault Victims, 13 Ohio St. J. Crim. L. 67, 86 (2015) ("It is apparent that independent lawyers for sexual assault victims are needed to ensure victims can knowingly and voluntarily choose whether and when to engage with the criminal justice system and, having engaged, whether to exercise or waive any specific right. Critically, prosecutors cannot substitute for this vital role because they cannot consistently and adequately represent victims' interests, nor can they facilitate agency.").

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See Margaret Garvin, Giving Meaning to the Apostrophe in Victim(')s Rights, 87 Brook. L. Rev. 1109, 1123–25 (2022) (noting that "it is well-recognized that representation by an attorney holds the most promise for positive outcomes" and discussing the benefits of counsel for crime victims in criminal cases). <sup>3</sup> See generally Victims Can Have Attorneys, NCVLI Quicktool (2013), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AsnbJff4TKU (explaining the role of victims' rights attorneys in criminal cases and how this role differs from that of the prosecuting attorney); see Doe v. United States, 666 F.2d 43, 46 (4th Cir. 1981) (noting that neither the government nor the defendant "shares [the victim's] interests to the extent that they might be viewed as a champion of the victim's rights"). <sup>4</sup> Given the different roles of the prosecutor and victims' counsel, the right to counsel is distinct from the right that victims have, in some jurisdictions, to hire counsel to assist the prosecutor. See, e.g., Kan. Stat. Ann. § 19-717; N.J. Stat. Ann. § 19:34-63; Or. Rev. Stat. § 135.165; Tenn. Code Ann. § 8-7-401(a); W. Va. Code Ann. § 7-7-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> See, e.g., Ariz. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 13-4437(A); Ariz. R. Crim. P. 39(d)(4); Cal. Const., art. I, § 28(c)(1); Fla. Const. art. I, § 16(c); 725 Ill. Comp. Stat. Ann. 120/4(d); id. 120/4.5(c-5)(3); Ky. Const. § 26A; Md. Rule 1-326(a); N.C. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 15A-834.5(a)(1); id. § 15A-834.5(e); N.D. Const. art. I, § 25(2); Ohio Rev. Stat. Ann. § 2930.19(A)(1), (B)(1); Okla. Const. art. II, § 34(B); Okla. Stat. Ann. tit. 21, § 142A-2(F); S.D. Const. art. VI, § 29(19); Wis. Const. art. I,  $\S 9m(4)(a)$ .

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> This chart focuses on laws and rules that apply in criminal cases involving an adult perpetrator; it does not address the right to counsel in juvenile court cases. <sup>7</sup> Some states afford victims the right to be informed about their right to counsel through provisions that expressly call for this specific information to be conveyed to victims. See, e.g., Fla. Const. art. I, § 16(b)(11); 725 Ill. Comp. Stat. Ann. 120/4.5(b)(9.3); N.D. Const. art. I, § 25(1)(s); N.D. Cent. Code Ann. § 12.1-34-02(6); Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 2930.04(B)(1)(I), (D)(1); S.C. Code Ann. § 16-3-1545(D); S.D. Const. art. VI, § 29(19), para. 1. Other states expressly afford victims this right through provisions that afford victims the right to be informed of their rights and/or how such rights are enforced. See, e.g., Cal. Penal Code § 679.026(b); N.C. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 15A-830.5(b)(5); Okla. Stat. Ann. tit. 21, § 142A-2(A)(13); Wis. Const. art. I, § 9m(2)(p). In at least one jurisdiction, an express right to be informed of the right to counsel arises when there is a conflict between the victim and the prosecutor. See, e.g., Ariz. R. Crim. P. 39(d)(3). 8 See, e.g., Ala. Code § 12-21-264(a) (affording victims the right to have an attorney present, upon request, during a deposition taken because the victim "is or may be unavailable for trial for medical reasons or other exceptional circumstances"); Ariz. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 13-4437(E) ("Notwithstanding any other law and without limiting any rights and powers of the victim, the victim has the right to present evidence or information and to make an argument to the court, personally or through counsel, at any proceeding to determine the amount of restitution pursuant to § 13-804."); Ga. Const. art. I, § 1, ¶ XXX(b) (affording victims the right to assert their constitutional rights through a motion and providing that victims may be represented by an attorney at the hearing on the motion); Nev. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 176.015(3)(a) (affording victims the right to be appear through counsel at sentencing); N.C. Const. art. I, § 37(1b) (affording victims the right to counsel at a hearing related to a victim's motion asserting their rights).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> See, e.g., 18 U.S.C. § 3771(d)(1) ("The crime victim or the crime victim's lawful representative, and the attorney for the Government may assert the rights described in [18 U.S.C. § 3771(a)]."); N.M. Stat. Ann. § 31-26-7(A) ("A victim may designate a victim's representative to exercise all rights provided to the victim pursuant to the provisions of the Victims of Crime Act. A victim may revoke his designation of a victim's representative at any time."); Tex. Const. art. I, § 30(e) ("A victim or guardian or legal representative of a victim has standing to enforce the rights enumerated in this section but does not have standing to participate as a party in a criminal proceeding or to contest the disposition of any charge.").

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> See States v. Turner, 367 F. Supp. 2d 319, 330 (E.D.N.Y. 2005) (finding that the Crime Victims' Rights Act (CVRA), 18 U.S.C. § 3771(d)(1), recognizes that "[a] victim may obtain assistance from others in asserting [their] rights" when it affords the victims ability to assert their rights through a "lawful representative"; and observing that the statute's legislative history supports the conclusion that this provision of the CVRA "refers to a victim's discretion to retain counsel").

<sup>11</sup> See, e.g., Fed. R. Crim. P. 60, advisory committee notes to 2008 Amendment (recognizing that the Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 60(b)(2) and the Crime Victims' Rights Act (CVRA), 18 U.S.C. § 3771(d)(1), afford the "victim" and the "victim's lawful representative" the right to assert the victim's rights, and that "[i]n referring to the victim and the victim's lawful representative, the [criminal rule advisory] committee intends to include counsel"); Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 2930.04(D)(1) (recognizing that victims have the right to exercise their rights through counsel under the state's statutory and constitutional victims' rights provisions where, *inter alia*, the state constitution expressly authorizes the assertion of a victim's right by the victim, the prosecutor, upon the victim's request, or the victim's other lawful representative (citing Ohio Const. art. I, § 10a(B)).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> See, e.g., Ga. Const. art. I, § 1, ¶ XXX(b) (affording victims the right to assert their rights through a motion and directly authorizing victims' counsel to represent victims at a hearing on that motion); N.J. Stat. Ann. § 52:4B-36(r) (affording victims the right "[t]o appear in any court before which a proceeding implicating the rights of the victim is being held, with standing to file a motion or present argument on a motion filed to enforce any right conferred herein or by Article I, paragraph 22 of the New Jersey Constitution, and to receive an adjudicative decision by the court on any such motion").

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> See Crime Victims Have the Right to Retained Counsel's Presence During Investigative Interviews, Victim Law Position Paper (Nat'l Crime Victim Law Inst., Portland, Or.), Aug. 2014, <a href="https://law.lclark.edu/live/files/17836-victim-law-position-paperright-to-counsel-in">https://law.lclark.edu/live/files/17836-victim-law-position-paperright-to-counsel-in</a> (discussing the right of crime victims to retained counsel's presence during investigative interviews as an aspect of victims' right to due process).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> See Armstrong v. Manzo, 380 U.S. 545, 552 (1965) (observing that fundamental aspects of due process include the opportunity to be heard "in a meaningful manner").

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> See Powell v. Alabama, 287 U.S. 45, 68–69 (1932) ("The right to be heard would be, in many cases, of little avail if it did not comprehend the right to be heard by counsel.").

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> For information regarding a court's authority to appoint counsel to represent a victim, contact NCVLI for <u>technical assistance</u>.

The following chart is a survey of select laws and is not intended as an exhaustive resource of all relevant laws. It does not explore how courts have applied these laws or otherwise analyzed procedures related to victims' right to counsel. Practitioners are encouraged to research relevant case law to learn more about the provisions included below, as well as state practices that have not been codified.

State	Express Right to Counsel	Express Right to be Informed of Right to Counsel
Arizona	Ariz. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 13-4437(A) ("The victim has standing to seek an order, to bring a special action or to file a notice of appearance in a trial court or an appellate proceeding, seeking to enforce any right or to challenge an order denying any right guaranteed to victims In asserting any right, the victim has the right to be represented by personal counsel at the victim's expense and the proceedings may be initiated by the victim's counsel or the prosecutor.").  Ariz. R. Crim. P. 39(d)(4) ("In asserting any of the rights enumerated in this rule or provided by any other provision of law, a victim has the right to be represented by personal counsel of the victim's choice. After a victim's counsel files a notice of appearance, all parties must endorse the victim's counsel on all pleadings. When present, the victim's counsel must be included in all bench conferences and in chambers meetings with the trial court that directly involve the victim's constitutional rights. At any proceeding to determine restitution, the victim has the right to present information and make argument to the court personally or through counsel.").	Cf. Ariz. R. Crim. P. 39(d)(3) ("If any conflict arises between the prosecutor and a victim in asserting the victim's rights, the prosecutor must advise the victim of the right to seek independent legal counsel and provide contact information for the appropriate state or local bar association.").

California	Cal. Const., art. I, § 28(c)(1) ("A victim, the retained attorney of a victim, a lawful representative of the victim, or the prosecuting attorney upon request of the victim, may enforce the rights enumerated in subdivision (b) in any trial or appellate court with jurisdiction over the case as a matter of right.").	Cal. Penal Code § 679.026(b) ("Every victim of crime has the right to receive without cost or charge a list of the rights of victims of crime recognized in Section 28 of Article I of the California Constitution[, which includes the right to counsel]. These rights shall be known as 'Marsy Rights.'").
Florida	Fla. Const. art. I, § 16(c) ("The victim, the retained attorney of the victim, a lawful representative of the victim, or the office of the state attorney upon request of the victim, may assert and seek enforcement of the rights enumerated in this section and any other right afforded to a victim by law in any trial or appellate court, or before any other authority with jurisdiction over the case, as a matter of right. The court or other authority with jurisdiction shall act promptly on such a request, affording a remedy by due course of law for the violation of any right. The reasons for any decision regarding the disposition of a victim's right shall be clearly stated on the record.").  Cf. Fla. Stat. Ann. § 960.001(1)(a)(8) (directing various agencies to develop guidelines to implement victims' constitutional rights and achieve objectives that include the development and distribution by law enforcement of a victims' rights information card or brochure about, inter alia, "[t]he right of a victim to employ private counsel" and that "[t]he Florida Bar is encouraged to develop a registry of attorneys who are willing to serve on a pro bono basis as advocates for crime victims").	Fla. Const. art. I, § 16(b)(11) ("To preserve and protect the right of crime victims to achieve justice, ensure a meaningful role throughout the criminal and juvenile justice systems for crime victims, and ensure that crime victims' rights and interests are respected and protected by law in a manner no less vigorous than protections afforded to criminal defendants and juvenile delinquents, every victim is entitled to the following rights, beginning at the time of [their] victimization: The right to be informed of these rights, and to be informed that victims can seek the advice of an attorney with respect to their rights. This information shall be made available to the general public and provided to all crime victims in the form of a card or by other means intended to effectively advise the victim of their rights under this section.").

Illinois	725 Ill. Comp. Stat. Ann. 120/4(d) ("At any point, the victim has the right to retain a victim's attorney who may be present during all stages of any interview, investigation, or other interaction with representatives of the criminal justice system.  Treatment of the victim should not be affected or altered in any way as a result of the victim's decision to exercise this right.").  725 Ill. Comp. Stat. Ann. 120/4.5(c-5)(3) ("The following procedures shall be followed to afford victims the rights guaranteed by Article I, Section 8.1 of the Illinois Constitution: The victim has standing to assert the rights enumerated in subsection (a) of Article I, Section 8.1 of the Illinois Constitution and the statutory rights under Section 4 of this Act in any court exercising jurisdiction over the criminal case. The prosecuting attorney, a victim, or the victim's retained attorney may assert the victim's rights. The defendant in the criminal case has no standing to assert a right of the victim in any court proceeding, including on appeal.").	725 Ill. Comp. Stat. Ann. 120/4.5(b)(9.3) ("To afford crime victims their rights, law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and corrections will provide information, as appropriate, of the following procedures: The [O]ffice of the State's Attorney: shall inform the victim of the right to retain an attorney, at the victim's own expense, who, upon written notice filed with the clerk of the court and State's Attorney, is to receive copies of all notices, motions, and court orders filed thereafter in the case, in the same manner as if the victim were a named party in the case[.]").
Kentucky	Ky. Const. § 26A ("The victim, the victim's attorney or other lawful representative, or the attorney for the Commonwealth upon request of the victim may seek enforcement of the rights enumerated in this section and any other right afforded to the victim by law in any trial or appellate court with jurisdiction over the case.").	

Maryland	Md. Rule 1-326(a) ("An attorney may enter an appearance on behalf of a victim or a victim's representative in a proceeding under Title 4 [Criminal Causes], Title 8 [Appellate Review in the Supreme Court and the Appellate Court], or Title 11 [Juvenile Causes] of these Rules for the purpose of representing the rights of the victim or victim's representative.").	
North Carolina	N.C. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 15A-834.5(e) ("A victim has the right to consult with an attorney regarding an alleged violation of the rights provided in this Article, but the victim does not have the right to counsel provided by the State.").  N.C. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 15A-834.5(a)(1) ("A victim may assert the rights provided in this Article pursuant to Section 37 of Article I of the North Carolina Constitution The procedure by which a victim may assert the rights provided under this Article shall be by motion to the court of jurisdiction. For the purposes of this section, the term 'victim' includes [t]he victim's attorney.").	N.C. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 15A-830.5(b)(5) ("A victim has [t]he right to be given information about the crime, how the criminal justice system works, the rights of victims, [which includes the right to consult with a private attorney regarding a rights violation] and the availability of services for victims.").
North Dakota	N.D. Const. art. I, § 25(2) ("The victim, the retained attorney of the victim, a lawful representative of the victim, or the attorney for the government upon request of the victim may assert and seek enforcement of the rights enumerated in this section and any other right afforded to a victim by law in any trial or appellate court, or before any other authority with jurisdiction over the case, as a	N.D. Const. art. I, § 25(1)(s) ("To preserve and protect the right of crime victims to justice, to ensure crime victims a meaningful role throughout the criminal and juvenile justice systems, and to ensure that crime victims' rights and interests are respected and protected by law in a manner no less vigorous than the protections afforded to criminal defendants and delinquent children, all victims shall be entitled to the

	matter of right. The court or other authority with jurisdiction shall act promptly on such a request, ensuring that no right is deprived without due process of law, and affording a remedy by due course of law for the violation of any right. The reasons for any decision regarding disposition of a victim's right shall be clearly stated on the record.").	following rights beginning at the time of their victimization: [t]he right to be informed of these rights, and to be informed that victims can seek the advice of an attorney with respect to their rights. This information shall be made available to the general public and provided to all crime victims in what is referred to as a Marsy's Card.").  N.D. Cent. Code Ann. § 12.1-34-02(6) ("Victims and witnesses must be informed of the right to seek the advice of an attorney.").
Ohio	Ohio Rev. Code. Ann. § 2930.19(B)(1) ("A victim of a criminal offense or delinquent act has the right to be represented by an attorney. Nothing in this section creates a right to an attorney at public expense for a victim. If a victim is represented by an attorney, the court shall notify the victim's attorney in the same manner in which the parties are notified under applicable law or rule. The victim's attorney shall be included in all bench conferences, meetings in chambers, and sidebars with the trial court that directly involve a decision implicating that victim's rights as enumerated in Ohio Constitution, Article I, Section 10a. Nothing in this section shall be construed as making a victim a party to the case.").  Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 2930.19(A)(1) ("A victim, victim's representative, or victim's attorney, if applicable, or the prosecutor, on request of the victim, has standing as a matter of right to assert, or to challenge an order denying, the rights of the victim	Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 2930.04(B)(1)(l) (providing that the sample victims' rights request form that the attorney general must provide various entities with access to must "[a]dvise victims of the right to counsel and provide victims information about available no-cost legal services to help enforce victims' rights").  Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 2930.04(D)(1) ("At the time of its initial contact with a victim of a criminal offense or delinquent act, or as soon as practicable following the initial contact, the law enforcement agency responsible for investigating the criminal offense or delinquent act shall provide the victim in writing, or provide access to the following information: The victim's rights under this section and the victim's bill of rights under Ohio Constitution, Article I, Section 10a, including the right to exercise those rights through counsel[.]").

	provided by law in any judicial or administrative proceeding. The trial court shall act promptly on a request to enforce, or on a challenge of an order denying, the rights of the victim. In any case, the trial court shall hear the matter within ten days of the assertion of the victim's rights. The reasons for any decision denying relief under this section shall be clearly stated on the record or in a judgment entry.").	
Oklahoma	Okla. Const. art. II, § 34(B) ("The victim, the victim's attorney or other lawful representative, or the attorney for the state upon request of the victim may assert in any trial or appellate court, or before any other authority with jurisdiction over the case, and have enforced the rights enumerated in this section and any other right afforded to the victim by law. The court or other authority with jurisdiction shall act promptly on such a request. This section does not create any cause of action for compensation or damages against the state, any political subdivision of the state, any officer, employee or agent of the state or of any of its political subdivisions, or any officer or employee of the court.").  Okla. Stat. Ann. tit. 21, § 142A-2(F) ("The victim, the attorney for the victim or other lawful representative, or the attorney for the state upon request of the victim may assert in any trial or appellate court or before any other authority with jurisdiction over the case and have enforced all the rights enumerated in this section and any other right afforded to the victim by law. The court or other authority shall act	Okla. Stat. Ann. tit. 21, § 142A-2(A)(13) ("The office of the district attorney shall inform the victims and witnesses of crimes of their rights under the Oklahoma Victim's Rights Act, which shall include [the right] [t]o be informed in writing of all constitutional and statutory rights[, which include the right to counsel].").

	promptly on such a request. The rights afforded victims under the Oklahoma Victim's Rights Act shall be protected in a manner no less vigorous than the rights afforded the accused.").	
South Carolina		S.C. Code Ann. § 16-3-1545(D) ("The prosecuting agency must inform each victim of his right to legal counsel and of any available civil remedies.").
South Dakota	S.D. Const. art. VI, § 29(19), para. 2 ("The victim, the retained attorney of the victim, a lawful representative of the victim, or the attorney for the government, upon request of the victim, may assert and seek enforcement of the rights enumerated in this section and any other right afforded to a victim by law in any trial or appellate court, or before any other authority with jurisdiction over the case, as a matter of right. The court or other authority with jurisdiction shall act promptly on such a request, affording a remedy by due course of law for the violation of any right and ensuring that victims' rights and interests are protected in a manner no less vigorous than the protections afforded to criminal defendants and children accused of delinquency. The reasons for any decision regarding the disposition of a victim's right shall be clearly stated on the record.").	S.D. Const. art. VI, § 29(19), para. 1 ("A victim shall have [t]he right to be informed that a victim can seek the advice of an attorney with respect to the victim's rights.").
Wisconsin	Wis. Const. art. I, § 9m(4)(a) ("In addition to any other available enforcement of rights or remedy for a violation of this section or of other rights, privileges, or protections provided by law, the victim, the victim's attorney or other lawful representative, or	Wis. Const. art. I, § 9m(2)(p) ("In order to preserve and protect victims" rights to justice and due process throughout the criminal and juvenile justice process, victims shall be entitled to the following right[], which shall vest at the time of victimization and be

the attorney for the government upon request of the victim may assert and seek in any circuit court or before any other authority of competent jurisdiction, enforcement of the rights in this section and any other right, privilege, or protection afforded to the victim by law. The court or other authority with jurisdiction over the case shall act promptly on such a request and afford a remedy for the violation of any right of the victim. The court or other authority with jurisdiction over the case shall clearly state on the record the reasons for any decision regarding the disposition of a victim's right and shall provide those reasons to the victim or the victim's attorney or other lawful representative.").

protected by law in a manner no less vigorous than the protections afforded to the accused: . . . [t]o timely notice about all rights under this section and all other rights, privileges, or protections of the victim provided by law, including how such rights, privileges, or protections are enforced [where enforcement through victim's counsel is addressed in Wis. Const. art. I, § 9m(4)(a)]").