

Victim and Witness Costs

Cost category Costs in response to crime

Cost item Victim and Witness Costs

Definition Costs incurred as a result of time spent by victims and witnesses on a case

Theoretical discussion [\[link to relevant section in Bibliography\]](#)

Preferred estimation methodology Average number of days spent by victims and witnesses in reporting an offence, giving evidence and attending court. May include time spent by friends and daily in support activities such as escorting to court.

Comments The role of victim and witness is potentially stressful. It involves confronting offenders in court, having to remember and record possibly narrowing details and withstanding hostile cross-examination by defence lawyers, defendants and judges. Offenders may attempt to intimidate victims and witnesses in the hope of persuading them to abandon pressing charges or appearing in court as witness. Although strictly speaking some of these actions may comprise offences in their own right (and thus count separately) it is often difficult to assemble sufficient evidence to press charges successfully in respect of them.

Usage These costs are normally ignored.

Offences normally included Potentially applies to all offence types

Formula

Data sources Court data rarely include estimates of victim and witness time inputs: Crime victimisation surveys (such as BCS) ask considerable numbers of questions about intimidation of victims and witnesses

Example