

IMPORTANT RESOURCES



**TO GET HELP FILING CRIME VICTIM COMPENSATION,
OR TO GET SUPPORT IN FILING A POLICE REPORT:**

**CENTER CITY CRIME
VICTIM SERVICES**

42 South 15th Street
Suite 1103
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215.665.9680

**EAST DIVISION CRIME
VICTIM SERVICES**

3300 North Mascher Street
Philadelphia, PA 19140
215.426.4810

**NORTHWEST
VICTIM SERVICES**

6301 Germantown Avenue
Second floor #1
Philadelphia, PA 19144
215.438.4410

**NORTHEAST
VICTIM SERVICES**

Revere Commons, Suite 4
2824 Cottman Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19149
215.332.3888

**NORTH CENTRAL
VICTIM SERVICES**

1415 North Broad Street
Suite 222
Philadelphia, PA 19122
215.763.3280

**WEST/SOUTHWEST
VICTIM SERVICES**

5429 Chestnut Street, #G-3
Philadelphia, PA 19139
215.748.7780

**VICTIM/WITNESS SERVICES
OF SOUTH PHILADELPHIA**

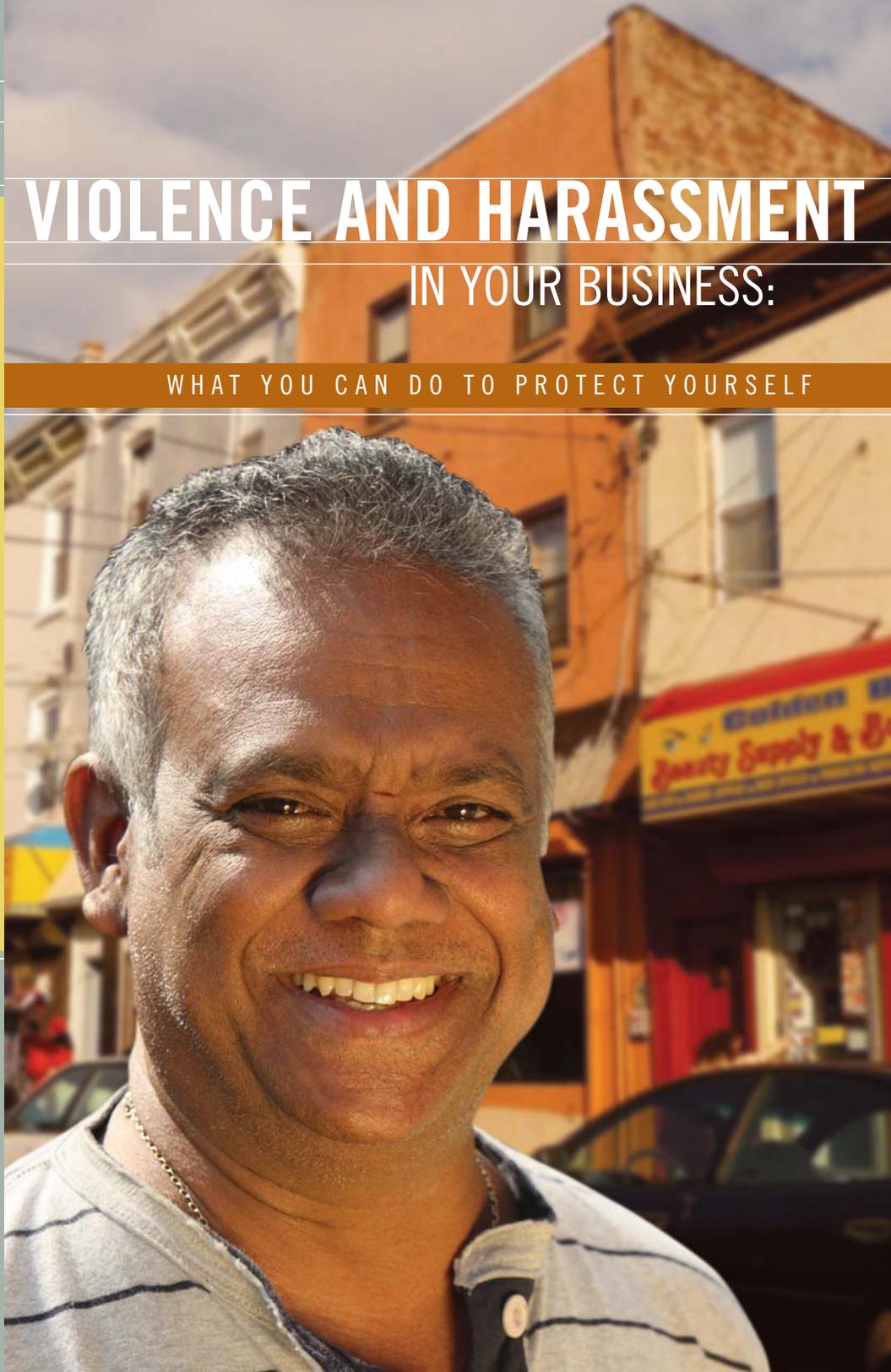
1426 South 12th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147
215.551.3360

**PENNSYLVANIA VICTIMS
COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM (Harrisburg)**

717.783.5153
800.233.2339
www.pccd.state.pa.us

VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT IN YOUR BUSINESS:

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF



This report was made possible by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.



*Connecting immigrants, employers,
and communities*

Welcoming Center West
248 South 52nd Street
Philadelphia, PA 19139
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1617 John F. Kennedy Blvd., 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103
ph: 215.557.2626
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www.welcomingcenter.org



WHAT IS HARASSMENT?

HARASSMENT *(noun):*
Threatening behavior
An action or actions that intend to disturb or upset
Offensive and disturbing behavior

You have probably heard the word “harassment” many times, but you may not know what types of harassment can happen to store-owners and merchants. Below is a list of examples that can help you recognize when you or another merchant is being harassed.

VANDALISM: When a person damages or destroys private or public property. For example, if a person throws rocks at your storefront windows and breaks the window, or paints graffiti on your storefront.

ASSAULT: A violent act against another person. An assault can be a verbal (words) or physical attack (hitting). Two examples of assault are: 1) a person comes into your store and tells you that he plans to rob your store and will hurt you if you try to stop him, 2) a customer in your store gets angry and punches you.

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT: Some assaults are considered to be a more serious threat than others and are punished more severely by the law. When an assault involves actions that intend to rape, severely injure or murder the victim, this is considered aggravated assault. An example of aggravated assault is when a person threatens or injures you with a knife or gun.

LOITERING: When a person or people linger in a place for no reason, this can be considered loitering. In a business an example of loitering is when someone hangs around your store for a long time without buying anything and you are afraid to ask them to leave.

IF YOU WITNESS OR ARE A VICTIM OF THREATENING BEHAVIOR AND HARASSMENT, YOU SHOULD REPORT IT BY CALLING 9-1-1

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU EXPERIENCE OR WITNESS HARASSMENT

- **Call 9-1-1 and file a police report:** In an emergency, you should call the police. You should file a police report every time you experience an incident.

You should be aware that even after you report someone to the police, that person may still be walking freely on the streets. If a suspect is taken to the police station and charged with harassment, they are usually released until their trial date. You should take extra safety precautions, including requesting a stay-away order, asking another family member or friend to assist you at your store, and asking neighbors to watch out for who hangs around or enters your store.

- **Call 9-1-1 again if necessary:** Philadelphia police are very busy fighting crime and cannot not always come right away when a merchant calls about harassment. If they do not come, call again. If they do not come at all, you should ask for the 9-1-1 supervisor.

DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO AN INTERPRETER WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH THE POLICE?

- **Request an Interpreter:** You have the right to an interpreter when communicating with the police. You can also register your language of choice with the police district. That way, if you call from your store, the 9-1-1 operator should know that you need an interpreter. Regardless of whether you register, you are always entitled to an interpreter when talking with the police.*

* As per the City of Philadelphia’s Executive Order 09-08, interpretation service is available when communicating with the police.



IT IS IMPORTANT TO
FILE A POLICE REPORT EVERY SINGLE TIME
YOU EXPERIENCE OR WITNESS HARASSMENT SO THAT THE
POLICE HAVE MORE PRESENCE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.

- **Request a Roll Call from the Police:** If you have been experiencing violence or threats in your store, you can sign up for the police to make regular stops (about every 20 minutes) at your business to make sure everything is okay. This is called being put on roll call. You can sign up for roll call by requesting it in person at a police station, or online at: www.ppdonline.org/rpts/rpts_rollcall_frm.php. Remember that being on roll call only lasts 2-3 days. If you still do not feel safe after your roll call expires, you should request another one.
- **Request a Stay-Away Order:** If the aggressor has been arrested, you can request a stay-away order from the court. When you request a stay-away order, the judge makes it illegal for the individual to approach your property. At the preliminary hearing, request the paperwork to file a stay-away order.

- **File for Victim Compensation:** If you have been the victim of crime and have lost more than \$100 because of that crime, contact a victim services agency. They may be able to help you get money to repay you for your loss. Contact information for these agencies is listed on the back page of this manual.

You must have the following information in order to qualify for victim compensation:

- You must have filed a police report within three days of the crime incident.
- You must file the claim for compensation within two years of the crime.
- You must keep any receipts, medical bills, etc. to request reimbursement for expenses that resulted from the incident.
- You must have lost at least \$100 because of the crime.
- You should tell the police that you will be applying for victim compensation and list all expenses that you plan to submit.
- You should provide the police with all details possible in order for the police to correctly code the incident so that you can qualify for compensation.

EXAMPLE OF A
VICTIM COMPENSATION CLAIM THAT WAS REJECTED:

Lisa had her wallet stolen. Inside her wallet, Lisa had her green card (legal permanent resident card). Lisa filed a police report and told the police that her wallet was stolen, but did not mention the green card. When Lisa filed for Crime Victim Compensation for the cost to replace her green card, she was not approved. Why? She did not report to the police that her green card was stolen with her wallet. **Remember to list EVERYTHING that you plan to request compensation for when filing your police report.**





If you are the victim of harassment, there is critical information that you should try to collect and **write down**:

- The first and last name of the aggressor (or if unavailable, a description of the aggressor and their vehicle).
- The name and badge number of the police officer that files your police report.
- The date and time of the incident, location of the incident.
- A description of what happened.
- A description of damaged or stolen items.



SINCE OPENING **WELCOMING CENTER WEST,**

THE WELCOMING CENTER HAS CONDUCTED INFORMAL AND FORMAL SURVEYS OF BUSINESS OWNERS IN WEST PHILADELPHIA. THE RESULTS OVERWHELMINGLY INDICATE THAT **SAFETY IS THE TOP CONCERN FOR MERCHANTS.**

WELCOMING CENTER WEST IS A SATELLITE OFFICE OF THE WELCOMING CENTER ESTABLISHED TO SUPPORT EXISTING AND POTENTIAL SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS. TO REACH WELCOMING CENTER WEST, CALL 215.220.8795

What are simple things you can do to prevent harassment in your neighborhood?

- Attend police district meetings and get to know your local police officers.
- Attend community events, and bring your family with you if possible.
- If you do not speak fluent English, practice the words that you *do* know with your customers.
- Be friendly with your customers; ask them about their families.
- Join a local business association or neighborhood group.
- Talk to your neighbors and the other business owners in your area.
- Keep a notebook in your store to write down any incidents that happen.
- Greet your regular customers by name (“Hello, Mr. Johnson!”).
- Hang a bulletin board in your store so that people can post flyers, news and photos.
- Set up a surveillance camera. This shows potential aggressors that you are proactive about crime prevention.
- Make deposits at the bank often and at different times of the day. If you think it is necessary, seek a police escort.

My Police District number

The phone number for my local police station

My local police officer

His/her badge number

This store's name

The owner of this store

Owner's cell phone

Another emergency contact is (name and phone number)

Fill in this important information and post this page on your cash register or in a place where you can easily see it!