



REPÚBLICA DE PANAMÁ
— GOBIERNO NACIONAL —



Promotion of Crime Prevention, Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law: Towards Fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the Kyoto Declaration

Safeguarding the rights of victims and protection of witnesses and complaints Improvement of Criminal Investigation Processes

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Reforms to make the criminal justice system more focused on victims

**Evidence of the implementation of laws towards a
more victim-centered criminal justice system**

Law #27 of June 16, 1995

- **Defines the crimes of intrafamily violence.**
- **Commands the establishment of dependencies and specialized prosecutors for the care of victims of these crimes.**

Law #31 of May 28, 1998

- **Protection of victims.**
- **Introduces the participation of the victim without formalities in investigations.**
- **Guarantees access to justice, constituting itself as a party, being able to count on Free Defense, which represents it during the entire process**
- **Physical and psychological protection to the victim and family members.**

Law # 82 of October 24

- **Aprove prevention measures against violence against women and reforms the Penal Code to classify Femicide and punish acts of violence against women, thereby,**
- **Introduction of new criminal figures to protect the victim,**
- **Establishes a scenario of awareness, prevention and attention, through a committee.**

- **New criminal figures are established:** psychological violence, patrimonial, femicide, violation of protection measures.
- **The Secretariat for the Protection of Victims, Witnesses, Experts and Other Intervening Parties is created** in criminal procedures, directed by the victim, Witness Protection Unit and other participants in the criminal procedures.
- **The Witness Protection Unit keeps** an Action Protocol for the Units for the Protection of Victims, Witnesses, experts and other interveners since April 7, 2015 and the Protocol for Comprehensive Care for victims and witnesses against sexual freedom.

- **Improvement of the attention** that victims receive with a focus on integral attention and multidisciplinary actions with the active participation of psychologists, social workers, and specialized personnel in the field of law to provide the necessary guidance.
- **Establishment of an active mechanism** in conjunction with the Prosecutor's Office to care for victims in crisis, comprehensive medical assistance depending on the crime, psychological assistance, legal assistance, transfers to safer places (hotels, shelters), provision of food, with due protection of human rights depending on their special needs.

The Panamanian Public Ministry implemented:

1. The **Charter of Rights of Persons before Justice**: it systematize the rights of people who report crimes, witnesses, direct or indirect victims, with emphasis on the principles of accessibility to justice, transparency, quality, closeness, efficiency and agility, and applies to all natural and legal persons.
2. **Creation of offices** of the Public Ministry in places of difficult access to receive complaints, provide guidance, crime investigation, give psychological support to migrant victims who cross the border between the Republic of Colombia and the Republic of Panama.

The Panamanian Public Ministry implemented:

3. Justice Access to provide the indigenous population a quick response and ensure access to justice, new branches of the Public Prosecutor's Office, Prosecutors, Operational Assistants, members of the Border Police.

4. Active Victim Assistance Unit that provides food, medical care and immediate psychological intervention, legal guidance and investigation follow up for preserving the physical and emotional integrity of the victims in difficult access communities (Resolution # 26 of October 7, 2021, Resolution # 01 of January 3, 2022 and Resolution # 02 of February 14, 2022).

5. Special assistance: have interpreters in several languages, as well as sign language, for people with a disability.

6. Center for Reception of Migrants and Registration of people, who enter the national territory, across borders and are provided with transportation from one border to another.

7. Use of Gesell cameras and closed-circuit systems has been implemented, technological tool to avoid re-victimization, reducing repetition of interviews with victims and witnesses who participate in trials to preserve their safety and emotional integrity.

8. Unification of the different offices involved in the attention to victims, witnesses and complainants in a single structure or building in the Metropolitan area, to guarantee the proximity of services, access to justice and speed.

9. There are other programs, laws and policies to support the most vulnerable victims: regardless of their economic status in cases of gender violence and in those in which the victims are older adults and minors.

THREATENS

Lack or Statistical information that can be consulted online at institutional websites.

Slow Institutional level Disciplinary Council administrative investigations

WEAKNESSES

Warranty safe relocation and identity protection of victims during complaint and investigation process because of low resources

OPORTUNITIES

Improvement of victim attention, interrogation thecnics, rapport, field investigation and human rights

Creative research with control of illicit behaviour from police members, lawyers and administrative personel

STRENGHS

24 hours telephonic center for complaints in case of unaproprate treatment to victims or family members

Administrative internal affairs investigations in Prosecutor's office

Anticorruption office open to all population

Strict attachment to protocols and Law inforcement

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION



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