

“A confident witness
is a good witness,
and a good witness
will promote due
process of law”

For further information about the
witness support service, please contact
the witness support coordinator
Norwegian Courts Administration.

Domstoladministrasjonen
www.domstol.no

WITNESS §UPPORT VOLUNTEERS

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Having experienced or witnessed a criminal act can often be difficult. The objective of the witness support service is to ensure that witnesses feel confident in court.

» WHAT IS A WITNESS?

Under the Norwegian legal system, a witness is a person who has information that may contribute to shed light on a civil dispute or a criminal case. Also the victim of a criminal act (the aggrieved person) is called a witness.

» WHAT IS A WITNESS SUPPORT VOLUNTEER?

A witness support volunteer is a person who offers to assist witnesses by giving emotional support and practical information in connection with criminal and civil cases.

He or she will be a good conversation partner both before and after the trial.

Witness support volunteers have undergone extensive training and are subject to a duty of confidentiality.

» WHY DO WITNESSES NEED SUPPORT?

To many people, being called as a witness in a case may mean that they will have to appear in a courthouse for the first time. This situation may feel uncomfortable and be filled with uncertainty. Witnesses may also have very little knowledge of procedures in court cases.

Many are apprehensive because they do not know what is expected of them. Some feel anxious about what they are going to say and may also find it unpleasant to be questioned about their experiences.

Most courthouses only have a joint waiting room, which means that the accused and any persons accompanying him or her will share the same waiting room as the witnesses. This may be distressing.

Through contact with a witness support volunteer, it will be much more likely that the witness will have the confidence necessary to make a good statement. The witness will to a greater extent feel that he or she has control of the situation.