



Greg Smith SC MP

Attorney General
Minister for Justice

MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW DVD HELPS WITNESSES GET READY FOR COURT

The Attorney General, Greg Smith SC, today launched a DVD that will demystify the court process for victims of crime and help them prepare to give evidence.

“Victims of crime are often the most crucial witnesses in a trial and the Justice Journey DVD will help ensure they understand their role in court and are not overwhelmed by the experience,” Mr Smith said.

The DVD provides a step-by-step guide to the justice process, from the time the crime is reported to police until the matter is finalised in court.

Mr Smith said the DVD addresses fears and anxieties commonly felt by victims of crime and other witnesses during criminal proceedings.

It also gives practical tips about coming face to face with the alleged offender in court, warns them to be prepared for court delays and how to prepare for the possibility of a not-guilty verdict.

“Victims can be assured that they are not alone and the DVD explains how they can access support services and avoid suffering additional trauma in court,” Mr Smith said.

“One of the Justice Journey case studies involves a victim of sexual assault, who gives evidence via closed circuit cameras to avoid being in the same room as her attacker.”

The DVD is divided into sections so that it can be stopped and discussed in counselling and court preparation sessions. It includes sections on courtroom processes and protocol, the role of key court participants and the role and rights of witnesses.

The DVD is supported by a booklet and other resources that will be available to all victim support organisations.

“Justice Journey will be a valuable resource for victims of all ages and backgrounds, as well as their families and supporters,” Mr Smith said.

“It is engaging, educational and all the information is presented in a way that is sensitive and respectful towards victims.

“I hope this DVD encourages more victims to give evidence and help bring those responsible for the crime to justice.”

The Department of Attorney General and Justice funded and coordinated the Justice Journey DVD in consultation with victim support groups, the NSW Police Force, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions NSW, Legal Aid NSW, the Judicial Commission of NSW, the Law Society of NSW, the NSW Bar Association, NSW Health and a range of other agencies.