



INFORMATION / FACT SHEET

ATTENDING A 'PROOFING' MEETING AT THE DPP

As a victim of crime or witness for the prosecution, you may be asked to attend a meeting, or number of meetings, at the *Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP)*.

The legal term for this meeting is called a '*proofing*'.

Stated simply, a '*proofing*' is a meeting with the *Prosecutor* who has conduct of the prosecution case involving the accused.

Why Do We Have 'PROOFING' Meetings?

There are a number of reasons why a '*proofing*' meeting may be required. This may include:

- *To introduce you to members of staff currently dealing with the prosecution matter;*
- *To explain the role and function of the ODPP;*
- *To provide you with information about the criminal court process;*
- *To provide you with information about the progress of the matter in which they are involved;*
- *To ensure that the information provided in your witness statement/s is true and correct (i.e. contains no errors or omissions).*
- *To obtain further detail regarding the information provided in your witness statement/s; and / or any aspects that are ambiguous or unclear;*
- *To further assess the appropriateness of the charges laid;*
- *To assess whether you are capable of recounting the allegation/s;*
- *To discuss particular issues that may have arisen pertaining to the prosecution case;*
- *To discuss any proposal to resolve the matter;*
- *To assist with the decision to prosecute; and*
- *To prepare victims and witnesses to give evidence at trial.*

Ultimately, the '*proofing*' meeting will give you the opportunity to meet with ODPP staff that has conduct of the matter involving you, and to ask questions you may have about the prosecution process.

Who Will Be in Attendance at the 'PROOFING' Meeting?

When attending a '*proofing*' meeting, the *Prosecutor* who has conduct of the file will be present, as well as the *Investigating Officer* from the South Australian Police (SAPOL).

If a *Witness Assistance Officer (WAO)* from the ODPP has been allocated to you, then they will be in attendance also.

If you are '*proofed*' on more than one occasion it is important to note that the *Prosecutor* you meet on the first occasion may or may not be the *Prosecutor* you will meet on the follow-up occasion(s).

Please note that this is a normal part of the prosecution process.

Where will the 'PROOFING' Meeting Occur

The majority of '*proofing*' meetings occur at:

**The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP)
Level 7, 45 Pirie St, Adelaide
(08) 8207 1529**

In certain circumstances a '*proofing*' meeting may occur in a location that is more convenient to you.

You will be informed of the date, time and location of the '*proofing*' meeting prior to the date it is scheduled.

What Will Happen at the 'PROOFING' Meeting ?

The '*proofing*' meeting is an important meeting where the *Prosecutor* may ask you questions about the *Witness Statement/s* you gave to police.

You may be asked to read the *Witness Statement/s* you gave to the Police before the '*proofing*' meeting to refresh your memory about the details of the allegation(s).

If you do not have a copy of your *Witness Statement/s* with you, a further copy will be provided to you at the meeting.

The *Prosecutor* and *Witness Assistance Officer* will also provide you with general information about their roles, the role of the ODPP, the criminal justice system, the prosecution process and the process of giving evidence at a trial.

If you are a child victim or prosecution witness you may be asked to watch the DVD or video of your original interview.

The '*proofing*' meeting is also an opportunity for you to personally meet the *Prosecutor* and *Witness Assistance Officer* from the DPP and to ask any questions that you may have about the prosecution process or the criminal justice system.

Any further information which you provide during the '*proofing*' meeting may result in a further statement having to be taken from you by the *Investigating Officer*.

Can a Support Person Attend With Me at the 'PROOFING' Meeting?

You may have a support person accompany you to the '*proofing*' meeting.

Your support person may attend at the initial and end part of the '*proofing*' meeting with you, however will be asked to leave the meeting when the *Prosecutor* speaks with you about the details of the allegation(s).

This is for legal reasons and to ensure that your support person is not later called as a witnesses during a Trial.

Where a *Witness Assistance Officer* is allocated to you, they will provide support to you at the '*proofing*' meeting.

It is a requirement of the Office that child and adolescent victims of sexual offences are accompanied by a *Witness Assistance Officer* throughout the duration of the '*proofing*' meeting.

How Many Times Will I Have to be 'PROOFED'?

In most cases you will meet with a *Prosecutor* from the ODPP for a '*proofing*' meeting early in the legal process, and then shortly before for Trial (where applicable).

Prior the commencement of the Trial you may be required to attend a '*Proofing*' meeting with the *Prosecutor* who will conduct the Trial.

The *Trial Prosecutor* and *Witness Assistance Officer* (where one has been allocated to you) will help prepare you to give evidence at the Trial.

In some cases you may be required to attend at the ODPP for '*proofing*' meetings subsequent to the initial one.

Multiple '*proofing*' meetings will be avoided wherever possible, unless they are necessitated by other events or information.

What if I Require Assistance to Attend the 'PROOFING' Meeting?

If you require assistance to attend a '*proofing*' meeting at the ODPP you should speak with the Investigating Officer (SAPOL) about your circumstances.

Please note that parking in the city during business hours is limited and can be expensive. You may therefore consider using public transport as an alternative.

Are There Child Care Facilities Available at the ODPP if I Require Them?

We strongly recommend that infants and children are not present during '*proofing*' meetings.

Unfortunately the ODPP cannot provide child care whilst you are being '*proofed*', therefore it is important you make all necessary arrangements prior to any scheduled '*proofing*' meeting.

This may involve making alternative child care arrangements or bringing someone with you who can provide the necessary care to your children or dependants.

What If I Have Further Questions About the 'PROOFING' Meeting?

If you have further questions about the '*proofing*' meeting, you may contact the Investigating Officer (SAPOL), ODPP Prosecutor, or *Witness Assistance Officer* (where one has been allocated to you).

If you cannot recall the names of ODPP staff allocated to your matter, *ODPP Reception Staff (8207 1529)* should be able to assist you.