

## What to Expect From Law Enforcement?

Going through a homicide investigation is a daunting and frustrating time for homicide survivors — especially in obtaining information.

Here are some common challenges that loved ones might experience with law enforcement and the reasons behind law enforcement actions:

The investigator is not communicating with me — As Investigators search for the person(s) responsible for your loved one's death, they follow policies and procedures that limit the information they can share in the investigation.

Progress is painfully slow — Evidence must be obtained legally to prosecute the crime successfully, making the legal processes slow. Due to various factors, evidence processing and testing can take months or years.

The Investigator is unfeeling towards my family and me — Law enforcement must remain objective which can come across as cold. Investigators cannot afford to become emotional in their job capacity.

The police won't share the reports with me, and I want to read them — All police reports, photos, and documents are considered evidence and cannot be shared. However, homicide survivors have the right to an incident report number. The number can be referenced when contacting the assigned investigator.

My loved ones had personal property on them when they were killed, and I can't get it back — These items are considered evidence and the state follows laws to preserve them. They may never be returned to homicide survivors.

Victims do have rights with Law Enforcement and as a victim of crime.

Please contact NCVAN and speak to a victim advocate to help navigate the criminal justice system.

\*Investigator and detectives are often used interchangeably. Different agencies can have different titles for sworn officers assigned to their specified duties.