

# VICTIM WITNESS *Assistance* PROGRAM



## **VICTIM WITNESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Office of the Thirteenth Circuit Solicitor

Greenville County Courthouse

**864-467-8647**

Pickens County Courthouse

**864-898-5905**

## **CRIMINAL COURT**

### **How the Process Works**

As the victim of a crime, it is important that you understand how the criminal court process works. You will feel more “in control” if you know what to expect in the crime to court process.

- A report of a crime is made to law enforcement.
- You may be asked to come to the Law Enforcement Center to give a written statement or to look at mug shots.
- The suspect is identified, formally charged by a warrant, and is arrested.
- Bond is set and the defendant is released if he can make bond. In some cases, a bond hearing may be held.
- The warrant arrives in the Solicitor’s Office and the case

is assigned to an Assistant Solicitor to prosecute.

- The defendant’s attorney may request a preliminary hearing before a magistrate. The magistrate decides if there is enough evidence to send the case to Grand Jury.
- You may meet with the Assistant Solicitor to discuss the case and the Solicitor decides if the case should proceed.
- The Grand Jury meets and hears evidence in the case. The Grand Jury returns a “True Bill of Indictment” or a “No Bill” determining whether or not the case will be prosecuted.
- The case may go to trial or the defendant may plead guilty to the original charge or a lesser charge.
- If a trial is held you may need to testify. The defendant will either be convicted (found guilty), acquitted (found not guilty), or a mistrial (jury cannot agree) is declared.
- If a defendant is sentenced to prison, there are forms you can fill out that will ensure you are notified if/when a prisoner comes up for parole. You may appear before the parole board to express your opinion concerning his release.