
Road crash investigations in West Mercia: A guide for dealing with serious collisions

RoadPeace
2022



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Foreword

**by John Champion, West Mercia
Police and Crime Commissioner**



Roads are used every day by people to get us from A to B, yet we don't often think about the dangers they can present.

As Commissioner, I have long seen road safety as a priority in West Mercia. As a force area we have motorways and many rural roads. In 2021, 490 people were seriously injured on our roads. 490. It is simply not acceptable that this is happening and I refuse to see that number increase.

In order to truly tackle this, we have to look at it from different angles, and not expect fines and bans to stop the problem in its tracks. A large part is education. There is a great amount of awareness raising around drink and drug driving, the use of mobile phones, wearing a seatbelt and speeding. However, we also need to prioritise careless driving – where people are rushing, failing to judge other road users properly or not driving with due care and attention.

I am proud to support initiatives that focus on getting to the root cause of why collisions happen, as well as programmes that focus on training so that our road users are as equipped as they need to be in order to be safer drivers.

Being injured as a result of a serious road traffic collision brings sudden, unexpected and devastating changes to the injured person, and their support network. I am proud to support RoadPeace because no one should have to suffer alone. It's so important those injured, or the family and friends of the bereaved, can speak to someone and seek support from others to allow them to cope and find a way forward.

I will never give up my fight to make our roads safer, and ensure those using the roads are kept safe too. We have a chance to make a difference by working together. It certainly isn't down to just one group, it's about working with the police, local authorities to ensure the infrastructure works, road users, as well as the many other organisations whose priority it is to tackle this.

Introduction

Key points

- ▶ This guide aims to help you and your family understand what happens after a life-changing or life-threatening collision in West Mercia in the justice system.
- ▶ It covers the basic process involved in and information about the:
 - Collision investigation
 - Charging decision
 - Criminal prosecution
 - Civil compensation
- ▶ It also covers your entitlements under the Victims' Code to support, and signposts to additional sources of information and support:

Devastated, angry, shocked, confused – that's how you may be feeling if you or your loved one were recently in a life-changing or life-threatening collision. We're so very sorry for this.

Information can be hard to absorb after such a collision. We hope this guide will help you understand what will happen next. It explains how the police investigate such serious collisions and how they will keep you informed. It also covers criminal prosecution and civil compensation, and your entitlements as a victim to information and support under the Ministry of Justice's [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime \(Victims' Code\)](#).

Each section starts with a summary of key points and ends with a reminder of your entitlements under the Victims' Code. It alerts you to any deadlines and signposts you to other sources of information and additional support, including claiming compensation and getting help through a criminal trial. Hopefully, this will help you feel like you have more control at this very difficult time.

Produced by RoadPeace, the national charity for road crash victims, this guide is based on 30 years of experience of supporting road crash victims, and includes messages of support and advice from other victims in West Mercia.

We suggest you go through all sources of information with a friend or family member, and write notes and questions where you would like more explanation. This guide is based on the assumption that a driver could face prosecution for causing the collision.

Please get in touch with RoadPeace if you would like more help – we're here for you. Our contact details are on page 18.

The West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner has funded support services for road traffic collision victims in West Mercia. In addition to these guides, RoadPeace was funded to employ a locally-based Victim Care Coordinator and to organise monthly support groups for bereaved and injured victims and a trauma support programme for people bereaved by road deaths. Call RoadPeace on 0845 4500 355 to find out more.

Definition of life-threatening and life-changing injuries

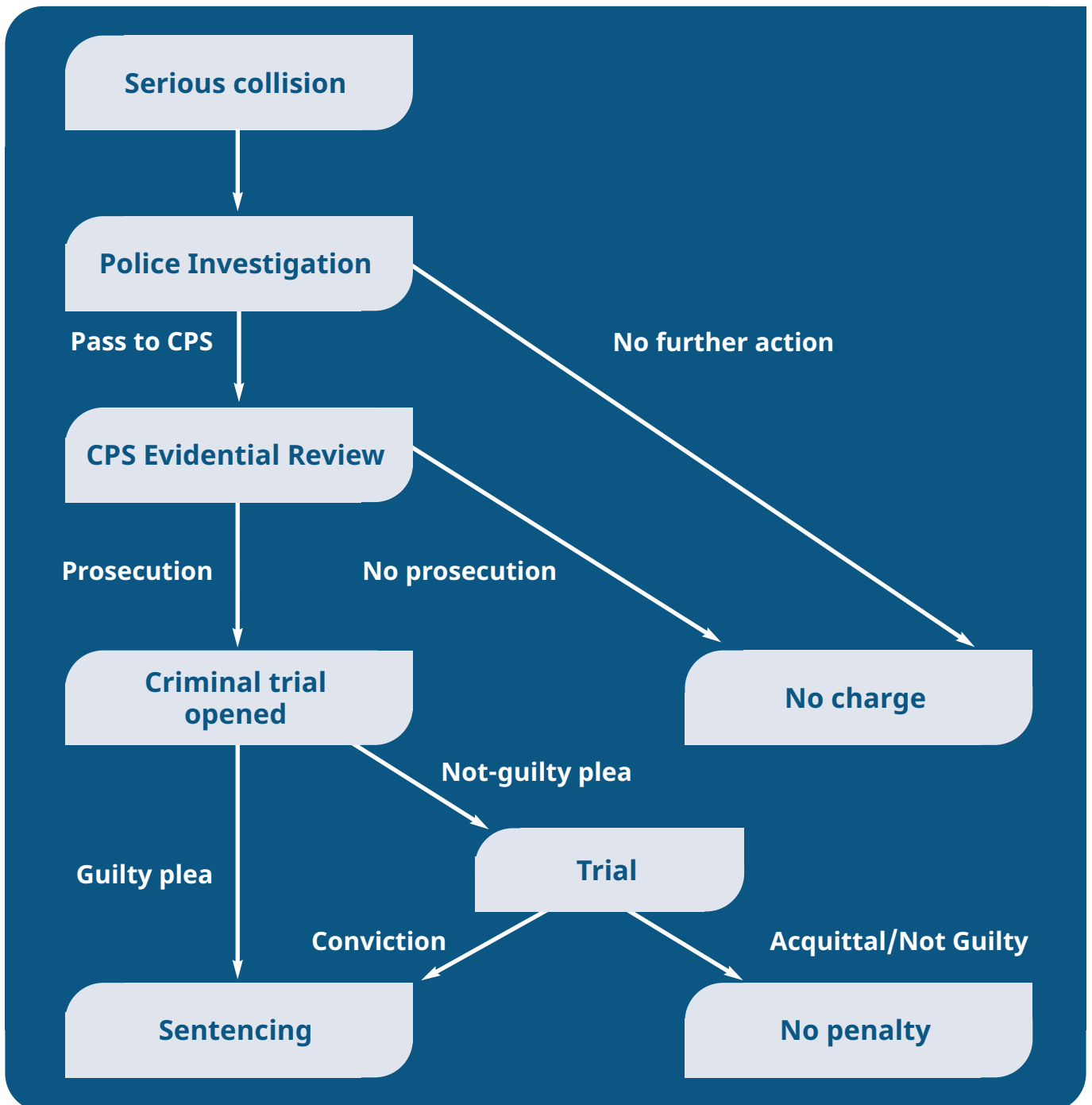
The Operations Policing Unit (OPU) investigates serious road traffic collisions. These involve life-threatening or life-changing injuries.

Life-threatening Injury

An injury which has been the subject of a full and formal assessment by a medical practitioner and as the result of that assessment has been deemed to be, on the balance of probability, as critical and of high risk to life.

Life-changing Injury

An injury which has been the subject of a full and formal assessment by a medical practitioner and as a result of that assessment is expected to result in the loss of a limb or is likely to result in a permanent significant physical impairment or disability which will prevent that person from being independent.



Collision investigation

Key points

- ▶ The investigation into a serious collision can take over a year to complete
- ▶ It will involve a team of police officers, including specialist trained Forensic Collision Investigators (FCI) who are responsible for establishing how the collision occurred
- ▶ The police will keep you updated on the investigation progress and inform you of the investigation outcome

The investigation into a serious collision starts at the scene, once it has been secured and casualties attended to. Serious collisions within West Mercia are investigated by the Operations Policing Unit (OPU). As shown overleaf, a team of officers is assigned to the investigation of these serious collisions.

At scene investigation

Local officers and/or the OPU will be the first to arrive at the scene. They are responsible for securing the scene, attending to casualties and preserving the evidence, until the specialist forensic investigators arrive.

At the scene, the FCI will conduct a full examination of the collision site, including using a laser scanner. Investigating Officers collect physical evidence.

Other members of the investigation team gather evidence from the driver and witnesses, and contact the victim's family. A Road Death Lead Investigator (RDLI), normally a sergeant from the OPU, will be appointed, and they are responsible for the direction of the subsequent investigation, including which witnesses are to be interviewed and how far the CCTV search should extend.

Witness statements

Initial accounts will be taken from witnesses and any surviving uninjured driver. This will be limited to their contact details and a brief account of what they saw. This can help identify any eye witnesses who saw the collision occur, as opposed to those who can only testify what has happened after the collision.

Vehicle inspection

The vehicle will normally be seized for a more thorough investigation and will be examined by a vehicle examiner.

Driver investigation

As with witnesses, only brief accounts are collected from driver(s) at the scene.

Uninjured drivers are tested for drink and drug driving. These are screening tests and any positive results must be verified by further testing at a police station. With injured drivers, impairment testing depends on doctor's permission. Medical treatment takes priority over impairment testing.

Operations Policing Unit

Forensic Collision Investigator (FCI)

These are specialist investigators with nationally recognised qualifications. They examine the collision scene, photograph and laser scan the scene, and conduct reconstructions. After analysing and comparing the evidence collected, they produce the collision investigation report.

Investigating Officer

Investigating Officers collect evidence and deal with the day to day investigation of the crash. This includes collecting witness statements and conducting suspect driver interviews.

Vehicle Examiner

Vehicle examiners inspect vehicles involved in serious collisions. This is to find out if a problem with the vehicle contributed to the collision occurrence or its severity. If the collision involved a heavy goods vehicle or public service vehicle, like a bus, an examiner from the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency can do this work.

Roads Policing Lead Investigator

A Roads Policing Lead Investigator is the officer in charge of a serious collision investigation. They approach a collision as an unlawful event until the contrary is proven. They decide what information is released to the media and when.

Note: this position used to be called the Senior Investigating Officer and some may still refer to this. The College of Policing, who set national guidance, now refer to Roads Policing Lead Investigators within collision investigations.

Mobile phones are checked. This may just be at the scene, or they could be seized. The victim's phone may also be taken.

Eyesight testing is always conducted. This may be at the scene or it can be deferred to a more appropriate time.

Where criminal offending is detected, e.g. drink driving, or there is a risk the driver may abscond, the police may arrest the driver on suspicion of causing the collision. This allows finger-printing and DNA to be collected and identification checks.

"The investigation into my crash took nearly a year to finish. Sometimes they are shorter, sometimes they are longer. Your Investigating Officer should be able to tell you why the investigation is taking the time it is, and what stage it is at."

Injured victim

Follow up investigation

Witness interviews

Media appeals will be released. The police will do everything they can to trace witnesses of the collision, and evidence will be secured from them where traced.

Key witness statements will be taken in person by an officer trained in conducting interviews.

Driver interview

In most cases, drivers will be asked to do a voluntary interview. In cases where offending has been detected or is suspected, drivers will be interviewed under caution as soon as possible and this will be recorded.

CCTV retrieval and analysis

The Investigating Officer is responsible for collecting any video evidence from roadside or bus cameras.

Vehicle

Any vehicles seized can be kept for as long as necessary, which could be until the completion of court hearings. Both parties, the victim's family and the suspect driver, have the right to an independent vehicle examination. These are arranged by the defence or victim's solicitor.

Event data recorders (black box) may be checked. For serious collisions involving an HGV, the company may be visited and their safety practices and records reviewed.

Site inspection

The site of the collision will be assessed by a West Mercia Police Traffic Management Advisor, alongside representatives from the relevant local authority's highways department. They are responsible for identifying any possible contribution to the collision by the road environment as well as suggesting any modifications to reduce risk.

Collision investigation report

The FCI produces the collision investigation report which contains physical evidence key to the investigation, including CCTV footage, scene plan, photographs and any reconstruction report. Reconstructions are not mandatory.

Collision investigation reports summarise the evidence collected and the findings regarding culpability. The FCI does not recommend specific criminal charges.

The collision report provides key evidence for the investigation. The FCI creates the report from physical evidence to come to conclusions as to how the collision occurred, and this report is impartial from the case evidence, such as; witness statements, driver interviews. Once completed the report will be shared with the RDLI, who will assess whether the physical evidence proves, or disproves conclusions from the case evidence.

In some cases the scene or elements of the collision are reconstructed to prove a particular point and aid understanding.

Quality assurance

A senior FCI evaluates all scene work, as well as any reports provided by the FCI to courts or third parties. This includes a final review of the completed collision investigation report.

Communication with the victim's family

The investigating officer will keep your family informed of the investigation process – they will also collect Victim Personal Statements from you when there is a prosecution.

Victims' Code key entitlements: Investigation stage

- ▶ A needs assessment to help work out what support you need;
- ▶ Information on what to expect from the criminal justice system;
- ▶ Be referred to organisations supporting crime victims;
- ▶ Be informed about the police investigation, such as if a suspect is arrested and charged and any bail conditions imposed.

Charging decision

Key points

- ▶ The charging decision refers to whether or not the driver is to be prosecuted for causing the serious injury collision
- ▶ The police can authorise a charge without a CPS review or decide there is not enough evidence for a prosecution
- ▶ If the police decide a prosecution should be considered, the CPS will decide which criminal charge, if any, to prosecute the driver
- ▶ Victims and their families can appeal the decision not to prosecute

A serious collision does not mean a criminal prosecution is automatic. In their guidance, the CPS are clear in stating that *“injury or death does not, by itself, turn a collision into careless driving or turn careless driving into dangerous driving”*.

Who decides?

The decision to charge a suspect driver with a criminal offence is the role of the CPS, but in some cases the police can also authorise a charge without a CPS review. Initially police will investigate and compile the evidence, a decision is then made by police as to whether there is enough evidence for a prosecution to be considered. If the evidence meets the threshold the police or CPS will consider the case and decide if there is or isn't a case to answer and what charges should be applied. Your rights to review the charging decision are explained below.

Police decision

Collision investigation reports into serious collisions are reviewed by the RDLI. They are responsible for deciding if the evidence reaches the threshold to charge the driver or for referral to the CPS for charging advice.

The police may decide that there is not enough evidence to justify a prosecution. You can ask them to review this if a suspect driver was identified and interviewed under caution for a specific criminal charge.

Charging decision

If the police pass the investigation file to the CPS, then the CPS will decide whether the driver should be charged and on which offence. To proceed, the CPS will require the case to pass two tests:

- ▶ The evidential test. This part of the test asks the prosecutor to consider whether there is a realistic prospect of conviction. This includes asking whether the evidence is admissible for court and whether it is reliable and credible.
- ▶ The public interest test.

The CPS should offer you a meeting to explain this decision. For more on the CPS and the procedures followed by prosecutors, see the [CPS website](#).

You can appeal if the CPS decide not to prosecute for any offence. You do not have the right to appeal if you think the charge should have been a more serious one.

Appealing the decision

The CPS ask that families submit their request for a review within five working days of being notified, but they will accept requests up to three months. The CPS will first seek to address your concerns through local resolution and, if you are still not satisfied, through an independent review.

Local resolution

The CPS will attempt to resolve it locally and within 10 days of the request for a review. The review will be conducted by a prosecutor in the same CPS area but who was not involved in the case previously. Your family will be given a *“clear and detailed explanation of the decision”* (CPS, 2016). There are three possible outcomes from a review:

1. Decision overturned. The CPS will apologise and explain what will happen next with commencing a criminal prosecution.
2. Decision confirmed but more explanation was needed which the CPS will provide. If you are dissatisfied, you have 10 days to request an independent review.
3. Decision confirmed and no more information provided. In these cases, the CPS progress to a second stage which involves an independent review at another office.

Independent review

The reviewing prosecutor will reconsider the evidence and the public interest test. The CPS will contact you with the outcome of the review. They aim to do this within thirty working days (six weeks). If more time is required, they will keep you updated.

Families should note that whilst the CPS describe this as an independent review, it is conducted by a CPS prosecutor from a different area, not an independent body.

Victims’ Code key entitlements: Charging decision stage

- ▶ Be informed if the suspect is to be prosecuted or not or given an out of court disposal;
- ▶ Seek a review of the police or CPS decision not to prosecute in accordance with the National Police Chiefs Council and CPS Victims’ Right to Review Schemes.

Criminal prosecution

Key points

- ▶ A criminal trial, including sentencing, can often take over a year to conclude, from the first hearing
- ▶ With criminal prosecutions, West Mercia Police Victim and Witness Care Unit provide pre-trial support and will put you in touch with the Witness Care Unit at court. Email: WitnessCare@westmercia.police.uk; Phone: 01905 331124

If the CPS decide a prosecution is justified, the police will charge the suspect driver and start court proceedings.

Common questions asked by families include:

Why are drivers suspected of causing serious collisions allowed to continue driving?

Few drivers have bail conditions imposed, including being given an interim driving ban. There must be evidence that the driver is likely to reoffend for a ban to be considered. We understand many families find this particularly difficult.

How long will a court prosecution take?

It can often take over a year for a case to be heard, especially if it involves a Crown Court trial. It is important to be aware that long waits with delays and adjournments can sadly be routine.

"In my case there were a lot of hearings and dates in court. Sometimes they changed last minute and I found the process to be quite disruptive. The only advice I can give is to try and not pin too much on specific dates – they might change."

Injured victim

What criminal charges are most likely?

As shown overleaf, the most common charge that specifically mentions a serious injury is Causing Serious Injury by Dangerous Driving. On 28th June 2022, a new offence of Causing Serious Injury by Careless Driving was introduced. Before this, drivers could be charged with Careless Driving, which did not mention any serious injury in its name. Dangerous Driving requires the driving standard to have fallen "far below" the standard of a careful and competent driver whereas Careless Driving is "just below".

What support is there?

Pre-court support is now available, West Mercia Police Victim and Witness Care Unit provide pre-trial support and will put you in touch with the Witness Care Unit at court. Email: WitnessCare@westmercia.police.uk; Phone: 01905 331124

If a driver is given a custodial sentence of more than 12 months, a Victim Liaison Officer from the Probation Service will be assigned to keep your family informed, including updates of any early release requests.

Do I have to worry about downgrading?

Downgrading will remain a risk throughout the prosecution. With a charge of Causing Serious Injury by Dangerous Driving, the CPS can accept a guilty plea to the lesser charges of Causing Serious Injury by Careless Driving or Careless Driving. Judges can also downgrade the charge and juries can decide the accused was guilty of Careless Driving rather than Dangerous Driving.

"In my case, the charge was downgraded from Dangerous Driving to Careless Driving. It can feel like justice is not being done, especially considering the seriousness of the injuries. My advice would be to speak to as many people as you can. Speak to the investigating officer about why there has been no charge/why it has been downgraded and seek advice from support organisations like RoadPeace."

Injured victim

What about my Victim Personal Statement

If your case is going to court, you and your family will be given the opportunity to make a Victim Personal Statement. These are intended to allow you to describe the impact the collision has had on your life. It is not intended to affect the sentencing. Please know you can always add to your statement if you wish. See the [government's website](#) for more information on Victim Personal Statements or for examples and our guide on writing a VPS please contact RoadPeace.

How do guilty plea discounts work?

If the accused pleads guilty early (at the first court hearing), they can be given up to one third off their custodial sentence. Guilty plea reductions do not apply to fines or driving bans.

Court prosecutions, West Mercia (2020)				
	Prosecuted	Convicted	Custodial sentence	Custody rate
Causing Serious Injury by Dangerous Driving	14	5	3	60%
Careless driving offences (excl. mobile phone offences)	298	203	n/a	n/a

Source: MoJ (2020), Criminal Justice Statistics

What sentences are likely?

For Causing Serious Injury by Dangerous Driving, most convicted drivers receive a custodial sentence. A minimum driving ban of two years also applies.

For Careless Driving, the majority of drivers convicted of this charge receive a community sentence. No custodial sentence is possible. Few drivers convicted of Careless Driving are banned. Instead they receive between 3–9 penalty points on their licence.

Causing Serious Injury by Careless Driving is a new charge and so there is not yet any information on this. Data on this will be published in May 2023.

Can I get my travel expenses paid?

If you are giving evidence, ask Victim Support or the Witness Care Unit at court how to apply for travel expenses.

What about Restorative Justice?

Restorative Justice is a government sponsored programme which allows victims to meet with offenders when there has been a successful conviction. It can provide a chance to ask questions about the collision or any remorse the offender has. It is possible that the victims may also receive an apology, which may appear more sincere than any given as part of a pre-sentencing ploy.

Both sides must give permission to participate. For Restorative Justice in West Mercia, contact rj.referral@victimsupport.cjsm.net or telephone 01905 726 896.

See [here](#) for background information on Restorative Justice for victims.

Victims' Code key entitlements: Sentencing related

- ▶ Read your VPS aloud or have it read aloud on your behalf, subject to the views of the court, if a defendant is found guilty;
- ▶ Be informed of any appeal against the offender's conviction or sentence;
- ▶ To opt into the Victim Contact Scheme (VCS) if the offender is sentenced to 12 months or more;
- ▶ Make a VPS for consideration by the Parole Board if the offender is considered for release or transfer and apply to the Parole Board to read it out at the hearing;
- ▶ Make representations about the conditions attached to the offender's licence on release and be informed about any licence conditions relating to you;
- ▶ Receive information about Restorative Justice and how you can take part;
- ▶ Make a complaint if you do not receive the information and services you are entitled to, and to receive a full response from the relevant service provider.

Civil compensation

Key points

- ▶ Civil compensation is possible without a criminal prosecution, or in cases where a driver is found not guilty
- ▶ Proceeding for claims must be issued in court within three years of the collision
- ▶ Your claim's success will depend on the evidence available – the sooner this is collected the better – it is advisable not to delay speaking to a solicitor
- ▶ There is a cost for accessing information for civil claims from the police but this can be included in your civil claim

In addition to being emotionally devastating, life-changing or life-threatening injury collisions can also be financially devastating. Civil compensation can help families with the additional costs they have incurred, including with lost income, even if no one is prosecuted for the collision. There are different standards of proof, with a lesser standard of proof for civil compensation.

Questions families often ask

Do I need a personal injury lawyer?

RoadPeace encourages all families to consult a [specialist personal injury lawyer](#) about a potential civil claim. With their experience and expertise, they will know what you can claim for. RoadPeace has a legal panel of specialist personal injury lawyers, who provide high quality legal advice to those suffering serious injuries in road traffic collisions and help them to achieve fair and timely civil compensation.

What about collisions involving a criminal prosecution?

Civil compensation also applies in cases where drivers are convicted of a criminal charge. The Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme which compensates victims of crime, does not compensate victims of driving offences as they are expected to receive compensation from motor vehicle insurance policies.

Are there any time limits for applying for civil compensation?

Civil claim proceedings need to be issued at court within three years of the collision. Injured children have until their 21st birthday for court proceedings to be issued.

Does a more serious charge mean more liability?

It does not matter if the driver is prosecuted for causing the collision or for which charge. This does not determine liability in civil compensation cases.

What if my collision involved a driver that did not stop at the scene or who was uninsured?

If the collision involved an uninsured or untraced driver (where the driver has failed to stop), your claim should be submitted to the Motor Insurer's Bureau (MIB, 2019), [please see here](#).

What information do I need to start my claim and how do I get it?

To begin a claim, you need the vehicle registration details of the vehicle involved and the insurers. The police will provide this information for a fee. Your solicitor can get this information for you (and other information such as witness statements and investigation reports) and cover any costs, as the fee can be claimed back as part of any compensation claim.

The College of Policing has published guidance on deadlines which police are to aim to meet in disclosing evidence to assist with civil claims. These include the following:

Recommended College of Policing disclosure deadlines for civil claim related information	
What information	When provided
Basic information on the vehicles involved, including owners and insurers	As quickly as possible and no later than four weeks after the collision
Other information on the collision and the investigation, including the police collision report, forensic collision investigators report (if any), photographs, plans, CCTV footage and notebook entries of reporting officers	Within four months of collision and no later than six months
Police witness statements	Within six months of collision and no later than nine months

[CPS \(2019\) Disclosure of Material to Third Parties](#)

For more information on civil compensation, you should contact RoadPeace who can help put you in touch with a specialist personal injury firm.

"I cannot stress enough how important it is to get a good solicitor as quickly as possible after the crash. Your claim is the money you need to get your life as close as it can be to how it was before the crash. It is a long process, and will probably take years. The sooner you get a solicitor, the better."

Injured victim

Learning lessons and longer term

Key points

- ▶ Motorisation and convenience should not result in road death or serious injury. 'Road Safety' is one of West Mercia's policing priorities. This is addressed by the targeting of travelling criminality and through the reduction of death and injury on our roads.

Each week, in West Mercia, at least one family is affected by a life-changing or life-threatening collision. West Mercia OPU and RoadPeace are working to improve the response to these tragedies. We are keen to hear how you were treated. This includes both what helped you during this terrible time and also what could have been done better.

Feedback and making a complaint

The basic guideline with making a complaint is to start with the person or organisation that you believe has failed your family. This is also the quickest way to get it resolved. Families may want to see lessons learned and practices quickly changed rather than formal complaints lodged and investigated.

If you need to complain about the police investigation, you should first start with your point of contact in the police and ask to raise it with their supervisor. The West Mercia police website provides information on how to make a complaint: [how to make a complaint](#) and also how they follow up on it: [how they follow up on it](#).

You can also make your complaint through the [Independent Office for Police Conduct](#) which handles appeals about complaints. Your complaint should be submitted within a year of the incident you are complaining about.

If you want to complain about the CPS, this can be done online, using their form. It should be done within six months of the cause for the complaint, as the CPS will not deal with complaints after this time.

Any complaints regarding solicitors should be submitted to their firm; they have up to eight weeks to respond. If the matter is not resolved, then you can contact the Legal Ombudsman.

Contact RoadPeace for more information about providing feedback and making complaints.

"I am very sorry this crash has happened to you. I wish very much mine had never happened. I take solace in that I am lucky to be alive and hope you can too."

Injured victim

References

CPS (2016), Victims' Right to Review Scheme,
<https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/victims-right-review-scheme>

CPS (2018), The Code for Crown Prosecutors,
<https://www.cps.gov.uk/publication/code-crown-prosecutors>

HM Government (2018), Victims Strategy,
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/746930/victim-strategy.pdf

MIB (2019) Making a claim,
<https://www.mib.org.uk/making-a-claim/>

MoJ (2020), Code of Practice for Victims of Crime,
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/476900/code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime.PDF

RJC (2015), Restorative Justice Works,
<https://rjc.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/files/rjc-victims-rjc-dig1.pdf>

Victim Advice Line (VAL) in West Mercia,
<https://victimadviceline.org.uk/>

Victim Support in West Mercia,
<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/resources/west-mercias/>

West Mercia Safer Roads policing priorities,
<https://www.westmercia.police.uk/police-forces/west-mercias-police/areas/west-mercias/about-us/about-us/safer-roads-partnership/>

How RoadPeace can help you

RoadPeace is the national charity for road crash victims. We support bereaved families and those who have been seriously injured in road traffic collisions through:

Support

National Helpline – 0845 4500 355

Our helpline provides emotional support, information about the justice system and signposting to appropriate services. It is for anyone bereaved or injured in a road traffic collision. The helpline is open **Monday to Friday from 10am to 1pm.**

For support following a crash in West Mercia, please contact RoadPeace@westmercia.police.uk or call the Victim Advice Line on **0800 952 3000**.

Befriender support

Our befriending service offers ongoing telephone support from trained volunteers who have suffered a similar experience.

Support Groups

Online support group meetings for injured victims and their families are held bi-monthly on the last Wednesday of the month. These groups provide a safe space for injured victims to come together for mutual support.

Advocacy and casework

Information guides

RoadPeace helps families navigate the justice system through detailed guides on collision investigation, inquests and sentencing. You can find out more about road death investigations and your rights by reading:

Ministry of Justice (2020), *Code of practice for victims of crime*.

Casework assistance

We help victims with queries about investigation, inquests, prosecution, compensation and sentencing.

Access to civil justice

The RoadPeace Legal Panel provides high quality legal advice to those bereaved or seriously injured in road traffic collisions, and to support them to achieve justice and fair compensation.

The Legal Panel is made up of leading specialist personal injury law firms. Panel members sign up to an agreed set of qualifying criteria including quality standards as their sign of commitment to road traffic collision victims.

To contact a legal panel member please visit our website or call our helpline.

Campaign for justice

In addition to supporting road traffic collision victims, we campaign for change including for:

- ▶ improved investigations, appropriate prosecution and sentencing of offenders, and fair compensation for victims
- ▶ improved rights and recognition for road traffic collision victims
- ▶ road danger reduction policies that prioritise vulnerable road users and the environment

If you have any questions about collision investigation or need any other support, please contact RoadPeace.

Call our Helpline: 0845 4500 355

Send an email: helpline@roadpeace.org

Visit our website: www.roadpeace.org



Other sources of support

Assist Trauma Care

Provide therapists trained to work with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and the after effects of trauma

Advice Line **01788 560800**
assisttraumacare.org.uk/

Back up trust

Supporting those with spinal cord injury
Support line 020 8875 1805

backuptrust.org.uk

Brain and Spine Foundation

Support those affected by neurological problems, their family, friends and carers

Helpline **0808 808 1000**
brainandspine.org.uk/

Brake, the road safety charity

Provide support and information to road crash victims

Helpline **0808 8000 401**
Monday to Friday (10am to 4pm)
brake.org.uk/victim-support

Changing Faces

Support, Information & Advice **0300 012 0275**
changingfaces.org.uk/

Child Brain Injury Trust

Provides emotional and practical support to families affected by childhood acquired brain injury across the UK

childbraininjurytrust.org.uk/

Restorative Justice Service in West Mercia

Phone **01905 726 896**
rj.referral@victimsupport.cjism.net

Samaritans

Offers a 24/7 helpline support before, during and after a crisis

Helpline **116123**
samaritans.org/

SCARD

Offers support to the families and friends of those lost in road traffic collisions

Helpline **0345 123 5542**
Scard.org.uk

The Silverlining Brain Injury Charity

Specialises in the support of all those affected by brain injury

thesilverlining.org.uk/

Shout

Offers a free 24/7 texting service for anyone in crisis
giveusashout.org/

Spinal Injuries Association

Supports anyone who has been touched by spinal cord injury

Advice line **0800 980 0501**
spinal.co.uk/

Victim Advice Line (West Mercia)

A free and confidential service for people that have been affected by crime in West Mercia

Advice line **0800 952 3000**
victimadviceline.org.uk/

Victim Support

Offers support to victims of crime and traumatic incidents in England and Wales

National Helpline **0808 168 9291**
West Mercia Helpline **01905 726 896**
victimsupport.org.uk/resources/west-mercias/

WAY (Widowed and Young)

Offers support to bereaved partners
widowedandyoung.org.uk/

RoadPeace

The national charity for road crash victims

