

Are appointments needed?

We encourage people to make appointments for VEV so that we can ensure a trained member of staff is available to take photographs.

But we understand that this isn't always possible, so if a trained member of staff is not available for an unscheduled visit, the VEV agency will help liaise with another local VEV agency to carry out the service as soon as possible.

We promise to:

- treat clients with dignity and understanding
- only take photographs with consent
- let clients decide when and if the photographs are to be used in any proceedings
- keep the fact that we have photographs for a client confidential
- safeguard the photographs
- let clients decide if they want the photographs destroyed (photos are held for a maximum of six years).



Contact VEV at:

Telephone: 01905 726 896 or email:
TrainingWestMercia@victimsupport.org.uk

We are an **independent** charity offering **free, confidential** support to people affected by crime and traumatic incidents.

For information and support, contact us by:

- calling: Supportline **08 08 16 89 111**
- using our 24/7 live chat service:
victimsupport.org.uk/live-chat
- using BSL: victimsupport.org.uk/bsl
- Online: victimsupport.org.uk

To find out how you can help us, visit
victimsupport.org.uk/get-involved

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Victim Support, Ground Floor, Building 3, Eastern Business Park,
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Telephone: 020 7268 0200

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**VS VICTIM
SUPPORT**

Visual Evidence for Victims – VEV



Not ready to go to the police?
We record and store evidence of crime
for when you are.

victimsupport.org.uk

What is Visual Evidence for Victims (VEV)?

VEV is a free, confidential service for adults. Our approved agencies can take photographs of injuries and store them securely.

By preserving a record of incidents in this way, we help victims to keep open the option of reporting a crime to the police in the future if **you** decide not to report straight away.

How does VEV work?

Clients will have their VEV photographs taken confidentially, and there will also be a member of staff with them to give emotional support. We will never take photographs without written consent.

VEV agencies may also take photographs of damaged personal items that can be brought to the appointment.

The VEV agency will store these photographs securely until further notice from the client (for up to six years).

Who can use VEV?

VEV will record evidence for any victim of violent crime aged 18 or over and who isn't ready to report to the police.

Can under-18s use VEV?

No, violence against under-18s should be reported to an appropriate authority to safeguard children and young people from harm.

What kind of evidence can VEV record?

VEV can record photographic evidence of visible injuries to people caused by incidents such as assault, domestic violence, sexual violence and hate crime.

We can only record visible evidence such as physical injuries (for example bruises, scratches, cuts or pulled out hair) or damage to personal items that are portable to the appointment.

How does VEV evidence help in criminal cases?

VEV evidence can help support the victim's account of what happened.

How else can VEV evidence be used?

- Civil proceedings.
- New evidence can be captured over time to help victims build a case whilst they prepare to report.

**Please contact Victim Support West Mercia for more information on the VEV project:
01905 726 896**

TrainingWestMercia@victimsupport.org.uk

Is VEV used for medical or forensic evidence?

VEV does not collect forensic evidence – this can only be done by the police or another approved agency using early evidence kits.

We will always encourage our VEV clients to get medical attention when needed. As well as being important for their health, this can also provide more evidence for their case if they decide to report.

VEV and confidentiality?

VEV agencies only store the photographs confidentially. But all agencies still have a duty of care to VEV clients if they feel life is in danger.

How can victims be referred to VEV?

VEV agencies will take referrals through any route, including:

- **self referral** – directly with the victim if they have seen VEV information somewhere or heard about it from someone else
- **referral agencies** – a partner agency which doesn't offer the VEV service directly but can contact one on behalf of the victim
- **VEV agency** – a direct referral by an agency that provides the service and is already supporting the victim.

