

## Question 15

### **Victims of Crime Act - Appointment of a support person during proceeding**

14A. (1) Where a victim is identified as a minor, the Court shall, upon the request by the prosecution or upon an application by any person, appoint a support person, in terms of the Code of Organization and Civil Procedure, to assist the minor throughout the entire court proceedings, as well as for a suitable period of time following the conclusion of the court proceedings, as may be necessary: Provided that in the absence of any such request the court may order such appointment ex officio, as appropriate:

Provided further that the Court shall in the appointment of a support person take into consideration the gender of the minor. (2) For the purposes of this article, the term "support person" refers to a specially trained expert in family and child matters. (3) The functions of the support person shall include, inter alia:

(a) guiding and assisting the minor in a sensitive manner during the judicial proceedings, and if necessary, after the justice process;

(b) the provision of general emotional support to the minor;

(c) advising the Court as to whether therapy or counselling is necessary both during and after the judicial process; (d) liaising with the minor's parents or legal guardians, family members, and advocate, as appropriate; (e) informing the minor about the proceedings at Court and discuss, in a sensitive manner, his role during the proceedings;

(f) advising or requesting the Court on the issuing of protection orders both during and after the judicial process, as appropriate;

(g) monitoring the adherence to Court orders by perpetrators following the conclusion of the judicial proceedings;

(h) monitoring the relationship between the minor and the perpetrators, both during and after the judicial process, as appropriate;

(i) liaising with the appropriate agencies and, or professionals to ensure that the necessary counselling and, or treatment is provided, as appropriate;

(j) advising or requesting the Court to issue any special measures as may be necessary in the minor's best interest.