

Frequently Asked Questions



OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES
Focusing on a brighter future

VICTIM COMPENSATION PROCESS

The Office of Victim Services (OVS), **Victim Compensation Program** has compassionate staff to help crime victims and their families with the victim compensation process. These Frequently Asked Questions will help you understand this process and how long the process may take.

It is important that you let OVS staff know if your contact information changes. If we cannot reach you, your claim may be closed or you may miss important deadlines set by state law.

The Victim Compensation Program cannot pay for lost, stolen, or damaged property, and/or pain and suffering.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER MY APPLICATION IS RECEIVED BY OVS?

OVS will mail a packet of information to you within 10 days after receiving your application. The packet has information on the Victim Compensation Program and other OVS programs that may be helpful to you, a victim rights booklet, a file folder for you to keep documents and information about your claim, and the name of your claims examiner.

Your claims examiner will review your application for the information needed to help decide if your claim is eligible for victim compensation. The claims examiner may contact the police, medical and mental health providers, your employer, insurance companies, and other agencies for more information. You may also be asked to provide documentation like pharmacy receipts and insurance information.

The review of the application is the longest part of the process. This process usually takes 4 months but can take more time, if your claims examiner is unable to get the police report or other information that is needed.

The Victim Compensation Program can only pay crime-related expenses that are not covered or eligible to be covered by insurance or other financial resources.

HOW WILL I KNOW IF I AM ELIGIBLE FOR VICTIM COMPENSATION?

You will receive a determination letter in the mail that explains if your claim is or is not eligible for victim compensation. If your claim is eligible, the letter will list the bills that will be paid and who will receive payment. Payments may be made directly to you and to your service providers. If you have an attorney representing you on your claim for victim compensation, your attorney will receive the payment and be responsible for paying the bills listed on the letter. Your attorney has the right by state law to keep 15% of the compensation ordered for his or her services.

To accept the compensation, you must sign and date the Claim of Compensation form that came with the determination letter and send it to OVS within 45 days from the date of the determination. After this form is received by OVS, it usually takes 4 to 6 weeks for a check to be mailed from the State Comptroller's Office.

WHAT IF I DON'T AGREE WITH THE OVS DETERMINATION?

You have a right by state law to request a review of the OVS determination by a Victim Compensation Commissioner. You will need to fill out the Request for Review form that was sent with the determination letter and send it to OVS within 30 days from the date of the determination. It can take 1 to 2 months for your review to be held. OVS will send the Commissioner's decision within 120 days from the date the Commissioner closes the review hearing.



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