**Crime Victim’s Compensation Fact Sheet**

Experiencing violence or abuse is traumatic and stressful and the recovery process can be extensive and challenging. Individual’s need time and space to focus on this healing without additional financial concerns that can result from the violence or abuse, including costs of medical care, counseling or lost income. Crime Victim’s Compensation Programs have been developed to help aid victims with these expenses in the aftermath of a crime. Each state operates their own program designed to compensate certain costs resulting from violent crimes. These programs are used to compensate nearly 200,000 crime victims with almost $450 million annually[[1]](#footnote-1).

**Background[[2]](#footnote-2)**

Crimes Victims programs began as state-run programs, with the first in California with other states soon following with their own programs. In 1984 the Victims of Crime Act passed federally and created the national Crime Victims Fund, which is the leading funding source for victim’s services in the county. These funds come primarily through offenders, not from taxpayers. Primary revenue sources include criminal fines, forfeited appearance bonds, forfeitures of collateral profits from crimes, and donations.

**Expenses Covered**

States all reimburse at different rates for different expenses but all programs generally cover the following expenses:

* Medical costs (including sexual assault exams)
* Mental health counseling
* Funeral and burial costs
* Crime scene clean-up
* Lost wages or loss of support
* Certain states may also compensate for other expenses including dental services or prosthetics

**Eligibility Requirements**

States again have differing definitions of timelines but all have a similar set of criteria for eligibility including:

* Prompt reporting of the crime to law enforcement
* Cooperation with police prosecutors (exceptions are occasionally made for child victims)
* Submit a timely victim compensation application
* Have a cost or loss not covered by insurance or another benefit program
* Not have committed a criminal or wrongful act that caused or contributed to the crime

**How to apply**

The victim of the crime should apply for compensation in the state where the crime occurred, regardless of residency. Applications can be found from the compensation program in your state, the police, prosecutors or victim’s services agencies.

**As these programs are state run, each state has different eligibility requirements and benefits, so it is important to check what the details of the program are in your state. To find information about the program in your state visit:** [**www.nacvcb.org**](http://www.nacvcb.org)

1. National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards. Crime Victims Compensation: An Overview. Retrieved: May 2015. Available at http://www.nacvcb.org/index.asp?bid=14 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Office for Victims of Crime. Crime Victims Fund Fact Sheet. June 2013. Available at <http://ojp.gov/ovc/pubs/crimevictimsfundfs.intro.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)