

# Quick Reference Guide to Office of Victim Services Compensation Program

## Who May Qualify?

- Victim of a personal injury crime, including a victim of a person driving drunk, under the influence, leaving the scene (hit and run), or purposely using a vehicle to hurt the victim
- Dependent or the legal designated decision maker of a homicide victim
- A Relative\* of a sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse, or homicide victim
- Child who witnesses domestic violence and is not related to the victim (*parent or legal guardian must file an application for a minor child (under the age of 18)*)
- Person who paid some or all of the funeral expenses for a homicide victim
- Person who paid some or all of the crime scene clean-up
- Person who missed time from work to provide care to a personal injury victim
- Person who is blind or has a disability and owns or keeps a guide or assistance dog that was injured during a crime
- Please note, that as of August 2016 fiancé's of murder victims are not eligible for Compensation. However, any children of the decedent are eligible even if the couple was not married.

## Who Does Not Qualify?

- A victim whose own misconduct contributed to the crime.
- A victim who suffered property loss or damage without bodily injury.
- A victim engaged in illegal conduct at the time of the crime.
- The offender, who might be unjustly enriched by the award.

## Eligibility Requirements

- You were injured during a crime or injured while helping police during a crime and the crime happened in
  - Connecticut
  - a United States territory that does not have a victim compensation program and you were a resident of Connecticut at the time of the crime
  - Outside the United States, and you were a victim of international terrorism and a resident of Connecticut at the time of the crime
- You did not cause the crime or do anything illegal;
- The crime was reported to the police within 5 days or within 5 days of when a report could reasonably be made
- You are a sexual assault victim and told a medical or mental health provider or an advocate about the sexual assault or you went to a health care facility to have a sexual assault forensic exam done
- You are filing the application within 2 years of the date of the personal injury or death (*a waiver form is available*)
- You must cooperate with the police in their investigation
- You must cooperate with the Victim Compensation Program by providing the information requested.

Revised November 2016

This information is from an Office of Victim Services publication.

\*All references to "Relative" refer to this definition found in Connecticut General Statutes § 54-201(4) means a person's spouse, parent, grandparent, stepparent, child, including a natural born child, stepchild and adopted child, grandchild, brother, sister, half-brother or half-sister or a parent of a person's spouse

## **What Expenses May Be Paid?**

### **Personal Injury (up to \$15,000)**

- Medical, dental, counseling, and prescription expenses
- Counseling for relatives of sexual assault, domestic violence, and child abuse victims
- Cosmetic and plastic surgery
- Medical-related special needs, such as medical equipment (wheelchair) and; modification to a home or vehicle (ramp)
- Lost wages (does not include going to court)
- Crime scene clean-up (up to \$1,000)

### **Survivor Benefits (up to \$25,000)**

- Funeral (up to \$5,000) to any person who paid some or all of the expenses
- Loss of support for dependents and legal designated decision makers
- Lost wages and mileage for relatives and legal designated decision makers to attend criminal court proceedings
- Counseling for relatives and legal designated decision makers
- Crime scene clean-up (up to \$1,000)

### **Non-relative Child Witness of Domestic Violence (up to \$2,000)**

- Counseling

## **What Expenses Are Not Covered?**

- Property loss or damage
- Pain and suffering (*physical and emotional stress*)
- Household living expenses
- Mileage to doctor appointments
- Attorney's fees. (*if an attorney files a victim compensation application for you, the Program allows attorney fees of no more than 15% of the compensation awarded.*)

## **What is the Maximum Award?**

- \$25,000 for Survivor Benefits and \$25,000 for Personal Injury. However, please keep in mind that this is a reimbursement fund so a check will not be issued. Only expenses that are directly paid for, by the family or individual, will be reimbursed with this money. Any expenses covered by sources such as, Worker's Compensation, Medicaid, Medicare, or Health Insurance, will not be reimbursed.

Revised November 2016

This information is from an Office of Victim Services publication.

\*All references to "Relative" refer to this definition found in Connecticut General Statutes § 54-201(4) means a person's spouse, parent, grandparent, stepparent, child, including a natural born child, stepchild and adopted child, grandchild, brother, sister, half-brother or half-sister or a parent of a person's spouse

## Do I Have to Pay the Office of Victim Services Back?

- If you receive money from any other financial resources because of the crime, the Victim Compensation Program by state law is entitled to receive back 2/3 of the amount of victim compensation paid. (Section 54-212 of the Connecticut General Statutes)
  - For example, if the Victim Compensation Program compensated you \$15,000 and you receive a \$40,000 insurance settlement for the same expenses paid by the Program, the Program is entitled to receive \$10,000 from your settlement

## *Examples of other financial resources include:*

- Private or public health insurance
- Auto and homeowner's insurance
- Insurance or civil lawsuit settlements
- Workers' compensation
- Any monies collected for Funeral Expenses through crowdfunding websites (GoFundMe, YouCaring, etc.)

## How Long Will It Take?

- Decisions are made when all required information is received. Therefore, time varies from case to case. On average, it will take 3-4 months. You will receive a letter of Determination after a decision is made. If you are denied you can file an appeal within 30 days of the decision.

## How Long Do I Have to File?

- Applications need to be filed two years after the date of the crime.
- A waiver of the two-year requirement is available for certain circumstances. However, not knowing about the Compensation Fund is not accepted as a reason for the waiver.

## How Do I Apply?

- Call the Office of Victim Services at 1.888.286.7347 or download the application at [www.jud.ct.gov/crimevictim](http://www.jud.ct.gov/crimevictim)
- Please note that Survivors of Homicide is not in charge of the Compensation Program. It is run by the Office of Victim Services. While we are **more than happy** to help you fill out the Application, any questions regarding the status of your application should be referred to OVS.

Revised November 2016

This information is from an Office of Victim Services publication.

\*All references to "Relative" refer to this definition found in Connecticut General Statutes § 54-201(4) means a person's spouse, parent, grandparent, stepparent, child, including a natural born child, stepchild and adopted child, grandchild, brother, sister, half-brother or half-sister or a parent of a person's spouse