



OVC Fact Sheet

APRIL 2002

WHAT YOU CAN DO IF YOU ARE A VICTIM OF CRIME

I don't believe half of the American population or even a small portion knows what can happen to you when you are a victim of a crime going through the criminal justice process.

—A crime victim, quoted in *New Directions from the Field: Victims' Rights and Services for the 21st Century*, 1998

Crime victimization is a frightening and unsettling experience for the millions of Americans whose lives it touches each year. As recently as 1972, almost no services were available to help crime victims or their survivors repair the damage to their lives and property or contend with the traumatic and frustrating ordeal of prosecuting the offender. Today, however, due largely to the dedicated efforts of advocates, lawmakers, and crime victims, a tremendous range of services and resources is available to help victims obtain justice and heal. The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), the U.S. Department of Justice agency that advocates for the fair treatment of crime victims, wants you to know that if you or someone you love is a victim of crime—you have rights, you can get help, and you can work for positive change.

You Have Rights

A majority of states have amended their constitutions to guarantee certain rights for crime victims. Typically, these include the following fundamental rights:

- The right to notification of all court proceedings related to the offense.
- The right to be reasonably protected from the accused offender.
- The right to have input at sentencing (in the form of a victim impact statement).
- The right to information about the conviction, sentencing, imprisonment, and release of the offender.
- The right to an order of restitution from the convicted offender.
- The right to notice of these rights.
- The right to enforce these rights.

If you are a victim of or witness to a crime, these rights apply to you. You may obtain information about these rights through your local victim/witness assistance program (usually located in the

prosecutor's office), your state Attorney General's Office, or U.S. Attorneys' Offices.

You Can Get Help

Literally thousands of programs that provide services and sanctuary to crime victims exist throughout the United States. These programs are within state government agencies and private nonprofit or charitable organizations. They provide two general types of services—compensation and assistance. Crime victim compensation programs reimburse victims of crime occurring within the state (including victims of federal crimes) for crime-related expenses. Crimes covered include violent crimes such as homicide, rape, drunk driving, domestic violence, and child sexual abuse and neglect. Expenses covered are medical costs, mental health counseling, funeral and burial costs, and lost wages or loss of support. Crime victim assistance programs provide a range of services, including crisis intervention, counseling, emergency shelter, criminal justice advocacy, and emergency transportation. Although compensation and assistance

are provided most often to individuals, in certain instances, entire communities may be eligible to receive assistance for a multiple victimization. Usually, you can obtain information about compensation and assistance through your local prosecutor's office. You also may receive it from your local law enforcement agency when you report an offense.

The Crime Victims Fund

Financial support for many of these programs is provided through the Crime Victims Fund, which is administered by OVC. Established by the Victims of Crime Act of 1984, the Fund is a major funding source for victim services throughout the country. Millions of dollars have been deposited into the Fund each year from criminal fines, forfeited bail bonds, penalties, and special assessments collected by U.S. Attorneys' Offices, U.S. federal courts, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons. To date, all Fund dollars have come from offenders convicted of federal crimes, not from taxpayers. However, new legislation has expanded the possible sources of Fund deposits. The recently passed (October 2001) Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required To Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act (USA PATRIOT Act) provides authority for the deposit of gifts, bequests, or donations from private entities into the Fund. Beginning in fiscal year 2002, deposits into the Fund may come from criminal fines, penalties, special assessments, gifts, bequests, or donations from private entities.

You Can Work for Positive Change

Progress achieved in improving the treatment of crime victims is due

largely to the efforts of thousands of individuals who have turned their victimization into a force for positive change. Victims and survivors of victims of homicide, rape, child abuse, domestic violence, and other serious offenses have transformed their experience into a vehicle for ensuring that victims of similar types of crime are afforded true justice, meaningful assistance, and compassionate treatment before the law. Many victims and survivors volunteer their time and resources toward creating and staffing programs, conducting legislative advocacy, working in shelters, answering crisis hotlines, and speaking on victim impact panels. Similar opportunities exist in virtually every community. Working for positive change helps ensure that this progress is not lost and that new ground is broken to gain greater justice and healing for all victims of crime.

National Victim Organizations Stand Ready To Assist You

If you are a crime victim and are seeking information or referrals on victims' rights, services, and criminal justice resources, the following organizations may help you:

Childhelp USA/Forrester National Child Abuse Hotline
1-800-422-4453

Family Violence Prevention Fund/Health Resource Center
1-800-313-1310

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)
1-800-438-6233

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)
1-800-843-5678

National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC)
1-800-394-2255

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information
1-800-729-6686

National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information
1-800-394-3366

National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)
1-800-851-3420

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-7233

National Fraud Information Hotline
1-800-876-7060

National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA)
1-800-879-6682

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
1-800-537-2238

National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C)
1-888-693-2874

Office for Victims of Crime Resource Center (OVCRC)
1-800-627-6872
(TTY 1-877-712-9279)

Parents of Murdered Children (POMC)
1-888-818-7662

Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)
1-800-656-4673

State Compensation and Assistance Programs in the United States and U.S. Territories

Alabama

Victim Compensation

334-242-4007

Fax: 334-353-1401

Web site: www.agencies.state.al.us/crimevictims

Victim Assistance

334-242-5811

Fax: 334-242-0712

Web site: www.ago.state.al.us/victim.cfm

Alaska

Victim Compensation

907-465-3040

Fax: 907-465-2379

Web site: www.dps.state.ak.us/vccb/htm

Victim Assistance

907-465-4356

Fax: 907-465-3627

Web site: www.dps.state.ak.us/cdvsa/index.htm

American Samoa

Victim Assistance

011-684-633-5221

Fax: 011-684-633-2269

E-mail: Leleaga L. at llevalasi@yahoo.com

Arizona

Victim Compensation

602-230-0252

Fax: 602-728-0752

Web site: www.azvictims.com

Victim Assistance

602-223-2465

Fax: 602-223-2943

Web site: www.acjc.state.az.us/rules.html

Arkansas

Victim Compensation

501-682-1323

Fax: 501-682-5313

Web site: www.ag.state.ar.us

Victim Assistance

501-682-1074

Fax: 501-682-5206

Web site: www.state.ar.us/dfa/intergovernmental

California

Victim Compensation

916-323-3432

Fax: 916-327-2933

Web site: www.boc.ca.gov

Victim Assistance

916-324-9140

Fax: 916-324-8554

Web site: www.ocjp.ca.gov/programs.htm

Colorado

Victim Compensation

303-239-4442

Fax: 303-239-4411

Web site: www.cdpsweb.state.co.us/ovp/comp.htm

Victim Assistance

303-239-4429

Fax: 303-239-4411

Web site: www.cdpsweb.state.co.us/ovp/voca.htm

Connecticut

Victim Compensation

860-747-6070

Fax: 860-747-6428

Web site: www.jud.state.ct.us

Victim Assistance

860-747-6070

Fax: 860-747-6428

Web site: www.jud.state.ct.us

Delaware

Victim Compensation

302-995-8383

Fax: 302-995-8387

Web site: courts.state.de.us/vccb

Victim Assistance

302-577-8693

Fax: 302-577-3440

Web site: www.state.de.us/cjc/index.html

District of Columbia

Victim Compensation

202-879-4216

Fax: 202-879-4230

Web site: www.dcbcr.org/dcsc/victim.html

Victim Assistance

202-727-6537

Fax: 202-727-1617

E-mail: Brenda R. at Brenda.Ross@dc.gov

Florida

Victim Compensation

850-414-3300

Fax: 850-487-1595

Web site: legal.firn.edu/victims/compensation.html

Victim Assistance

850-414-3300

Fax: 850-487-3013

Web site: legal.firn.edu/victims/index.html

Georgia

Victim Compensation

404-559-4949

Fax: 404-559-4960

Web site: www.ganet.org/cjcc

Victim Assistance

404-559-4949

Fax: 404-559-4960

Web site: www.ganet.org/cjcc

Guam

Victim Compensation

9-1-671-475-3324, ext. 285

Fax: 9-1-671-472-2493

Victim Assistance

9-1-671-475-3324, ext. 285

Fax: 9-1-671-472-2493

Web site: www.justice.gov.gu/dol/agpro1a.htm

State Compensation and Assistance Programs in the United States and U.S. Territories (continued)

Hawaii

Victim Compensation

808-587-1143

Fax: 808-587-1146

Web site: www.cpja.ag.state.hi.us

Victim Assistance

808-586-1152

Fax: 808-586-1373

Web site: www.cpja.ag.state.hi.us

Idaho

Victim Compensation

208-334-6000

Fax: 208-334-5145

Web site: www2.state.id.us/iic/crimevictims.htm

Victim Assistance

208-334-5580

Fax: 208-332-7353

Web site: www2.state.id.us/crimevictim

Illinois

Victim Compensation

312-814-2518

Fax: 312-814-5079

Web site: www.ag.state.il.us/crimevictims/crime.htm

Victim Assistance

312-793-8550

Fax: 312-793-8422

Web site: www.icjia.state.il.us

Indiana

Victim Compensation

317-232-2560

Fax: 317-232-4979

Web site: www.state.in.us/cji

Victim Assistance

317-232-2560

Fax: 317-232-4979

Web site: www.state.in.us/cji

Iowa

Victim Compensation

515-281-5044

Fax: 515-281-8199

Web site: www.state.ia.us/government/ag/cva.html

Victim Assistance

515-281-5044

Fax: 515-281-8199

Web site: www.state.ia.us/government/ag/cva.html

Kansas

Victim Compensation

785-296-2359

Fax: 785-296-0652

Web site: www.ink.org/public/ksag

Victim Assistance

785-296-2215

Fax: 785-296-6296

Web site: www.ink.org/public/ksag

Kentucky

Victim Compensation

502-564-7986

Fax: 502-573-4817

Web site: www.state.ky.us/agencies/cppr/cvcb

Victim Assistance

502-564-3251

Fax: 502-564-5244

Web site: www.law.state.ky.us/victims/rights.htm

Louisiana

Victim Compensation

225-925-1997

Fax: 225-925-1998

Web site: www.cole.state.la.us/cvr.htm

Victim Assistance

225-925-1757

Fax: 225-925-1998

Web site: www.cole.state.la.us/cva.htm

Maine

Victim Compensation

207-626-8800

Fax: 207-624-7730

Web site: www.state.me.us/ag/victim.htm

Victim Assistance

207-287-2736

Fax: 207-626-5555

E-mail: Jeannette T. at

jeannette.c.talbot@state.me.us

Maryland

Victim Compensation

410-585-3331

Fax: 410-764-3815

Web site: www.dpscs.state.md.us/cicb

Victim Assistance

410-767-7176

Fax: 410-333-0256

Web site: www.dhr.state.md.us/victim

Massachusetts

Victim Compensation

617-727-2200

Fax: 617-367-3906

Web site: www.ago.state.ma.us/videfault.asp

Victim Assistance

617-727-5200

Fax: 617-727-6552

Web site: www.ago.state.ma.us/videfault.asp

Michigan

Victim Compensation

517-334-9941

Fax: 517-241-2769

Web site: www.mdch.state.mi.us/cv/index.htm

Victim Assistance

517-334-9180

Fax: 517-241-2769

Web site: www.mdch.state.mi.us/cv/index.htm

State Compensation and Assistance Programs in the United States and U.S. Territories (continued)

Minnesota

Victim Compensation

651-205-4826

Fax: 651-296-5787

Web site: www.dps.state.mn.us/mccvs/reparations/reparations%20front%20page.htm

Victim Assistance

651-282-6256

Fax: 651-205-4808

Web site: www.dps.state.mn.us/mccvs

Mississippi

Victim Compensation

601-359-6766

Fax: 601-359-3262

Web site: www.dfa.state.ms.us/cvcomp.html

Victim Assistance

601-987-4990

Fax: 601-987-4154

E-mail: Charles S. at cstamps@dps.state.ms.us

Missouri

Victim Compensation

573-526-3510

Fax: 573-526-4940

Web site: www.dolir.state.mo.us/wc/dolir6f.htm

Victim Assistance

573-751-4905

Fax: 573-751-5399

Web site: mova.missouri.org

Montana

Victim Compensation

406-444-3653

Fax: 406-444-4722

Web site: www.doj.state.mt.us/ago/victimservices/cvindex.htm

Victim Assistance

406-444-3604

Fax: 406-444-4722

Web site: www.mbcc.state.mt.us

Nebraska

Victim Compensation

402-471-2194

Fax: 402-471-2837

Web site: www.nol.org/home/crimecom/Administration/cvrbochure.htm

Victim Assistance

402-471-2194

Fax: 402-471-2837

Web site: www.nol.org/home/crimecom/Functions.htm#Crime#Victim#Assistance#Programs

Nevada

Victim Compensation

702-486-2740

Fax: 702-486-2555

E-mail: Roy L. at rleo@govmail.state.nv.us

Victim Assistance

775-684-4449

Fax: 775-688-1616

E-mail: Chris G. at cgraham@govmail.state.nv.us

New Hampshire

Victim Compensation

603-271-1284

Fax: 603-271-2110

Web site: www.state.nh.us/nhdoj/victimwitness/victserviceindex.html

Victim Assistance

603-271-3671

Fax: 603-271-2110

Web site: www.state.nh.us/nhdoj/victimwitness/victserviceindex.html

New Jersey

Victim Compensation

973-648-2107

Fax: 973-648-7031

Web site: www.state.nj.us/victims/VCCBDIR.HTM

Victim Assistance

609-588-4698

Fax: 609-588-7890

Web site: www.state.nj.us/lps/dcj/victimwitness/home.htm

New Mexico

Victim Compensation

505-841-9432

Fax: 505-841-9437

Web site: www.state.nm.us/cvrc

Victim Assistance

505-841-9432

Fax: 505-841-9437

Web site: www.state.nm.us/cvrc

New York

Victim Compensation

518-457-8063

Fax: 518-457-8658

Web site: www.cvb.state.ny.us

Victim Assistance

518-485-2763

Fax: 518-457-8658

Web site: www.cvb.state.ny.us

North Carolina

Victim Compensation

919-733-7974

Fax: 919-715-4209

Web site: www.nccrimecontrol.org/vjs/cvcp0.htm

Victim Assistance

919-733-4564

Fax: 919-733-4625

Web site: www.gcc.state.nc.us

North Dakota

Victim Compensation

701-328-6193

Fax: 701-328-6186

Web site: www.state.nd.us/docr/field_services/victims.htm

Victim Assistance

701-328-6193

Fax: 701-328-6186

Web site: www.state.nd.us/docr/field_services/victimserviceprogram.htm

Northern Mariana Islands

Victim Assistance

9-1-670-664-4457

Fax: 9-1-670-664-4560

Web site: www.cjpa.gov.mp/programs.htm

State Compensation and Assistance Programs in the United States and U.S. Territories (continued)

Ohio

Victim Compensation

614-466-5610

Fax: 614-995-5412

Web site: www.ag.state.oh.us/crimevic/cvcomps.htm

Victim Assistance

614-644-5610

Fax: 614-752-2732

Web site: www.ag.state.oh.us/crimevic/cvassist.htm

Oklahoma

Victim Compensation

405-264-5006

Fax: 405-264-5097

Web site: www.odawan.net

Victim Assistance

1-800-745-6098

Fax: 405-264-5097

Web site: www.odawan.net

Oregon

Victim Compensation

503-378-5348

Fax: 503-378-5738

Web site: www.doj.state.or.us/CrimeV/comp.htm

Victim Assistance

503-378-5348

Fax: 503-378-5738

Web site: www.doj.state.or.us/CrimeV/welcome1.htm

Pennsylvania

Victim Compensation

717-787-2040

Fax: 717-783-7713

Web site: www.pccd.state.pa.us

Victim Assistance

717-787-2040

Fax: 717-783-7713

Web site: www.pccd.state.pa.us

Puerto Rico

Victim Compensation

787-724-2110

Fax: 787-724-0928

Victim Assistance

787-725-0335

Fax: 787-721-7280

E-mail: [Luis G. at Lgozalez@justicia.prstar.net](mailto:Luis.G.at.Lgozalez@justicia.prstar.net)

Rhode Island

Victim Compensation

401-222-2287

Fax: 401-222-2212

Web site: www.state.ri.us/treas/vcfund.htm

Victim Assistance

401-222-2620

Fax: 401-222-1294

Web site: www.rijustice.state.ri.us/vca.htm

South Carolina

Victim Compensation

803-734-1930

Fax: 803-734-1708

Web site: www.govoepp.state.sc.us/sova/cvcomp.htm

Victim Assistance

803-896-7896

Fax: 803-896-8714

Web site: www.govoepp.state.sc.us/sova/index.htm

South Dakota

Victim Compensation

605-773-3656

Fax: 605-773-6834

Web site: www.state.sd.us/social/cvc/index.htm

Victim Assistance

605-773-4330

Fax: 605-773-6834

Web site: www.state.sd.us/social/asa/victims/domesticabuse/index.htm

Tennessee

Victim Compensation

615-741-2734

Fax: 615-532-4979

Web site: www.treasury.state.tn.us/injury.html

Victim Assistance

615-741-8277

Fax: 615-532-2989

Web site: www.state.tn.us/finance/rds/ocjp.html

Texas

Victim Compensation

512-936-1200

Fax: 512-320-8270

Web site: www.oag.state.tx.us/victims/victims.htm

Victim Assistance

512-463-1929

Fax: 512-475-2440

Web site: www.governor.state.tx.us/the_office/cjd/cjdmain.htm

U.S. Virgin Islands

Victim Compensation

340-774-1166

Fax: 340-774-3466

Victim Assistance

340-774-6400

Fax: 340-776-3317

E-mail: [R. Maria Brady at crimevictims@islands.vi](mailto:R.MariaBrady@crimevictims@islands.vi)

Utah

Victim Compensation

801-238-2360

Fax: 801-533-4127

Web site: www.crimevictim.utah.gov/about.htm

Victim Assistance

801-238-2360

Fax: 801-533-4127

Web site: www.crimevictim.utah.gov/about.htm

State Compensation and Assistance Programs in the United States and U.S. Territories (continued)

Vermont

Victim Compensation

802-241-1250

Fax: 802-241-1253

Web site: www.ccvs.state.vt.us

Victim Assistance

802-241-1250

Fax: 802-241-1253

Web site: www.ccvs.state.vt.us

Virginia

Victim Compensation

804-378-3434

Fax: 804-378-4390

Web site: www.vwc.state.va.us/cicf/cicf_start_page.htm

Victim Assistance

804-786-4000

Fax: 804-786-7980

Web site: www.dcjs.state.va.us

Washington

Victim Compensation

360-902-5340

Fax: 360-902-5333

Web site: www.lni.wa.gov/insurance/cvc.htm

Victim Assistance

206-923-4910

Fax: 206-923-4899

E-mail: Susan H. at hsus300@dshs.wa.gov

West Virginia

Victim Compensation

304-347-4850

Fax: 304-347-4915

Web site: www.legis.state.wv.us/joint/court/victims/main.html

Victim Assistance

304-558-8814

Fax: 304-558-0391

Web site: www.state.wv.us/wvdoc/victimservices.htm

Wisconsin

Victim Compensation

608-266-6470

Fax: 608-264-6368

Web site: www.doj.state.wi.us/cvs/programs/cvc.asp

Victim Assistance

608-267-2251

Fax: 608-264-6368

Web site: www.doj.state.wi.us/cvs/programs/vw.asp

Wyoming

Victim Compensation

307-777-7200

Fax: 307-777-6863

Web site: www.vssi.state.wy.us

Victim Assistance

307-777-7200

Fax: 307-777-6863

Web site: www.vssi.state.wy.us

Note: The agencies responsible for these programs vary from state to state.

For More Information

For more information about the Office for Victims of Crime, please contact

Office for Victims of Crime
U.S. Department of Justice
810 Seventh Street NW., Eighth Floor
Washington, DC 20531
202-307-5983
Fax: 202-514-6383
Web site: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc

For copies of this fact sheet, other OVC publications, or information on

additional victim-related resources, please contact

Office for Victims of Crime Resource Center (OVCRC)
P.O. Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
1-800-627-6872 or 301-519-5500
(TTY 1-877-712-9279)
Web site: www.ncjrs.org
E-mail: askovc@ojp.usdoj.gov

Or order OVC publications online at www.puborder.ncjrs.org.

The Office for Victims of Crime is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

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