

## ***Crime victims have rights, too!***

Criminal defendants are not the only individuals in the legal system who have rights.

In fact, crime victims have a variety of specific rights established under a state law known as the "Crime Victims Act."

You have the right to:

- ▶ Information on services available to crime victims.
- ▶ Notification of important developments in your case.
- ▶ Have someone go with you to hearings about your case.
- ▶ Give a statement on the impact the crime had on you and your family.
- ▶ Help in filing for victim compensation benefits.
- ▶ Have any property taken returned to you.

*Contact a victim service agency or District Attorney's Office for more information.*

The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency cares about crime victims and their families.

For more information on our services, please contact:

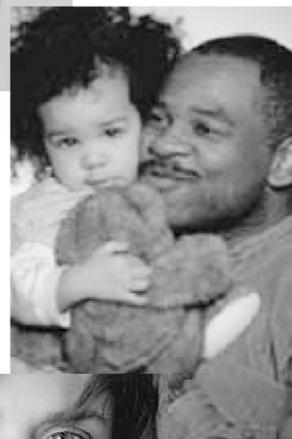
Victims Compensation  
Assistance Program  
Office of Victims' Services  
Pennsylvania Commission  
on Crime and Delinquency  
P.O. Box 1167  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania  
17108-1167

By telephone  
(800) 233-2339  
or  
(717) 783-5153  
Fax (717) 787-4306

**[www.pacrimevictims.org](http://www.pacrimevictims.org)**



## ***Financial Assistance for Victims of Crime***



## ***Crime victims have a place to turn for help***

The Victims Compensation Assistance Program helps victims and their families ease the financial burdens they may face as a result of crime.

Although compensation will not erase the fact that a crime has occurred, it can help victims to begin the healing and recovery process.

This brochure provides a brief overview of the Victims Compensation Assistance Program. It is not intended to serve as a complete list of services that are available to crime victims.

There may be factors other than those listed in this brochure that may determine whether you qualify for compensation.

For complete details, please contact your local victim service agency, or the Victims Compensation Assistance Program at 1-800-233-2339.

## ***Questions and answers about Victims Compensation***

### ***Who is eligible?***

You may be eligible if...

- ▶ The crime occurred in Pennsylvania
- ▶ And the crime was reported to law enforcement **OR** a Protection from Abuse Order (PFA) was filed.

### ***How long do I have to file?***

The claim must be filed, in most cases, within two years of the date of the crime.

There are also exceptions when the victim is a child.

### ***Is anyone other than the victim eligible?***

Yes. In certain circumstances, others (including family members) may be eligible for compensation.

### ***Which types of expenses may be covered?***

- ▶ Medical expenses
- ▶ Counseling expenses
- ▶ Loss of earnings
- ▶ Loss of support
- ▶ Relocation expenses
- ▶ Funeral expenses
- ▶ Crime-scene Cleanup
- ▶ Money stolen or defrauded from individuals on a fixed income, such as Social Security or a pension.

### ***Must someone be arrested or convicted before I may apply?***

No, but you must cooperate with the law enforcement authorities who are handling your case.

### ***Is there a limit on total compensation?***

Yes, There are different limits for the various types of expenses covered by the Program.

### ***Where can I obtain a claim form?***

You may request a claim form by calling 1-800-233-2339 or through your local police department, county district attorney's office, or local victim service programs. Claim forms are also available at [www.pacrimevictims.org](http://www.pacrimevictims.org) by clicking on the "Financial Help" button.

### ***How will my claim be considered?***

After our staff carefully reviews your application, you will be notified of a decision as quickly as possible. If your claim is denied, the reason will be explained to you, as well as the appeal procedure.

### ***How long will it take for my claim to be processed?***

Most claims are processed within two months -- but if your claim is complex, it may take longer. We strive to work as quickly as possible.