



### **What if I need compensation right away?**

In limited cases, you may ask for an emergency award, up to \$2,500.

### **What if I move after filing a claim?**

Send a letter with your new address, phone number(s) and email address, if you have one, to:

New York State Office of Victim Services  
Alfred E. Smith State Office Building  
80 South Swan St., Second Floor  
Albany, New York 12210

You may also submit your signed change of address request online through the Victim Service Portal: [ovs.ny.gov](https://ovs.ny.gov).

### **Where can I get more information or help in my community?**

OVS funds victim assistance programs across New York State. These programs can assist you with filing your claim with OVS and can provide immediate help, including access to counseling, legal advice and emergency shelter, among other services.

For more information, visit [ovs.ny.gov](https://ovs.ny.gov) or call **800-247-8035** to learn more.

### **As a victim of crime in New York State you should know:**

- You can get a free copy of the police report (New York State Executive Law §646).
- You are protected by law from threats or intimidation from the suspect or the suspect's family. Local police departments and district attorneys (DAs) can explain these laws to you.
- You have a right to be involved in certain stages of the criminal justice process. Local police departments and DAs can explain your role in the criminal justice process, the important steps in the process, and how you can get information about those steps.
- You have the right to make a statement at the time of the defendant's sentencing, if you are the victim of a felony.
- You have the right to be notified of the defendant's incarceration status. You can call VINE at 888-846-3469 to provide your contact information.

*For more detailed information on your rights as a crime victim, please refer to the publication "The Rights of Crime Victims in New York State," which is available at [ovs.ny.gov](https://ovs.ny.gov).*



# **Every Crime Victim Matters**

## **A Guide To Crime Victims' Compensation In New York State**

**ovs.ny.gov**  
**800-247-8035**



Office of  
Victim Services

### ***How do I apply for compensation?***

- Complete the OVS application
- Meet the eligibility requirements
- Have a current or future eligible out-of-pocket loss as a result of the crime

### ***Who may be eligible for compensation?***

- The victim must be an innocent victim of the crime
- Victims of crime who were physically injured as a result of the crime
- Victims of crime who are under 18, 60 and over, or disabled, who were not physically injured
- Certain relatives, including surviving spouse, grandparent, parent, stepparent, guardian, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, child, stepchild, grandchild, or any other person dependent for his or her principal support upon the victim of a crime who died as a direct result of such crime
- A surviving spouse, grandparent, parent, stepparent, guardian, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, child, stepchild, or grandchild of a victim of a crime who died as a direct result of such crime and where such crime occurred in the residence shared by such family member or members and the victim
- Individuals who paid for or incurred burial costs for an innocent crime victim
- Child victims, a child who witnesses a crime, and the child's parent, stepparent, grandparent, guardian, brother, sister, stepbrother or stepsister
- Victims of certain menacing, unlawful imprisonment, kidnapping, criminal mischief, robbery, criminal obstruction of breathing or blood circulation, harassment, aggravated harassment, criminal contempt, stalking, or hate crime charges who have not been physically injured
- Vulnerable elderly, incompetent, or physically disabled persons who cannot care for themselves
- Certain victims of labor trafficking or sex trafficking
- Victims of terrorist acts outside of the United States who are residents of New York State
- Victims of frivolous lawsuits brought by individuals who committed crimes against the victims

### ***What other steps must I take to be eligible?***

- Report the crime within one week to police or another criminal justice agency
- File a claim with OVS within one year of the crime
- If late with either crime reporting or claim filing, justify the delay in writing
- Cooperate with police, the district attorney's office and OVS

### ***What kind of expenses may I be eligible for?***

OVS offers compensation related to: personal injury, death and loss of essential personal property. The specific expenses OVS may cover include:

- Medical and counseling expenses
- Loss or damage of essential personal property (up to \$500)
- Burial/funeral expenses (up to \$6,000)
- Lost wages, savings, or lost support, including lost wages of parents if a child victim is hospitalized (up to \$30,000)
- Transportation (necessary court appearances for prosecution)
- Occupational/vocational rehabilitation
- Use of shelters by domestic violence victims and their children
- Crime scene clean-up (up to \$2,500)
- Good Samaritan property losses (up to \$5,000)
- Moving expenses (up to \$2,500)

### ***What if my property was lost, damaged or destroyed because of the crime?***

- If you are under 18, 60 or over, disabled or were injured, you may apply for benefits to repair or replace your essential personal property lost, damaged or destroyed as the direct result of a crime that was not covered by any other resource
- Essential means necessary for your health, safety and welfare, such as eyeglasses and clothing

### ***How do I obtain an application?***

- Visit ovs.ny.gov to file a claim online
- Contact any victim assistance program near you; an advocate can help you file an application
- Obtain an application from any police department or hospital emergency room

### ***What other documents does OVS need from me?***

Depending on the type of claim, you may need to provide copies of some or all of the following when you file your application online or via surface mail:

- Police reports
- Insurance cards
- Receipts for essential personal property
- Proof of relationship (examples: victim's birth certificate, marriage license)
- Death certificate and funeral contract
- Itemized medical bills
- Letters from any insurers denying or authorizing payment for the services listed on the form
- Proof of age (examples: driver's license, birth certificate)
- Legal guardianship papers

### ***What if I don't have the documents OVS needs?***

You may submit only the application. OVS will contact you once your claim has been accepted and request any additional documentation needed to process your claim.

Please keep in mind that OVS cannot make a decision on your application without the required documents, as they are necessary to determine if you are eligible for assistance.

### ***What is the HIPAA authorization form?***

This form allows providers to discuss health information with OVS. You must sign this form for each health care provider that has treated you.

### ***Who can sign the application?***

The victim must sign the application. If the victim is under 18 or is physically or mentally incapable of signing, then his/her legal guardian must sign.