

NEW JERSEY VICTIMS OF CRIME COMPENSATION OFFICE

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

The New Jersey Victims of Crime Compensation Office (VCCO) provides compensation to certain victims of crime for some of the expenses they incur as a result of their victimization. The following is a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ's) and useful information about VCCO's services:

Who is eligible to file a VCCO claim?

People who are eligible include crime victims, their family members, dependents of victims, the estate of the victims, guardians of victims, and the authorized agent of the victims' dependents. Additionally, any person who paid for services on behalf of a victim may file for reimbursement under a victim's claim.

How do I file a VCCO claim?

To file a claim, you need to complete the online VCCO claim application at www.njvictims.org. Include in your claim police reports and all documentation supporting the financial loss or financial needs if possible. VCCO will contact you once your application is received.

Can I still file a claim if the suspect has not been arrested or if the accused person is acquitted at trial?

Yes. Compensation may be made whether or not a person is prosecuted or found guilty of the crime.

What are the eligibility criteria?

To be compensated, all of the following must be met:

- The crime must have been committed in the State of N.J.,
- It must have been reported to law enforcement within 9 months of the crime, filing of a restraining order or sexual violence protective order, and
- The VCCO application must be filed within 5 years of the crime date.

Have there been any recent changes to VCCO eligibility and benefits?

Yes, there have been several important updates:

- An increase in the amount of reimbursement for attorney representation
- Limited compensation for homicide cases where the victim contributed to their own death, new types of benefits specific to Human Trafficking victims, and new crime types (Disorderly Persons, Harassment, and Criminal Mischief).

Who determines my claim eligibility?

VCCO is responsible for determining the eligibility of all claims in compliance with its governing law. Law enforcement does not determine a victim's eligibility for VCCO assistance. They are only required to inform all victims of the availability of VCCO services.

What benefits can VCCO assist with?

Benefits include: medical and counseling related expenses, loss of earnings, loss of support, funeral expenses, relocation assistance for crime related safety concerns, child care and domestic help, transportation assistance for funeral and attendance, and court attendance or medical appointments.

Is the VCCO a crisis intervention agency?

No. VCCO's primary responsibility is to provide compensation to victims. As a victim service agency, it does provide information to all victims in need about available resources, such as shelters, legal services, counseling services (such as trauma recovery), but does not itself provide these services.

Is victim compensation taxable?

According to IRS Revenue Ruling 74-74, victim compensation is not taxable to victims who receive it.

Does VCCO assist victims who are undocumented?

Yes. VCCO benefits are available to victims of compensable crimes, regardless of immigration status. Victims who apply are only required to provide supporting documentation related to their claim.

Does VCCO deny claims if the applicant has open municipal charges or warrants?

No, unless the open charge or warrant is directly related to the crime. If there is an active superior court warrant, VCCO will close the case, although it may be reopened at a later time.

How does VCCO disperse payments?

VCCO provides payment only after other resources – like insurance – are exhausted. VCCO can reimburse victims for services already paid or payment can be submitted directly to a vendor or service provider registered with *NJSTART*.



New Jersey Office of the Attorney General • Violence intervention & victim assistance
Victims of Crime Compensation Office
877-658-2221 • www.NJVictims.org • njvictims@njvictims.org