

What are the steps to receive Office of Victim Services (OVS) compensation?

- Complete the OVS application form
- Meet the eligibility requirements
- Have a compensable out-of-pocket loss or have one at a later time



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 and dependents, including surviving spouse, child, parent, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, stepparent or person primarily dependent on the victim for support
- Those 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
- Certain victims of unlawful imprisonment or kidnapping
- Certain stalking victims
- Victims of terrorist acts outside of the US who are a resident of New York State
- Victims of frivolous lawsuits brought by a person who committed a crime against the victim

What kinds of expenses may I get compensated for?

The 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, including \$100 for cash*)
- Burial/funeral expenses (*up to \$6,000*)
- Lost wages or lost support (*up to \$30,000*)
- Transportation (necessary court appearances for prosecution)
- Occupational/vocational rehabilitation
- Use of domestic violence shelters
- 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 and welfare, like eyeglasses, cash and clothes.



How do I apply for compensation?

You can get an application from OVS directly or contact us to find a local victim assistance program near you. You may also get an application from any police station, precinct house, or hospital emergency room.

Send us your completed OVS application along with **photocopies** of:

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



What if I don't have some of the papers OVS needs?



Send your application in right away. You can send the other documents later.

What else should I do to receive benefits?

- Report the crime within one week to police or other criminal justice agency
- File a claim within one year of the crime
- Justify any delay in reporting crime or filing claim
- Cooperate with law enforcement and OVS

What is the HIPAA authorization form?



The HIPAA authorization form allows providers to discuss health information with OVS. You must sign a HIPAA authorization form for EACH health care provider.

Who can sign the application?

The victim must sign the application unless s/he is under 18 or is physically or mentally incapable of signing; then the legal guardian must sign.

Where can I get the forms I need?



Forms are available to download from the OVS website: www.ovs.ny.gov. You can also contact OVS or ask your local victim assistance program.

Do I need a lawyer to file a claim with OVS?



No. But, if you hire a lawyer to assist you with this claim, OVS may reimburse up to \$1,000 of the legal fees.

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?



Write to OVS and give us your new address and phone number. Also, let us know if your email address changes.

Where can I get more information?



We can help you find a victim assistance program near you. Call us at: **1-800-247-8035**
TTY:1-888-289-9747

Or visit our website:
www.ovs.ny.gov

Other victim services:

Many Victim Assistance Programs (VAPs) are funded through the New York State OVS and are located throughout the State. These programs can assist you in filing your claim with OVS. VAPs can provide immediate help to victims and offer additional services that are not directly offered by OVS. Many of these services can be of great comfort and assistance to victims of crimes. For a listing of VAPs in your area, contact OVS directly or refer to our website.

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

- You can get a free copy of the police report (NYS Exec. Law §646).
- You are protected by law from threats or intimidation from the suspect or the suspect's family. Local police departments and DA's 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 DA's 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 the Division of Parole at 1-800-639-2650 to provide your contact information.

For more detailed information on your rights as a crime victim, please ask for a copy of "The Rights of Crime Victims in New York State" pamphlet by contacting OVS or visiting our website.

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A GUIDE TO CRIME VICTIMS COMPENSATION IN NEW YORK STATE

If you need a claim application, help filing a claim or have questions, you can contact the Office of Victim Services at:

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| Main Office | New York City Office |
| 1 Columbia Circle | 55 Hanson Place |
| Suite 200 | Room 1000 |
| Albany, NY 12203 | Brooklyn, NY 11217 |
| (518) 457-8727 | (718) 923-4325 |

Buffalo Office
65 Court St., Room 308
Buffalo, NY 14202
(716) 847-7992

1-800-247-8035
<http://www.ovs.ny.gov>
TTY: 1-888-289-9747