

What is the Victims of Crime Financial Benefits Program?

The Victims of Crime Financial Benefits Program provides a financial benefit to eligible victims of violent crime in Alberta, as an acknowledgement of their victimization. Injury benefits are based on the victim's verified injuries. The program does not pay for any costs or losses related to the crime (i.e. personal property loss, damages, lost wages or medical costs). The program is administered under the *Victims of Crime Act and Regulation*. Benefit amounts are set in the *Victims of Crime Regulation*.

The Financial Benefits Program also has a death benefit which pays funeral costs for victims who died as a result of a violent crime in Alberta. The application must meet the eligibility criteria for funeral costs to be paid.

Funding for the Financial Benefits Program comes entirely from the Victims of Crime Fund. This fund is fully financed by surcharges on provincial offence fines and surcharges imposed by the courts under the Criminal Code of Canada.

Are costs and losses paid?

The Financial Benefits Program does not pay for costs or losses for injured victims. For example, it does not cover property damage, medical expenses, loss of wages or pain and suffering. The only costs paid are funeral expenses for deceased victims.

Victims may seek restitution or take civil action to recover costs or losses from the offender. Contact your nearest Victims Services Unit or police service for information on these processes. Information is also available on the Alberta Government website at www.victims.alberta.ca.

Who is eligible for financial benefits?

You may be eligible for a financial benefit if:

- you were the victim of one of the eligible offences listed in the *Victims of Crime Regulation*;
- the crime happened in Alberta;
- you reported the crime to police within a reasonable time;
- you cooperated fully with the police investigation; and
- your application was received within two years of the date of the crime. Do not wait for charges to be laid or for a conviction before applying.

The program recognizes child victims and significantly incapacitated adults are not in a position to apply on their own. In those instances, a guardian or someone acting on the victim's behalf may apply.

You may not be eligible for a financial benefit if:

- the crime did not happen in Alberta;
- you were injured in a motor vehicle incident;
- you have an extensive criminal record or criminal lifestyle; or
- your actions directly or indirectly contributed to your injuries.

Death Benefit

If the crime resulted in death, funeral costs may be claimed by the person who paid the costs.

Witness to a death

You may be eligible for a benefit for your psychological injuries if you:

- witnessed a crime that resulted in the death of a person, and;
- have a pre-existing strong emotional attachment to the deceased person (i.e. deceased is a family member), and;
- suffered psychological injuries as a result of witnessing the crime.

Motor Vehicle Incidents

Injuries or deaths resulting from impaired driving or other criminal driving charges are not covered by the Financial Benefits Program. If you were injured in a motor vehicle incident, you may be eligible for the Motor Vehicle Accident Claims Program. For more information on the program, call 780-427-8255 or toll-free through Service Alberta at 310-0000 and enter 780-427-8255.

How do I apply?

Application forms are available from:

- the Financial Benefits Program, 780-427-7217;
- your local Victim Services Unit, listed in the blue pages in the phone book;
- your local police service, listed in the blue pages in the phone book; and
- the Government of Alberta website, www.victims.alberta.ca.

There are two application forms available.

Complete the Injury Application if:

- you were injured as a result of a violent crime in Alberta; or
- you are applying for psychological injuries as a result of witnessing a homicide.

Complete the Death Benefit Application if:

- you are applying for reimbursement of funeral costs for a victim who died as a direct result of the crime.

In almost all cases, a completed application form is the only information you will need to submit. Financial Benefits Program staff will obtain any police or medical reports to verify the information you provide on your application. All decisions on applications are provided in writing.

Contact Us

To inquire about the Financial Benefits Program or to request an application form contact:

Victims of Crime Financial Benefits Program
10th Floor, 10365 – 97 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3W7

Telephone: 780-427-7217

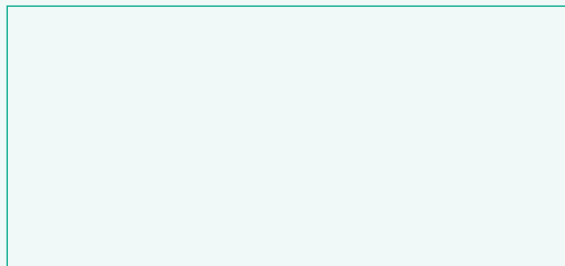
Fax: 780-422-4213

Toll-free through Service Alberta: 310-0000.

For information on the Financial Benefits Program, restitution and other programs for victims, please visit our website:

www.victims.alberta.ca.

The application forms are also available on-line through this site.



Financial Benefits for Victims of Violent Crime

VICTIMS DESERVE TO BE HEARD