



Fact Sheet 18: Victims of Crime Financial Assistance Scheme

If you've been a victim of an act of violence that **happened in the ACT** you may be able to get some financial assistance under the ACT Victims of Crime Financial Assistance Scheme.

1. Who can seek financial assistance?

You can seek financial assistance under the Victims of Crime Financial Assistance Scheme if you are:

- a **primary victim** — a person who is injured or dies as a direct result of an act of violence;
- related to, or in a relationship with, the primary victim and you are dependent on the primary victim;
- related or in a relationship with the primary victim who has died as a result of the act of violence;
- present when a homicide occurred or are a witness in a homicide criminal investigation and are injured by this; or
- paying for the funeral of the primary victim.

2. What is an act of violence?

To be a primary victim you to have been the victim of an act of violence.

An act of violence is a crime that causes a person's injury or death. Examples of offences that can cause injury or death include (but are not limited to):

- murder;
- manslaughter
- assault;
- sexual assault;
- robbery;
- stalking;
- family violence offences, which can include:
 - destroying or damaging property;
 - arson;
 - forcible entry onto land;
 - dangerous driving; and
 - contravention of family violence order.

You must report the act of violence to the Police before you submit your application. You may still be able to get financial assistance even if the person who committed the act of violence can't be identified or has not been charged, convicted or found guilty of the offence.

If you did not report the act of violence to Police you may still be entitled to financial assistance if you are a special reporting class victim.

A special reporting class victim is:

- a victim of a sexual offence; or
- a victim of an offence and the person who committed the offence was in a position of power over that victim (for example, teacher, carer or parent); or
- a victim under the age of 18 when the act of violence happened; or
- someone with impaired physically, psychologically or intellectual capacity; or
- a victim who did not report the act of violence to Police because they were threatened.

A special reporting class victim needs to report the act of violence to two of the following:

- a government agency;
- a doctor;
- a psychologist or counsellor; or
- a social worker.

3. What is considered an injury?

To be the victim of an act of violence you must suffer an injury caused by the violence.

An injury can be a:

- physical injury,
- mental illness; and/or
- mental disorder.

If the injury is caused by a sexual offence or family violence offence, then injury also includes an unplanned pregnancy, a sense of violation, a reduced sense of self-worth and increased fear or feelings of insecurity.

4. Financial Assistance you can seek

Victim class	Immediate need payment Made quickly to promote recovery, prevent further harm and minimise safety threats.	Economic need payment Provides for payment for loss of earnings caused by the injury.	Recognition payment Lump sum payments to acknowledge the trauma suffered by the victim.	Funeral expenses payment	Total financial assistance available for victim class
A person who has been injured or dies as a direct result of an act of violence done by another person. (Primary Victim)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	\$54,174
A dependant and either related to OR in a relationship with the Primary Victim.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	\$32,503
Financially dependent AND either related to or in a relationship with the Primary Victim.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	\$21,669
At the time the Primary Victim dies is a family member AND financially independent of the Primary Victim.	Yes	Yes	No	No	\$10,833
A person who was present when a murder or manslaughter occurred and was injured by being present at the murder or manslaughter.	Yes	Yes	No	No	\$10,833
A person paying for the funeral of a primary victim.	No	No	No	Yes	\$8,000

However, the maximum amount for financial assistance relating to a family violence offences is \$10,833.

5. Ineligibility for financial assistance

You will not be eligible for financial assistance if:

- you plan the act of violence with the offender;
- the act of violence was committed because you were involved with a serious crime;
- you did not give the police reasonable assistance in relation to the act of violence.

You will also have your payment reduced if you receive any associated payments that cover the same harm or loss that the financial assistance would cover.

6. Applications

An application must:

- be in writing;
- include your contact address;
- state the type of payment you are requesting;
- evidence that the act of violence was reported to police.

You should include supporting documentation with the application. This may include:

- medical reports about your injury;
- police statements;
- receipts,
- quotes or invoices for any other money you spent because of the act of violence; and
- your payslips if applying for lost wages.

7. How to apply

Applications are made to Victim Support ACT and decided by the Victims of Crime Commissioner.

The application form is available here <https://www.victimssupport.act.gov.au/financial-assistance-scheme/new-financial-assistance-scheme-1-july-2016/applying-for-financial-assistance>.

Submit your application to:

Email: fasvsact@act.gov.au

Post: Financial Assistance Scheme,
Victim Support ACT
GPO Box 158
Canberra ACT 2601

8. Time limits

You have three years from the most recent act of violence to apply for financial assistance.

If you were under the age of 18 when the act of violence occurred you have three years from the time you turned 18 to apply.

You must make the application for the funeral expenses payment within 3 years after the death of the Primary Victim.

Where the Commissioner considers it reasonable the time for making an application may be extended.

9. Where can I get more information?

- Call Street Law for help on 6218 7995 or email us on streetlaw@canberracommunitylaw.org.au. We are a free legal service for people in the ACT who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Visit www.victimssupport.act.gov.au