

Office of Victim Services

What if I have been a victim of a crime?

If you have been a victim of a crime, the Office of Victim Services (“OVS”) may be able to provide assistance with expenses related to personal injury, death and loss of essential personal property as a result of the crime.

How do I know what is considered a victim of a crime?

Victimization includes:

- physical assault
- sexual assault
- arson
- bullying (verbal, cyber, physical)
- burglary
- domestic and/or family violence
- elder abuse and/or neglect
- hate crime
- human trafficking
- identity theft/fraud/financial crime
- robbery
- stalking/harassment
- survivors of homicide victims

Am I eligible to receive compensation from OVS if I was physically injured as a result of a crime?

Yes, you may be eligible if you were physically injured as result of the crime and you are an innocent victim of the crime.

Am I eligible to receive compensation from OVS if I was a victim of a crime and was not physically injured? Yes, you may be eligible if you are:

- A victim of certain menacing crimes including: unlawful imprisonment, kidnapping, criminal mischief, robbery, criminal obstruction of breathing or blood circulation, harassment, aggravated harassment, criminal contempt, stalking, or hate crime charges who but have not been physically injured
- A vulnerable elderly, incompetent, or physically disabled person who cannot care for themselves
- A victim of labor trafficking or sex trafficking
- A victim of terrorist acts outside of the United States and a resident of New York State

Am I eligible to receive compensation from OVS if I had my property stolen?

You may be eligible to receive compensation for personal property only if you are:

- A minor
- Over 60 years of age, or
- Disabled

The property claimed must be essential to health, safety or welfare, and were damaged as a result of the crime [up to \$500]. Some examples include:

- Cash [up to \$100]
- Eyeglasses
- Clothing

Am I eligible for compensation from OVS if I only witnessed a crime?

Yes, you may be eligible if you are a surviving spouse, grandparent, parent, stepparent, guardian, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, child, stepchild, grandchild, or any other person dependent for support upon the victim of a crime who died as a direct result of the crime.

If I meet one of the above, what type of compensation may I receive?

If you are eligible, OVS may provide compensation, other than essential personal property, for expenses including:

- medical bills
- counseling expenses
- burial costs
- funeral costs
- lost wages

What do I do if I think I am eligible for compensation?

You have to complete an OVS Claim for Compensation Application.

Where can I find the Application?

The application is located on-line at the OVS website:

<https://ovs.ny.gov/sites/default/files/general-form/2013ovsclaimapplication.pdf>

The application is also available at any police station, precinct house, or hospital emergency room.

Is the Application available at Neighborhood Legal Services?

Yes.

Can Neighborhood Legal Service help me complete an Application?

Yes, Neighborhood Legal Services has a dedicated team of attorneys who are available to assist you with the completion of the application.

How do I get in touch with Neighborhood Legal Services about the Application?

Call our office at 716-847-0650 and ask for assistance with an OVS Claim for Compensation Application. Our staff will put you in contact to meet with one of our attorneys who can assist you with your Application.