



## ***THE STATE OFFICE OF VICTIM ASSISTANCE***

***1205 Pendleton Street, Room 401  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201  
Business Line: 803.734.1900  
Victims Only: 1.800.220.5370  
[www.sova.sc.gov](http://www.sova.sc.gov)***

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **What is the Crime Victims' Fund?**

The South Carolina Crime Victims' Compensation Fund is a financial assistance program designed to help victims with expenses directly resulting from a crime that are not covered by other payment sources. It is administered by the State Office of Victim Assistance (SOVA), and is governed by state and federal laws. If you qualify for the program, it can pay certain costs for recovery treatment or burial arrangements up to the maximum allowed by law.

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#### **What are the Eligibility Criteria?**

- Crime must occur in South Carolina
- Victim must sustain direct injury-physical or psychological
- No contributory behavior (initiated or provoked incident)
- No illegal activity at time of crime
- Must cooperate with SOVA and Law Enforcement
- Crime must be reported within 48 hours
- Claim must be filed within 180 days

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#### **Who is Able to Apply?**

If you or a loved one were injured by violence, such as:

Assault	Homicide
Domestic Violence	Felony DUI w/bodily injury
Sexual Assault	Felony DUI w/death
Reckless Homicide	

The crime must be a criminal offense.

The State Office of Victim Assistance may be able to help you put the pieces back together.

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#### **Will law enforcement be involved with my claim?**

Yes. Law Enforcement will be contacted to confirm the facts of the case and provide additional information. Your claim cannot be processed without a copy of the law enforcement incident report.

### **When will I know if I qualify?**

After you have sent us the application you will be notified by us that you are eligible or ineligible. If you are eligible you will receive a "Notice of Award" that will list how much SOVA is going to pay on the bills you submitted. You may receive many of them while your claim is active.

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### **If I qualify, what will SOVA pay?**

SOVA can help with certain types of crime related costs. In every case, the expense has to be linked to losses from injury or death as a result of the crime. In order for payment to be considered, you must submit the medical claim form or explanation of benefits.

**\*Up to combined total of \$15,000 for:**

**Medical/Dental Costs**  
**Counseling (from a licensed professional)**  
**Burial bills for a deceased victim (maximum \$4,000.00)**  
**Lost Wages/Loss of Support**  
**Mileage to and from Dr. Appointments/Therapy Sessions**  
**Eyeglasses damaged during the victimization**

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### **Do family members qualify?**

Sometimes, if one of your immediate family members is a victim, you may be able to get counseling or receive part of your wages if you have to stay out of work to take care of him/her. If you paid the funeral bill for a family member who was a victim, you may be eligible to get back up to \$4,000. Please call SOVA for additional detailed information.

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### **If I do not qualify for SOVA funds what are the steps?**

If you do not qualify, you will be notified that your claim has been denied and you will receive a packet of information describing how to appeal SOVA's decision. If you wish to appeal, follow the instructions in the appeal packet and appeal brochure. Please return the appeal application to SOVA within 30 days from receipt.

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### **What if I have insurance, am I eligible for SOVA benefits?**

The State Office of Victim Assistance is the payer of last resort. If the victim has insurance and elects not to use his/her insurance for treatment, SOVA will not cover the cost. It is the provider's responsibility to ensure that other avenues of payment are explored and used.

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### **What is not covered by SOVA?**

SOVA cannot pay for property damage (to include crime scene cleanup or items taken as evidence), any expenses related to going to court (to include legal fees or transportation), or "pain and suffering."