



OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS

# Office of Justice Programs Victims Services

Minnesota Department of Public Safety Local Government Convening  
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# Office of Justice Programs and Victim Services

- OJP advances support for victims and survivors across several dedicated programs:
  - Crime Victim Reimbursement Program
  - Crime Victim Justice Unit
  - Grants to provide direct services for Crime Victims
  - OJP Community and Victim Specialists
  - Domestic and Sexual Violence Housing Support



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# Crime Victim Reimbursement Program

# Crime Victim Reimbursement Program

- Government program that reimburses victims of violent crimes, and their family members, for many of their out-of-pocket expenses
- Covers medical, funeral, counseling, and lost wages
- Eligibility tied to MN crime reporting and cooperation
- Critical financial safety net for victims

# Crime Victim Reimbursement

## Who Can Apply?

- Victim who suffered an injury
- Family Member of injured/homicide victim
- Parents, Spouse/Domestic Partner, Children, Siblings, grandparents
- An eyewitness or someone who discovers body of homicide victim

# Crime Victim Reimbursement Program Coverage and Eligibility

- Covers medical, funeral, counseling, and lost wages
  - Crimes Covered: Murder, Robbery, Kidnapping, Physical/Sexual Child Abuse, Human Trafficking, Assault, Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault/Sex Related Offenses, Some Motor Vehicle Crashes (i.e., Criminal Vehicular homicide), Some Overdose Deaths (i.e., murder charge)
  - Property Crimes Not Covered
- Eligibility tied to MN crime reporting and cooperation
  - Crime must have occurred in Minnesota or Minnesota resident in a country without a Victim Compensation program
  - Crime must be reported to police within 30 days of crime occurring (exceptions sexual assault and child abuse)

# Crime Victim Reimbursement Program

## Things to Know

- Complete separate applications for each victim
- A guardian or relative should file on behalf of a minor, incapacitated, or deceased victim
- Apply as soon as possible. Additional expenses can be added later.
- Apply even if no current out-of-pocket expenses. Can re-open claim if incur expenses in the future.
- Apply via the Victim Service Portal: [ojp.dps.mn.gov](http://ojp.dps.mn.gov)



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# Crime Victim Justice Unit

# Crime Victim Justice Unit

- Ensures victims understand and exercise their rights
- Resolves complaints and criminal justice system issues
  - Has authority to investigate complaints about “elements of the criminal justice system”(except judges).
  - Can investigate complaints of statutory rights violations and victim mistreatment.
- Bridges victims and justice system

# Crime Victim Justice Unit

## Types of Complaints

- Statutory rights violation
  - Violation of specific statutory rights
- Victim mistreatment
  - Rude or inappropriate treatment of victims
  - Not following the law or agency's own procedures and policies
  - Poor or inadequate investigation
  - Unethical conduct
  - Abuse of discretion

# Crime Victim Justice Unit

## CVJU Responses

- Screen issue or complaint
- Provide assistance (brief or intensive)
- Informal resolution of case.
  - Setting realistic expectations, second opinions, advice on how to communicate, advice on how to voice a complaint, repairing relationships, and connecting people
- Formal investigation of complaints alleging statutory rights violations and/or victim mistreatment by elements of the CJS
  - Request and review documents, interview parties, prepare report: findings, recommendations, “further discussion”
  - Most complaints are handled informally.



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# Crime Victim Services Grants

# Grants for Services to Crime Victims

- The Office of Justice Programs distributes approximately \$60 million in state and federal funds annually to 170 agencies throughout Minnesota to provide direct advocacy services to victims of crime.
- This funding provides services for victims of sexual assault, domestic abuse, child abuse, homicide, gun violence, assault, and theft.
- Eligible grantees include local governments, county governments, Tribal governments, and community-based organizations.
- Specifically, the funding OJP administers provides support to survivors through:
  - safety planning, crisis intervention,
  - advocacy, assistance applying for protective orders,
  - safe housing, transportation, accessing financial assistance,
  - court-related support, accompaniment to hearings and appointments,
  - support groups, and healing services.



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# OJP Community and Victim Specialists

# Community and Victim Specialists

- Brings information from community to help make changes or updates to Legislative policy. Ensuring the voice of the community is at the table for victims/survivors
- Support communities and victims after a violent crime or mass incident
- Crisis response- serve as a community liaison for OJP, assist Police Departments statewide to assist and help with crisis situations
- Resourcing- ensuring families/individuals of violent crime have information to navigate the complexities and/or resourcing to help in time of crisis
- Get OJP specific information out into community space
  - Hospitals, schools, prayer vigils, rec centers, boots on the ground/grass roots organizations, 1x1 with family



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# Housing Support for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survivors

# Domestic/Sexual Violence Survivors Housing Support

- Supports survivors of domestic/sexual violence
- Expands housing stability for survivors
- Builds system capacity
- Expands housing resources
- Supports grantees and providers through training and technical assistance



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# Thank You!

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