



Justice
Victims Services

The victims support scheme

A detailed guide

If you are a victim of crime in NSW
call the **Victims Access Line**
for information and support

1800 633 063

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For more information

1. Go to our website
www.victimsservices.justice.nsw.gov.au
2. Call the Victims Access Line 1800 633 063
3. We have an Aboriginal Contact Line 1800 019 123
4. Our email address is vs@justice.nsw.gov.au
5. Our hours are
8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (exc. pub holidays)
6. Our address is
Level 1, Justice Precinct Offices
160 Marsden Street, Parramatta NSW 2150

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ISBN 978 1 922121 08 0 (BK19 • REV 06/2015)

Summary

The NSW victims support scheme provides a coordinated approach to information, support and referral, with an emphasis on immediate assistance and access to counselling.

Victims are able to access the services they need when they need them most. Victims are allocated a support coordinator, who conducts a comprehensive assessment of each situation, develops a tailored plan and then guides them through the criminal justice and human services systems. The support coordinator provides information, referrals to other services and ongoing advice to victims of crime.

A package of care may include some or all of five types of support:

1. Information, referrals and advice
2. Counselling
3. Financial assistance for immediate needs
4. Financial assistance for economic loss
5. Recognition payment

Key benefits of the scheme

The NSW victims support scheme:

- provides assistance when victims need it most
- builds a package of care tailored to individual needs
- is simpler and faster
- provides financial and emotional support straight away.

Overview

The NSW victims support scheme is focused on building a package of care to support and assist victims at the time they need it most. We provide information, referrals to other services and ongoing assistance to help you negotiate the criminal justice and human services systems. Each package of care may include some or all of the following five types of assistance.

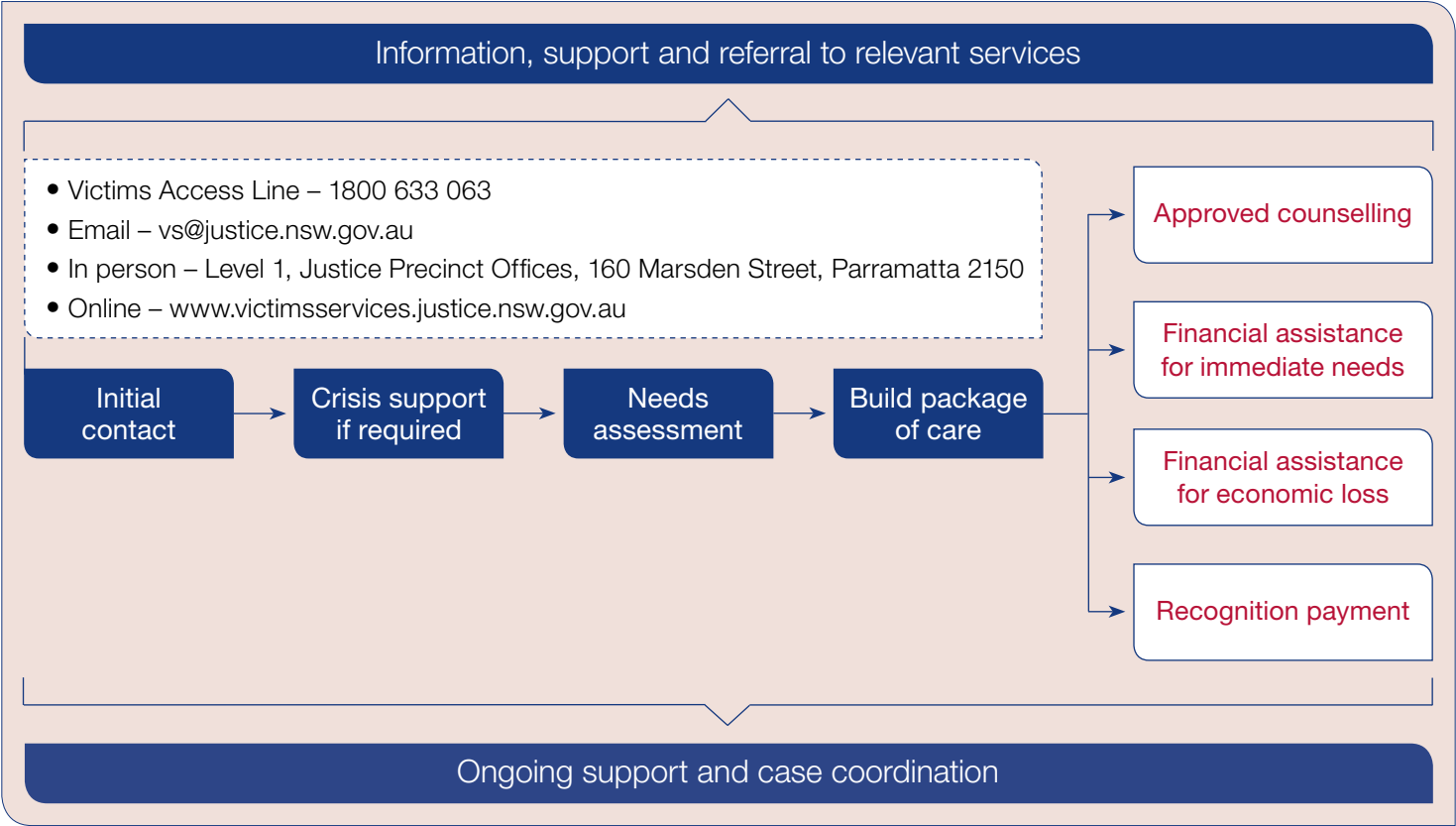
	Purpose	Benefits	Who is eligible to apply?	What evidence is required?	How long do you have to claim?
Information, support and referral	To assist in your recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and information about the court process, criminal justice and human services systems • Access and referral to a wide range of other services available to victims of crime • Crisis support • Support throughout the process of applying for counselling and financial assistance 	All victims of crime	None	No time limit applies
Counselling	To assist in your recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An initial 10 hours of counselling • A further 12 hours if required 	All victims of violent crime	A simple application form	No time limit applies

	Purpose	Benefits	Who is eligible to apply?	What evidence is required?	How long do you have to claim?
Financial assistance for immediate needs	To address any urgent needs you may have as a result of the incident(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance in relocating to a safer location • Implementation of safety measures, eg. changing locks • Crime scene clean up • The package of benefits is capped at \$5,000 • Funeral costs capped separately at \$8,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary victims • Immediate family of homicide victims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A report from police or government agency • Evidence of injury • Evidence of expenses you are claiming (eg. quotes, invoices or receipts) <p>In some cases further information may be required</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No later than two years from the incident or within two years of turning 18 for children

	Purpose	Benefits	Who is eligible to apply?	What evidence is required?	How long do you have to claim?
Financial assistance for economic loss	To aid your rehabilitation and recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable travel expenses • Medical and dental expenses • Assistance with cost of living, eg. rent assistance, furniture, childcare and household bills capped at \$5,000 for those victims who were not employed at the time of the crime • Expenses associated with damage to personal effects capped at \$1,500 • Justice-related expenses capped at \$5,000 • Loss of actual earnings capped at \$20,000 • Total limit is \$30,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary victims • Parents of a child victim may be eligible • Immediate family members of homicide victims can access justice-related expenses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A report from police or government agency • Evidence of injury • Evidence of expenses you are claiming (eg. quotes, invoices or receipts) <p>In some cases further information may be required</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No later than two years from the incident or within two years of turning 18 for children • There is no time limit for victims of sexual assault if they were a child at the time the incident(s) occurred to claim for justice-related or out-of-pocket expenses

	Purpose	Benefits	Who is eligible to apply?	What evidence is required?	How long do you have to claim?
Recognition payment	To acknowledge the trauma you have suffered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$15,000 (Financially dependent family of homicide victim) • \$7,500 (Non-financially dependent parents of homicide victim) • \$10,000 – Sexual assault involving serious bodily injury, multiple offenders or use of an offensive weapon; Pattern of sexual or indecent assault/ attempted sexual assault involving violence • \$5,000 – Sexual assault; Attempted sexual assault involving serious bodily grievous bodily harm; Pattern of physical assault of a child • \$1,500 – Indecent assault; Attempted sexual assault involving violence; Robbery; Assault 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary victims • Dependent family members and parents of homicide victims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A report from police or government agency and evidence of injury is needed to establish eligibility <p>In some cases further information may be required</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No later than two years from the incident or within two years of turning 18 for children • Claims for domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse offences must be lodged within 10 years, or within 10 years of turning 18 for children • There is no time limit for victims of sexual assault if they were a child at the time the incident(s) occurred

Overall process



What kind of evidence do you need to provide?

Before your application for victims support is considered you will need to provide receipts, quotes or invoices to support any expense claimed and a brief explanation as to how each expense relates to the act of violence.

Medical and dental treatment	You need to provide invoices or quotes for the treatment required. You may also need to provide medical evidence telling us how the treatment required was a direct result of the act of violence. An amount will only be approved for expenses incurred after Medicare, health fund or other rebates have been deducted.
Justice-related expenses (\$5,000 maximum) Includes costs associated with court proceedings related to the act of violence, such as preparing victim impact statements.	You need to provide quotes, invoices or receipts and a brief description outlining how the cost is related to the criminal proceedings. Only expenses for criminal proceedings directly related to the act of violence will be considered. The legal fees of a legal practitioner are not included.
Safety and security (\$5,000 maximum) Including the installation of safety measures (changing locks etc) or relocating to a safer location.	You need to provide invoices or quotes and a brief description outlining how the need for a security upgrade or relocation was a direct result of the act of violence.

<p>Out of pocket expenses (\$5,000 maximum)</p> <p>Including assistance with cost of living expenses, eg. rent assistance, furniture, child care and household bills for those victims who were not employed at the time of the incident.</p>	<p>Increased or new expenses that arose as a direct result of the act of violence may be considered for victims who were not employed at the time of the act of violence. You need to provide invoices or quotes and a brief description outlining how the expenses are a direct result of the act of violence.</p>
<p>Loss or damage to personal effects (\$1,500 maximum)</p> <p>Including loss or damage to personal effects carried or worn at the time of act of violence.</p>	<p>You need to provide invoices or quotes as well as evidence demonstrating that those items were worn or carried at the time of the act of violence.</p>
<p>Loss of actual earnings (\$20,000 maximum)</p> <p>Calculated at a prescribed rate minus any payments received from other sources.</p>	<p>You need to provide a medical certificate or written advice of your inability to work during the claimed period along with a statement from your employer that includes your name, address and days you were absent from work. The statement from your employer should also include details of any holiday or sick leave payments you received. If you were self-employed, you should provide some form of evidence that shows your absence from work, such as a statement from your accountant and medical records. You will also need to provide full details of any Centrelink, Income Protection/Insurance or Workers Compensation payments.</p>

Other questions you may have

Where do you get all the information and forms you need?	Victims Services – call the Victims Access Line on 1800 633 063 or visit our website www.victimsservices.justice.nsw.gov.au
Who will assist with my claim?	A support coordinator will assist with your claim. Victims Services will obtain police reports and court papers where available, and we can also obtain clinical notes, with your consent from medical practitioners you have seen for your injuries.
Who pays for your counselling?	Victims Services will pay for counselling.
How much counselling can you get access to?	An initial 10 hours of counselling are granted in the first instance, but if more is required a further 12 hours may be granted up to a maximum of 22 hours in total.
Who can you call for help and advice?	The Victims Access Line or your support coordinator.
How long will the payment take?	There is no set time for how long it will take an eligible victim to receive a payment. The time it takes will depend on each individual case.
How will this affect your Centrelink payments?	As it is classified as criminal compensation, your Centrelink payments should not be affected, however you should check out the Centrelink website www.humanservices.gov.au for a detailed list of contact phone numbers.
Do you need a lawyer?	No. You will be allocated a support coordinator to assist with your claim and get evidence.
Is the payment that you receive from Victims Services taxable?	You should contact the Australian Taxation Office's Personal Tax Information Line on 13 28 61 to find out whether your payment may be subject to tax. Alternatively you should speak to your accountant or a tax professional.



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