Compensation amendments:

Frequently asked questions

What are the main changes of the recent amendments?

- Clarification in relation to multiple acts of violence;
- Lodging of claims relating to incidents that occurred before a previous successful claim;
- Extension of the Victims Assistance Scheme (VAS);
- Extension of the Approved Counselling Scheme;
- Withdrawal of application.

The website includes a Summary of the Main Changes.

Can I still lodge multiple claims for abuse that occurred over a long period of time?

Yes, you can still lodge multiple. The amendment does not stop you from lodging multiple claims it just makes it clear that the compensation assessor is able to decide if the matter should be one act of violence or multiple acts of violence.

Where I have previously received compensation can I still lodge a claim for an incident that occurred before that successful claim?

You may still lodge a claim for an incident that occurred before the previous successful claim. You will need to tell us why the claim should be accepted so the compensation assessor can consider if there are exceptional circumstances, for example if you have not lodged a previous claim for childhood abuse and you were a victim of childhood sexual assault and have only been able to disclose and deal with the impacts of the assault now that you are older.

What are the changes in relation to counselling?

Previously a victim would receive 2 initial hours of counselling. The amendments have increased it to 10 initial hours which means that a victim can continue with counselling rather than needing to obtain further approval after the 2 hours are completed.

Under the amendments what happens if I withdraw my claim for compensation?

Previously if you withdrew your claim for compensation an assessor would dismiss the matter. You would not be able to lodge another claim for the same incident.

Following the amendments, when you request your claim to be withdrawn Victims Services withdraws the claim without it being dismissed by a compensation assessor. This means you can lodge a claim in the future for the same act of violence.

This amendment is specifically beneficial for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence who may withdraw claims for fear of the offender.

What are the changes to Victims Assistance Scheme (VAS)?

VAS allows a victim to claim for expenses that arise as a result of the act of violence. These expenses were previously limited to a specific list. The amendments mean that the list of expenses that can be claimed has been expanded and covers all act expenses, which included medical aids, dentures, prosthesis and hearing aids.

For more information please refer to the VAS section on the website.

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(02/2011)