EMERGENCY FUND FOR CRIME VICTIMS

Increased Access to Emergency Funds for Crime Victims Throughout the State of Colorado

Colorado Department of Public Safety
Division of Criminal Justice
Office for Victim Programs
Introduction

• In the Spring of 2015, the Office for Victims Programs, Division of Criminal Justice, conducted a statewide needs assessment of victim services programs on what were the most pressing needs of crime victims.
  • Out of that needs assessment, the following priority areas were identified:
    • Civil Legal Services for Crime Victims
    • Housing for Crime Victims
    • Emergency Funds for Crime Victims

• The Emergency Funds for Crime Victims Special Project was kicked-off in Fall 2015, by convening a statewide steering committee comprised of multi-disciplinary representatives to address the lack of sufficient emergency funds for crime victims.
• The Steering Committee met monthly to conduct further research of existing sources of emergency funds and to develop and implement a plan to increase accessibility of emergency funds for crime victims throughout the state of Colorado.

• While various potential strategies were considered, the Steering Committee eventual came to consensus around a two-prong approach:
  • Encourage individual programs to request eligible Emergency Funds in their 2016 CVS Application for funding
  • Create the Emergency Funds Program in partnership with the Colorado Organization for Victims Assistance (COVA)
NOW WHAT?!?!?

• As of January 16, 2017, victim services programs in Colorado will be able to access additional emergency funds for crime victims through COVA’s VOCA Emergency Fund!

• The Fund has close to $1 million available to assist crime victims with the following emergency needs:
  • Clothing, Food, and Supplies (toiletries, diapers, etc.)
  • Rental Assistance
  • Hotel Stay
  • Utilities Assistance
  • Bus tickets and Transportation
  • Relocation
  • Short-term Nursing Home Shelters for Elder Abuse Victims (*when no other safe, short-term residence is available)
  • Childcare
What’s the catch?

• Requests for emergency funds must be **advocate-initiated** – this means victims cannot request funds directly and need to be working with a community- or systems-based advocate.

• At this time, the Emergency Fund Program is not putting explicit restriction on the exact amount of financial assistance a crime victim can receive, nor on the frequency of which they can receive it.

• The use of the Emergency Fund is designed to be a source of **last resort**, and cannot be used in place of available Victim Compensation funds.
What’s the catch? (cont.)

• While victims do not need to have interfaced with the criminal justice system (i.e. do not need to have reported their crime to law enforcement), to receive assistance, they must be a victim of a VOCA-eligible crime, including:

  • Adult Physical Assault
  • Adult Sexual Assault
  • Adults Sexually Abused/Assaulted as Children
  • Arson
  • Bullying (Verbal, Cyber, or Physical)
  • Burglary
  • Child Physical Abuse or Neglect
  • Child Pornography
  • Child Sexual Abuse/Assault
  • Domestic and/or Family Violence
  • DUI/DWI Incidents
  • Elder Abuse or Neglect
  • Human Trafficking: Labor, Human Trafficking: Sex
  • Identity Theft/Fraud/Financial Crime
  • Kidnapping (custodial) & Kidnapping (noncustodial)
  • Mass Violence (Domestic/International)
  • Other Vehicular Victimization (e.g., Hit & Run)
  • Robbery
  • Stalking/Harassment
  • Survivors of Homicide Victims
  • Teen Dating
  • Terrorism (Domestic/International)
  • Hate Crime: Racial/Religious/Gender/Sexual Orientation/Other
Accessing the Funds

• When interested in accessing the Emergency Fund Program, advocates should contact the Emergency Fund Program Manager Mandee McLane at mandee@coloradocrimevictims.org or 303-996-2781.

• While the Program’s main hours of operation are 8:00a.m. -5:00p.m. M-F, programs can call the Night Line after 5:00p.m. and on weekends for emergencies - 303-475-2496

• Advocates requesting emergency funds for victims must complete the Emergency Funds Program Application in full and provide the documentation required by the type of assistance requested.
Accessing the Funds (cont.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Emergency Assistance</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Receipts/Documentation needed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clothing, Food and Supplies (diapers, toiletries, etc.)</td>
<td>Itemized store receipt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergency Shelter</td>
<td>Receipt from shelter and check or CC bill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rental Assistance</td>
<td>Copy of 1st and last page of lease and copy of cashed check</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergency Hotel stay</td>
<td>Copy of receipt and check or CC bill</td>
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<td>Utilities assistance (start-up and/or current bill)</td>
<td>Copy of most recent bill and check or CC Bill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short-term Nursing Home Shelters for elder abuse victims</td>
<td>Copy of bill and check or CC bill</td>
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<td>Childcare</td>
<td>Copy of bill and check or CC bill</td>
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<td>These expenses for dependents</td>
<td>Copy of bill and check or CC bill</td>
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<td>Bus tickets/Transportation</td>
<td>Copy of bill, confirmation email, and CC Bill</td>
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<td>Moving Expenses</td>
<td>Copy of bill and check or CC bill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relocation</td>
<td>Copy of bill and check or CC bill</td>
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Accessing the Funds (cont.)

- Advocates can request a copy of the fillable pdf version of the application by contacting Mandee at mandee@coloradocrimevictims.org or 303-996-2781.

- A Required Documentation Checklist can be downloaded here: http://www.coloradocrimevictims.org/ (under the Emergency Fund Program tab), along with a recording of this webinar, FAQs, and more information about eligible uses of the emergency funds.

- This information will also be posted on DCJ’s website here: https://sites.google.com/a/state.co.us/dcj-victim-program/home/grant-programs/statewide-special-projects

- In some cases, requesting advocacy organizations may be asked to “front” the expense for the crime victim and then be reimbursed through the Emergency Fund Program.
Q & A

• Please type your comment or questions in the Chat or Question Box

• All questions will be documented and compiled into a FAQs and posted here: [www.coloradocrimevictims.org](http://www.coloradocrimevictims.org) (under the Emergency Funds Program Tab)
Contact Info.

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