

PRACTICE GUIDE

Victim Assist Queensland

Introduction

Victim Assist Queensland provides information and advice for victims of crime, including reporting an incident, assisting with access to available support services and leading and coordinating the victims' services sector within Queensland.

The Queensland Government provides financial assistance through Victim Assist Queensland to victims of acts of violence. This assistance is to pay for or reimburse the costs of goods and services victims may need to recover from physical or psychological injuries as a result of a violent crime committed in Queensland.

The children and families who Child Safety works with may be victims of an act of violence. Depending on the specific circumstances, they may be eligible for support and financial assistance from Victim Assist Queensland to help them recover from the acts of violence experienced.

Child Safety obligations

All government agencies must uphold the rights of victims of violent crime. Child Safety staff have obligations under the *Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009* when working with children, families and carers who may have been injured as a result of an act of violence including:

- upholding the [Charter of Victims' Rights](#) when working with victims of crime
- proactively providing victims of crime (child, parent, guardian, carer or other relevant person) with sufficient information to allow them to contact Victim Assist Queensland
- providing information about services and financial assistance they may be eligible to receive from the Queensland Government through Victim Assist Queensland (Refer to the [Victim Assist Queensland](#) website.)
- facilitating an application on behalf of a child identified as a victim of crime who is subject to an interim or final child protection order granting guardianship to the chief executive
- informing victims of their right to make a complaint if they feel that a Queensland Government or non-government agency has behaved in a way contrary to the Charter of Victims' Rights. (Refer to [Compliments and complaints](#) on the Child Safety website.)

Available supports and assistance

Under the *Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009*, eligible victims can seek a range of support and assistance through Victim Assist Queensland, depending on the victim's individual circumstances, including:

- Financial assistance to cover or reimburse the cost of:
 - counselling
 - medical and dental expenses
 - reasonable incidental travel expenses
 - safety and security expenses

- loss of earnings and funeral expenses.
- Non-financial assistance, including referral to support services for:
 - victims of domestic and family violence
 - victims of sexual assault
 - victims who are under 18 years of age
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims of crime
 - relatives of homicide victims
 - court support and legal support for victims of crime.

A primary victim may be eligible for a special financial assistance payment between \$1,000 and \$10,000 in acknowledgement of the act of violence committed against them. If the victim is under the age of 18, Victim Assist will arrange for the special assistance payment to be held in trust by the Public Trustee of Queensland until the victim is 18 years of age.

Victim Assist Queensland is a complementary scheme and will only pay for goods and services that have not already been covered by another scheme, such as:

- WorkCover
- Medicare
- Centrelink
- private insurance
- child related costs in the case of a child subject to a child protection order granting custody or guardianship to the chief executive.

The family member of a primary victim who has died as a result of an act of violence may be eligible for a dependency payment of up to \$20,000 and a recognition payment of up to \$10,000.

For further information about supports available and categories of victims and their eligibility for different types of assistance, refer to the [Victim Assist Queensland](#) website.

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