

GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



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PRESS RELEASE

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USVI Crime Victims Compensation Program: Local support for victims of crime

(U.S. Virgin Islands)- The Virgin Islands Criminal Victim Compensation program has paid over \$208,329.83 in FY2022 to innocent victims of criminal offenses in our territory. Since recently receiving its annual legislative allotment, which was signed by the 34th Legislature and approved by Governor for FY2023, the funds replenishment brings hope for local victims who had no other means of helping to defray the costs caused by personal injury due to a violent crime.

The VI Criminal Victims Compensation Commission (CVCC) was originally established in 1968 and operates under DHS's Office of the Commissioner. The program, which receives guidance from the department's Chief Legal Counsel, provides monetary assistance to innocent victims of violent crimes for pain and suffering, medical bills, funeral/burials, lost wages, loss of support to financial dependents, and mental health counseling.

Who can get help?

- Any person who suffers physical injury as a result of a crime.
- A surviving spouse or child of a homicide victim.
- Any person who assumed responsibility for the funeral expenses of a homicide victim.

How do I qualify?

- You must report the crime to police within 24 hours of the crime and file a notice of intent to file a claim with the Crime Victims Compensation Program within 90 days.
- Your claim must be filed within two (2) years of the crime.
- You will not be eligible for compensation if you caused, provoked, or contributed to the crime that caused your injury.
- You are responsible for proving your claim. You must provide proof that you have unreimbursed expenses as the result of a crime
- You must cooperate with law enforcement authorities and the VI Victims Compensation Commission

How do I file a claim

- Submit a complete application
- Include a copy of the **Police report** and all of the documents below that apply to your claim; victim's **death certificate**; copies of **all medical bills**, original receipts of all **funeral and burial expenses**; **birth certificates** or other proof of relationship for the victim's children under the age of 18.

In a statement, DHS Commissioner Kimberley-Causey Gomez spoke on the program's intent and purpose and explained that while compensation cannot address all that victims suffer, it can help with the healing process and repairing the harm. "While money can never erase the scars and painful memories of a crime, this program may ease some of the financial burdens faced by victims and their families. The financial impacts of violent crime on victims can be significant, and that's why we provide this assistance – so those burdens don't solely lie on the shoulders of innocent people who experienced a traumatic event." Commissioner Causey-Gomez concluded.

Applications for the VI Criminal Victims Compensation program can be picked up at:

St. Croix

Administrator of Criminal Victims
Compensation
Office of the Commissioner
3012 Golden Rock, Christiansted
St. Croix, VI 00820

St. Thomas/ St. John

Administrator of Criminal Victims
Compensation
Office of the Commissioner
Knud Hansen Complex, Building A

Call **340-718-2980 ext.1612** or send an email to the Administrator of Criminal Victims Compensation at criminalvictimsusvi@dhs.vi.gov, for more information on the USVI Crime Victims Compensation Program.

For general information, please visit the Department of Human Services website at www.dhs.gov.vi, or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/usvidhs.

The Department of Human Services exists to provide social services to members in our community with diverse needs. In times of national uncertainty and hardship we act as a safety-net and exist to inspire hope and empower change through non-judgmental, quality delivery of needed services and resources.

The Bryan-Roach Administration is investing in the Territory's people, infrastructure, and future through transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit transparency.vi.gov.

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