

Crime Victims' Compensation

Criminal Code of Procedure, Chapter 56B

The Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Chapter 56B ensures the Crime Victims' Compensation Program (CVC) is available to help eligible individuals and their immediate family members with certain expenses related to the crime. Benefits may be awarded for expenses such as medical bills, counseling, lost wages, relocation, property damage to landowners on agricultural land, tattoo removal, crime scene cleanup, funeral, burial expenses, and more to help aid victims and their families in their recovery.

Examples of some of the crimes that are covered by CVC include sexual assault, family violence, kidnapping, aggravated robbery, assault, homicide, child abuse, stalking, trafficking, and other crimes where the victim suffers physical harm or death. Motor vehicle crimes covered by CVC include DWI, manslaughter, criminally negligent homicide, aggravated assault, reckless driving, and intoxication manslaughter.

Crime Victims' Compensation Fund

Call: 800-983-9933

Portal access: texasattorneygeneral.gov/crime-victims

Scan the QR code to learn more.



A Victim Services Professional with the Texas Department of Public Safety is available to assist you in applying for the Crime Victims' Compensation program.

Texas Department of Public Safety Victim Services



Help for Individuals and Families Affected by Crime in Texas

Contact:

Victim Services Professional

Garland Office: 214-861-2485

Tyler Office: 903-939-6134

www.dps.texas.gov

Trooper/Officer

Phone Number

Case #

You may contact the investigating agency for case status updates and information about your rights.

Victim Services Program

The Texas Department of Public Safety Victim Services Program is dedicated to providing culturally sensitive, trauma-informed services to individuals and families affected by crime in Texas. Our Victim Services Professionals work to ensure that victims of violent crime receive the rights granted to them by law. All services are provided free of charge and may include:

- Explanation of the rights of crime victims
- Case status and arrest notifications
- Criminal justice information and support
- Assistance connecting with the assigned investigator
- Law enforcement, court, and forensic exam accompaniments
- Assistance with Crime Victims' Compensation applications
- Assistance with the Address Confidentiality Program
- Help requesting a pseudonym (fake name)
- Assistance with the return of evidence
- Counseling/therapy and crisis intervention
- Personal advocacy
- Safety planning
- Referrals for legal aid and other social service/advocacy programs

Important Contact Information:

Funeral home/medical examiner

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

The vehicle was towed by

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Additional referrals

Helpful Phone Numbers

The following offer free, confidential, 24/7 support services.

Texas Integrated Victim Services Systems Counties
For access to information and to receive notifications regarding suspect/offender status and court event changes.

Call: 866-268-8959

Register at: ivss-counties.tdcj.texas.gov

Texas Youth Helpline

Call or text: 800-989-6884

Chat online: dfps.texas.gov/youth-helpline

National Domestic Violence Hotline

Call: 800-799-7233 or Text: "START" to 88788

Video chat (if Deaf): 855-812-1001

Chat online: thehotline.org

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline

Call: 866-331-9474 or Text: "LOVEIS" to 22522

TTY: 800-787-3224

Chat online: loveisrespect.org

National Sexual Assault Hotline

Call: 800-656-4673 or Text: "HOPE" to 64673

Chat online: rainn.org

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Call, text, or video chat (if Deaf): 988

Chat online: 988lifeline.org

National Human Trafficking Hotline

Call: 888-373-7888 or Text: 233733

Chat online: humantraffickinghotline.org

Mothers Against Drunk Driving Helpline

Call: 877-623-3435

Chat online: madd.org

National Elder Fraud Hotline

Call: 833-372-8311 (M-F, 10 am - 6 pm EST)

Texas Abuse Hotline

Call: 800-252-5400

Report online: txabusehotline.org

Texas Legal Services Center

Call: 800-622-2520

Visit: texaslawhelp.org

Texas Advocacy Project

Call: 800-374-4673 (M-F, 9 am - 5 pm CST)

Apply online: texasadvocacyproject.org

Rights of Crime Victims

Code of Criminal Procedure, Chapter 56A

The Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Chapter 56A ensures that victims, the guardians of a victim, or the close relatives of a deceased victim, who experienced a crime of sexual assault, kidnapping, aggravated robbery, human trafficking, injury to a child, elderly person, or disabled person, family violence, or stalking, are entitled to certain rights under the law. This includes anyone who has been physically injured or killed because of a crime someone else committed, as well as people harmed by certain protective order or bond condition violations, when those violations involved violence or sexual assault.

The following is an abridged version. The full text is available at: statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/CR/htm/CR.56A.htm

If you are a victim of a crime listed above, the guardian of a victim, or a close relative of a deceased victim, you are entitled to the following rights within the criminal justice system.

- (1) The right to receive adequate law enforcement protection from harm or threats resulting from your cooperation with prosecution efforts.
- (2) The right to have the magistrate consider your safety (or the safety of the victim's family) when setting the amount of bail for the person accused of the crime.
- (3) If requested, the right to be informed by the attorney representing the state (the prosecutor) of any upcoming court dates, cancellations, or resets at least five days before the scheduled hearing, or as soon as possible; and to be informed of any appellate court decisions.
- (4) If requested, the right to be informed by the law enforcement agency of the offender's right to bail and about criminal investigation procedures (the rules, process, and steps involved); be informed by the prosecutor's office about the procedures in the criminal prosecution process and the justice system, including how plea negotiations, arraignment, restitution, the appeals process, and parole works; and be informed whether the person accused of the crime has complied with any conditions set in their bail.
- (5) The right to provide an agency conducting a presentencing investigation (community supervi-

sion and corrections department) with relevant information about how the crime has impacted you and your family (emotionally, financially, physically, etc.) via testimony, written statement, or any other manner before the judge decides the offender's sentence.

- (6) The right to receive information about the Crime Victims' Compensation program, including what expenses or costs can be covered (medical bills, counseling, lost wages, etc.), how much money might be available for compensation or reimbursement, eligibility requirements, and how to apply. Victims of sexual assault also have the right to receive information about payment for a forensic medical exam and coverage for any ongoing medical care related to the assault that is provided within 30 days after the exam; and, if requested, be referred to available social service agencies that can offer more help or support (counseling, shelter, advocacy, etc.).
- (7) If requested, the right to be informed about parole procedures (the rules, process, and steps involved); participate in the parole process, including attending parole hearings and submitting protest materials; provide information to the Board to be considered before deciding whether to grant parole; be notified of any upcoming parole hearings concerning the offender; and be notified of the offender's release on parole, including the county where the offender will live, and any non-confidential (public) conditions of parole, such as if the offender is not allowed to go near your home or place of work or is required to complete a battering intervention and prevention program (for family violence cases), as well as to be notified if the offender is charged with a new crime while on parole, if a warrant is issued for the offender's arrest, or if the offender's parole is revoked.
- (8) The right to be provided with a safe and separate waiting area before and during court proceedings that is away from the person accused of the crime, their family, and other witnesses. If a separate waiting area is not available, other safeguards should be taken to minimize your contact with the offender, the offender's relatives, and witnesses.
- (9) The right to the prompt return of any of your property that is held by a law enforcement agency or the prosecutor as evidence, but only when that property is no longer required as evidence.
- (10) If requested, the right to have the prosecutor notify your employer that your cooperation and testimony are necessary in a court proceeding that may

require you to be absent from work.

- (11) The right to request victim-offender mediation coordinated by the victim services division of the Department of Criminal Justice.
 - (12) The right to be informed of the uses of a victim impact statement and the statement's purpose in the criminal justice system, to complete a victim impact statement, and to have your victim impact statement considered by the prosecutor and the judge before sentencing or before a plea agreement is accepted; and to have your victim impact statement considered by the Board before the offender is released on parole.
 - (13) For a victim of sexual assault, or a victim of assault who is younger than 17 years of age or whose case involves family violence, the right to have the court consider how a continuance (postponement of a scheduled trial, hearing, or court appearance) requested by the offender will impact you. If the continuance is requested by the prosecutor or by the offender's attorney, the court must state on the record the reason for granting or denying the continuance.
 - (14) If the offense is a capital felony (punishable by the death penalty) and if the court has approved costs for a defense-initiated victim outreach specialist, the right to receive a written explanation of defense-initiated victim outreach by mail from the court; not be contacted by the victim outreach specialist unless you (or the guardian of the victim or close relative of a deceased victim) provides a written notice to the court consenting to the contact; and designate a victim service provider to receive all communications from a victim outreach specialist acting on behalf of any person.
- You have the right to be present at all public court proceedings related to the crime, given that the judge in the case provides approval.
- The prosecutor's office, and the sheriff, police, or other law enforcement agency must ensure, to the extent possible, that you are provided the rights granted by Ch. 56A. Rights of Crime Victims, and that you receive an explanation of these rights if you request to receive that information.
- You may designate an advocate who can obtain information regarding parole proceedings and the offender's release on parole (section 7) on your behalf.
- A Victim Services Professional with the Texas Department of Public Safety is available to assist you in exercising these rights.**

Your Rights and Options as a Survivor of Family Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, Trafficking, Harassment, Terroristic Threat, and Certain Sexual Offenses

It is a crime for any person, including a current or former member of your family, to cause you, your child, or any other household member physical injury or harm. Please tell the investigating peace officer if you or a child, elderly, or disabled individual has been injured, or if you feel you are going to be in danger when the officer leaves, or at a later time.

You have the right to ask your local law enforcement agency to file a criminal complaint against the person committing violence against you or a family member. If the offender is arrested, you also have the right to ask the arresting officer to request a Magistrate's Order for Emergency Protection on your behalf. Victims of family violence, sexual assault, stalking, trafficking, and other similar offenses may also request the use of a pseudonym (a fake name) to be used in all criminal justice documents. Additionally, victims and guardians may apply for a court order to protect you and your family.

If you feel unsafe, getting support can help you understand your options and feel safer. When ending an abusive relationship or seeking help, threats or violence can increase. Some warning signs of increased risk may include jealousy, controlling finances or your movements, isolating you from friends or family, verbal abuse, threats to harm or kill you, and physical abuse, including strangulation. If you are in immediate danger, call 911 right away.

You are not alone. There are resources and support to help you. Scan the QR code to learn more.

