



# Phrases that Work in Trauma-Informed Victim-Centric Writing

Ease the financial burden incurred by persons impacted by crime and witnesses of crime when other resources are exhausted  
.....

Take your time and complete the entire application, printing clearly. Sign every place where a signature is requested. Revisiting stressful or traumatic events can be distressing, leading to an incomplete application  
.....

Dear ..., you are receiving this letter because you have filed a claim for victims' compensation with the ... Program. Please read through carefully and slowly. Being a person that's been impacted by a crime can potentially be activating / or cause distressing reactions, and the letter/correspondence contains essential information.  
.....

**Or**

Being a person impacted by crime can cause overwhelming feelings or reactions. Please take your time and read through the documents below carefully and thoroughly, as it contains important information regarding the claim for compensation.  
.....

"You may want to visit our website@.... for additional information on ... (list things they will be finding by visiting your website)." Some ideas are your rights, how to access help in your county, information on how being a victim of crime may impact you, information to help you understand the steps in the criminal or juvenile justice system, etc.  
.....

The claim for \_\_\_benefits was thoroughly reviewed, and it was determined that based on the .... State Crime Victim Comp program guidelines, the claim does not meet the necessary eligibility requirements for compensation  
.....

Please know it is the goal of the office to ease the financial burden associated with,...

Dear ..., you are receiving this letter because you have filed a claim for victims' compensation with the ... Program. Please read through carefully and slowly. Being a person that's been impacted by a crime can potentially activating, cause distressing reactions, and the letter/ correspondence contains important information  
.....

Provide a brief statement explaining why you feel that the claim SHOULD BE Considered for compensation.  
.....

Crime Victims Compensation Program (CVCP) has received the application filed for compensation. After careful review and consideration, we are able to inform you that the your claim has been **APPROVED or . (falls within guidelines for compensation)**  
.....

The current status of your claim is OPEN. This Open status means that you may continue to submit eligible request(s) for compensation benefits. Within the limits of each categorical cap, the Program offers benefits for medical, counseling, funeral, crime scene sanitization and economic support categories up to the Program Cap of \$25,000.



# The OVC VOCA Center

The OVC Center for VOCA Administrators

A Benefits Statement is enclosed for your review. The Benefits Statement lists all of the bills submitted and the status of each bill. We hope pur hope that these funds will assist with easing some of the financial burden that has resulted from being a (a person impacted by violent crime)

We have trained Advocates that are here to help. Please contact us if you need assistance in obtaining the required documentation. Once you have submitted the additional documents required, we will continue reviewing the request and determining program eligibility.

Although we have received some of the required documentation, there is additional information that we needed in order to make a determination regarding the your request for Economic Support benefits.

Take your time and complete the entire application, printing clearly. Sign every place where a signature is requested. Revisiting stressful or traumatic events can be overwhelming, leading to an incomplete application,

If you do not have some or all of the required documentation (such as a police report), you may still submit a signed application to begin the claim review process. The Your claim will be listed as incomplete and we will follow up with you for the additional documents that are needed.

You may also apply even if no known offender. While the incident must be reported to law enforcement or an investigative agency (DFCS, APS, the courts, medical authorities, or the school system), an offender's arrest and/or prosecution is not a program or eligibility requirement.

The ... regrets that you faced circumstances that prompted you to apply for compensation. While we recognize the devastating impact of violent crime, our decisions are guided by state statutes and board rules which provide specific guidelines to qualify for the compensation program. .

This office thoroughly reviewed the claim for compensation for injuries resulting from being impacted by violent crime. Based on our review, we have concluded that you are an eligible claimant under the Victims of Violent Crime Compensation Act. However, one or more the expenses submitted do not fall within the guidelines for compensation and are not eligible for reimbursement. We have therefore denied these expenses as of the date of this letter. See below for more information on covered expenses

You may be asked to complete a medical release form when requesting medical or counseling benefits. Submitting the release with your Complete Application Packet may expedite processing.

We are the payor of last resort. We cover expenses not paid by insurance, including Medicaid/Medicare or other monetary resources.

Benefits received are based on eligible expenses that fall within the program's guidelines, and itemized bills must be submitted with your application for review.

According to the information provided this claim does not fall within the guidelines. The information provided in the application packet does not meet one or more statutory requirements for consideration as a victim of a violent crime. Therefore, .... law prohibits .... from providing any assistance in this matter

Although it may be difficult to understand the statutory limitations of a compensation program, please be advised that the outcome of the application does not diminish the significance of your experience as a person impacted by crime. You may want to visit our website at ... for additional information."

Please note that your assigned claim number is also listed in the upper right-hand corner of this letter. You will need to provide us with this number when you contact our Office. All information that the Victim Compensation & Assistance Program receives and maintains as a part of our work is confidential and will not be released unless you authorize us to do so by providing this claim number when you contact us or by giving this number to anyone you wish for us to speak to regarding your claim.

We recognize this may be a very difficult time

We recognize that no amount of money can ever compensate for a violent crime. Nevertheless, we hope that the compensation will help ease some of the financial burdens on you and your family. If you need other assistance or information about crime victim services, please do not hesitate to contact...

Additional materials submitted with this Request for Administrative Reconsideration are:

The Division of Victim Services received the crime victims' compensation application and has started the claims review process. A thorough review of an application to determine eligibility for compensation takes time and includes verifying all information on the application before making a determination. We are currently awaiting:

- A. Law Enforcement Documentation
- B.

### **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO APPEAL THIS DETERMINATION**

Payor of last resort

Define terms

Warm-up letter

Determination

Replace acknowledgement and award when possible

## WARM UP LETTER IDEAS

**Dear ...,**

The ..... regrets that you faced circumstances that prompted you to apply to the ....compensation program. You are receiving this letter because an application to the ... program has been received or you have filed a claim for victims' compensation with the ... Program. Please read through all the material below carefully and slowly. Being a person that's been impacted by a crime can potentially be activating / or cause distressing reactions, and the letter/correspondence contains essential information

State/federal statutes and requirements govern a compensation program and often require verification of the crime and financial losses... you may be asked to submit supporting documentation with the application. We may be able to help collect these reports ...

The program strives to ease the financial burden due to being a person impacted by crime and here is an introduction to the compensatory losses claimants can apply for...

- **Lost wages**
- **Counseling...**

We are a payor of last resort which means.....in the meantime, please save copies of bills and receipts to expedite the process. More information will follow once a determination has been made on the application ...

The compensation application process takes time and has various steps before (time line if it can be shared) determination and future correspondences may contain legal and technical language. We are here to help ... You may want to visit our website@.... for additional information on ... (list things they will be finding by visiting your website)." Some ideas are your rights, how to access help in your county, information on how being a victim of crime may impact you, information to help you understand the steps in the criminal or juvenile justice system, etc

- **It will be helpful to keep your claim # on hand and use this # each time you contact the office**
- **Please be sure to sign any forms that request a signature**

Please know it is the goal of the program to support persons impacted by crime whenever possible and

**Sign with detailed contact info...**