

Financial assistance for people affected by homicide

If you have been affected by a homicide, we are sorry for your loss and want to be able to help you recover. We may be able to give financial assistance to close family members and financial dependants of people who have died as a result of violence or been killed by a dangerous driver.

Specialist support services

Queensland Homicide Victims Support Group provides statewide specialist support to people who have experienced a homicide in their family. They can also provide information about the what to expect during the investigation and subsequent trial and handling media enquiries. You can call them 24 hours on 1800 774 744.

You can ask the funeral director to help you apply for funeral assistance. We provide optional training for funeral directors about helping families after a homicide.

Related victim claims

The deceased person's **partner, parents, children, siblings** and **financial dependents** can apply for financial assistance if they had a close personal relationship with the deceased at the time of their death.

We can also consider applications from a person who was the deceased person's **parent, sibling** or **child** under Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander custom.

You can apply for financial assistance if:

- the homicide was committed in Queensland
- the cause of death was;
 - murder
 - manslaughter
 - dangerous operation of a motor vehicle (e.g. car, bus, truck or motorbike) causing death
 - dangerous operation of a motor vessel (e.g. boat or jet ski) causing death.

Close family members

You will need to provide a document that confirms your relationship to the deceased person. Please provide 1 or more of the following:

- a copy of the relevant birth certificate(s)
- copies of a marriage license or shared bills, bank accounts, mortgage documents or rental agreements (partners)

- a copy of a shared Medicare card
- a copy of the deceased person's will
- a copy of the death notice (detailing family members).

If you are making a claim under Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander custom, you should provide:

- a letter from a community Elder or justice group that explains your relationship to the deceased.

If needed, you could also provide copies of dated photos of family events, social media screenshots or telephone/messaging records to show you communicated regularly.

Financial dependants

A financial dependant is a person who is (or was) entirely or substantially dependant on the income of the deceased person at the time of their death.

You do not need to also be a close family member, but you may be. See Claiming dependency for more details.

Special conditions and limitations

We must consider the cause of death when we are assessing applications.

We may not be able to finalise the assessment if the victim is a **missing person** or the cause of death is **unknown** or **not yet determined**. If this is the case, you can complete the application form at any time, but we may need to defer making our decision until after:

- the coroner or police determine the person has more likely than not died from an offence listed above
- police charge a person with an offence listed above
- a cause of death certificate is issued under the *Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003* detailing an offence listed above.

We cannot pay financial assistance if the cause of death was:

- an accident or suicide
- because of dangerous use of a bicycle, skateboard, foot scooter, mobility device
- because of dangerous use of non-motorised watercraft (e.g. kayak, canoe, surfboard, paddle board or similar).

Payments

If your application is approved, we may give you a one-off distress payment of up to \$10,000.

If you were a financial dependent of the deceased person, we may also be able to pay a one-off dependency payment of **up to \$20,000**.

- This payment is to recognise the loss of wages they were earning or benefits they were receiving – and would have continued to get if they had not died.
- If more than 1 person was a financial dependant of the deceased person, the \$20,000 payment will be shared between the dependants.

We may also repay the cost of a range of expenses to help you recover. Please read the relevant factsheet about claiming other expenses.

How to claim

To claim financial assistance, you need to:

- complete the related victim application form
- attach any close family member document from the list above
- attach receipts or invoices for each expense you are claiming and complete the relevant expenses section of the application form (see relevant factsheet)
- provide identity document(s)
- Send your application and other documents to:
 - VictimAssist@justice.qld.gov.au
 - Victim Assist Queensland, GPO Box 149, Brisbane, Qld 4001.

Please note, you must tell us if you have received or may receive any money from another person, agency, organisation, insurer or fund because of the homicide (including community donations). You can do this by completing the relevant payments section of the application form.

Payments process

If your claim is approved, we will send you a 'Notice of Decision'. This notice will list what we have agreed to pay for, who we will be paying and the conditions on the payment.

Please don't tell someone that we will pay for something before you get the 'Notice of Decision'. The 'Notice of Decision' will say if we will pay the cost or not.

Lump sums

If you are an adult, and your claim is approved, lump sum payments (distress and dependency), will be paid directly to you.

If you are an adult with impaired capacity for a prescribed financial matter and your claim is approved, and an administrator or enduring power of attorney has been appointed, the one-off lump sum payment will be paid to the administrator or enduring power of attorney.

If you are a child (under 18), and your claim is approved, lump sum payments (distress and dependency), will be paid directly to the Public Trustee of Queensland to be held in trust for you until you turn 18.

Timeframe

Due to the high number of claims already queued, it may be many months before we're able to assess your application and pay approved expenses.

If you have an urgent expense, and meet the conditions for claiming urgent expenses, we may prioritise the assessment of these expenses. If we decide the expenses don't meet these conditions, we'll let you know. Non urgent expenses will be queued for general assessment within normal timeframes.

Other factsheets you may need

You should also read the following instructions:

- Reporting requirements for all applicants
- Providing information about your injuries
- Prove your identity when you apply
- Claiming urgent expenses

All instructions, forms and reports talked about in this factsheet are available at www.qld.gov.au/victimssapply.

If you do not have internet access, please call 1300 546 587 during business hours and request the information via post.
