

# Special assistance payments for primary victims

A primary victim of violence can apply for a special assistance payment through Victim Assist. This is a one-off lump sum recognition payment.

## Who can claim?

You can claim this payment if:

- you have been directly injured, by
- an act of violence, that
- was committed in Queensland.

You must report the violence to a relevant agency before you apply.

See *Reporting requirements* for more details.

## Types of crimes

An act of violence is a crime where a person hurts a person. It can include:

- Child abuse (physical or sexual)
- Domestic and family violence
- Sexual violence (such as rape or sexual assault)
- Physical assault (such as being choked, hit, kicked, cut, burned, poisoned or restrained)
- Being threatened with a weapon or with force
- Stalking, kidnapping or deprivation of liberty
- Dangerous driving causing grievous bodily harm
- Attempted murder
- Murder, manslaughter or dangerous driving causing death.

## People affected by domestic violence

A person that is the main victim of domestic violence can apply for financial assistance as a **primary victim**.

Children and other family members, who are **living** in a home where domestic violence happens, can also apply for financial assistance as a **primary victim** if – the violence was directed **at you, your parent, your caregiver or other family members who live with you.**

You might have:

- been physically abused by the offender
- been threatened or coerced by the offender
- been emotionally, psychologically or economically abused by the offender
- had your property deliberately damaged by the offender
- been otherwise restrained, controlled or dominated by the offender in a frightening way, including:
  - having to hide from the offender because you were frightened
  - fearing for the safety of another person or an animal that the offender was threatening.
- comforted or provided assistance to a person who has been physically abused
- observed bruising or other injuries of a person who has been physically abused
- cleaning up a site after property has been damaged
- being present at a domestic violence incident that is attended by police officers
- experiencing financial stress arising from economic abuse.

## Witnesses

**A bystander** who witnesses violence may **apply as a witness**. Witnesses can claim some recovery expenses, but they cannot claim a special assistance payment. This may include people who:

- see or hear an assault
- overhear domestic violence such as threats of physical abuse or repeated derogatory taunts (including racial taunts).

For more information see: Claim recovery expenses – after witnessing violence

## How much is the special assistance payment?

The amount you get depends on the type of crime that was committed against you.

In some cases, the seriousness of your injuries and your circumstances will be taken into consideration. We will need to assess your claim to work out what amount you will get. For example, a victim of unlawful stalking may get \$1000 but a victim of rape may get \$10,000.

The maximum amount that can be paid under 'special assistance' is \$10,000.

## How to claim special assistance

To claim financial assistance, you need to report the violence, and:

- complete the approved application form

- attach information about your injuries
- provide identity document(s)
- Send your application and other documents to:
  - [VictimAssist@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:VictimAssist@justice.qld.gov.au)
  - Victim Assist Queensland, GPO Box 149, Brisbane, Qld 4001.

### Claiming other recover expenses

You can also ask us to pay for recovery expenses. A primary victim can claim:

- medical, counselling and travel to medical and counselling appointments
- damage to clothing
- legal expenses
- loss of earnings
- other recovery expenses.

If you are claiming an expense you will need to provide receipts, invoices or a treatment plan for each expense you are claiming.

### 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.

### Special assistance payments are one-off lump sum payments

In most cases, if you are an adult, and your claim is approved, special assistance will be paid directly to you (by direct deposit or cheque).

However, 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 these conditions, we may prioritise the assessment of the urgent 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

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*All instructions, forms and reports talked about in this factsheet are available at [www.qld.gov.au/victimsapply](http://www.qld.gov.au/victimsapply).*

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

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