



Victims Assistance Unit

Guideline 6

Granting Financial Assistance for Security Under Exceptional Circumstances

This guideline is issued pursuant to section 131 of the *Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009* (the Act) for Government assessors on the exercise of their powers in assessing claims for financial assistance. Nothing in this guideline supersedes or overrides the requirements of the legislation.

1. This guideline describes how reasonable security expenses should be determined by an assessor in a grant of financial assistance.
2. An assessor may consider reasonable costs associated with securing a victim's place of residence or business or to relocate an applicant in order to re-establish personal safety in the aftermath of an act of violence. "Exceptional circumstances" must exist as required by sections 39, 42, 45 and 49 of the Act. An assessor may consider an applicant's special needs in determining a grant of assistance but must be satisfied that the expense will significantly help the applicant recover from the act of violence.
3. Grants of this nature are limited to goods and services to upgrade the physical security of the applicant's premises or to increase their personal safety but will not include the purchase of animals (e.g. guard dogs).
4. An assessor may make a grant of financial assistance for safety-related expenses including:
 - The installation of security doors, alarm systems or motion-sensor lights;
 - Personal security devices;
 - Lock changes; and
 - Repair to re-establish security (e.g. replacing a damaged door or windows at the premises where the applicant continues to reside).

5. An assessor may request more than one quote for security upgrades where the costs exceed \$5,000 before making a grant of assistance. However, multiple quotes may not be required in circumstances where there are limited service providers available due to the nature or urgency of the service or geographical location of the premises.
6. If an applicant requests financial assistance in relation to a number of security measures, an assessor may refuse some items if others are considered capable of re-establishing the applicant's sense of safety to an appropriate degree (i.e. Victim Assist Queensland is not obliged to approve every requested security measure, particularly if some will be redundant).

John Sosso
Director-General
Department of Justice and Attorney-General