

Claim funeral assistance after a homicide

Having to plan a funeral is always difficult. We're sorry for your loss and want to be able to help. We can help pay funeral expenses if a person has 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 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.

Who can claim

You can claim funeral expenses if you are the person responsible for paying the funeral costs. You do not need to be a family member of the deceased person, but you may be.

We can help with funeral expenses 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.

Special conditions

We may not be able to pay financial assistance if the victim is a missing person or the cause of the person's death is unknown. 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.

Approved costs

You can claim **up to \$8,000**. We can cover a range of expenses associated with a funeral or cremation. These expenses may include:

- embalming and mortuary care
- Funeral Director's professional service fee
- funeral celebrant fee
- coffin and floral arrangement for coffin
- cremation costs or council cemetery fee (internment, grave or burial fee, grave liner)
- venue hire
- funeral notice and service booklet
- certified death certificates and registration of death.

A close family member may also be able to claim other expenses, including:

- the cost of repatriating the deceased person for funeral, cremation or burial purposes
- the purchase of an urn, wall memorial, plaque and tombstone.

How to claim

To claim funeral expenses, you must:

- apply for financial assistance using the funeral assistance application form
- attach copies of the funeral invoice and/or receipts for funeral expenses
- 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.

You must tell us – if any portion of the funeral costs have been paid by another person, agency, organisation, insurer or fund. You can do this by completing the relevant payments section of the application form.

Payment process

If your claim is approved, we will send you a 'Notice of Decision'. The 'Notice of Decision' will say what costs we will pay.

Timeframe

We always prioritise the assessment of funeral application, but it may still take several weeks to assess the claim and repay the cost of approved expenses.

Limitations

We cannot pay funeral costs 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).

We cannot pay for:

- costs associated with a wake
- food or beverage expenses
- additional keepsake urns
- non-essential funeral costs like balloons, doves or car hire.

Other factsheets you may need

You should also read the following instructions:

- 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/victimscopy.

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