



Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency

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Shapiro-Davis Administration Highlights Importance of Proposed 2025-26 State Budget Investment for Victims Compensation and the Critical Role of the Program for Victims and Survivors of Crime

The Shapiro-Davis Administration proposed a \$9 million investment for the Victims Compensation Assistance Program in the 2025-26 budget to provide critical funding for victims of crime

Since 2023, PCCD has paid more than \$29 million for over 16,000 claims to financially support victims of crime with medical costs, counseling, relocation, and more



Lancaster, PA — Today, the **Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD)**, **Victim/Witness Services of the Lancaster District Attorney's Office**, and other local victim service providers highlighted the importance of supporting victims and survivors of crime and to encourage support for the Shapiro-Davis Administration's proposed \$9 million investment in the Victims Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP) in the 2025-26 state budget.

“No crime victim should have to worry about how they’ll afford medical bills. No family should have to struggle with funeral expenses for a loved one lost to violence. And no sexual assault survivor should have to worry about costs of counseling to overcome their trauma,” said **Kathy Buckley, Director of PCCD’s Office of Victims’ Services**. “That’s why VCAP is so essential— it’s more than just financial assistance; it’s a lifeline. We need to continue raising awareness about the vital impact of this program and the importance of the Shapiro-Davis budget investment in VCAP to ensure it remains available for Pennsylvanians who need it most.”

VCAP serves as a critical financial lifeline for people who have experienced crime victimization. Each year, the program receives an average of 12,000 claims for eligible expenses including medical and counseling expenses, loss of earnings, loss of support, stolen cash, relocation, funeral costs, crime scene cleanup, and more. Over the past five years, PCCD has paid more than 67,000 VCAP claims totaling \$67 million in eligible expenses for citizens across all 67 Pennsylvania counties.

In recent years, VCAP’s expenses have exceeded deposits into the fund, depleting it to a critically low level. Governor Shapiro’s proposed \$9 million investment in VCAP for the 2025-26 state budget is pivotal to help stabilize the fund, ensuring continued support for Pennsylvanians when they need it most.

“Every year, Lancaster County Victim Witness Services files VCAP claims for victims of all types of crimes, from harassment to homicide. Regardless of the crime, many victims sustain financial losses which can very quickly impact their lives, leaving them in a state of crisis,” said **Deanna Weaver, Director of Victim/Witness Services**. “We rely on VCAP as a critical resource to address these financial burdens in hopes that we can prevent housing and food instability, emotional despair, damaged credit, and lifelong effects of trauma.”

[Lancaster Victim Witness Services](#) provides information, support, and advocacy to victims of crime and witnesses for trials and submits the largest number of victim compensation claims in Lancaster County. In Lancaster alone, VCAP has paid more than 2,400 compensation claims totaling over \$3 million in expenses in the last five years.

Supporting Survivors of Sexual Assault

“The Victims Compensation Assistance Program is crucial for victim-survivors of sexual abuse, harassment, and assault in Lancaster County. Our clients rely on the program to cover the costs of medical care, transportation to our services, and ongoing therapeutic support, among other things,” said **Mandy Billman, Director of YWCA Lancaster’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Counseling Center**. “Funding services to address the rights and well-being of victim-survivors is critical.”

The [YWCA Lancaster’s](#) Sexual Assault Prevention and Counseling Center is the designated rape crisis center in Lancaster County. The center provides no-cost

counseling, therapy, medical advocacy, legal advocacy, and access to a 24-hour sexual assault hotline for victim-survivors and non-offending individuals impacted by sexual abuse, harassment, and assault. The center also provides prevention and education initiatives through empowerment groups and other outreach services to Lancaster County schools, churches, community groups, businesses, and organizations. In the last three years, PCCD has paid over 1,000 sexual assault counseling claims, totaling more than \$4 million statewide.

Supporting Survivors of Gun Violence

Some expenses incurred by victims of gun violence and covered by VCAP include medical and counseling expenses, loss of earnings, funeral costs, loss of support, relocation, crime scene clean-up, and transportation costs. In the last three years, VCAP has paid over 1,800 claims, where the incident involved gun violence, totaling more than \$9.5 million statewide.

Supporting Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse

The [Lancaster County Children's Alliance](#) serves as the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) for Lancaster County and provides a coordinated, evidence-based response for children experiencing abuse. For cases of child sexual abuse, CACs often file claims for forensic rape exams to obtain evidence against the perpetrator. VCAP covers the costs of forensic rape exams as well as counseling and medical costs for children who have experienced abuse.

Supporting Survivors of Domestic Violence

[Community Action Partnership](#) is the local domestic violence program for Lancaster County providing a 24/7 hotline and text line, emergency shelter, counseling, children's programming, legal advocacy and representation, and transitional housing. The VCAP program can provide vital support for victims and survivors of domestic violence including covering costs for relocation, medical and counseling expenses, loss of earnings, and more. In the last three years, PCCD has paid over 860 claims, related to domestic violence incidents, totaling more than \$2 million statewide.

For more information on VCAP, visit the [PCCD website](#). If you or someone you know was affected by a crime, visit the [PA Crime Victims website](#) for information and resources.

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