



# Crime Victim Compensation

- History and Background

  - State Program Development

  - VOCA

- The Basics

  - Rules, Benefits, Funding

  - Outreach, Processing, Decision Making

- Trends

  - In Coverage, Eligibility, Costs



# Crime Victim Compensation

## Overview

1. Development (History)
2. Size and Structure
3. VOCA: Federal and State Involvement



## First, some facts . . .

- Compensation programs help 200,000 victims with \$400 million annually
- Most money – state and federal – comes from offenders, not taxpayers
- States operate under state law with supplemental federal funding:
- Two thirds is State money: \$260 m.
- One third is VOCA grants: \$130 m.



# Development

- New Zealand and Great Britain led the way – early 1960s
- California first in U.S. – 1965
- Texas was the 29<sup>th</sup> – 1980
- More than 45 states had a program by the time VOCA was passed – 1984
- Most European Union countries, Japan, Australia – but rare elsewhere



# Size and Structure

- California and Texas the biggest – close to \$50 million
- New York, Florida, Georgia: 15 – 25 million
- 5 states pay nearly half of all comp
- Median is about \$4 million
- 16 AGs, 11 CJ agencies, rest scattered in various govt. depts.



# Crime Victim Compensation

## The Basics

1. Benefits
2. Requirements
3. Procedures



# Joan and Amber

- Jessica is severely assaulted at home by husband. Rae, their six-year-old daughter, witnesses and also is hurt. Husband damages TV and car, kills dog.
- Jessica and Rae seek medical care and counseling. Because of injuries, Joan can't work for a month. She'd like to get a new TV. And they want to bury their pet and get a new one.



# Benefits

- Medical care
- Mental health therapy
- Lost wages
- Lost support
- Funeral
- In some states, Native American traditional healing
- Miscellaneous





# Requirements

- Victim of violent crime: assault, rape, murder, drunk driving, child abuse, domestic violence
- Report to police and cooperate
- File timely application
- No contributory conduct
- Must be unreimbursed expense



# Procedures

- File timely application in state where crime occurred
- Provide requested documentation: diagnosis, treatment plan, insurance info; EOBs
- Program reviews police report and documentation, makes decision
- Payment sent – usually directly



# Special Issues

- Payer of last resort: use collateral resources first
- Pre-existing conditions: generally not covered
- Out-of-state crimes – other states, or foreign countries
- Many other resources – VOCA programs, other government benefits



# Trends

- Sexual Assault Victims

  - States become more flexible

- Domestic Violence Victims

  - States add benefits

- Criminal Participation

  - Some offenses may not result in denial

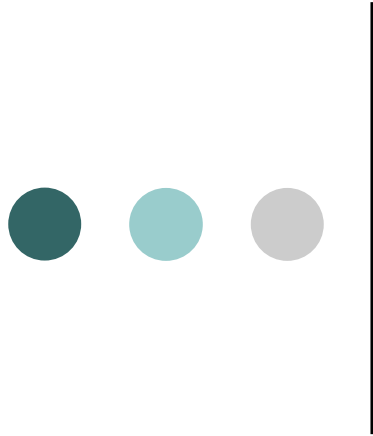
- Nonviolent Offenses

  - Property Crimes: Treating mental injury?



# Some Myths?

- Non-reporting victims aren't eligible?
- Documentation is burdensome?
- Payment takes forever?

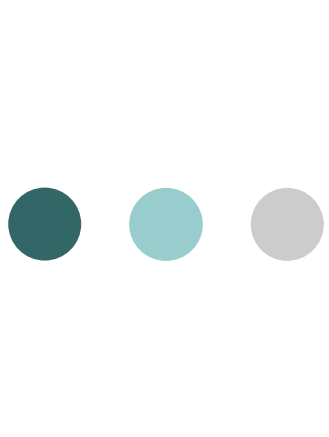


# Outreach

Basic Strategies

More Advanced: Social Media, PSA

Relationships with allied professionals



# Processing

Variations in Approaches

Software and databases

New Advances: Paperless, Online  
Applications, Online Lookup, Web-  
based



# Decision Making

Boards and Administrative-Based  
Appeals