

## Connecting with Your Community: Blog Posts

If you are interested in sharing more in-depth communications with your community via your website and social media, a blog is a great way to do it. [WordPress](#) and [Blogger](#) are two excellent platforms to host your blog. Many websites can also be constructed to host a blog space. You can post as frequently as you wish, but a good goal is once a month. Be sure to link to your blog and share new blog posts on your social media pages, such as Facebook and Twitter. Use the sample blogs below to develop your own blog posts on crime victim compensation and other topics.

### 5 Steps to an Engaging Blog Post

- Make sure to target your audience by using an appropriate reading level and relevant content.
- Check your facts; use statistics that come from reliable sources such as the [NCVCRW Crime and Victimization fact sheets](#).
- State your main points in your introduction and again in the conclusion.
- Limit your post to no more than 750 words, although many blog posts are much shorter.
- Time when you share the blog post to coincide with events and current news.

### Sample Blog: For a General Audience (National Level)

#### How Crime Victim Compensation Can Help

Every state has a [crime victim compensation program](#), however eligibility, reimbursable costs, maximum claim, and application procedures vary by state or county. These programs help more than 200,000 victims of crime each year across the country pay for costs related to crime. While no amount of money can undo the harm caused by crime, crime victim compensation allows victims to focus on their physical and emotional recovery, with less financial stress.

#### What You Need to Know

1. Generally, **victims of violent crimes are eligible for compensation**. This often includes assault, domestic violence, rape, child abuse, drunk driving, and more. Family members of homicide victims are also eligible to apply. Parents or legal guardians of child victims can file a compensation claim on their behalf. In some cases, witnesses are also eligible to apply.
2. When compensation staff look at claims, they often evaluate whether the victim
  - Reported the crime to law enforcement
  - Provided reasonable cooperation with law enforcement
  - Filed their claim in a timely manner
  - Incurred expenses that were not covered by insurance or another public benefit program
3. **Most compensation programs do not cover costs related to property damage or loss**. Eligible expenses often include, but are not limited to the following:
  - Medical treatment, including sexual assault exams
  - Counseling bills
  - Funeral and burial expenses
  - Lost wages for dependents in homicides

4. Victims must apply for compensation in the state where the crime happened.
5. Each state sets a limit on the amount of compensation available per victim.

### **How to File for Compensation**

Application processes vary by program. Some states accept electronic applications while some accept only mail applications. Speak with a local crime victim advocate to learn more about the application process, eligibility requirements, and eligible benefits in your state.

Every compensation program has a website where you can learn more about the application process, eligibility requirements, and available benefits in your state. Contact your state or county compensation program or speak with a local crime victim advocate for assistance in applying.

### **Sample Blog: For a Law Enforcement Audience (National Level)**

#### **You are the Gatekeeper to Services for Victims**

As law enforcement officers, you are a vital component of the critical justice system, especially because you are usually the first, and often the only, professional who speaks with victims after a crime. You provide a vital connection between the justice system and victim support services. Crime victim compensation can be a valuable resource for victims of violent crime and you are well placed to make sure victims know about it.

[Crime victim compensation](#) provides financial assistance to victims of violent crime, including but not limited to assault, domestic violence, rape, child abuse, and drunk driving. This also includes family members of homicide victims. In some programs, witnesses are also eligible to apply. Compensation usually does not cover expenses related to property damage or loss. Every state has a program, although eligibility, reimbursable benefits, maximum claim amounts, and application procedures vary by state or county. The vast majority of the money used to fund these programs comes from offender fees and fines, rather than taxpayer dollars, and about a third of the funding comes from the federal Crime Victims Fund. While no amount of money can undo the harm caused by crime, compensation programs allow victims to focus on their physical and emotional recovery, with less financial stress.

Compensation program staff make determinations on claims based on a variety of factors including police reports, contributory conduct, cooperation with law enforcement, and whether the victim/claimant has other payment sources available to cover the costs. However, compensation programs may define contributory conduct and cooperation differently than law enforcement departments, so it is important to refer every victim of crime to the compensation program.

You can also refer victims to local advocates who can help them apply for compensation benefits, understand their rights, and navigate the criminal justice system. By doing this, law enforcement officers demonstrate their investment in the well-being of their community and support the recovery of the victims who depend on them. To learn more about crime victim compensation and what you can do to help, visit [\[link to project website\]](#).

Not sure where to find an advocate in your area? Contact the [VictimConnect Resource Center](#).