

COMPENSATION AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

At Hertfordshire Beacon, we recognise that being a victim of crime can be difficult enough, without the potential threat of financial loss. Individual injuries, loss of earnings and damage to property can make a bad experience particularly tough. Here at Beacon our trained case managers will help guide you through the claims process by offering all the practical and emotional support we can. If you are a victim of crime and have suffered/are suffering financial loss, there are schemes that you may be eligible for. These include Criminal Injury Compensation Authority (CICA), the Hardship Fund and court-awarded compensation. Eligibility factors considered in order to claim compensation are:

- You are a victim of crime
- You are a close relative of someone who has died due to a crime
- You witnessed a serious crime, intervened and were seriously injured

Criminal Injuries Compensation (CICA)

If you have been a victim of a violent crime, you may be eligible to apply for compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA). CICA allows you to claim for physical/mental injuries and sexual/physical abuse injuries. You can apply to CICA within 2 years of reporting the crime, providing you have cooperated with investigations. It is always best to report the crime as soon as possible.

Points to make note of:

- The offender does NOT need to have been convicted for you to receive compensation
- The CICA 2012 Scheme (Annex E) lists criminal injuries which compensation is payable
- CICA will gather medical evidence or need medical evidence provided from GPs or other healthcare professionals
- The process of a CICA application can take a long time and will have you speaking about details of the crime again, this may upset you however, we can be here to support you through this.

Information and applications can be accessed on <https://www.gov.uk/claim-compensation-criminal-injury> or through their direct helpline 0300 003 3601.

The Hardship Fund

The Hardship Fund is a government fund for temporary financial support for those in low paid work AND have been unable to work due to being a victim of violent crime. The Hardship Fund is for victims where their injuries are not listed under the Criminal Injuries Compensation 2012 Scheme.

The fund is there to provide temporary financial relief for victims and help reduce some of the stress the crime has caused.

Points to make note of:

- You can only apply for the fund if you have been unable to work for 7 consecutive days because of a violent crime, payment will not cover first 3 days.
- You must NOT be receiving Statutory Sick Pay
- You can apply for Hardship Fund if you earn less than £111 per week
- You must NOT have any unspent criminal convictions

For more information and how to apply for The Hardship Fund you can visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-hardship-fund-a-guide> or call Victim Support on 0808 168 9111.

Court-awarded compensation

If an offender has been convicted of a crime against you, you are able to claim compensation from them. However, with this type of compensation you will need to let the police know you want this form of compensation and what losses you are claiming for.

These could include:

- Personal injury
- Damage to property/Loss from theft
- Loss from fraud
- Medical expenses
- Travel expenses
- Pain and suffering
- Being off work
- Loss, damage or injury caused to or by a stolen vehicle.

The police will pass your request for court-awarded compensation to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). The CPS will ask the court to order the convicted person to pay compensation to you.

Points to make note of:

- The court will set any compensation according to what the offender can afford to pay (this can sometimes not reflect your losses)
- Bear in mind the court may also allow the offender to pay instalments rather than a lump sum.
- The court will collect compensation from the offender and then pass it on to you. You will NOT have any dealings with the offender.

Court Expenses

Attending court can sometimes leave you out of pocket, especially in circumstances where your employer does not have to pay you for the time, you'll take off work. In this instance, you may be able to claim some expenses back. This could include travel expenses, meals, loss of earnings and childcare.

To claim expenses back you should receive a witness expense claim form, a prepaid envelope and a list of your allowable expenses before the trial. If for any reason you have not received these, your solicitor or court official should provide them for you. For more information on making a claim on court expenses please visit:

- <https://www.gov.uk/going-to-court-victim-witness/expenses-for-going-to-court>
- <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/legal-system/going-to-court-as-a-witness1/get-help-and-support-being-a-witness/witness-referral/>