

CHAPTER 95

AN ACT concerning victims of crime and amending, supplementing and repealing various parts of the statutory law.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. Section 2 of P.L.1971, c. 317 (C.52:4B-2) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-2 Definitions.

2. As used in P.L.1971, c.317:

"Agency" means the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency;

"Review Board" or "board" means the Victims of Crime Compensation Review Board established by section 2 of P.L.2007, c.95 (C.52:4B-3.2);

"Child" means an unmarried person who is under 21 years of age and includes a stepchild or an adopted child;

"Dependents" means such relatives of a deceased victim as were wholly or partially dependent upon his income at the time of his death and shall include the child of such victim born after his death;

"Personal injury" means actual bodily harm and includes pregnancy and mental or nervous shock;

"Relative" of any person means his spouse, parent, grandparent, stepfather, stepmother, child, grandchild, brother, sister, half brother, half sister, or spouse's parents;

"Victim" means a person who is injured or killed by any act or omission of any other person which is within the description of any of the offenses specified in section 11 of P.L.1971, c.317.

C.52:4B-3.2 Victims of Crime Compensation Agency; executive director; review board.

2. a. There is hereby established in the Department of the Treasury the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency.

b. The chief executive officer of the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency shall be the executive director, who shall be appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate. The executive director shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Governor may appoint an acting executive director to serve as chief executive officer of the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency, who may be the person serving as chairman of the Victims of Crime Compensation Board on the effective date of P.L.2007, c.95 (C.52:4B-3.2 et al.), and who shall serve as the executive director of the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency until his successor is appointed and qualifies. The executive director shall, in consultation with the Review Board established pursuant to subsection c. of this section, develop, establish and supervise all practices and procedures of the agency.

c. There is hereby established in the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency the Victims of Crime Compensation Review Board which shall be composed of five citizens, to be appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, one of whom shall be designated chairman by, and serve as such at the pleasure of, the Governor. At least one member of the board shall be an attorney admitted to the practice of law in the State of New Jersey and who shall have practiced law in the courts of New Jersey for a minimum of five years. The purpose of the Victims of Crime Compensation Review Board shall be:

- (1) to hear appeals of decisions of the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency involving issues of victim compensation;
- (2) to consult with the executive director in developing, establishing and supervising all practices and procedures of the agency;
- (3) to review individual and supplemental awards to a victim or a victim's family in excess of \$10,000 in the aggregate, and awards of attorney fees for legal representation to victims;
- (4) to review, on at least a bi-monthly basis, information detailing the aggregate claims received and paid by the agency, and the operations of the agency; and
- (5) to review and, if appropriate, approve any rules and regulations, standards, and maximum rates and service limitations for reimbursement proposed by the agency.

d. All the functions of the Violent Crimes Compensation Board and the Victims of Crime Compensation Board are continued in the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency and the Victims of Crime Compensation Review Board. Whenever in any law, rule, regulation, judicial or administrative procedure or otherwise, reference is made to the Violent Crimes Compensation Board or to the Victims of Crime Compensation Board, the same shall mean and refer to the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency or the Victims of Crime Compensation Review Board, as the case may be.

C.52:4B-3.3 Violent Crimes Compensation Board abolished.

3. The Violent Crimes Compensation Board established pursuant to section 3 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-3) is abolished and the terms of the persons serving as members of that board on the effective date of P.L.2007, c.95 (C.52:4B-3.2 et al.) shall cease and determine as of that effective date.

C.52:4B-3.4 Victims of Crime Compensation Review Board, members, terms, no compensation.

4. The term of office of each member of the Victims of Crime Compensation Review Board shall be three years and until the member's successor is appointed and qualifies, except that of the members first appointed one shall be appointed for a term of one year, two for terms of two years and two for terms of three years. All vacancies, except through the expiration of term, shall be filled for the unexpired term only.

Each member of the board shall be eligible for reappointment and any member of the board may be removed by the Governor for inefficiency, neglect of duty or malfeasance in office.

The members of the board shall serve without compensation.

5. Section 5 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-5) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-5 Employment of experts, assistants and employees.

5. The agency is authorized to appoint and fix the duties and compensation of such officers, examiners, and other experts as may be necessary for carrying out its functions under this act, and the agency may, subject to Title 11A of the New Jersey Statutes, "Civil Service," appoint and fix the duties and compensation of such other assistants and employees as are necessary. The compensation fixed pursuant to this section shall be within the limits of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the agency for that purpose.

6. Section 11 of P.L.1995, c.135 (C.52:4B-5.1) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-5.1 Access to criminal history records.

11. The Victims of Crime Compensation Agency is authorized to obtain direct access to criminal history records maintained by the State Bureau of Identification in the Division of the State Police and is hereby designated a criminal justice agency for that purpose.

7. Section 6 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-6) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-6 Principal office; place of conduct of affairs.

6. The principal office of the agency shall be in Trenton, New Jersey, but the agency may sit and conduct its affairs in any place.

8. Section 7 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-7) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-7 Hearings by review board.

7. Hearings on appeals from decisions of the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency involving issues of victim compensation shall be conducted by the Victims of Crime Compensation Review Board in the following manner:

a. Upon an application made to the board under the provisions of P.L.1971, c.317, the board shall fix a time and place for a hearing on such application and shall cause notice thereof to be given to the applicant.

b. For the purpose of carrying out the provisions of P.L.1971, c.317, the board, or any member thereof, may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, and take such testimony as the board or such member may deem advisable. Any member of the board may administer oaths or affirmations to witnesses. The board shall have full powers of subpoena and compulsion of attendance of witnesses and production of documents, except that no subpoena shall be issued except under the signature of a member of the board, and application to any court for aid in enforcing such subpoena may be made in the name of the board by any member thereof. Subpoenas shall be served by any person designated by the board.

c. In any case in which the person entitled to make an application is a child, the application may be made on his behalf by his parent, guardian, or advocate. In any case in which the person entitled to make an application is mentally incompetent, the application may be made on his behalf by his guardian, advocate, or such other individual authorized to administer his estate.

d. Any person having a substantial interest in a proceeding may appear, produce evidence and cross-examine witnesses in person or by his attorney.

e. The board may receive in evidence any statement, document, information, or matter that may in the opinion of the board contribute to its functions under P.L.1971, c.317, but the board shall not be bound by the rules of evidence.

f. If any person has been convicted of any offense with respect to an act or omission on which a claim under P.L.1971, c.317 is based, proof of that conviction shall be taken as conclusive evidence that the offense has been committed, unless an appeal or any proceeding with regard thereto is pending.

9. Section 8 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-8) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-8 Attorney fees and costs.

8. a. (1) The agency may, as a part of any order entered under P.L.1971, c.317, determine and allow reasonable attorney fees and costs, which shall not exceed 15% of the amount awarded as compensation under section 10 of P.L.1971, c.317, to be paid in addition to the amount of such compensation, to the attorney representing the applicant. Notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection, no award for attorney fees shall be less than \$300, unless the agency determines that the attorney has not acted diligently or in good faith representing the claimant.

(2) Where the agency enters an order denying compensation, it may nevertheless allow attorney fees of \$300 to the attorney representing the claimant if the agency determines that the attorney has acted diligently or in good faith representing the claimant.

(3) It shall be unlawful for any such attorney to ask for, contract for or receive any larger sum than the amount so allowed under paragraph (1) or (2) of this subsection.

b. The agency may allow payment up to a maximum of \$1,000, at an hourly rate to be fixed by the agency, to an attorney who provides legal assistance to a victim in any legal matter, other than a decision of the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency involving victim compensation or any related appeal, arising from or related to having been the victim of an offense specified in section 11 of P.L.1971, c.317 provided that the victim is otherwise eligible to make a claim for compensation. Payment under this subsection may be made if and only to the extent that the amount of such payment does not, when combined with the amounts paid or payable to the victim under an order for compensation, exceed the \$25,000 limitation on compensation set forth in section 18 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-18), and requests for payment under this subsection shall be subject to the five-year time limitation set forth in section 18 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-18).

10. Section 19 of P.L.1991, c.329 (C.52:4B-8.1) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-8.1 Development of an informational tracking system.

19. a. The Victims of Crime Compensation Agency, after consultation with the Attorney General, the Department of Corrections, and the Administrative Office of the Courts, on behalf of the county probation divisions and the municipal court clerks, shall continue to develop the existing uniform system for recording all information necessary to ensure proper identification, tracking, collection and disposition of moneys owed for:

- (1) assessments imposed pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1979, c.396 (C.2C:43-3.1);
- (2) fines and restitutions imposed in accordance with provisions of Title 2C of the New Jersey Statutes;
- (3) fees imposed pursuant to N.J.S.2C:35-20;
- (4) penalties imposed pursuant to N.J.S.2C:35-15.

b. The Victims of Crime Compensation Agency shall use the moneys deposited in the Criminal Disposition and Revenue Collection Fund to defray the costs incurred by the agency in developing, implementing, operating and improving the agency's component of the uniform system for tracking and collecting revenues described in subsection a. of this section.

c. The Juvenile Justice Commission established pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1995, c.284 (C.52:17B-170), the Department of Corrections, and the Administrative Office of the Courts, on behalf of the county probation divisions and the municipal court clerks, shall file such reports with the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency as required for the operation of the uniform system described in subsection a. of this section.

d. The Victims of Crime Compensation Agency shall report annually to the Governor, the Attorney General, the Administrative Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Commissioner of the Department of Corrections, the Juvenile Justice Commission and the Legislature on the development, implementation, improvement and effectiveness of the uniform system and on moneys received, deposited and identified as receivable.

11. Section 9 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-9) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-9 Rules and regulations; determination of compensation.

9. In the performance of its functions, the agency is authorized to make rules and regulations prescribing the procedures to be followed in the filing of applications and the proceedings under P.L.1971, c.317, and such other matters as the agency deems appropriate.

In determining the amounts of compensation payable pursuant to P.L.1971, c.317, the agency shall insofar as practicable formulate standards for uniform application of this act and shall take into consideration rates and amounts of compensation payable for injuries and death under other laws of this State and of the United States and the availability of funds appropriated for the purposes of P.L.1971, c.317.

The agency shall establish maximum rates and service limitations for reimbursement for medical and medical related expenses, including counseling. In establishing these rates, the agency shall reflect the medical fee schedules for health care providers established by the Commissioner of Banking and Insurance pursuant to the provisions of section 10 of P.L.1988, c.119 (C.39:6A-4.6). A medical service provider who accepts payment from the agency for a service shall accept the agency's rates as payment in full and shall not accept any payment on account of the service from any other source if the total of payments accepted would exceed the maximum rate set by the agency for that service.

All standards formulated and maximum rates and service limitations for reimbursement established by the agency shall be subject to the prior review and approval of the Review Board.

12. Section 10 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-10) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-10 Persons entitled to compensation; order.

10. In any case in which a person is injured or killed by any act or omission of any other person which is within the description of the offenses listed in section 11 of P.L.1971, c.317, the agency may, upon application, order the payment of compensation in accordance with the provisions of P.L.1971, c.317:

- a. to or on behalf of the victim,
- b. in the case of the personal injury of the victim, where the compensation is for pecuniary loss suffered or expenses incurred by any person responsible for the maintenance of the victim, to that person, or
- c. in the case of the death of the victim, to or for the benefit of the dependents of the deceased victim, or any one or more of such dependents.

In determining whether to make an order under this section, the agency may consider any circumstances it determines to be relevant, including provocation, consent or the behavior of the victim which directly or indirectly contributed to his injury or death, the prior case history, if any, of the victim and any other relevant matters.

An order may be made under this section whether or not any person is prosecuted or convicted of any offense arising out of such act or omission. Upon application made by an appropriate prosecuting authority, the agency may suspend proceedings under P.L.1971, c.317 for such period as it deems appropriate on the ground that a prosecution for an offense arising out of such act or omission has been commenced or is imminent.

For the purposes of P.L.1971, c.317, a person shall be deemed to have intended an act or omission notwithstanding that by reason of age, insanity or otherwise, he was legally incapable of forming a criminal intent.

13. Section 1 of P.L.1981, c.258 (C.52:4B-10.1) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-10.1 Emergency award.

1. a. The Victims of Crime Compensation Agency may make one or more emergency awards to any applicant for compensation pending final determination of a case, when it determines that compensation is likely to be provided and that the applicant will suffer undue hardship if funds are not made immediately available. The amount of any one emergency award shall not exceed \$2,500 with the total amount of each such award made to an individual applicant not to exceed \$5,000. Any emergency awards made to an applicant shall be deducted from the final amount of compensation provided to an applicant by the agency. If the amount of compensation made by the agency to an applicant is less than the sum provided to the applicant through emergency grants, the applicant shall pay to the agency an amount of money equal to the difference. If the agency determines that an applicant who has received emergency awards shall receive no compensation, the applicant shall repay to the agency the total amount of all emergency awards which he received.

b. In addition to any emergency award made pursuant to the provisions of subsection a. of this section, the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency may make an emergency award in an amount not to exceed \$200.00 for compensation for funds stolen from a victim in connection with any of the incidents specified in section 11 of P.L.1971, c.317

(C.52:4B-11) except paragraph 11 of subsection b. of section 11 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-11), burglary, whether or not the victim suffered personal injury, under the following circumstances:

(1) The victim is 60 years of age or older or is disabled as defined pursuant to the federal Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. s. 416(i);

(2) The victim's income does not exceed the limits adopted by the State Department of Human Services as the standard of need for the General Assistance Program;

(3) The funds stolen exceed \$50.00;

(4) The victim establishes:

(a) that the victim has filed a police report indicating, among other things, the amount stolen;

(b) that the victim has cooperated with investigative and prosecuting authorities; and

(c) the source of the funds stolen; and

(5) The agency is satisfied that there are no other sources available to provide the victim with funds necessary to cover immediate costs of essential shelter, food or medical expenses, and that, but for the victim's loss, the victim would otherwise have had the funds to pay such costs.

c. The agency shall direct that any funds awarded pursuant to this act be expended solely to cover the costs established pursuant to paragraph (5) of subsection b. of this section.

d. (Deleted by amendment, P.L.2007, c.95).

14. Section 3 of P.L.1995, c.135 (C.52:4B-10.2) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-10.2 Additional compensation.

3. In addition to ordering the payment of compensation for personal injury or death which resulted from the incidents specified in section 11 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-

11), the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency may order the payment of compensation for funds in connection with those incidents to compensate certain victims, whether or not those victims suffered personal injury, as specified in paragraphs (1) through (5) of subsection b. of section 1 of P.L.1981, c.258 (C.52:4B-10.1), in an amount not to exceed \$200.

15. Section 11 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-11) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-11 Victim compensation.

11. The agency may order the payment of compensation in accordance with the provisions of P.L.1971, c.317 for personal injury or death which resulted from:

a. an attempt to prevent the commission of crime or to arrest a suspected criminal or in aiding or attempting to aid a police officer so to do; or

b. the commission or attempt to commit any of the following offenses:

(1) aggravated assault;

(2) (Deleted by amendment, P.L.1995, c.135).

(3) threats to do bodily harm;

(4) lewd, indecent, or obscene acts;

(5) indecent acts with children;

(6) kidnapping;

(7) murder;

(8) manslaughter;

(9) aggravated sexual assault, sexual assault, aggravated criminal sexual contact, criminal sexual contact;

(10) any other crime involving violence including domestic violence as defined by section 3 of P.L.1981, c.426 (C.2C:25-3) or section 3 of P.L.1991, c.261 (C.2C:25-19);

(11) burglary;

(12) tampering with a cosmetic, drug or food product;

(13) a violation of human trafficking, section 1 of P.L.2005, c.77 (C.2C:13-8); or

c. the commission of a violation of R.S.39:4-50, section 5 of P.L.1990, c.103 (C.39:3-10.13), section 19 of P.L.1954, c.236 (C.12:7-34.19) or section 3 of P.L.1952, c.157 (C.12:7-46); or

d. theft of an automobile pursuant to N.J.S.2C:20-2, eluding a law enforcement officer pursuant to subsection b. of N.J.S.2C:29-2 or unlawful taking of a motor vehicle pursuant to subsection b., c. or d. of N.J.S.2C:20-10 where injuries to the victim occur in the course of operating an automobile in furtherance of the offense.

16. Section 12 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-12) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-12 Losses or expenses reimbursable.

12. The agency may order the payment of compensation under this act for:

a. expenses actually and reasonably incurred as a result of the personal injury or death of the victim, including out-of-pocket losses which shall mean unreimbursed and unreimbursable expenses or indebtedness reasonably incurred for medical care or other services necessary as a result of the injury upon which such application is based,

b. loss of earning power as a result of total or partial incapacity of such victim,

c. pecuniary loss to the dependents of the deceased victim, and

d. any other pecuniary loss resulting from the personal injury or death of the victim which the agency determines to be reasonable.

17. Section 13 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-13) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-13 Directory of impartial medical experts.

13. To assist the agency in determining the nature, extent or cause of personal injury or cause of death compensable under P.L.1971, c.317, the agency shall maintain a directory of impartial medical experts.

18. Section 18 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-18) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-18 Compensation for criminal injuries; two-year limitation of actions.

18. No order for the payment of compensation shall be made under section 10 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-10) unless the application has been made within two years after the date of the personal injury or death or after that date upon determination by the agency that good cause exists for the delayed filing, and the personal injury or death was the result of an offense listed in section 11 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-11) which had been reported to the police or other appropriate law enforcement agency within three months after its occurrence or reasonable discovery. The agency will make its determination regarding the application within six months of acknowledgment by the agency of receipt of the completed application and any and all necessary supplemental information.

In determining the amount of an award, the agency shall determine whether, because of his conduct, the victim of such crime contributed to the infliction of his injury, and the agency shall reduce the amount of the award or reject the application altogether, in accordance with such determination; provided, however, that the agency shall not consider any conduct of the victim contributory toward his injury, if the record indicates such conduct occurred during efforts by the victim to prevent a crime or apprehend a person who had committed a crime in his presence or had in fact committed a crime.

The agency may deny or reduce an award where the victim has not paid in full any payments owed on assessments imposed pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1979, c.396 (C.2C:43-3.1) or restitution ordered following conviction for a crime.

No compensation shall be awarded if:

- a. Compensation to the victim proves to be substantial unjust enrichment to the offender or if the victim did not cooperate with the reasonable requests of law enforcement authorities unless the victim demonstrates a compelling health or safety reason for not cooperating; or
- b. (Deleted by amendment, P.L.1990, c.64.)
- c. The victim was guilty of a violation of subtitle 10 or 12 of Title 2A or subtitle 2 of Title 2C of the New Jersey Statutes, which caused or contributed to his injuries; or
- d. The victim was injured as a result of the operation of a motor vehicle, except as provided in subsection c. or d. of section 11 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-11), boat or airplane unless the same was used as a weapon in a deliberate attempt to run the victim down; or
- e. The victim suffered personal injury or death while an occupant of a motor vehicle or vessel where the victim knew or reasonably should have known that the driver was operating the vehicle or vessel in violation of R.S.39:4-50, section 5 of P.L.1990, c.103 (C.39:3-10.13), section 19 of P.L.1954, c.236 (C.12:7-34.19), section 3 of P.L.1952, c.157 (C.12:7-46), subparagraph (b) of paragraph (2) of subsection b. of N.J.S.2C:20-2, subsection b. of N.J.S.2C:29-2 or subsection b., c. or d. of N.J.S.2C:20-10; or
- f. The victim has been convicted of a crime and is still incarcerated; or
- g. The victim sustained the injury during the period of incarceration immediately following conviction for a crime.

Except as provided herein, no compensation shall be awarded under P.L.1971, c.317 in an amount in excess of \$25,000, and all payments shall be made in a lump sum, except that in the case of death or protracted disability the award may provide for periodic payments to compensate for loss of earnings or support. Five years after the entry of an initial determination order, a claim for compensation expires and no further order is to be entered with regard to the claim except for requests for payment of specific out-of-pocket expenses received by the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency prior to the expiration of the five-year period except in those cases determined by the agency to be catastrophic in nature. No award made pursuant to P.L.1971, c.317 shall be subject to execution or attachment other than for expenses resulting from the injury which is the basis of the claim.

Compensation may be awarded in an amount not exceeding the actual cost of a rehabilitative service of the type enumerated in section 2 of P.L.1999, c.166 (C.52:4B-18.2).

The award may provide for periodic payments in the case of protracted care or rehabilitative assistance.

19. Section 3 of P.L.1982, c.192 (C.52:4B-18.1) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-18.1 Increased compensation applicability.

3. The increase in compensation to a maximum of \$25,000 provided for in P.L.1982, c.192 shall apply only to crimes committed after the effective date of P.L.1982, c.192 when personal injury or death occurs.

20. Section 2 of P.L.1999, c.166 (C.52:4B-18.2) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-18.2 Supplemental awards for rehabilitative assistance to certain crime victims.

2. a. In addition to any award granted pursuant to section 18 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-18), the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency may make one or more supplemental awards for the purpose of providing rehabilitative assistance to catastrophically injured crime victims or other persons entitled to compensation under section 10 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-10).

b. The rehabilitative assistance which the supplemental award may cover can include, but is not limited to, any of the following services not covered by the original award of compensation or by other sources provided that the agency determines that the services are reasonable and necessary:

(1) Surgical and therapeutic procedures;

(2) Rehabilitative physical and occupational therapy designed to restore an optimum function level;

(3) Prescription drugs and medical supplies;

(4) Cognitive and psychological therapy;

(5) Home health assistance;

(6) Vehicle modifications;

(7) Driver training;

(8) Wheelchair, braces, splints, crutches, walkers, shower or commode chair and any other personal adaptive equipment required to meet individual disability needs;

(9) Structural modifications to living environment designed to provide accessibility and to maximize independence;

(10) Dependent care as needed.

c. The Victims of Crime Compensation Agency is authorized to make rules and regulations prescribing the procedures to be followed in qualifying for a supplemental award. The agency is also authorized to establish a cap on the total amount of supplemental awards to be made in a year and a cap on the amount which a person may receive as a supplemental award, which personal cap shall not be less than \$25,000.

d. The payment of any supplemental award granted under the provisions of this section shall be approved by the agency for payment out of funds appropriated for the administration of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-1 et seq.), the "Criminal Injuries Compensation Act of 1971."

e. A catastrophically injured crime victim who received a compensation award prior to the enactment of this section may apply for a supplemental award pursuant to the provisions of this section. A denial by the agency of an application made pursuant to the provisions of this subsection shall not be subject to appeal.

f. As used in this section, "catastrophically injured crime victim" means a person who is injured by any act or omission of another person which is within the description of the offenses specified in section 11 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-11) and who has sustained a severe long term or life long personal injury.

21. Section 19 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-19) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-19 Amounts receivable from other sources; filing of order for compensation; authorization for payment.

19. In determining the amount of compensation to be allowed by order, the agency shall take into consideration amounts received or receivable from any other source or sources by the victim or his dependents as a result of the offense or occurrence giving rise to the application.

Each order for compensation made by the agency shall be filed with the Director of the Division of Budget and Accounting and shall constitute authority for payment by the State Treasurer to the person or persons named therein of the amounts specified in such order.

22. Section 20 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-20) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4-20 Subrogation of agency to cause of action of victim against person responsible for personal injury or death; liens.

20. a. Whenever an order for the payment of compensation is or has been made for personal injury or death resulting from an act or omission constituting an offense under this act, the agency shall, upon payment of the amount of the order, be subrogated to the cause of action of the applicant against the person or persons responsible for such personal injury or death to recover such payments. With the consent of the board, the agency also shall be entitled to bring an action against such person or persons for the amount of the damage sustained by the applicant. In the event that the amount paid in satisfaction of a judgment entered pursuant to this section is more than the amount paid by reason of the order for payment of compensation, the agency shall pay the balance to the applicant.

b. If a judgment is entered in favor of the agency pursuant to subsection a. of this section to recover payments made to the applicant pursuant to order for payment of compensation, the judgment shall constitute a lien on any and all real and personal property or income in which the person or persons responsible for the personal injury or

death has or may acquire an interest, including the net proceeds, after the payment of fees and costs, of any settlement negotiated prior or subsequent to the filing of a lawsuit, any civil judgment, any civil arbitration award and any inheritance payable to the person or persons responsible for the personal injury or death. The lien shall have priority over all other levies and garnishments against the net proceeds of actions identified in this section unless otherwise provided by the Superior Court. The lien shall not have priority over levies to recover unpaid income taxes owed to the State or a judgment for child support entered pursuant to section 1 of P.L.1988, c.111 (C.2A:17-56.23a).

c. All judgments and other related papers required for the purposes of this section shall be received and recorded by the clerk of the Superior Court without payment of fees.

d. To discharge or otherwise compromise any lien or liens arising pursuant to this section, the agency shall file with the clerk of the Superior Court a duly acknowledged certificate setting forth the fact that the agency desires to discharge or amend the lien of record.

e. Any person desiring to secure immediate discharge of any lien arising pursuant to this section may deposit with the court cash in an amount sufficient to cover the amount of the lien or post a bond in an amount and with sureties approved by the court. Upon proper notice to the agency of such deposit or bond, a satisfaction of the lien shall be filed at once with the clerk of the Superior Court.

f. Any person affected in any manner, whether directly or indirectly by any lien arising under this section, and desiring to examine the validity of the lien or the facts and circumstances surrounding the entry of the lien, may do so in an action brought in the county where the lien was filed. The action shall be brought against the agency claiming the lien, and the court may proceed in the action in a summary manner and enter such judgment as it may deem appropriate.

23. Section 21 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-21) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-21 Severability.

21. If any section or sections of P.L.1971, c.317 or any provision thereof shall be declared to be unconstitutional, invalid or inoperative in whole or in part, such section or provision shall, to the extent that it is not unconstitutional, invalid or inoperative be enforced and effectuated and no such determination shall be deemed to invalidate or make ineffectual the remaining provisions of the sections of P.L.1971, c.317.

24. Section 1 of P.L.1981, c.256 (C.52:4B-22) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-22 Information booklets, pamphlets.

1. a. Every State, county, and municipal police department and hospital or other place of emergency medical care shall have available and shall post in a public place information booklets, pamphlets or other pertinent written information, to be supplied by the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency, relating to the availability of crime victims' compensation including all necessary application blanks required to be filed with the agency.

b. Included in the information supplied by the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency shall be information for victims of sexual offenses. This information shall contain the location of rape crisis centers in all geographical areas throughout the State and shall instruct victims of sexual offenses that if a rape crisis center is not available in a victim's immediate geographical area, the victim may contact the appropriate county victim-witness coordinator appointed by the Chief of the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy established pursuant to P.L.1985, c.404 (C.52:4B-39 et seq.). Unless the victim requires immediate medical attention, this information shall be personally conveyed to the victim of a sexual offense by a representative of the hospital or place of emergency care before a medical examination of the victim is conducted, or by a representative of the police department before the victim's statement is taken, to afford the victim the opportunity to arrange to have assistance from the rape crisis center or county victim-witness coordinator during these procedures. Hospitals shall be held harmless from suits emanating from a hospital's carrying out the obligation to convey information to victims of sexual offenses.

"Rape crisis center" means an office, institution or center offering assistance to victims of sexual offenses through crisis intervention, medical and legal information and follow-up counseling.

c. Every police department shall, upon the filing of a report of a violent crime, make available to any victim information concerning crime victims' compensation.

25. Section 2 of P.L.1981, c.256 (C.52:4B-23) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-23 Failure to give notice; immunity from liability; nonalteration of requirements.

2. No cause of action against the State, any county, or any municipality, or any employee thereof, shall arise out of a failure to give the notice required by section 1 of P.L.1981, c.256 (C.52:4B-22), nor shall any such failure be deemed or construed to effect or alter any time limitation or other requirement contained in P.L.1971, c.317 for the filing or payment of a claim hereunder.

26. Section 3 of P.L.1981, c.396 (C.52:4B-24) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-24 Senior citizens' public awareness program.

3. The agency shall undertake a special senior citizens' public awareness program to make brochures and applications for claim forms available to senior citizens.

27. Section 2 of P.L.1982, c.192 (C.52:4B-25) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-25 Victim counseling service.

2. a. The Victims of Crime Compensation Agency shall establish a victim counseling service which shall identify and develop sources to provide counseling to victims as defined in P.L.1971, c.317. The service shall provide assistance to victims without charge, which assistance shall include information and advice relative to filing a claim with the board, emergency food and clothing, employment opportunities, referral to other social service agencies, and in obtaining legal advice or representation. The service shall be conducted at such locations within the State as the agency deems advisable.

b. The agency is authorized to appoint such personnel for the service as may be necessary to carry out its functions. Appointments made pursuant to this subsection shall

be within the funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the agency for this purpose.

c. (Deleted by amendment, P.L.2007, c.95).

d. The agency may also identify and develop sources to provide mental health counseling to victims, and provide victims with such information as may be appropriate through its victim counseling service.

28. Section 1 of P.L.1989, c.322 (C.52:4B-25.1) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-25.1 Child and family counseling unit.

1. a. In addition to the victim counseling service established pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1982, c.192 (C.52:4B-25), the Victims of Crimes Compensation Agency shall establish a specialized child and family counseling unit. This unit shall be under the direction of a person appointed by the executive director whose training or experience includes the handling of child abuse cases.

b. The agency is authorized to appoint such personnel for the child and family counseling unit as may be necessary to carry out its functions. Appointments made pursuant to this subsection shall be within the limits of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the agency for that purpose.

c. The child and family counseling unit may be principally located in any place as the agency deems advisable, but shall be available to lend assistance to child victims in every county in this State.

29. Section 1 of P.L.1985, c.404 (C.52:4B-39) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-39 Definitions.

1. As used in P.L.1985, c.404:

a. "Victim" means a person who suffers personal physical or psychological injury or death or incurs loss of or injury to personal or real property as a result of a crime committed against that person.

b. "Agency" means the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency in the Department of the Treasury.

30. Section 2 of P.L.1985, c.404 (C.52:4B-40) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-40 Office of Victim-Witness Assistance.

2. There is established under the jurisdiction of the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency in the Department of the Treasury an Office of Victim-Witness Assistance under the supervision of the Director of the Office of Victim-Witness Assistance.

C.52:4B-40.1 Director of the Office of Victim-Witness Assistance.

31. The Office of Victim-Witness Assistance shall operate under the direction of the Director of the Office of Victim-Witness Assistance, who shall be appointed by the executive director of the agency. The Director of the Office of Victim-Witness Assistance shall have a minimum of five years of experience in crime victim direct services and advocacy. The appointment made pursuant to this section shall be within the limits of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the agency for this purpose.

32. Section 4 of P.L.1985, c.404 (C.52:4B-42) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-42 Victim-witness rights information program.

4. The victim-witness rights information program shall:

a. Provide victims or their representatives with information about the availability of social and medical services, especially emergency and social services available in the victim's immediate geographical area;

b. Provide victims or their representatives with information about possible compensation under the "Criminal Injuries Compensation Act of 1971," P.L.1971, c.317

(C.52:4B-1 et seq.) and of the sentencing court's authority to order restitution under chapter 43 of Title 2C of the New Jersey Statutes;

c. Provide victims or their representatives with information about how to contact the appropriate county office of victim-witness advocacy and the appropriate county prosecutor's office;

d. Provide a 24-hour toll-free hotline telephone number for victims and witnesses to call with inquiries concerning the information and services available pursuant to this act;

e. Provide victims and witnesses with a detailed description of the rights established under the Crime Victim's Bill of Rights created by P.L.1985, c.249 (C.52:4B-34 et seq.) and Article I, paragraph 22 of the New Jersey Constitution;

f. Gather available information from victim assistance programs throughout the country and make that information available to the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy, police agencies, hospitals, prosecutors' offices, the courts, and other agencies that provide assistance to victims of crimes;

g. Sponsor conferences to bring together personnel working in the field of victim assistance and compensation to exchange methods and procedures for improving and expanding services to victims;

h. Provide assistance to victims without charge, which assistance shall include information and advice relative to filing a claim with the board, emergency food and clothing, employment opportunities, referral to other social service agencies, and in obtaining legal advice or representation; and

i. Conduct training programs for attorneys and victim service providers.

Repealer.

33. The following sections are repealed:

Sections 3, 4, 14, 15, 16 and 17 of P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-3, 52:4B-4 and 52:4B-14 through 52:4B-17);

Section 4 of P.L.1981, c.396 (C.52:4B-4.1); and

Section 12 of P.L.1995, c.135 (C.52:4B-3.1).

34. This act shall take effect on the first day of the second month after enactment.

Approved June 28, 2007.