

July 13, 2022

*****CONSUMER ALERT*****

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL CAUTIONS THE PUBLIC TO BE VIGILANT FOR POTENTIAL SCAMS RELATED TO VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today encouraged Illinois residents to be alert for scams that involve supporting the victims of the July 4 mass shooting in Highland Park, Illinois and gun violence in other parts of the state.

The Attorney General's office is urging vigilance following reports that survivors of the July 4 mass shooting have been contacted by potential scammers who provide inaccurate and incomplete information about state assistance available to crime victims. Raoul's office administers the Crime Victim Compensation Program, which provides financial reimbursement to eligible victims of violent crimes in Illinois. Attorney General Raoul is also encouraging Illinois residents to exercise caution before donating to organizations purporting to support victims of the mass shooting or violent crime.

"As victims of a violent crime – including those affected by the horrific shooting in Highland Park – attempt to recover from trauma, they should not have to sort through misinformation or potential scams relating to programs that may provide assistance in a time of need," Raoul said. "I am reminding all Illinois residents to exercise caution, and utilize free information and resources available through the Attorney General's office to avoid being defrauded by those seeking to take advantage of the gun violence plaguing too many of our communities."

Raoul's Crime Victim Services Division has been contacted by a number of family members and friends of victims injured during the mass shooting in Highland Park. Those individuals reported receiving anonymous calls from people offering to assist victims with applications for aid through the Crime Victims Compensation Program. Many of the callers misrepresent the program's eligibility requirements and covered expenses. Attorney General Raoul is urging individuals who receive calls regarding the Crime Victims Compensation Program to verify the call is from the Illinois Attorney General's office, and if uncomfortable speaking over the phone, to request an in-person appointment. Raoul also encourages applicants to be aware that Illinois law prohibits individuals from charging applicants a fee for assistance in filing an application. In addition, state law limits reimbursement to statutorily-determined expenses.

The Crime Victims Compensation Program provides financial reimbursement to victims of violent crime who meet certain requirements. Eligible expenses under the program include costs associated with funeral and burial, lost wages, counseling and medical, hospital and dental costs, to name a few. Applications [can be found online](#). To obtain additional information or to report a suspicious contact regarding the program, please call the Attorney General's Crime Victims Assistance Line at 800-228-3368 or visit the [Attorney General's website](#).

Attorney General Raoul is also encouraging Illinois residents to research organizations prior to making donations to support victims of the Highland Park shooting or other victims of gun violence. Under Illinois law, fundraisers and charitable organizations are required to register each year with the Attorney General's office. To assist potential donors in making wise giving decisions, important information, such as charitable organizations' incomes, expenditures and programs, is available for free on the [Attorney General's website](#).

People should also consider the following tips to best ensure a donation will be used for its intended purpose:

- **Ask how much of your donation will go to the charity and how much will be used to pay fund-raising costs.** Solicitors must give you this information if you ask.
- **Pay close attention to the name of the charity.** Some fraudulent charities use names that sound or look like those of legitimate organizations to mislead you.
- **Ask questions about the charity.** Donate only when your questions have been answered and you are certain your money will be used according to your wishes. Ask whether the charity is registered with the Illinois Attorney General's office and what percentage of the money taken in goes to fundraising, administration and charitable programming.
- **Exercise caution when giving online.** Spam email solicitations that appear to be linked to individuals collecting for families affected could be coming from persons wishing to take advantage of those wishing help. Be wary of any online solicitations from unfamiliar persons or charities.
- **Do not pay in cash.** For security and tax record purposes, pay by check. Be sure to write the full official name of the charity on your check—do not abbreviate.
- **Request written information.** A legitimate charity will provide information outlining its mission, how your donation will be distributed, and proof that your contribution is tax deductible.
- **Do not donate if the solicitor uses high-pressure tactics, asks for cash payment or insists on sending someone to pick up your donation.** These are all hallmarks of a scam.

Donors should contact the Attorney General's Charitable Trust Bureau to report suspicious solicitations by calling 312-814-2595. The Attorney General recommends that, whenever possible, keep notes detailing the date and time of the call, the organization's name, the name of the solicitor, and the "pitch" or any other pertinent information.

Raoul's Crime Victim Services Division administers a host of programs and services to assist victims meet the challenges that often result from a violent crime and to help them recover from trauma and rebuild their lives. Additional information about the division's programs and resources can be found on the [Attorney General's website](#).



The Crime Victims Compensation Program Fact Sheet

The Crime Victims Compensation Program provides financial reimbursement to victims of violent crime who meet certain eligibility requirements. The program is governed by the Crime Victims Compensation Act, 740 ILCS 45/1 et seq.

Who is a victim?

- Person killed or injured in Illinois
- Parent, spouse or child of a person killed or injured in Illinois
- Person killed or injured while attempting to aid a victim
- Person killed or injured in Illinois while assisting law enforcement
- Personal witness to a crime
- Person called as a witness by the prosecution to establish a nexus
- An Illinois resident injured in a country without a Compensation Program
- Person under the age of 18 who is the brother, sister, half-brother, half-sister of a person killed or injured in Illinois (For the purposes of counseling expenses only)

Who is eligible for compensation?

- Statutorily Defined Victims (see above)
- Dependents (for loss of support only)
- Any person that paid or became obligated to pay for the victim's expenses

What violent crimes are compensable with the program?

Arson • Homicide • Assault • Human Trafficking • Battery • Involuntary Manslaughter • Child Pornography • Kidnapping • Criminal Sexual Abuse • Fleeing or Attempting to Elude a Peace Officer • Criminal Sexual Assault • Non-consensual Dissemination of Private Sexual Images • Desecration or Removal of Human Remains • Reckless Conduct • Dismembering of a Human Body • Stalking • Domestic Battery • Posting of Identifying or Graphic Information on Pornographic Internet Sites • Driving While Under the Influence • Exploitation of a Child • Violations of Protective Orders (Domestic Violence Orders of Protection, Civil No Contact Orders, and Stalking No Contact Orders) • Hate Crimes • Hit and Run of a Pedestrian/Person • Operating Vehicle Moved Solely by Human Power or Using a Mobility Device

Reimbursement is available for the following types of crime-related expenses:

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES		
Funeral and Burial (up to \$10,000)	Medical/Hospital/Dental	Tattoo Removal
Lost Wages (up to \$2,400)	Counseling and Transportation	Accessibility
Loss of Dependent Support (up to \$2,400)	Tuition Loss	Relocation
Crime Scene Cleanup	Replacement Costs	Replacement Service Loss

EFFECTIVE August 7, 2022, the Total Maximum Award is \$45,000 per victim.

Where to Apply:

Applications are available to download at:

<https://illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/victims/cvc.html>

or Can be Submitted Online:

<https://illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/victims/cvonlineapplication.html>

Application Window

Status at Time of the Crime	Application Window
Adult without a disability	Five years from the date of the crime or one year from criminal charge for the offense.
Minor	Three Years from turning 18
Adult with disability	Three Years from the removal of the disability

Applications submitted outside the prescribed eligibility window may be accepted if the Attorney General determines that the applicant had good cause for a delay.

WHEN IN DOUBT....APPLY!

**For more information, contact the Crime Victims Assistance Line at
1-800-228-3368.**