

Crime Victims Assistance Division

The mission of the Lancaster Police Department's Crime Victims Assistance Division is to assist victims of crime by providing support, education, information, and referrals as they regain control of their lives. To advocate safety, healing, justice, and restitution. To increase awareness about violent crime victimization and its impact on our lives and the city of Lancaster. Lancaster Police Department Crime Victims Assistance Division Nakeya Fincher, Crime Victims Advocate 1650 N. Dallas Ave. Lancaster, TX 75134 972-218-2751 Fax 972-218-2790

Our History: The Crime Victims Assistance Division was developed in order to serve the needs of victims and their families. The program provides crisis counseling, crisis intervention, criminal justice support and advocacy, information and referral services, notification of rights and assistance with filing Crime Victims Compensation claims, and transportation to shelters for all victims of violent crimes reported to the Lancaster Police Department as well as other pertinent victim needs.

Affiliations: The program holds active memberships in The Crime Victim Council of Dallas County, Law Enforcement Victim Assistance, and Texas Victim Services Association.

A victim of violent crime is: someone who is the victim of family violence, assault, sexual assault, kidnapping or aggravated robbery or who has suffered bodily injury or death because of the criminal conduct of another. the close relative (spouse, parent, adult brother or sister or child) of a deceased victim. the guardian of a victim. Crime Victims' Compensation may be available to pay the amount of expense reasonably and necessarily incurred for:

- (i) Medical, counseling, prescription and rehabilitative services;
- (ii) Partial loss of earnings because of a disability resulting from personal injury, participation in the criminal justice process, or seeking medical treatment;
- (iii) Child care for minor children to enable a victim or spouse of a deceased victim to continue employment;
- (iv) Certain funeral and burial expenses;
- (v) Reasonable costs associated with crime scene cleanup;
- (vi) Reasonable replacement costs for clothing or bedding taken as evidence or made unusable as a result of the criminal investigation of a sexual assault;
- (vii) Travel expenses necessary to participate in the criminal justice process and/or seek medical treatment;
- (viii) One-time payment of certain relocation expenses in domestic violence and sexual assault

Reimbursement for property damage or loss is not an eligible expense. In order to qualify for Crime Victims' Compensation: The crime must be reported to law enforcement within a reasonable amount of time unless there are justified extraordinary circumstances. Claim must be filed within three years unless good cause can be shown as to why the claim wasn't filed. The victim must cooperate with law enforcement and prosecution efforts. The victim must be the innocent victim of a violent crime who suffers personal injury. The Crime Victims Assistance Division of the Lancaster Police Department will assist you in applying for benefits from Crime Victims' Compensation. Upon request, we will assist you in the completion and submission of the claim form, will send the required documentation to CVC, and notify service providers that a claim has been applied for and is pending. We can also provide follow-up assistance on submitted claims. Please allow us assist you in obtaining these benefits if you feel you may qualify.

Crime Victims Rights in Texas

Victims of crime have the right to:

- Receive adequate protection from harm and threats of harm arising from cooperation with prosecution efforts
- Have their safety considered by the magistrate when setting bail
- Advance notification, on request, of relevant court proceedings, including cancellations and rescheduling
- Request information from a peace officer about a defendant's general right to bail and criminal investigation procedures, and from the prosecutor's office about general procedures in the criminal justice system, including plea agreements, restitution, appeals and parole
- Information about the Texas Crime Victims' Compensation Fund and, on request, referral to social service agencies that provide other types of assistance
- Provide pertinent information concerning the impact of the crime to the probation department conducting the pre-sentencing investigation
- Payment for medical examination for victims of sexual assault by the law enforcement agency requesting the exam and, on request, the right to counseling regarding AIDS and HIV infection and testing for sexual assault victims
- Information, on request, about parole procedures, notification of parole proceedings and of the inmate's release, and the right to participate in the parole process by submitting written information to the Board of Pardons and Paroles for inclusion in the defendant's file for consideration by the Board prior to parole
- Be present at all public court proceedings, with the presiding judge's consent
- A safe waiting area at all public court proceedings
- Prompt return of any property that is no longer needed as evidence
- Have the prosecutor notify, on request, an employer that the need for the victim's testimony may involve the victim's absence from work
- Complete a Victim Impact Statement, detailing the emotional, physical and financial impact of the crime on the victim and to have the statement considered by a judge at sentencing and by officials prior to the release of the offender(s)

