

# *National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards*

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## *Compensation Protocol*

A Guide to Responding to Mass-Casualty Incidents

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# Foreword

OVC's experiences with terrorism and other mass casualty victims, including the range of unforeseen needs that arise, have taught us some important lessons. But perhaps the most important lesson learned is that we cannot be bureaucratic when it comes to responding quickly and effectively to victims of mass casualties. While we must operate within the laws that govern our work and funds, we need to be creative, very flexible, and use common sense and empathy. We need to recognize the extraordinary impact that these crimes may have on entire communities. As with any crime victim, we can't bring back what has been lost, but we *can* do everything in our power to reduce the unnecessary pain and frustration that results when systems de-humanize victims, fail to recognize their needs, or "nitpick" the provision of services, information and benefits. And, of course, one of the most critical things we can do is to be prepared to have protocols, plans, and training in place before a catastrophic crime occurs. This mass casualty protocol for compensating victims is an important step forward.

Kathryn M. Turman, Director  
Office for Victims of Crime  
Office of Justice Programs  
U. S. Department of Justice

Within the last year, managers and staff of crime victim compensation programs across the country have faced mass violence incidents in their states and have learned to respond very quickly to meeting the financial needs of these victims. While such incidents have occurred before, their frequency has increased to the extent that every compensation program director now understands that this can happen at any time. The National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards established as a goal for this year the development of a protocol to assist states in preparing for and responding to these incidents. This is the resulting document, and the Association is to be commended for this work.

This document is dynamic in that it has been developed by directors who have learned first hand what it is like to work through these incidents and who have mentored other directors during these crises. This document will continue to evolve as an increasing number of states develop mass violence and terrorism protocols and response teams.

All of us are still learning. The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) is working with other federal organizations to provide leadership on integrating the needs of victims into the criminal justice response to mass violence and terrorism. As OVC develops policies, procedures and protocols on a federal response to local events, this document will inform our discussions. It is to be expected that as OVC continues its work and its interactions with state compensation directors and the Association, that this document will continue to evolve.

Thank you to the directors who worked on this document. Thank you for your foresight and the commitment to helping your colleagues better meet the needs of victims of mass violence and terrorism.

Carol R. Watkins, Director  
State Compensation and Assistance Division  
Office for Victims of Crime  
Office of Justice Programs  
U. S. Department of Justice

# Introduction

In 1993, the United States was rocked by news that terrorists had bombed the World Trade Center in New York City. As horrible as this tragedy was, many Americans still did not believe that our nation was susceptible to incidents of mass violence.

The Oklahoma City bombing in 1995 robbed Americans of our innocence and proved that our nation was indeed vulnerable to mass violence. This event also served as a crossroads for the crime victim compensation community. State compensation programs banded together to offer support to the Oklahoma Crime Victims Compensation Program. Individually, compensation programs also took measures to prepare for the possibility—or inevitability—that a mass casualty incident would occur elsewhere in our nation.

Mass violence did continue. A wake of unending tragedies has swept our nation in recent years, prompting victim compensation programs to continually refine methods for assisting crime victims. An informal support network developed within the compensation movement as more and more states became the site of mass-casualty tragedies. The numerous high-profile incidents that have followed the Oklahoma City bombing include, but are not limited to:

Centennial Olympic Park bombing Atlanta, Georgia – 1996, Summer Olympics	murder-suicide city bus crash Seattle, Washington – 1998
Heath High School shooting West Paducah, Kentucky – 1997	Columbine High School shooting Littleton, Colorado – 1999
Pearl High School shooting Pearl, Mississippi – 1997	Heritage High School shooting Conyers, Georgia – 1999
Westside Middle School shooting Bono, Arkansas – 1998	Buckhead-area shooting Atlanta, Georgia – 1999
Latter Day Saint Genealogy Library shooting Salt Lake City, Utah – 1998	Jewish Community Center shooting Los Angeles, California – 1999
Thurston High School shooting Springfield, Oregon – 1998	Wedgewood Baptist Church shooting Fort Worth, Texas – 1999

In order to address the extraordinary chain of mass violence, Iowa Compensation Director Kelly Brodie, president of the National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards, appointed a Mass-Casualty Protocol Committee. The Committee's mandate was to examine the role of compensation programs during a mass-casualty incident and to outline a strategy for effectively serving victims, survivors, allied victim professionals, and compensation program staff. The combined talents of the committee members resulted in a clear statement of objectives for critical incident preparedness.

The Mass Casualty Protocol Committee explored real-life disaster experiences to discover the best practices used by compensation programs. These practices created a blueprint for compensation programs to follow when preparing for a crisis event.

The Office for Victims of Crime demonstrated support for this project and provided technical assistance from the Training and Technical Assistance Division (TTAC). On September 10, 1999, TTAC convened a mass-casualty protocol focus group in Little Rock in the Office of Arkansas Attorney General Mark Pryor. Seven state compensation directors met face-to-face for a daylong meeting to ensure the effectiveness of the protocol.

The enormity of mass violence and terrorism will continue to plague our nation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but the effectiveness with which we respond to these events will certainly define the character and quality of our states' compensation programs and our nation's victim services network. This protocol is an important component in the national effort to ensure quality care for victims today and in the years to come.

Ginger Bankston Bailey, Chairman  
Mass-Casualty Protocol Committee  
*Director*  
*Outreach Division*  
*Arkansas Office of the Attorney General*

Terri Cowell, Editor  
Mass-Casualty Protocol  
*Community Relations Coordinator*  
*Outreach Division*  
*Arkansas Office of the Attorney General*

# Outline of Mass-Casualty Protocol

This Mass-Casualty Protocol for Victim Compensation Programs is designed to provide a standard operating procedure for compensation programs to follow during a mass-casualty incident that will promote cohesive relationships with all involved entities. By working with the appropriate federal, state, and local organizations, compensation programs can help provide a network of services to victims of mass-casualty incidents in a compassionate and expeditious manner.

## Before a Crisis

- ✓ Network with local, state, federal agencies
- ✓ Evaluate funding availability and supplemental sources
- ✓ Assemble information regarding community resources
- ✓ Continue community outreach efforts
- ✓ Form compensation mass-casualty response team
- ✓ Create specialized materials for mass-casualty response use
- ✓ Examine program guidelines from mass-casualty perspective

## During a Crisis

- ✓ Establish communication with necessary agencies
- ✓ Mobilize staff
- ✓ Apply program guidelines to crisis situation and identify special circumstances
- ✓ Begin program outreach in affected area
- ✓ Monitor influx of claims
- ✓ Work with media to generate claims / donations

## After a Crisis

- ✓ Meet emotional needs of staff
- ✓ Do follow-up outreach to victims
- ✓ Establish exit-plans for specially-funded items
- ✓ Evaluate process

*“If you wait until a disaster happens,  
you’re too late.”*

*Kelly Brodie,*

*Iowa Crime Victim*

*Assistance Division*

*Compensation Director*

—————  
*“Advanced preparation is  
the key. It is not if a  
mass casualty incident  
will occur at the hands of  
criminal violence, but when.  
Seize the opportunity to  
network in advance with  
your prosecutor-based or law-  
enforcement-based victim  
assistance programs in order  
to respond quickly.  
Within the first 72 hours of the  
Westside Middle School  
shooting in Arkansas,  
the local victim-assistance  
coordinator invited two  
compensation program staff*

# Protocol

## Before a Crisis

- Your state has a variety of governmental and private agencies that are responsible for or likely to become active in mass-casualty or disaster-relief efforts. Educate these entities about your compensation program and your mass-casualty protocol. Ask these agencies to make you an integral part of their disaster-response protocol. (See Appendix 2)
- Become involved in any formal or informal network of agencies and officials organized to respond to mass violence. Make sure that each agency official understands what services and assistance you can provide. If a network does not exist, work toward establishing one in your state. (See Appendix 2)
- Identify and become familiar with your liaison at the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). Research the availability and criteria for applying for OVC’s crisis-response reserve fund. (See Appendix 8)
- Establish and maintain a good working relationship with your state’s Victims Of Crime Act (VOCA) Assistance Administrator. Outline procedures for ensuring adequate funding to cover benefits for victims of mass-violence.
- Establish and maintain a relationship with your state’s network of victim-assistance professionals. They should be educated about your program and be able to assist you by informing victims of your existence and available services.
- Establish a state emergency-preparedness fund. Consider using this fund to pay for expenses that are not reimbursable by the compensation program. (See Appendix 1) Determine if legislation would be required to establish such a fund. It may be possible to use Victims Of Crime Act (VOCA) assistance funds to help pay for emergency needs.
- Gain a better understanding of the differences between mass-casualty disasters and terrorism. Know that terrorism leads to the involvement of federal, state, and local law-enforcement officers and may cross jurisdictional boundaries. (See Appendix 5)
- Establish and maintain a relationship with victim-assistance professionals and law-enforcement education coordinators in your local U.S. Attorney’s office or FBI office. Also, get to

know your FBI Weapons of Mass Destruction Coordinator and get training regarding this issue.

- Consider establishing an advisory group to create a directory of resources with local, state, and national information and include phone numbers or addresses for local mental health facilities, state and national victim-advocacy organizations. (See Appendix 2)
- Identify resources for special-needs victim populations, such as hearing-impaired persons, non-English speaking persons, tourists, etc.
- Contact your state’s Department of Emergency Management to see if they have a 24-hour toll-free phone number used for disaster response. Use that phone line to exchange information and to inform disaster-response personnel about your program.
- If your state does not have a crisis-line, consider obtaining a phone list for key individuals and agencies who could help you educate the community about your program. Consider obtaining work and home phone numbers for representatives of these groups.
  - ✓ hospitals
  - ✓ schools [principals, counselors, school psychologists, school resource officers]
  - ✓ law-enforcement agencies
  - ✓ prosecutors’ offices
  - ✓ victim-advocate programs
  - ✓ religious alliances
- Identify facilities throughout your service area that could serve as mass-casualty response headquarters in case you are involved in the coordinated effort to set up field operations.
- Provide training to your staff on how your program will respond to mass violence. Consider facilitating opportunities for staff members to be trained as crisis-response specialists through courses provided by national or state organizations.
- Create a compensation program mass-casualty response team. Establish roles for staff members [team leader, spokesperson, field-worker, etc.] Establish a calling tree to be utilized when the team is called into service outside of normal working hours.
- Designate a public spokesperson from your agency to receive all media-referrals during a crisis.
- Designate a phone number or beeper number that can be used by your program as a “dedicated-line” during a crisis.

*members to meet with  
members of the  
victims’ families. This meeting  
allowed the families  
to ask questions and receive  
assistance in filling out  
a shortened application form.”*

*Ginger Bankston Bailey,  
Arkansas Crime Victims  
Reparations Program Director*

*“It was through our  
established working relationship  
with the local district attorney’s  
victim assistance coordinator  
that we were able to  
assist victims of the  
Pearl High School shooting  
in the most expeditious manner.”*

*Sandra K. Morrison,  
Mississippi Crime Victim  
Compensation Program Director*

*“Assisting people who  
have been involved in*

*mass-casualty incidents can have a profound affect on us, regardless of our past experience or how well prepared we think we are. It is important to take care of yourself and your co-workers by recognizing when it's time to take a break from the crisis so it does not consume you."*

*Suzanne Breedlove,  
Oklahoma Crime Victims  
Compensation Board Administrator*

*"In the midst of a crisis, if we remember to respond within our areas of expertise, we are more successful in providing a greater service to the crime victim."*

*Shawanda Reynolds-Cobb, Georgia  
Crime Victim Compensation  
Program Director*

*"In Colorado, we are decentralized and housed in the victim-witness unit of the district*

- Develop a shortened compensation application form for use during mass-casualty victimizations. Much information necessary on a normal application form may not be required in a mass-casualty incident, such as description of crime, agency to which the crime was reported, etc. (See Appendix 9)
- Develop and maintain an official form of identification, such as a photo-I.D., for staff working in the field.
- Prepare a compensation mass-casualty response kit for staff use, and include:
  - ✓ shortened application forms
  - ✓ brochures
  - ✓ cell-phone for field use
  - ✓ dedicated crisis-line phone number
  - ✓ name badges
  - ✓ office supplies
  - ✓ notary seal [if required in your state]
- Develop a generic press release about the compensation program's services which can be easily modified to include specific information pertaining to a mass-casualty victimization. (See Appendix 6)
- Find out if special measures need to be taken by your agency to address issues surrounding the possible need for staff to work overtime during a crisis.
- Consider your program's definition of primary and/or secondary victim and discuss how to apply these definitions to various mass-casualty scenarios. Consider how to identify victims. Determine what documentation would satisfy your program's guidelines when considering claims by these victims. (See Appendix 1)
- Consider your program's definition of eligible expenses and discuss how your program would respond to various expenses that may be peculiar to a mass-casualty incident. (See Appendix 1)
- Consider whether or not your program would waive filing-deadlines following a mass-casualty incident. If your program has a fast-track procedure, consider applying this method to the mass-casualty compensation applications.
- Find out how and if your compensation program can benefit from charitable donations. Be prepared to promote donations to the compensation program as a way for concerned citizens to help crisis victims. Know whether these donations should be placed in a general compensation fund or a special fund established to benefit victims of this specific incident. (See Appendix 1)

- Determine whether you will consider donations to victims as collateral resources. (See Appendix 1)
- Stage a mass-casualty crisis exercise and try to apply your contingency plan.

## During the Crisis

- Identify the lead agency coordinating the disaster-response effort and establish communication.
- Identify and establish communication with the local victim-assistance professional in the area affected by the incident.
- Activate the compensation program’s dedicated crisis-line phone number.
- Contact the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), the National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards (NACVCB), National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) and/or the International Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Foundation (ICISDF), American Red Cross, your state’s Department of Emergency Management, your state critical incident stress management organization and crisis response team, and religious associations. Give these entities the program’s dedicated-line crisis phone number.
- Remind staff that only designated spokespersons should talk with the media. The designated compensation spokesperson should work in concert with the lead disaster-response agency’s media spokesperson. If the event draws attention of the national media, consider giving assistance to the spokesperson.
- Customize your short form to include the date, location, and other information that will be uniform to this crisis. Make an adequate number of copies.
- If your applications are numbered or coded, consider using a special designation for applications of each mass-casualty incident.
- Determine what information will satisfy your program’s need for a “police report.” (See Appendix 1)
- Evaluate the need to restructure the staff’s working-schedule to allow for the compensation office to be open extra shifts if necessary.
- Consider sending compensation representatives to the affected area and set up mass-casualty response headquarters. Try to coordinate the compensation headquarters with another integral agency [such as the prosecuting attorney’s office] so victims

*attorney’s office. Because of these unique circumstances, on the day of the Columbine High School shooting we were able to mobilize very quickly. We worked that same day to establish the policies for addressing compensation claims resulting from this incident and we developed a shortened application form. Victim advocates helped us distribute the application form in mass, and to date we have received over 325 applications. Close relationships with local victim assistance professionals are invaluable during mass-casualty incidents—and during everyday operations.”*

*Amy Greer,  
Colorado 1st Judicial District  
Compensation Program Director*

\_\_\_\_\_

*“Any compensation director who feels they are prepared to handle a mass-casualty event may be the first one scrambling to find his or*

*her copy of the “protocol” when the event occurs. Adopting a protocol will be beneficial only to the extent we are willing to invest in preparation for the eventuality of what always happens somewhere else.”*

*Rodney Doss, Florida Victim Services and Criminal Justice Programs Division Director*

—  
*“Compensation staff arrived at Thurston High School the day of the shooting in Oregon. However, four days later at a family informational meeting conducted by police, prosecutors, and victim advocates, was when compensation staff reached the majority of families and applications were completed. To simplify the communication and claims process, one CVC claims’ examiner was designated to coordinate with a VOCA-funded*

will not have to make an additional stop. Be sensitive to timing issues—some situations may warrant immediate activity by compensation program staff and other situations may call for a delayed response.

- Coordinate your activities with the lead disaster-response agency and the local community crisis response team.
- Remind staff about guidelines for maintaining the confidentiality of victim information. Caution staff to apply these measures to an “in-the-field” environment. [Discussing victim specifics in a public setting could be harmful.]
- Make contact with a representative from each of the medical facilities treating victims. Distribute the shortened application form to the appropriate medical facilities.
- Using your program’s guidelines, determine who would be considered a direct victim of this incident and who would be a secondary victim. (See Appendix 1)
- Obtain a list of all of the direct-victims of the disaster and use this list to cross-reference with filed applications for several months following the disaster. Consider whether or not this list would suffice as the “police report” for purposes of your program’s regulations. (See Appendix 1)
- Identify any special victim populations. Be prepared to get contact information for a special-needs victim in order to provide follow-up services to compensate for any delay in obtaining the necessary tools or information to assist this victim.
- Consider working with local victim advocates to mail an application to each direct-victim to ensure their awareness of the compensation program. Consider hand-delivering compensation applications in instances where a death occurred—traveling in a group of at least two.
- If compensation information is mailed to victims, consider including facts about posttraumatic stress disorder, available resources, or other applicable information. Also include information about your state’s constitutional or statutory Victims’ Bill of Rights. (See Appendix 7)
- Consider doing follow-up phone calls to all direct-victims. Local victim-advocates may be of assistance.
- Distribute the shortened application form to all victim-assistance professionals in the affected area and to each crisis-response agency involved in the incident.

- Ask members of any national or state crisis response teams to distribute compensation applications after crisis-intervention sessions.
- Make sure school superintendents, school counselors, school resource officers, churches, and community agencies within the affected area have information and applications for the compensation program.
- Stay in contact with all of the victim-assistance and mental health professionals within the affected area.
- Following the incident, attend all informational-community meetings and ask to be included on the agenda. Work together as a staff to stay informed about particular circumstances in order to better anticipate questions. Be prepared for victims who may be frustrated with limitations of your compensation program. Be prepared to offer valid referrals. (See Appendix 2)
- Find out if your state licenses or certifies mental health professionals. Determine if the certifying agency would make referrals for victims seeking counseling. Have the contact information for this agency available in case your program is asked to give a mental health referral.
- Consider utilizing an emergency-award process for funerals. Determine if you will guarantee payment after collateral sources have been applied.
- Do not be in a hurry to pay medical claims before checking for collateral sources.
- Consider giving priority to requests for loss of earnings.
- Be candid about processing time and eligibility requirements.
- Be aware that victims of crimes other than the mass-casualty incident may be critical of special attention or priority being placed upon mass-casualty victims.
- Negotiate with medical providers if payments cannot be processed in a timely manner. Hospitals and other medical providers understand that insurance availability must be checked and usually will not demand immediate payment from victims. When necessary, intercede to prevent medical providers from seeking immediate payment.
- If names of compensation applicants [potential crime witnesses] are to be released to agencies investigating the mass-casualty incident, know how to properly disclose this information to all parties involved without violating a victim's privacy. Be aware of your program's guidelines regarding confidentiality.

*case manager who was quickly  
hired in the prosecutor's victim  
assistance program."*

*Mary Ellen Johnson,  
Oregon Crime Victims' Assistance  
Section Former Director*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*"In today's volatile society, mass  
violence will strike again.  
Preparation and training are  
essential to meet the challenges of  
victims left in crisis."*

*Dan Davis, Utah Office of Crime  
Victim Reparations Director*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*"In Texas, we started our crisis  
response efforts in 1991 after 23  
people were murdered in a Luby's  
Cafeteria. Unfortunately, there have  
been other mass-casualty events  
since then, but by working together  
we've been able to build a response  
capability that ensures that*

*appropriate services and assistance*

*with crime victims' compensation*

*are provided to victims."*

*Karen Kalergis, Texas Crime*

*Victims' Compensation Division*

*Public Information Officer*

*"While compensation programs*

*have a long history of assisting*

*victims of mass violence, the*

*increasing frequency of bombings*

*and shootings in recent years has*

*dramatically demonstrated how*

*crucial a quick response can be*

*when these terrible incidents occur.*

*By planning in advance with other*

*victim-service and disaster-relief*

*agencies, as well as moving rapidly*

*and appropriately when tragedy*

*strikes, compensation programs can*

*make a real difference in helping*

- Monitor the number of filed claims and estimate the average award in order to determine the possible impact on available compensation funds. Work with your state Victims Of Crime Act (VOCA) Assistance Administrator and your Office for Victims of Crime State Compensation and Assistance (SCAD) contact to apply for supplemental VOCA funding. (See Appendix 8) Be familiar with reporting requirements for special funding expenditures. Implement adequate expenditure-tracking procedures.
- Consider hiring additional staff and purchasing or leasing additional equipment to assist with increased data entry.
- Prepare press releases and handouts for distribution. (See Appendix 6)
- Work with the designated spokesperson to provide information to the media informing the public about how donations can be made to the compensation program.
- Coordinate donation procedures with your state's attorney general/consumer protection agency to prevent fraudulent fundraising on behalf of victims.

## After the Crisis

- Provide crisis-intervention for compensation staff. Provide professional help if warranted.
- Be sensitive to important dates related to the crisis (anniversary, trial, etc.). These dates may have a significant impact on victims and compensation staff.
- Consider doing follow-up outreach with special victim populations (domestic/international tourists, military personnel) to ensure that they are aware of what local victim services are available to them.
- Develop a long-term plan for staff positions or equipment being paid for by temporary crisis-response funds.
- Meet with the staff and evaluate the protocol. Adjust the protocol as needed.
- Conduct on-going meetings with staff to discuss crisis issues affecting victims.
- Consider what assistance your program received during the crisis that was helpful and extend that courtesy to other compensation programs that experience a crisis.

## Natural Disasters

Although it may seem that compensation programs would not be directly involved in the response to natural disasters, consider the possibility of personal injury while trying to prevent looting or an increase in domestic violence following a wide-spread natural disaster. Educate community workers in the affected area about compensation. Warn victim-assistance professionals about the possibility of a rise in crime and encourage them to increase outreach efforts.

*individuals and communities*

*recover.”*

*Dan Eddy, National Association of*

*Crime Victim Compensation Boards*

*Executive Director*

# Appendix 1 • Program Guidelines/Statutes

## Primary Victim

Mass-casualty incidents inherently leave in their wake large numbers of victims. One challenge faced by compensation programs is to determine who will be considered a “primary” victim of the incident in question. It may be helpful for a program to consider the following points of interest.

- Find out if there is an official police report or law-enforcement document listing victims and witnesses. Evaluate whether the persons listed in this document meet your program’s criteria for “victim.”
- If the incident took place at a school, place of employment, or similar location, find out if there is a list of persons present on the date of the incident. Evaluate whether these persons would meet your program’s criteria for “victim.”
- If your program’s definition of “victim” prohibits you from paying compensation to an individual, there may be a way for you to facilitate obtaining services for that person through outside resources such as VOCA, local charities, etc.

## Examples

- In 1997, a student opened fire at Pearl High School in Pearl, Mississippi. The Mississippi Crime Victim Compensation Program’s guidelines allowed for the seven injured people, the families of the three homicide victims, and direct witnesses of the crime to be the only primary victims of the incident.
- In 1998, a student opened fire at Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon. The Oregon Crime Victims Assistance Section’s guidelines allowed anyone who was present in the cafeteria or hallway where the shooting had taken place to be considered as primary victims.
- In 1998, three students opened fire at Westside Middle School in Bono, Arkansas. The Arkansas Crime Victims Reparations Program’s guidelines allowed for all staff and students present at any of the Westside School District’s campuses on the day of the shooting to be considered victims.

## Secondary Victim

The “domino” effect that is usually associated with victimization can be greatly magnified by a mass-casualty incident. After determining which persons can be considered as primary victims of an incident, examine your program’s guidelines to see who may be considered as secondary victims. Some of the relationships that you may want to examine are:

- Parents, siblings, or children of a primary victim
- Persons living in the same household as the primary victim
- Grandparents of a primary victim
- Persons visually witnessing the victimization of a primary victim
- Persons hearing, smelling, or experiencing the victimization in another indirect manner

## Example

- In 1998, three students opened fire at Westside Middle School in Bono, Arkansas. The Arkansas Crime Victims Reparations Program’s guidelines allowed for all staff and students present at any of the Westside School District’s campuses on the day of the shooting to be considered victims. At the

time of the incident, the program’s guidelines did not allow secondary victims to receive compensation. Because the nature of the crime involved so many young children, many grandparents of students felt victimized and sought mental health counseling. The program was unable to provide assistance with these expenses. In 1999, Arkansas Attorney General Mark Pryor successfully lobbied to change legislation and include grandparents as eligible secondary victims.

## **Official “Police” Report**

If an official document is available listing victims and witnesses of a mass-casualty incident, consider whether this would suffice as a “police” report. Consider whether the compensation staff could obtain this document and eliminate the need for each individual victim to produce their own documentation. Consider other sources of documentation (American Red Cross client list, shelter roster, etc.) for persons who may not be included in the police report but may have been affected by the crime.

### **Example**

In the African embassy bombings, the Office for Victims of Crime accepted the FBI list of victims as adequate documentation and asked state compensation programs to do the same. This eliminated each victim from having to contact the FBI directly.

## **Unusual Expenses**

Mass-casualty incidents may leave victims facing costs that are unusual—or more costly—than in other types of victimization. A compensation program should explore what types of expense would be reimbursable according to program guidelines. There may be an alternate source of funding for expenses that cannot be reimbursed by the compensation program. (See Appendix 3)

### **Examples**

Some unusual expenses faced by compensation programs during a mass-casualty incident may include:

- Replacement costs for clothing or other items damaged by the crime or held as evidence
  - ✓ Tennis Shoes
  - ✓ Backpacks
  - ✓ Clothing
- Lost wages due to transporting victim to and from medical facility
- Lost wages due to trial
- Parking fees for medical facility or trial facility
- Pet therapy
- Lodging expenses for family of a victim injured while away from home
- Travel expenses for family of victim injured while traveling away from home
- Car rental
- Costs of transporting body of homicide victim to burial site
- Renovations to home of disabled victims
- Food trays
- Counseling following “copycat” crimes
- Wages for security officer to be placed at scene of crime on long-term basis
- Wages for counselor to be placed at scene of crime on long-term basis
- Room rental to house witnesses at trial

## **Donations/Collateral Sources**

Mass-casualty incidents often gain the attention of national media, thereby prompting national and international outpourings of sympathy and support. Many people send items—such as flowers, cards, etc., which can be difficult for a community to display, store, or dispose of. Also, many people send money. It can be challenging for a compensation program to reconcile these mass donations with guidelines that require collateral sources to be considered when paying compensation. After a mass-casualty incident, your compensation program may want to consider the following.

- Promote the compensation program as a possible recipient for direct donations.
- Establish a separate fund— “the healing fund” —to pay for expenses that are not covered by compensation. (See “Unusual Expenses” in Appendix 1.)
- Document all expenses incurred by a victim, even those ineligible for compensation. Show that donations received were applied to other expenses, thereby allowing compensation to pay for remaining eligible expenses.

# Appendix 2 • Networking

As stated in the first step of the Mass-Casualty Protocol, you should network with other agencies—local, state, and federal—to prepare your state for a mass-casualty victimization. You should familiarize yourself with their procedures and ask to be included in their protocol. Provide them with education about the compensation program and make sure that they understand what services you can provide during a crisis.

## State/Local

Some of the local and state agencies you may want to include in your victim services network are:

- Governor’s Office
- Department of Emergency Management (or designated disaster-relief agency)
- State Police
- State Department of Education
- State Associations of:
  - Medical Examiners
  - School Superintendents
  - School Psychologists
  - Social Workers
  - School Resource Officers
- State and Local Crisis Response Teams and Critical Incident Stress Management Teams
- Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), local chapter
- American Red Cross, local chapter
- United Way, local office
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), local chapter
- Neighbors Who Care, local chapter

## Federal

Many federal agencies have state or local branches. Some of the federal agencies which you should include in your victim services network are:

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- U.S. Attorney’s Office
- FBI
- FBI Victim-Witness Unit
- Secret Service
- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF)
- U.S. Marshal

# Appendix 3 • Resources

Compensation programs are usually just one component among many in a state’s victim-services network. Services can be provided to victims in an effective, efficient, and expedient manner if victim-service agencies are educated about each other’s roles. Offering the appropriate referral to a victim can sometimes be the most valuable service available from a compensation program. In order to offer good referrals, a compensation program should maintain a directory of available local, state, and federal resources. After reviewing the “Unusual Expenses” portion of Appendix 1, identify alternative sources of funding for expenses that would not be eligible for reimbursement by your compensation program.

## Local/State Resources

- State Victims Of Crime Act (VOCA) Victim Assistance Administrator
- Department of Mental Health Services
- Department of Health and Human Services
- State emergency funds
- Charitable emergency funds
- American Red Cross
- United Way
- Clergy associations
- Private businesses (airlines, car-rental agencies, telecommunications companies, grocery stores, clothing stores)
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)
- Parents of Murdered Children (POMC)
- Neighbors Who care

## National Resources

- U.S. Postal Service [resources regarding child pornography victims]
- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms [resources regarding arson/gun-violence victims]
- Social Security Administration [resources for elderly victims of abuse and neglect]
- Drug Enforcement Administration [resources for incidents involving presence or manufacture of illegal controlled-substances]
- Jefferson Institute for Justice Studies, Washington, D.C. (202-659-2882), [www.jijs.org](http://www.jijs.org)

## Quick Reference

American Red Cross  
1621 N. Kent Street  
Arlington, VA 22209  
703-248-4222  
[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

National Association of Crime Victim  
Compensation Boards  
P.O. Box 16003  
Alexandria, VA 22302  
703-370-2996  
[nacvcb@aol.com](mailto:nacvcb@aol.com)

National Voluntary  
Organizations Active  
in Disaster  
[www.nvoad.org](http://www.nvoad.org)

International Critical Incident Stress  
Debriefing Foundation  
10176 Baltimore National Pike, Unit 201  
Elicott City, MD 21042  
410-750-9600  
[www.icisf.org](http://www.icisf.org)

National Organization for Victim  
Assistance  
1757 Park Road, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20010  
202-232-6682  
[www.try-nova.org](http://www.try-nova.org)

Office for Victims of Crime  
Department of Justice  
810 7th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20531  
202-307-5983  
[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc)

# Appendix 4 • Statistics

<b>Mass-Casualty Incident</b>	<b>Compensation Claims Filed</b>	<b>Compensation Claims Awarded</b>	<b>Total Amount Paid to Date by Compensation Program</b>	<b>Compensation Staff Members Employed at Time of Incident</b>
<b>1995 Murrah Building bombing, Oklahoma</b>	387	123	\$461,277.23	2.5
<b>1997 Pearl High School shooting, Mississippi</b>	8	7	\$5,083.00	2
<b>1998 Thurston High School shooting, Oregon</b>	81	81	\$59,356.29	6
<b>1999 Columbine High School shooting, Colorado</b>	510	510	\$224,000	2*
<b>1998 Westside Middle School shooting, Arkansas</b>	73	52	\$70,724.68	3.5
<b>1999 LDS Family History Library shooting, Utah</b>	5	5	\$2,919.48	4

\* Colorado has a decentralized compensation program. The Columbine High School shooting took place in Colorado's 1st Judicial District, which has a 2-person compensation staff.

# Appendix 5 • Mass Violence / Terrorism

It can be helpful for compensation programs to distinguish between acts of terrorism and crimes resulting in mass-casualties. Although the United States Code provides a definition for international terrorism (see below), there is no formal definition of mass-casualty violence. Some possible incidents that might “qualify” as mass-casualty violence are mass shootings, hostage situations, or air crashes or train derailments where criminal activity was involved in the cause of the incident. States may want to consider the following informal criteria when determining whether the event should qualify as a mass-violence crime.

## Mass Violence

- A crime involving multiple victims from multiple families
- A crime having a significant and substantial affect on a community
- A crime garnering national or international attention
- A crime where victims are those who are directly or imminently affected by violence or the threat of violence
- A crime where the scope may extend to all those linked in some shared relationship, including but not limited to:
  - ✓ School
  - ✓ Work
  - ✓ Church

## Terrorism

U.S. Code Title 18, Section 2331 states —

- (1) the term “international terrorism” means activities that...
- (A) involve violent acts or acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or any State, or that would be a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States or any State, or that would be a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States or any State; [note: “State” means a state within the U.S., not a foreign country]
  - (B) appear to be intended...
    - (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population;
    - (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or
    - (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by assassination or kidnapping; and
  - (C) occur primarily outside the territorial jurisdiction of the United States, or transcend national boundaries in terms of the means by which they are accomplished, the persons they appear intended to intimidate or coerce, or the locale in which their perpetrators operate or seek asylum.”

# Appendix 6 • Media Management

## A Checklist of Victims' Rights When Dealing with the Media

### Victims have the right:

- 1) To say "no" to an interview.
- 2) To select the spokesperson or advocate of their choice.
- 3) To select the time and location for media interviews.
- 4) To request a specific reporter.
- 5) To refuse an interview with a specific reporter even though they have granted interviews to other reporters.
- 6) To say "no" to an interview even though they have previously granted interviews.
- 7) To release a written statement through a spokesperson in lieu of an interview.
- 8) To exclude children from interviews.
- 9) To refrain from answering any questions with which they are uncomfortable or feel are inappropriate.
- 10) To know in advance the direction the story is going to take.
- 11) To avoid a press conference atmosphere and speak to only one reporter at a time.
- 12) To demand a correction when inaccurate information is reported.
- 13) To ask that offensive photographs or visuals be omitted from broadcast or publication.
- 14) To conduct a television interview using a silhouette or a newspaper interview without having a photograph taken.
- 15) To completely give their side of the story related to the victimization.
- 16) To refrain from answering reporters' questions during trial.
- 17) To file a formal complaint against a journalist.
- 18) To grieve in private.
- 19) To suggest training about media and victims for print and electronic media in their communities.

*From Crime Victims and the News Media by Anne Seymour and Linda Lowrance, (1988), pp. 7-10, National Victim Center, Fort Worth, Texas*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Month/Day, Year

CONTACT: NAME  
Phone Number(s)

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CITY — In the aftermath of [mass-casualty incident], [state/city/community] residents are being reminded that financial assistance is available for our state’s crime victims.

The [compensation program] can pay up to [maximum award] to help eligible crime victims with expenses for medical care, mental health counseling, burial costs, rehabilitative treatment, and other crime-related expenses. For expenses not covered by the program, referrals may be available to other victim-service organizations.

For additional information about the [compensation program] or to obtain a compensation application, contact [agency] by calling [number].

###

\*\*\*\*\* optional

Citizens wishing to help provide financial assistance to [state] crime victims can contribute to the [compensation program] by sending donations, payable to [fund information] at [address].

# Appendix 7 • Victim Assistance Resources

Attached are several documents that may be helpful to compensation programs as they serve victims of mass-casualty incidents. The documents are designed for easy duplication. Some compensation programs have photocopied these documents and mailed them with compensation applications.

- Code of Professional Ethics for Victim Assistance Providers
- After the Trauma
- Stress and Trauma
- Trauma and Loss
- Long-Term Crisis Reactions
- Long-Term Traumatic Stress Reaction
- Child Reactions to Trauma
- Coping Strategies for Children

# Code of Professional Ethics for Victim Assistance Providers

Adopted by the NOVA Board of Directors, April 23, 1994

Victims of crime and the criminal justice system expect every Victim Assistance Provider, paid or volunteer, to act with integrity, to treat all victims and survivors of crime-their clients-with dignity and compassion, and to uphold principles of justice for accused and accuser alike. To these ends, this Code will govern the conduct of Victim Assistance Providers:

## **In relationships with every client, the Victim Assistance Provider shall:**

- 1 Recognize the interests of the client as a primary responsibility
2. Respect and protect the client's civil and legal rights
3. Respect the client's rights to privacy and confidentiality, subject only to laws or regulations requiring disclosure of information to appropriate other sources
4. Respond compassionately to each client - withholding opinion or judgment, and accepting the client's statement of events as it is told, whether or not an offender has been identified, arrested, convicted, or acquitted
5. Provide services to every client without attributing blame, no matter what the client's conduct was at the time of the victimization or at another stage of the client's life
6. Foster maximum self-determination on the part of the client
7. Serve as a victim advocate when requested and, in that capacity, act on behalf of the client's stated needs without regard to personal convictions and within the social and legal parameters of the advocate's agency
8. Provide each client with personalized services, working for the client's welfare without concern about personal gain
9. Should one client's needs conflict with another's, act with regard to one client only after promptly referring the other to another qualified Victim Assistance Provider
10. Observe the ethical imperative to have no sexual relations with clients, current or past, in recognition that to do so risks exploitation of the knowledge and trust derived from the professional relationship
11. Make client referrals to other resources or services only in the client's best interest, avoiding any conflict of interest in the process
12. Provide opportunities for colleague Victim Assistance Providers to seek appropriate services when traumatized by a criminal event or a client

# After the Trauma

You may want to consider applying for compensation for mental health counseling if you observe any of the following behaviors in any member of your immediate family:

- Recurring nightmares about the incident
- Acting or feeling as if the incident was recurring (includes a sense of reliving the incident, illusions, hallucinations and flashbacks, including those that occur on awakening or when intoxicated)
- Intense psychological distress when experiencing things that resemble an aspect of the traumatic incident (ie. firecrackers)
- Physical responses when experiencing things that resemble an aspect of the traumatic incident
- Efforts to avoid activities, places or people that arouse memories of the trauma
- Inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma
- Markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities
- Feeling of detachment or estrangement from others
- Inability to feel a wide range of emotions
- Sense of a foreshortened future (ie. does not expect to have a career, marriage, children or normal life span)
- Difficulty falling and/or staying asleep
- Hypervigilance
- Exaggerated startle response

# Stress and Trauma

## Your Day-to-Day Life

Individuals exist in a normal state of "equilibrium" or balance. That emotional balance involves everyday stress, both positive and negative—like being late to work, getting a promotion, having a flat tire, getting ready for a date, or putting the children to bed. Occasionally, stress will be severe enough to move an individual out of his or her normal state of equilibrium and into a state of depression or anxiety. But most people most of the time stay in a familiar range of equilibrium.

## When Trauma Occurs

Trauma throws people so far out of their range of equilibrium that it is difficult for them to restore a sense of balance in life. Trauma may be precipitated by stress: "acute" or "chronic."

1. Acute stress is usually caused by a sudden, arbitrary, often random event.
2. Chronic stress is one that occurs over and over again—each time pushing the individual toward the edge of his state of equilibrium, or beyond.

Most trauma comes from acute, unexpected stressors such as violent crime, natural disasters, accidents or acts of war.

1. Some trauma is caused by quite predictable (but hated) stressors such as the chronic abuse of a child, spouse or elder abuse.
2. "Developmental crises" come from transitions in life, such as adolescence, marriage, parenthood and retirement
3. Though similar to acute stress, chronic and developmental crises have significant differences not covered in this review.

## The Crisis Reaction

The normal human response to trauma follows a similar pattern called the crisis reaction. It occurs in all of us.

### Physical Response

The physical response to trauma is based on our animal instincts. It includes:

1. Physical shock, disorientation, immobilization and numbness: "Frozen Fright."
2. "Fight-or-Flight" reaction (when the body begins to mobilize):
  - Adrenaline begins to pump through the body.
  - The body may relieve itself of excess materials by urinating, regurgitating or defecating.
  - Physical senses—one or more may become more acute while others "shut down."
  - The heart rate increases and one may hyperventilate, sweat, etc.
3. Exhaustion: physical arousal associated with fight-or-flight cannot be prolonged indefinitely. Eventually, it will result in exhaustion.

### Emotional Reaction

Our emotional reactions are heightened by our physical responses.

1. Stage one: shock, disbelief, denial
2. Stage two: cataclysm of emotions—anger/rage, fear/terror, sorrow/grief, confusion/frustration, self-blame/guilt
3. Stage three: reconstruction of equilibrium - emotional roller-coaster that eventually becomes balanced, but never goes back to what it was before the crisis—a new sense of equilibrium will be developed.

# Trauma and Loss

Trauma is accompanied by a multitude of losses:

1. Loss of control over one's life
2. Loss of faith in one's God or other people
3. Loss of a sense of fairness or justice
4. Loss of personally-significant property, self or loved ones
5. Loss of a sense of immortality and invulnerability
6. Loss of future

Because of the losses, trauma response involves grief and bereavement. One can grieve over the loss of loved things as well as loved people.

## Trauma and Regression

Trauma is often accompanied by regression—mentally and physically.

1. Individuals may do things that seem childish later. Examples include:
  - Singing nursery rhymes
  - Assuming a fetal position or crawling instead of walking
  - Calling a law enforcement officer or other authority figure "mommy" or "daddy" – or at least thinking of them that way
2. Individuals may feel childish. Examples include:
  - Feeling "little"
  - Wanting "mommy" or "daddy" to come and take care of you
  - Feeling "weak"
  - Feeling like you did when you were a child and something went terribly wrong

## Recovery From Immediate Trauma

Many people live through a trauma and are able to reconstruct their lives without outside help. Most people find some type of benign outside intervention useful in dealing with trauma.

Recovery from immediate trauma is often affected by:

1. Severity of crisis reaction
2. Ability to understand what happened
3. Stability of victim's/survivor's equilibrium after event
4. Supportive environment
5. Validation of experience

Recovery issues for survivors include:

1. Getting control of the event in the victim's/survivor's mind
2. Working out an understanding of the event and, as needed, a redefinition of values
3. Re-establishing a new equilibrium/life
4. Re-establishing trust
5. Re-establishing a future
6. Re-establishing meaning

# Long-Term Crisis Reactions

Not all victims/survivors suffer from long-term stress reactions. Many victims continue to re-experience crisis reactions over long periods of time. Such crisis reactions are normally in response to "trigger events" that remind the victim of the trauma. They can bring back the intense emotion that occurred with the original trauma. "Trigger events" will vary with different victims/survivors, but may include:

- Identification of the assailant in, say, a police lineup
- Sensing (seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting) something similar to something that one was acutely aware of during the trauma
- "Anniversaries" of the event
- The proximity of holidays or significant "life events"
- Hearings, trials, appeals or other critical phases of the criminal justice process
- News reports about a similar event

Long-term stress or crisis reactions may be made better or worse by the actions of others. When such reactions are sensed to be negative (whether or not they were intentional), the actions of others are called the "second assault" and the feelings are often described as a "second injury." Sources of the second assault may include:

- the criminal justice system
- the media
- family, friends, acquaintances
- hospital and emergency room personnel
- health and mental health professionals
- social service workers
- victim service workers
- schools, teachers, educators
- victim compensation system
- clergy

The intensity of long-term stress reactions usually decreases over time, as does the frequency of the re-experienced crisis. However, the effects of a catastrophic trauma cannot be "cured." Even survivors of trauma who reconstruct new lives and who have achieved a degree of normality and happiness in their lives—and who can honestly say they prefer the new, "sadder-but-wiser" person they have become—will find that new life events will trigger the memories and reactions to the trauma in the future.

# Long-Term Traumatic Stress Reaction

When someone survives a catastrophe, they often experience stress reactions for years. Long-term stress reactions are natural responses of people who have survived a traumatic event. Long-term stress reactions are most often a result of imprinted sensory perceptions and reactions in the brain and body. Long-term stress reactions are not always pathological nor do they necessarily require intensive mental health interventions. The most common types of long-term stress reactions include:

A. Post-traumatic Character Changes

B. Post-Traumatic Stress Reactions

C. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

a. Re-experiencing the event both psychologically and with physiological reactivity.

- Intrusive thoughts
- Nightmares and distressing dreams
- Flashbacks

b. Numbing, avoidance, and isolation

- avoidance of thoughts or activities that remind one of the event
- avoidance of previous habits or pleasurable activities that the individual engaged in before the event
- estrangement and isolation
- reduced affect or feelings of "emotional anesthesia"
- partial amnesia
- a sense of foreshortened future

c. Behavioral arousal

- inability to concentrate
- insomnia or interrupted sleep patterns
- flashes of anger or irritability
- startle reactions or hyperalertness

Duration of symptoms last for one or more months

The trauma reactions and symptoms impair functioning.

D. Acute Stress Disorder (ASD)

E. Adjustment Disorder

F. Complex PTSD or Diagnosis of Extreme Stress Not Otherwise Specified (DESNOS)

Symptoms may occur in persons who have survived complex, prolonged or repeated traumas during which they have been subjected to coercive control. Such control may be imposed through violence or threat of violence, control of bodily functions, capricious enforcement of petty rules, intermittent rewards, isolation, degradation, or enforced participation in the violence.

G. Depression

H. Simple Phobias

I. Panic Disorder

J. Anxiety Disorder

It is not important to know all the symptoms for the stress reactions mentioned above. If you become concerned about your reactions or how long they last, it is useful to talk to a mental health professional who is a specialist in working with people who have experienced traumatic events.

# Child Reactions To Trauma

- A. **Overview:** Children's reaction to a trauma will involve not only the impact of the catastrophe on their lives (what they saw, heard, felt, smelled and so on) but a sense of crisis over their parents' reactions. The presence or absence of parents and terror over a frightening situation – one that has rendered the children's parents helpless – all contribute to children's distress.

"A central theme that emerges from exploration of children's responses to disaster situations is that, in a way that is not generally appreciated, they, too, experience fear of death and destruction... Particularly influential in the young child's experience are the presence or absence of his parents and the terror of overwhelming physical forces that seem to render the 'all powerful' adult parents frightened and powerless."

## B. *Birth - 2 Years*

1. High anxiety levels manifested in crying, biting, throwing objects, thumb sucking, and agitated behavior.
2. While it is unlikely that the child will retain a strong mental memory of the trauma, the child may retain a physical memory.

## C. *2 Years - 6 Years: pre-school*

1. Children may not have the same level of denial as do adults so they take in the catastrophe more swiftly.
2. Engage in reenactments and play about the traumatic event – sometimes to the distress of parents or adults.
3. Anxious attachment behaviors are exhibited toward caretakers – may include physically holding on to adults; not wanting to sleep alone; wanting to be held.
4. May become mute, withdrawn and still.
5. Manifest a short "sadness span" but repeat sadness periods over and over.
6. Regress in physical independence – may refuse to dress, feed, or wash self; may forget toilet training; may wet bed.
7. Sleep disturbances, particularly nightmares are common.
8. Any change in daily routines may be seen as threatening.
9. Does not understand death (no one does) and its permanency – reaction to death may include anger and a feeling of rejection.

## D. *6 Years - 10 Years: School age*

1. Play continues to be the primary method of expression. Often art, drawing, dance or music may be integrated in the play.
2. The sense of loss and injury may intrude on the concentration of the child in school.
3. Radical changes in behavior may result – the normally quiet child becoming active and noisy; the normally active child becoming lethargic.
4. May fantasize about event with "savior" ending.
5. Withdrawal of trust from adults.
6. May become tentative in growth towards independence.
7. Internal body dysfunctions are normal – headaches, stomach aches, dizziness.
8. May have increasing difficulty in controlling their own behaviors.
9. May regress to previous development stages.

**E. 10 Years - 12 Years: girls' pre-adolescence**

**12 Years - 14 Years: boys' pre-adolescence**

1. Become more childlike in attitude.
2. May be very angry at unfairness of the disaster.
3. May manifest euphoria and excitement at survival.
4. See symbolic meaning to pre-disaster events as omens and assign symbolic reasons to post-disaster survival.
5. Often suppress thoughts and feelings to avoid confronting the disaster.
6. May be judgmental about their own behavior.
7. May have a sense of foreshortened future.
8. May have a sense of meaninglessness or purposelessness of existence.
9. Psychosomatic illnesses may manifest themselves.

**F. 12/14 Years - 18 Years**

1. Adolescents most resemble adult post-traumatic stress reactions.
2. May feel anger, shame, betrayal and act out their frustration through rebellious acts in school.
3. May opt to move into adult world as soon as possible – to get away from the sense of disaster and to establish control over their environment.
4. Judgmental about their own behavior and the behavior of others.
5. Their survival may contribute to the sense of immortality.
6. They are often suspicious and guarded in their reaction to others in the aftermath.
7. Eating and sleeping disorders are common.
8. Depression and anomie may plague the adolescent.
9. May lose impulse control and become a threat to other family members and him/herself.
10. Alcohol and drug abuse may be a problem as a result of the perceived meaninglessness of the world.
11. Fear that the disaster or tragedy will repeat itself adds to the sense of a foreshortened future.
12. May have psychosomatic illnesses.

# Coping Strategies for Children

- A. Rebuild and reaffirm attachments and relationships. Love and care in the family is a primary need. Extra time should be spent with children to let them know that someone will take care of them and, if parents are survivors, that their parents have reassumed their former role as protector and nurturer is important. Physical closeness is needed.
- B. It is important to talk to children about the tragedy – to address the irrationality and suddenness of disaster. Children need to be allowed to ventilate their feelings, as do adults, and they have a similar need to have those feelings validated. Reenactments and play about the catastrophe should be encouraged. It may be useful to provide them with special time to paint, draw, or write about the event. Adults or older children may help pre-school children reenact the event since pre-school children may not be able to imagine alternative "endings" to the disaster and hence may feel particularly helpless.
- C. Parents should be prepared to tolerate regressive behaviors and accept the manifestation of aggression and anger especially in the early phases after the tragedy.
- D. Parents should be prepared for children to talk sporadically about the event – spending small segments of time concentrating on particular aspects of the tragedy.
- E. Children want as much factual information as possible and should be allowed to discuss their own theories about what happened in order for them to begin to master the trauma or to reassert control over their environment.
- F. Since children are often reluctant to initiate conversations about trauma, it may be helpful to ask them what they think other children felt or thought about the event.
- G. Reaffirming the future and talking in "hopeful" terms about future events can help a child rebuild trust and faith in his own future and the world. Often, parental despair interferes with a child's ability to recover.
- H. Issues of death should be addressed concretely.

# Appendix 8 • OVC Protocol

## OVC Protocol for Awarding Supplemental Funding to States in cases of Mass Violence and Terrorism

- Purpose:** To outline the procedures for securing supplemental funding from the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)
- Background:** OVC is routinely called upon to respond to incidents and suspected incidents of terrorism and mass violence such as in the case of TWA Flight 800 air disaster, the Olympic Bombing in Centennial Park, School shootings in Littleton, Colorado, Springfield Oregon, the embassy bombings in Nairobi and Tanzania West Africa, the Oklahoma City bombings, and more recently the Pan Am Flight 103. OVC intervention has primarily focused on planning and coordination, collaborating with federal and state agency counterparts and private sector organizations, and State Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Administrators. In addition, OVC makes resources available to jurisdictions that include supplemental or new funding from the Reserve Fund and technical assistance and OVC staff support.
- Applicability:** This protocol defines the steps that shall be undertaken by State VOCA Administrators seeking federal assistance in response to a criminal disaster.
- OVC Functional Responsibilities:** OVC's principle role in assisting state and local jurisdictions respond to acts of mass violence and terrorism is threefold: 1) help define needs and resources; 2) provide supplemental funding; and 3) provide technical assistance, upon request.
- Funding Considerations:** 1) the scope of the crime, i.e., number of victims and community impact; 2) verification of the particulars of the crime; 3) state and local resources available to respond; 4) determination regarding the criminality of the incident; 6) other resources available to respond to the incident; and 8) intended uses of federal funds.
- Initial Contact & OVC Resources:** OVC's State Compensation and Assistance staff serve as the initial point of contact for states. On weekends and after hours, the SCAD Division Director should be contacted via the DOJ Command Center at 202/514-5000. The SCAD staff member will seek an initial assessment of the situation with the VOCA Administrator and he/she may request additional information needed to make a recommendation to the Division Director and the OVC Director. If specific actions are required over the weekend, a conference call will be scheduled via the Command Center.
- Outreach to State VOCA Programs:** The State Compensation and Assistance Division (SCAD) staff will coordinate any efforts between states when multiple states may have responsibility for responding to the victims and surviving family members, and coordinate efforts within OVC between the SCAD and the Federal Crime Victims Division (FCVD) as they pertain to federal victim-witness staff efforts.

Questions for States: 1) what current resources are in place to respond to the criminal disaster; 2) does the state/community have a crisis response team/protocol; 3) are advocates within the state/community trained in trauma response; 4) what role is the state/community mental health agency playing in the response; 5) what role (by whom) has been established for the victim advocacy community to respond to the incident; 6) what additional resources are needed for a comprehensive response; 7) have these resources been pursued within the state/community; 8) who are the primary, secondary, and tertiary victims; and 9) what is the time frame for the response?

The SCAD program manager for the state in question is available to travel to the site to offer technical assistance such as application streamlining efforts, victim outreach efforts, etc., as requested and appropriate.

**Interpretation of Federal Statute:**

The Attorney Advisor, working closely with the Office of General Counsel, provides interpretation of the Antiterrorism statute and reviews requests for funding.

**Application for Funding:**

The SCAD has established a streamlined supplemental application process to expedite the processing of any requests for supplemental funding. The VOCA Program Guidelines shall contain information regarding requirements for supplemental funding from the Reserve Fund in response to incidents of mass violence and terrorism.

Application content shall include: 1) Application for Federal Assistance SF 424; 2) Budget and Budget Narrative describing how funds will be used; 3) Brief Description of the crime; and 4) An explanation of why Federal funds are needed.

Applications may be faxed to OVC at 202/514-6383. The original should be sent to OVC in the mail at the same time:

Office for Victims of Crime  
810 7<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W., 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20531

OVC has established a 14 day turnaround time for funding documents. However, you will be notified within 72 hours if your application has been approved for processing. Upon notification the state may begin obligating funds.

**Information Coordination:**

States are requested to provide routine notification to OVC regarding developments relating to the incident.

**After Hours  
Contact Number:**

**DOJ Command Center 202/514-5000**

# Appendix 9 • Sample Applications / Cover Letters

Attached are several documents that may be helpful to compensation programs as they draft cover letters and prepare shortened-versions of compensation applications.

- Mississippi cover letter
- Mississippi application
- Iowa application
- Arkansas cover letter
- Arkansas application
- Utah application