

Crime Victims Civil Legal Services

- ▶ An 85-year-old man lives alone and is found emaciated and bruised, the result of an abusive neighbor who routinely steals the elderly gentleman's monthly stipend.
- ▶ Four children witness their father murder their mother and are left without a home or someone to help them.
- ▶ A woman leaves her husband after years of emotional and physical abuse, but she cannot afford to get a divorce.

Each of these individuals is a victim of crime.

During the 77th Texas Legislative Session, the Legislature appropriated \$5 million to the Texas Office of the Attorney General (OAG) to create a program that would provide civil legal assistance to victims of crime and their immediate family members. The OAG entered into an interagency contract with the Supreme Court of Texas to administer the Crime Victims Civil Legal Services (CVCLS) fund. The Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation handles the administrative responsibilities of this fund on behalf of the Court.

Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation

The Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation administers funds to create community capacity to provide civil legal services for low-income Texans. The organization is committed to the vision that all Texans will have equal access to justice, regardless of their income.

In addition to the CVCLS funding, the Foundation manages and grants the following funds:

Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts (IOLTA)

The IOLTA program allows attorneys to pool short-term or nominal deposits made on behalf of clients or third parties into one account. Interest generated by these accounts is dedicated to helping nonprofit organizations that provide free civil legal services to low-income Texans.

Basic Civil Legal Services (BCLS)

People who file lawsuits must pay a small additional fee to the court, ranging from \$2 in the lower courts to \$25 for suits taken to the Supreme Court of Texas. These fees are designated to assist nonprofit organizations in providing free civil legal services to low-income Texans.

Postage
Required

Crime Victims Civil Legal Services

Crime Victims Civil Legal Services funds are administered by the Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation.



This brochure is a product of the
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To determine where to find legal assistance
in your area, please review the insert and
contact the organization that best meets your needs.

Who is Eligible for Crime Victims Civil Legal Services?

In order to be eligible to receive civil legal services under CVCLS funding, there must be a relationship between the type of criminal activity involved, the specific injury suffered by the victim and the legal services to be rendered. Additionally, an individual must not earn more than 187.5% of federal poverty guidelines and must meet one of the following conditions:

Condition A

1) Be a resident of Texas, the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, or a U.S. territory or possession and 2) suffer personal injury or death in Texas as a result of criminally injurious conduct or as a result of actions taken as an intervener

Condition B

1) Be a Texas resident and 2) suffer personal injury or death as a result of criminally injurious conduct or as a result of actions taken as an intervener in a state or country without victims' compensation and 3) be entitled to compensation if the incident had occurred in Texas

Condition C

1) Be a Texas resident and 2) suffer personal injury or death as a result of criminally injurious conduct caused by an act of international terrorism committed outside the United States

Examples of Violent Crimes Covered

The following are examples of the types of crime covered by the Crime Victims Civil Legal Services fund. Please contact one of the organizations on the insert for more information.

- ◆ Sexual assault
- ◆ Kidnapping
- ◆ Robbery
- ◆ Assault
- ◆ Homicide
- ◆ Vehicular crimes (failure to stop and render aid, DWI, manslaughter and others)

Who May Qualify for Crime Victims Civil Legal Services?

Victims of crime

Authorized individuals acting on behalf of victims of crime

Surviving dependents of victims of crime

Immediate family members of victims of crime (must be related within second degree by marriage or blood)

Household members of victims of crime who require psychiatric care or counseling as a result of the crime

Authorized individuals acting on behalf of children who are dependents of crime victims who died as a result of the crime

Authorized individuals acting on behalf of children who are immediate family or household members of victims of crime who require counseling or psychiatric care as a result of the crime

Individuals who legally or voluntarily assume medical or burial expenses of victims of crime

Examples of Services Offered

The following are examples of the types of legal services offered under the Crime Victims Civil Legal Services fund. Please contact one of the organizations on the insert for more information.

- ◆ Protective orders
- ◆ Divorce
- ◆ Disability benefits
- ◆ Probate
- ◆ Housing