

Media Release

The Hon Enver Erdogan MP
Minister for Corrections
Minister for Youth Justice
Minister for Victim Support



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NEW FINANCIAL SCHEME NOW AVAILABLE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

The Allan Labor Government is better supporting victims of crime, making it easier to get financial assistance and have their trauma recognised outside of court through the new online Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS) – open for applications today.

The Labor Government has worked closely with victims of crime to ensure the new scheme is trauma-informed and victim-centred.

For the first time, the new online scheme can be accessed in the privacy of someone's home and will replace the courts-based Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal (VOCAT) – helping to minimise further trauma for victims, as they no longer having to attend court or face perpetrators.

Victims of crime will now be able to receive up to \$60,000, with some eligible for up to an additional \$25,000 in certain circumstances.

Victims of crime will also be able to choose to receive a recognition statement from the state – acknowledging the effects of the crime and expressing condolences.

The reform also removes the current harmful practice of pooling financial assistance for families and will instead give assistance individually to each family member. This will significantly reduce potential conflict between family members and allow them to apply for assistance in their own timeframe and in accordance with their own needs.

Application timeframes have also been extended from two years to three years, or for sexual offences or family violence cases to 10 years – giving victims more time to assess their needs.

Under VOCAT there were strict definitions around who was considered family – the FAS will expand eligibility to recognise Aboriginal kinship relations, LGBTQI+ relationships and other family members that an applicant may consider to be close family, for example a sister-in-law.

There is support available to victims when applying for FAS and victims will also be able to authorise someone to apply on their behalf. For further information on the new scheme and to apply visit victimssofcrime.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Victim Support Enver Erdogan

"The Financial Assistance Scheme is easy to access and straightforward – because victims of crime deserve support, not red tape."

"From today, we are giving victims a clearer path forward – helping them to move on with their lives."

Quote attributable to Financial Assistance Scheme CEO Marnie Williams

"We know that when financial assistance is easy to access, victims of crime can focus on their emotional and physical recovery without the additional worry of navigating complex systems."