

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2008 SESSION

CHAPTER 203

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 19.2-165.1, 19.2-368.3, and 19.2-368.11:1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund.

[S 312]

Approved March 3, 2008

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 19.2-165.1, 19.2-368.3, and 19.2-368.11:1 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 19.2-165.1. Payment of medical fees in certain criminal cases; reimbursement.

~~All A. Except as provided in subsection B, all medical fees involved expended~~ in the gathering of evidence for all criminal cases where medical evidence is necessary to establish a crime has occurred and for cases involving abuse of children under the age of 18 shall be paid by the Commonwealth out of the appropriation for criminal charges, provided that any medical evaluation, examination, or service rendered be performed by a physician or facility specifically designated by the attorney for the Commonwealth in the city or county having jurisdiction of such case for such a purpose. If no such physician or facility is reasonably available in such city or county, then the attorney for the Commonwealth may designate a physician or facility located outside and adjacent to such city or county.

Where there has been no prior designation of such a physician or facility, such medical fees shall be paid out of the appropriation for criminal charges upon authorization by the attorney for the Commonwealth of the city or county having jurisdiction over the case. Such authorization may be granted prior to or within 48 hours after the medical evaluation, examination, or service rendered.

~~Upon conviction of the defendant in any such case, the court shall order that the defendant reimburse the Commonwealth for payment of such medical fees.~~

B. All medical fees expended in the gathering of evidence through physical evidence recovery kit examinations conducted on victims complaining of sexual assault under Article 7 (§ 18.2-61 et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 18.2 shall be paid by the Commonwealth pursuant to subsection F of § 19.2-368.11:1. Victims complaining of sexual assault shall not be required to participate in the criminal justice system or cooperate with law-enforcement authorities in order to be provided with such forensic medical exams.

C. Upon conviction of the defendant in any case requiring the payment of medical fees authorized by this section, the court shall order that the defendant reimburse the Commonwealth for payment of such fees.

§ 19.2-368.3. Powers and duties of Commission.

The Commission shall have the following powers and duties in the administration of the provisions of this chapter:

1. To adopt, promulgate, amend and rescind suitable rules and regulations to carry out the provisions and purposes of this chapter *and to include a distinct policy for the payment of physical evidence recovery kit examinations.*

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of § 2.2-3706, to acquire from the attorneys for the Commonwealth, State Police, local police departments, sheriffs' departments, and the Chief Medical Examiner such investigative results, information and data as will enable the Commission to determine if, in fact, a crime was committed or attempted, and the extent, if any, to which the victim or claimant was responsible for his own injury. These data shall include prior adult arrest records and juvenile court disposition records of the offender. For such purposes and in accordance with § 16.1-305, the Commission may also acquire from the juvenile and domestic relations district courts a copy of the order of disposition relating to the crime. The use of any information received by the Commission pursuant to this subdivision shall be limited to carrying out the purposes set forth in this section, and this information shall be confidential and shall not be disseminated further. The agency from which the information is requested may submit original reports, portions thereof, summaries, or such other configurations of information as will comply with the requirements of this section.

3. To hear and determine all claims for awards filed with the Commission pursuant to this chapter, and to reinvestigate or reopen cases as the Commission deems necessary.

4. To require and direct medical examination of victims.

5. To hold hearings, administer oaths or affirmations, examine any person under oath or affirmation and to issue summonses requiring the attendance and giving of testimony of witnesses and require the production of any books, papers, documentary or other evidence. The powers provided in this subsection may be delegated by the Commission to any member or employee thereof.

6. To take or cause to be taken affidavits or depositions within or without the Commonwealth.

7. To render each year to the Governor and to the General Assembly a written report of its activities.

8. To accept from the government of the United States grants of federal moneys for disbursement under the provisions of this chapter.

§ 19.2-368.11:1. Amount of award.

A. Compensation for Total Loss of Earnings: An award made pursuant to this chapter for total loss of earnings which results directly from incapacity incurred by a crime victim shall be payable during total incapacity to the victim or to such other eligible person, at a weekly compensation rate equal to 66 2/3 percent of the victim's average weekly wages. The total amount of weekly compensation shall not exceed \$600. The victim's average weekly wages shall be determined as provided in § 65.2-101.

B. Compensation for Partial Loss of Earnings: An award made pursuant to this chapter for partial loss of earnings which results directly from incapacity incurred by a crime victim shall be payable during incapacity at a weekly rate equal to 66 2/3 percent of the difference between the victim's average weekly wages before the injury and the weekly wages which the victim is able to earn thereafter. The combined total of actual weekly earnings and compensation for partial loss of earnings shall not exceed \$600 per week.

C. Compensation for Loss of Earnings of Parent of Minor Victim: The parent or guardian of a minor crime victim may receive compensation for loss of earnings, calculated as specified in subsections A and B, for time spent obtaining medical treatment for the child and for accompanying the child to, attending or participating in investigative, prosecutorial, judicial, adjudicatory and post-conviction proceedings.

D. Compensation for Dependents of a Victim Who Is Killed: If death results to a victim of crime entitled to benefits, dependents of the victim shall be entitled to compensation in accordance with the provisions of §§ 65.2-512 and 65.2-515 in an amount not to exceed the maximum aggregate payment or the maximum weekly compensation which would have been payable to the deceased victim under this section.

E. Compensation for Unreimbursed Medical Costs, Funeral Expenses, Services, etc.: Awards may also be made on claims or portions of claims based upon the claimant's actual expenses incurred as are determined by the Commission to be appropriate, for (i) unreimbursed medical expenses or indebtedness reasonably incurred for medical expenses; (ii) expenses reasonably incurred in obtaining ordinary and necessary services in lieu of those the victim would have performed, for the benefit of himself and his family, if he had not been a victim of crime; (iii) expenses directly related to funeral or burial, not to exceed \$5,000; (iv) expenses attributable to pregnancy resulting from forcible rape; (v) mental health counseling for survivors as defined under subdivisions A 2 and A 4 of § 19.2-368.4, not to exceed \$2,500 per claim; (vi) reasonable and necessary moving expenses, not to exceed \$1,000, incurred by a victim or survivors as defined under subdivisions A 2 and A 4 of § 19.2-368.4; and (vii) any other reasonable and necessary expenses and indebtedness incurred as a direct result of the injury or death upon which such claim is based, not otherwise specifically provided for. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person who is not eligible for an award under subsection A of § 19.2-368.4 who pays expenses directly related to funeral or burial is eligible for reimbursement subject to the limitations of this section.

F. Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision 3 of § 19.2-368.10, §§ 19.2-368.5, 19.2-368.5:1, 19.2-368.6, 19.2-368.7, 19.2-368.8, subsection G of this section, and § 19.2-368.16, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund shall pay for physical evidence recovery kit examinations conducted on victims of sexual assault. Any individual that submits to and completes a physical evidence recovery kit examination shall be considered to have met the reporting and cooperation requirements of this chapter. Funds paid for physical evidence recovery kit collection shall not be offset against the Fund's maximum allowable award as provided in subsection H. Payments may be subject to negotiated agreements with the provider. Healthcare providers that complete physical evidence recovery kit examinations may bill the Fund directly subject to the provisions of § 19.2-368.5:2. The Commission shall develop policies for a distinct payment process for physical evidence recovery kit examination expenses as required under subdivision 1 of § 19.2-368.3.

In order for the Fund to consider additional crime-related expenses, victims shall file with the Fund following the provisions of this chapter and Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund policy.

¶ G. Any claim made pursuant to this chapter shall be reduced by the amount of any payments received or to be received as a result of the injury from or on behalf of the person who committed the crime or from any other public or private source, including an emergency award by the Commission pursuant to § 19.2-368.9.

¶ H. To qualify for an award under this chapter, a claim must have a minimum value of \$100, and payments for injury or death to a victim of crime, to the victim's dependents or to others entitled to payment for covered expenses, after being reduced as provided in subsection ¶ G, shall not exceed \$25,000 in the aggregate.