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SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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White Makes Filing for Crime Victim Assistance Accessible Online

SPRINGFIELD — Secretary of State Jesse White announced today that victims of violent crimes are now able to receive and file their applications for financial compensation via the Internet.

"Victims of violent crime often need funds to cover their medical bills, go for counseling, or cover their lost wages," White said. "Being able to apply and file over the Internet will help expedite that process and help get them the funding that they truly need."

White serves as the Clerk of the Court of Claims, which annually distributes \$25 million to Illinois victims of violent crimes. Funding is provided by the Illinois General Assembly with matching funds from the federal government.

Under the Illinois Crime Victim's Compensation Act, innocent victims of violent crimes who have inadequate insurance or no source of funds to cover their expenses are eligible for compensation.

To be eligible for compensation, the victim must report the crime within 72 hours to law enforcement as well as cooperate with them, cannot have contributed to the injury or death of a person, and they must complete an application.

Prior to Internet access, a crime victim would have to go to a police station or victim advocate to pick up the application to file his/her case. Now he/she is able to file directly over the Internet from the Secretary of State's Web site at www.cyberdriveillinois.com by clicking on the "[Help for Victims](#)" icon.

If the victim does not have a computer, he/she can go to the library and file his/her case. Librarians are being trained to assist in this process through the Assistance for Victims of Violence program set up by Secretary White, who is also State Librarian.

"The goal of the training is to establish community libraries as central repositories and safe environments where victims of violent crimes can get information about local assistance and shelters, as well as how to apply for crime victim's compensation," White said.

White said the training is being coordinated through regional library systems in Illinois. Local advocates from domestic violence shelters teach librarians and police officers about the cycle of violence in domestic situations, and provide referral information for domestic violence shelters and services in their respective areas of the state. Local advocates from sexual assault programs are teaching librarians and police officers about the dynamics of rape and provide referral information for rape crisis centers and counseling available to victims of sexual assault.

In addition, the training includes detailed information on crime victim's compensation, such as eligibility and how to file applications.

White will be participating in one of the training sessions this week, on Friday, March 8, in Champaign.

The Illinois Crime Victim's Compensation Act was originated in 1973.