



Jesse White

SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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Secretary of State Jesse White Promotes National Crime Victims Rights Week

Program provides up to \$26 million to victims of violent crimes

CHICAGO — In recognition of National Crime Victims Rights Week, April 6 - 12, Secretary of State Jesse White reminds people that assistance is available to victims of violent crimes through the Illinois Court of Claims and their local public libraries.

Under the Illinois Crime Victim's Compensation Act, victims of violent crimes who have inadequate insurance or no source of funds to cover their expenses are eligible for compensation covering medical bills, counseling, lost wages and other expenses. The Court of Claims distributes \$26 million per year to Illinois victims of violent crimes.

In his roles as State Librarian and the Clerk of the Court of Claims, White has promoted public 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.

"Many victims of violent crimes don't know where to go for safe shelter or to get help. Oftentimes the victims cannot afford funeral expenses, hospital stays and counseling," said White. "This program helps to fund these necessary services. It is crucial to get this important information to victims."

White's office has been training librarians and law enforcement officials throughout the state about important programs available to victims of violent crimes. 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 area of the state. Local advocates from sexual assault programs teach 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. The training also includes detailed information on crime victim's compensation, such as who is eligible and how to help victims file applications.

On April 8 at 1:30 p.m., members of White's Court of Claims department will join Attorney General Lisa Madigan for a National Crime Victims Rights Week Rally in Springfield. The rally will consist of advocates, professionals and victims coming together to publicize issues, rights, and programs related to crime victims.

More information for victims of violence is available through Secretary of State Jesse White's website at www.cyberdriveillinois.com or at local libraries statewide.