

ARIZONA CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

Crime Victim Compensation in Arizona FY 2016-2017



By: Matt Bileski, Applications Developer; Lorraine Felix, Staff Intern; Nicole Wiley, Staff Intern

INTRODUCTION

The Crime Victim Compensation Program, in collaboration with the Statistical Analysis Center, at the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission is providing annual performance measures to the county victim compensation coordinators to understand where services are currently being provided. The following performance measures are provided by the 15 Arizona counties based on applications for state victim compensation during the fiscal years (FY) 2016 and FY 2017.

NEW APPLICATIONS

Per Table 1, the number of new applications increased from FY 2016 to FY 2017 by 4.0 percent. Approximately 80 percent of applications are reported as homicides, sexual assault/abuse, or physical assault/abuse during both fiscal years.

The Statistical Analysis Center worked closely with county coordinators and the Crime Victim Compensation Program to improve offense reporting within the available categories, and from FY 2016 to FY 2017, reported crimes in the “other” offense category fell by 32.4 percent.

BENEFIT PAYMENTS TO VICTIMS BY OFFENSE

From FY 2016 to FY 2017, total payments to victims decreased by 1.9 percent (see Table 2). Greater than \$2.2 million (66.9 percent) went to support victims and derivative victims¹ of homicide and physical assault in FY 2017.

Table 2 also highlights a substantial increase in benefits issued for robbery from FY 2016 to FY 2017. Burglary likely increased over time due to its addition to the offense list in FY 2016. Reductions in benefit payment amounts were realized for assault, kidnapping, human trafficking, fraud/financial crimes and other crimes (including other vehicular).

Table 1. New Applications By Offense Type, FY 2016-2017

Offense	FY 2016	FY 2017	Percentage Change
Homicide	248	258	4.0%
Adult Sexual Assault	88	101	14.8%
Child Physical/Sexual Abuse	389	440	13.1%
Robbery	57	85	49.1%
Assault	646	628	-2.8%
Kidnapping	6	10	66.7%
Human Trafficking	0	1	N/A
Terrorism	2	0	-100.0%
Stalking	3	12	300.0%
Burglary	19	11	-42.1%
Arson	5	2	-60.0%
Fraud/Financial Crimes	4	4	0.0%
Driving Under the Influence	65	74	13.8%
Other Vehicular Crimes	49	58	18.4%
Other Crimes	108	73	-32.4%
Arizona Total	1,689	1,757	4.0%

Table 2. Benefit Payments By Offense Type, FY 2016-2017

Offense	FY 2016	FY 2017	Percentage Change
Homicide	\$873,657	\$1,024,991	17.3%
Adult Sexual Assault	\$101,362	\$110,000	8.5%
Child Physical/Sexual Abuse	\$245,318	\$356,586	45.4%
Robbery	\$64,314	\$126,538	96.8%
Assault	\$1,579,703	\$1,238,416	-21.6%
Kidnapping	\$15,242	\$13,552	-11.1%
Human Trafficking	\$1,226	\$86	-93.0%
Terrorism	\$0	\$0	0.0%
Stalking	\$2,900	\$5,014	72.9%
Burglary	\$477	\$7,330	1,436.7%
Arson	\$0	\$625	N/A
Fraud/Financial Crimes	\$1,453	\$1,071	-26.3%
Driving Under the Influence	\$203,620	\$283,102	39.0%
Other Vehicular Crimes	\$265,582	\$180,136	-32.2%
Other Crimes	\$94,542	\$36,894	-61.0%
Arizona Total	\$3,449,396	\$3,384,344	-1.9%

Table 3. Referral Source, FY 2016-2017

Type	FY 2016	FY 2017
Victim Assistance Programs	933	1,126
Law Enforcement Agencies	231	205
Social Service Agencies	48	46
Medical Service Providers	60	46
Prosecutors	76	83
Posters, Brochures, etc.	19	9
Self Referrals	15	19
Other Referral Source	225	223
Total Referrals	1,607	1,757

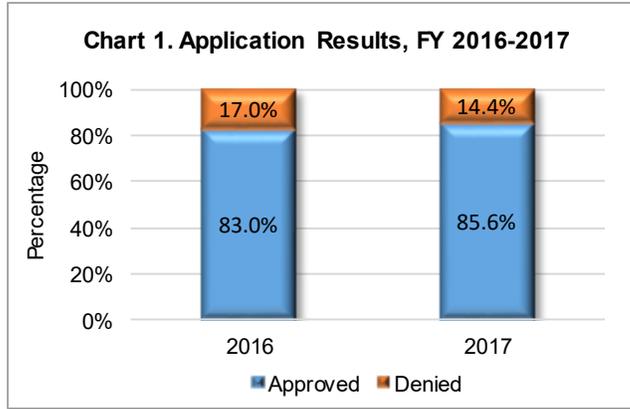
SOURCES OF APPLICATION REFERRALS

In FY 2017, approximately 75 percent of application referrals were made by Victim Assistance programs and law enforcement agencies (see Table 3). The greatest increase in referrals (20.7 percent) from FY 2016 to FY 2017 came from Victim Assistance Programs. Based on increased funding in the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Assistance Program, the Crime Victim Compensation Program anticipated an increase in referrals from Victim Assistance programs over this period.

¹ Derivative Victim is defined based on the relationship to the victim, witness of the act, or involvement in the victim's treatment as defined in Arizona Administrative Code R10-4-101.

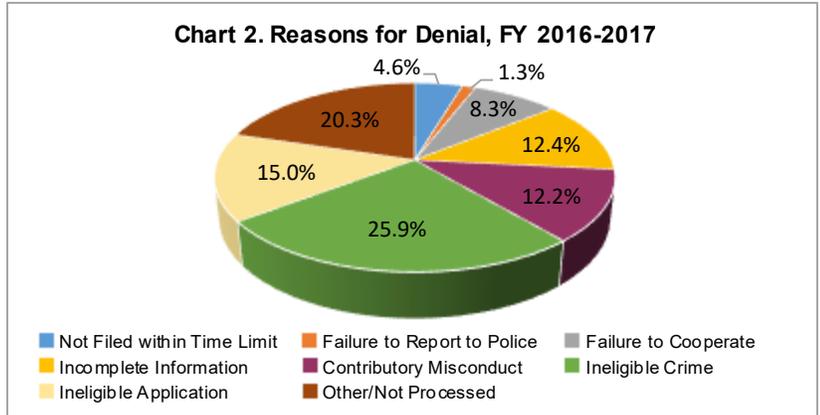
APPROVED AND DENIED APPLICATIONS

Chart 1 shows that a smaller percentage of applications were denied in FY 2017. In FY 2017, 85.6 percent of applications reviewed by county compensation boards were approved while 14.4 percent were denied.



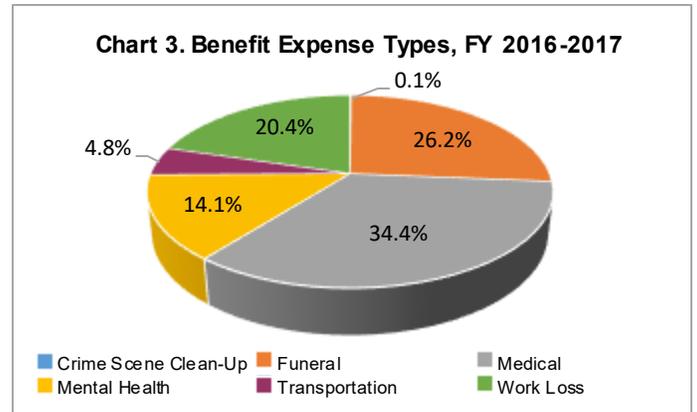
REASONS FOR APPLICATION DENIAL

Over the two fiscal years, the most common reason for application denial was an ineligible crime (see Chart 2). Nearly 10 percent of applications were denied due to the victim's failure to report the crime to law enforcement or cooperate throughout the criminal justice process.



BENEFIT EXPENSES PAID FOR VICTIMS

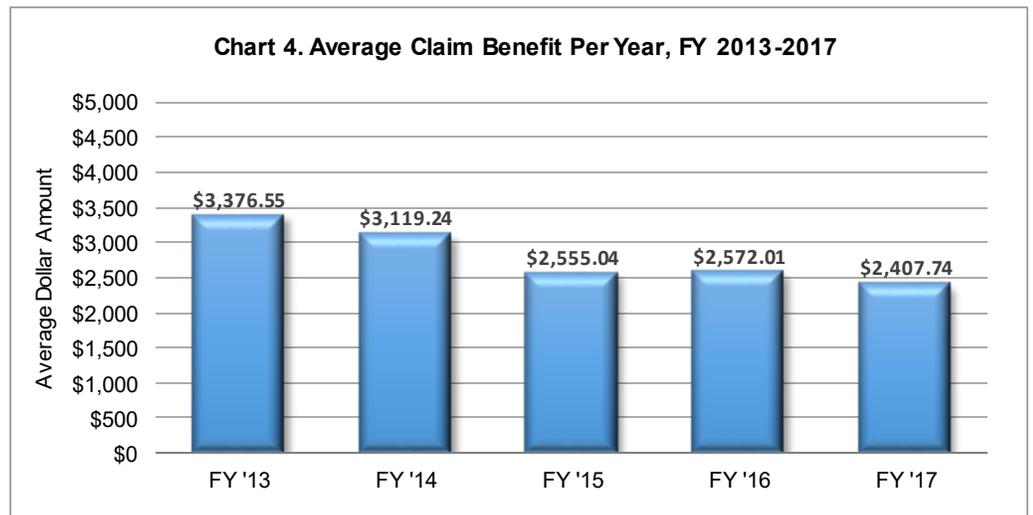
Approximately one-third of benefits paid in FY 2016 and FY 2017 were allocated to medical costs (see Chart 3). Funeral costs made up 26.2 percent of benefits paid while work loss accounted for 20.4 percent over the same period. Just over 14 percent of benefit monies were provided for mental health expenses while fewer than five percent of benefits paid went toward transportation and crime scene clean-up.



AVERAGE BENEFIT PAYMENT AMOUNTS

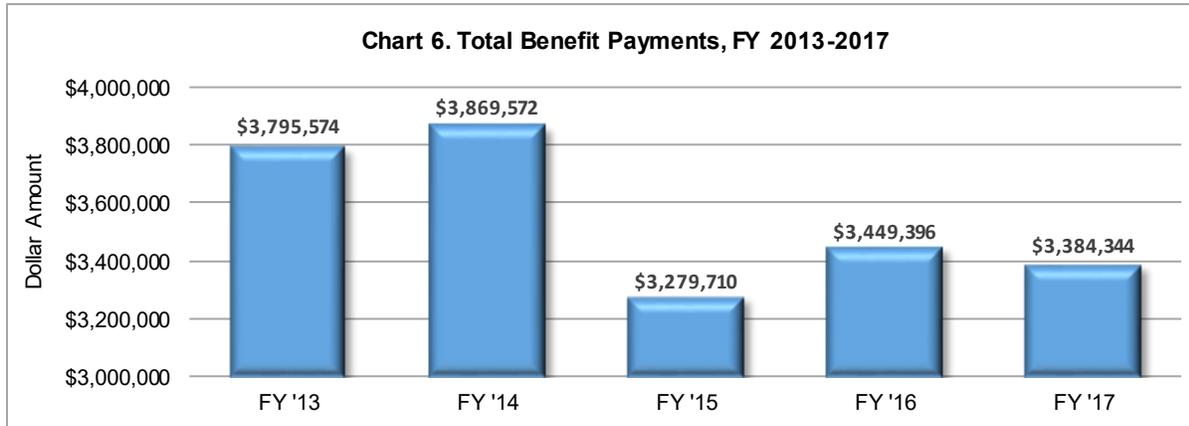
Chart 4 shows the average cost per Victim Compensation claim within each fiscal year. In FY 2013, the average benefit payments amounted to \$3,376.55 per claim, and the average amount declined to \$2,407.74 in FY 2017. This change in benefit payments may be due to an increased number of persons who are insured, thus reducing the amount of payment, and efforts by service providers to negotiate the approved payment rate set by the state's Medicaid agency, the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS).

Maximum claim benefits are capped at \$25,000 for all claims (including medical), \$10,000 for funeral expenses, \$5,000 for mental health counseling, and additional maximums for other expenses. The ACJC Data Warehouse system will enhance data collection of benefit payments and improve the monitoring and analysis of expenditures in the future.



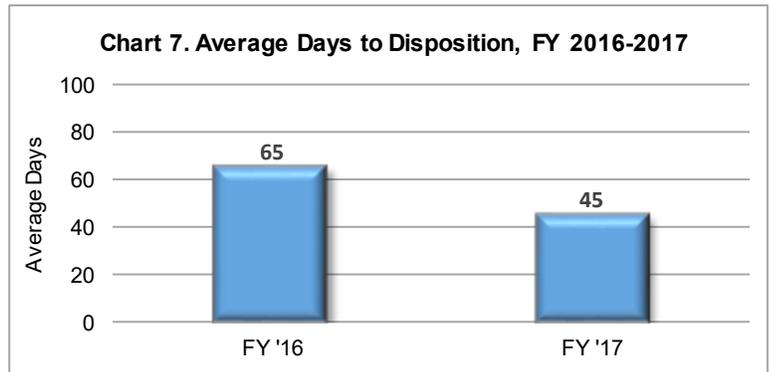
TOTAL STATEWIDE BENEFIT PAYMENTS

Chart 6 provides the statewide benefit payment amounts across the latest five fiscal years for the Victim Compensation program. Total benefit payments fluctuated, but decreased, from \$3,795,574 in FY 2013 to \$3,384,344 in FY 2017. The Victim Compensation Program paid out a five-year high of \$3,869,572 in FY 2014.



APPLICATION DISPOSITION

According to the average days to disposition reported by county coordinators, the average time to process an application to disposition has decreased from FY 2016 to FY 2017 (see Chart 7). Statewide, the average number of days fell from 65 in FY 2016 to 45 in FY 2017. All four quarters of FY 2017 were rather stable, ranging between 40 and 50 days on average for application processing.



CONCLUSION

The Crime Victim Compensation Program at the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission continues to monitor program performance measures to understand more about victim compensation services statewide and to identify areas of greatest need. From FY 2016 to FY 2017, over 80 percent of claim monies went to support a similar percentage of applications for homicide, sexual assault/abuse and physical assault/abuse. There was a four percent rise in applications from FY 2016 to FY 2017, which coincides with an increase in Victim Assistance program referrals. Despite this application increase, fewer dollars were paid out in FY 2017. Also during FY 2017, a smaller percentage of total applications were denied while all applications were processed more quickly compared to FY 2016. Over 60 percent of claim monies went to support medical and funeral expenses, and the average annual cost per claim declined to a five-year low of \$2,407.74 in FY 2017. In the coming years, improvements to the data collection process through the ACJC Data Warehouse will help improve performance measurement and monitoring of benefit payments across county lines.

The Arizona Criminal Justice Commission would like to thank the county victim coordinators for providing data and information critical in monitoring the impact of Victim Compensation funding across the state.

For questions and additional information, please contact Larry Grubbs, the Manager of the Victim Services Program at the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, at lgrubbs@azcjc.gov.

