

CRIME VICTIM SERVICES COMMISSION

Meeting – May 12, 2025

MINUTES

*****DRAFT*****

Commission Members Present:

Thomas Clement
Jeffrey S. Getting
Karen Gray Sheffield

Commission Members Absent with Notice:

Cpl. Robin Hornbuckle
Dr. Tolulope Sonuyi

Staff Members Present:

Jess Averill, Policy Analyst
Shalonna Banks, Crime Victims Compensation Director
Katherine Bennett, Assistant Attorney General
Michael Bobbitt, Departmental Analyst
Raven Douthard, Compensation Claims Analyst (Teams)
Alexandra Engen, Compensation Claims Analyst
Sasha Kemp, Compensation Navigator (Teams)
Jordan Kennedy, Manager Communications and Special Projects
Gail Krieger, Director of Operations
Megan Mezel, Victim Rights Program Specialist (Teams)
Catherine Michael, Compensation Claims Analyst (Teams)
Angela Povilaitis, Staff Attorney (Teams)
Nicole Quinn, SAFE Response Analyst and Compensation Analyst (Teams)
Rob Spada, Staff Attorney (Teams)
Emily Stinson, Crime Victim Compensation Program Manager (Teams)
Alicia VanEyck, Compensation Claims Analyst (Teams)
Kaylin Winchester (Teams)

Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Gray Sheffield, acting Chairperson, called the Crime Victim Services Commission meeting to order at 12:34 pm, on May 12, 2025, in the Dempsey Room at the Grand Tower Building, 235 S. Grand Avenue, Lansing, MI 48933.

Chair Report

Ms. Gray Sheffield said staff were grateful they were able to attend events honoring and recognizing Missing and Murdered Indigenous People Day on May 5th which was the original date of the commission meeting. She also acknowledged Mr. Gettings' reappointment to the Commission and said she is grateful the Governor granted his appointment for another term.

Public Comment

None.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Mr. Clement made a motion, supported by Mr. Getting to approve the May 12, 2025, meeting agenda. Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Clement made a motion, supported by Mr. Getting to approve the March 31, 2025, open meeting minutes as written. Motion carried.

Mr. Clement made a motion, supported by Mr. Getting to approve the March 31, 2025, closed meeting minutes as written. Motion carried.

Staff Report

Ms. Kennedy provided an update on the compensation media campaign. The objective of the campaign was to amplify statewide awareness of the Crime Victim Compensation program. She discussed how the campaign performed in the past year and how it focused on low income and highly populated metropolitan areas in Michigan. There were just under 9 million impressions which were the number of times that Crime Victim Compensation content flashed on a screen. There were also over 4 million video views which were the number of times people watched a compensation advertisement from start to finish. Overall, it was a successful campaign.

Ms. Banks provided an update on the status of the MiCAVS electronic claim system project after the new vendor, Blue Vector -a subsidiary of Google, was chosen. Discovery sessions were attended by Ms. Ely, the vendor and DTMB staff. These sessions discussed program requirements and system needs. The system is expected to go live by the end of the calendar year.

Ms. Banks said staff are continuing to work with the Lansing 360 group. This group is a consortium of prosecutors, the Office of Ingham County, the Lansing Police Department, and the City Council for Lansing. The group is working on how to respond to community violence, particularly gun violence.

Mr. Spada provided an update on the Antiterrorism and Emergency Assistance Program (AEAP). The resiliency center in Oxford's physical location is closing and they will be moving to a virtual process. The Department of Justice's funding has been received for the Oxford incident and is

currently awaiting finalization to conduct reimbursement for funds already spent out. Resiliency centers are still open in the Rochester Hills area and at MSU. The finalized budget for MSU is currently being reviewed by the Department of Justice attorneys.

Ms. Krieger provided a funding update. As discussed in the previous meeting, the Governor's budget included a \$20 million request for 2026, which is the anticipated amount that will be needed to keep the Compensation, Victim Rights and VOCA programs whole. Since then, the Senate's budget has dropped but did not include the Governor's \$20 million request, however a \$100 request was included. It is staff's understanding is that this is placeholder language which shows they want to make a commitment, but they don't know the level of commitment that they are going to make yet. A letter was drafted to explain not only the importance of crime victim money, but to explain more how this funding is received- through which funding streams, and what and how it is used. Commission staff thought that such a letter could be helpful to DHHS subcommittees during upcoming funding and budget conversations.

Motion: Mr. Getting made a motion, supported by Mr. Clement, to approve the draft letter on crime victim funding on behalf of the Commission, and for this letter to be used to convey the Commission's position on the importance of ensuring the funding necessary to provide for lifesaving victim services and victim compensation, including committee hearings on the subject. Motion carried.

Ms. Mezel spoke about where the gaps are with court reporting and court assessments and why DVS is not receiving all fines and fees that are collected. The governing statute is MCL 780.509 which says courts are supposed to transmit 90% of the assessments received under the section to the Department of Treasury, along with a written report of those assessments. The statute also states that courts must include the following information to the division monthly:

- The name of the court.
- The payment schedule.
- The number of convictions or dispositions.
- The number of defendants or juveniles.
- The total amount of assessments imposed.
- The total amount of assessments affected, and other information required by the division.

There is a concern with the lack of use of the online court reporting system for court assessments reporting. The online reporting system requires users to fill out all the fields including anything that is mandatory to submit the report. Users are also required to upload a copy of their internal tracking system report so it can be reviewed.

Often payments will be received that the courts have not reported. Every month the team must look at each payment and call the courts to determine who/what the payment was intended for. Some courts are also not submitting full payments.

Another concern is with the automatic set aside. When the division moved to an online system, there were many negative monetary amounts appearing on audit reports. Those negative amounts were automatic set asides due to the Michigan Clean Slate Act.

Some solutions to this problem could include expanding training and technical assistance with the courts. The goal is to get the State Court Administrators Office (SCAO) to work together with the Victim Rights team. A decision was made to further review possible solutions with a smaller group of staff and Commissioners Getting and Clement. The Commission may seek a meeting with SCAO and the Chief Justice once the smaller group has clearly laid out the issue. The group may also reach out to the Attorney General's office and PAAM for support in addressing this issue.

Legislative Updates:

Ms. Averill discussed the Public Safety and Violence Prevention Fund bill. This bill generates a sales tax, a portion of which goes to the Crime Victims' Rights Fund. The bill passed the House 104 to 4 and is now in the Appropriations Committee in the Senate. The same bill was reviewed by the Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board who voted to ask that money in that new fund, be earmarked to go to no-cost service of PPO's, which has been a long-sought priority. The Board submitted a letter to the committee, but the bill's sponsors were not interested in including it in this bill.

New Business:

Ms. Averill discussed modifying the procedural claims process in Commission meetings. In the past, when a case was reviewed, the Commission made a motion for their determination, and that determination was formally drafted and presented to the Commission at the following meeting to be approved and signed by members. After some internal staff conversations with Ms. Bennett from the Attorney General's office, the following process was proposed, and the Commission's approval was requested.

After a claim is discussed, a determination is decided, and a motion is carried, each Commissioner will complete their provided "notes" form with their signature. After the meeting, staff will then complete the official document to send to the claimant explaining their determination. Staff will add the electronic signatures of the commissioners to that compiled and newly drafted document. This process eliminates the need to present the determination review at the following meeting.

In practice, staff act upon a determination when it is made and do not wait until the next Commission meeting. In other words, they would send out the award once the determination was made. Allowing for the electronic signatures meets the rules and statute requirements of the "chair and one other member" signing the decision. The rules and statutes do not prescribe when or how this is to be done. With the agreement of the Commissioners, staff would like to move forward with this process and be allowed to use electronic signatures for this purpose.

Motion: Mr. Getting made a motion, supported by Mr. Clement, to allow staff to finalize commission decision documents and use electronic signatures for Commission determinations on cases reviewed in Commission meetings, not having to wait until the following Commission meeting to approve and sign determinations. Motion carried.

Motion: Mr. Clement made a motion, supported by Mr. Getting to go into closed session at 1:38. Motion carried.

Claim Number: 250378 - Issue: Claim was denied due to the aggregate maximum of \$45,000 being paid out on another claim prior to this application being submitted and received.

Claim Number: 250907 - Issue: Whether the claimant suffered a personal injury due to a breaking and entering of their house while they were out of town.

Motion: Ms. Gray Sheffield made a motion, supported by Mr. Getting to go into open session at 2:07. Motion carried.

Commission Review(s)

Motion: Mr. Getting made a motion, seconded by Mr. Clement, to uphold the recommendation to deny claim number 250378 because the maximum amount has already been previously paid to a different victim. Motion carried.
(MCL 18.356 Subsection 1)

Pre-determination(s)

Motion: Mr. Getting made a motion, supported by Ms. Gray Sheffield to deny claim number 250907 because a personal injury did not occur as a direct result of a crime. Motion carried.
(MCL 18.351(c)(i) and (MCL 18.351(i)(ii))

Unfinished Business:

None.

Commission Member Report:

None.

Adjournment

Mr. Getting made a motion, supported by Mr. Clement to adjourn the meeting at 2:10 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Bobbitt