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## **State of New Jersey**

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VICTIMS OF CRIME COMPENSATION OFFICE**

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### **NEW LAW EXPANDS BENEFITS TO VICTIMS OF CRIME**

The legislature recently passed P.L.2011, ch. 165, which amends the Victims of Crime Compensation Office our enabling statute. The new law is scheduled to take effect on March 1, 2012. The new provisions expand the time for filing and provide additional benefits to victims. The specific changes are as follows:

1. The time in which to file an application with the VCCO has been extended from two years to three years;
2. The time in which a victim/claimant must file a police report has been extended from three months to nine months;
3. Where a victim is under 18 at the time of the offense, the three year limit does not begin until the victim's 18th birthday;
4. Good cause for failure to file within the three year period now includes, but is not limited to, instances "where the victim or the victims' dependents were not appropriately informed of the benefits offered by the Office as required by law."
5. The five year expiration of a claim, along with the ability to extend it when compelling circumstances exist, has been repealed and replaced by a 10 year expiration period. Exceptions to the 10 year expiration include (1) requests for payment of specific out-of-pocket expenses received by the VCCO prior to the expiration of the 10 year period; (2) catastrophic cases; and (3) "requests for payment of expenses that were incurred only after the expiration of the 10 year period."
6. The "other sources" provision of NJSA 52:4B-19 has been amended to provide that life insurance payments and private donations received by the dependents of the victims shall not be considered as other sources.

**NOTE: While the new provisions take effect on March 1, 2012, the VCCO is retroactively applying the new provisions to active cases.**