

# Information Sheet

## Money Paid into Court for Victims of Crime



### Summary

This Information Sheet explains why your money is being looked after by Funds in Court (FIC), and how you can use your money.

- Special financial assistance money awarded by the Victims of Crime Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS) or the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal (VoCAT) to people under 18 years old is paid to the Senior Master to look after.
- Most people get their money paid out to them when they turn 18.
- You can use your money before you turn 18. Your money is not locked away. You can ask to use your money for anything that is reasonable.
- The Senior Master is an Associate Judge of the Supreme Court of Victoria.
- FIC is the part of the Supreme Court that helps the Senior Master look after money paid into Court.
- Your Client Liaison Officer (CLO) is your contact person at FIC. They will help you apply to use your money.
- The Senior Master or the Judicial Registrar at FIC will look at your request for money. They will decide if the money can be paid to you for the purpose you have described.
- You must contact your CLO before promising or spending your money.
- While your money is with FIC, we invest it so it can earn income for you.
- We will protect your personal information and privacy.
- You can access other support services.
- If you are unhappy with FIC you can make a complaint.

### Definitions

**Senior Master** An Associate Judge of the Supreme Court of Victoria. They are responsible for the funds paid into Court. They make all investment decisions about the funds and make decisions about how funds can be spent.

**Judicial Registrar** A Judicial Registrar of the Supreme Court of Victoria. They support the Senior Master and can also make decisions about how funds can be spent.

**Funds in Court (FIC)** Funds in Court is the part of the Supreme Court that supports the Senior Master. We are a not-for-profit division of the Court.

**Client Liaison Officer (CLO)** A FIC staff member who is your contact person at FIC. They are the person you talk to when you want to access your money.

**VoCAT** Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal.

**FAS** Victims of Crime Financial Assistance Scheme.

### Why does FIC have your money?

The law says that if you receive money from FAS or VoCAT and you are under 18 years old, the Senior Master must look after it. The Senior Master usually looks after your money until you are 18 years old.



## How can you contact FIC?

Your CLO is your contact person at FIC. They will help you apply to use your money and can explain things about FIC.

If you don't know who your CLO is, please contact us and ask.

You can contact your CLO by:

- calling us on 1300 039 390
- emailing us at [requests@fundsincourt.vic.gov.au](mailto:requests@fundsincourt.vic.gov.au).

## Where can you get more information?

We have lots of information on our website [fundsincourt.vic.gov.au](http://fundsincourt.vic.gov.au). Look at the 'For Under 18s' and 'Publications' tabs to start.

You can also talk to your CLO and they can send you information.

## Can you use your money?

Yes. We want you to use your money and we are here to help you use it.

You can use your money before you turn 18 for:

- clothes
- food
- holidays
- computers
- TVs
- bikes
- furniture
- other things you need.

## How?

When you want to use your money, contact your CLO. Your CLO will always take your wishes into account. They will also think about these questions:

- Can you afford it?
- Will you benefit from spending your money in this way?
- Should your money pay for it or should someone else (like FAS, VoCAT or your primary caregiver) pay for it?

Your CLO will help you apply to use your money. They will send the application to the Senior Master or the Judicial Registrar. Only the Senior Master or the Judicial Registrar can approve your request. Your CLO will let you know what has been decided.



## What will happen to your money at FIC?

The Senior Master has Investment Officers who help look after your money while it is held in Court.

We keep your money in 'common funds' managed by the Senior Master.

### Common Fund No. 2

Common Fund No. 2 invests in low-risk assets. Usually, most of your money will be in Common Fund No. 2.

Your Common Fund No. 2 money is protected by a government guarantee.

### Common Fund No. 3

Common Fund No. 3 is like a share portfolio. The Senior Master invests in companies that are low-risk and generally have good returns.

We will invest some of your money in Common Fund No. 3 if:

- you have more than \$10,000 held by the Senior Master
- the money is being held for at least six more years
- you aren't planning on using the money soon for a large purchase.

## Can you get further funds from FAS or VoCAT?

You may be entitled to further funds from FAS or VoCAT for things like:

- extra counselling (advice and personal assistance)
- medical expenses
- holiday expenses
- educational expenses
- safety-related expenses.

FAS has replaced VoCAT as the body that provides financial assistance to victims of crime. Even if your original award was made by VoCAT, applications for further funds need to be made to FAS.

You can talk to your CLO about whether you may be entitled to further funds before you contact FAS. If you think you are entitled to further funds after talking to your CLO, please contact FAS.

When you contact FAS they will tell you what you need to do. Applying for more funds is called applying to 'vary a VoCAT award' or applying for 'a change to your financial assistance'.

If FAS tells you to fill in an application, you will need to use their online portal. The application needs to be made to FAS, not FIC.



## How long do you have to apply for further funds?

If you were under 18 years of age when your original VoCAT award was made, you have until you turn 24 to apply to FAS to vary your original award.

If you were under 18 years of age when your original FAS notice of decision was made, you have until you turn 28 to apply for a change to your financial assistance.

If you were over 18 years of age when your original VoCAT award was made, you can apply to vary your original award for up to six years after the award was made.

If you were over 18 years of age when your original FAS notice of decision was made, you can apply for a change to your financial assistance for up to 10 years after the original decision was made.

There is no limit to the number of applications you can make to vary your award or decision. However, there are limits to how much money VoCAT or FAS can award you. Talk to FAS to find out more about this.

## Will you get your money when you turn 18?

Most people can apply to get their money from FIC when they turn 18. In some cases, FAS or VoCAT will say a person should wait until they are 21 or 25 years old before asking for their money.

Sometimes the Senior Master will want to make sure that a person can manage their own funds before they are paid their funds in Court. We might call you or visit you to get an update on how you are going.

## How do you apply to get your funds paid out?

We will send you an application form shortly before you are able to apply to get your money. To make sure we can contact you, please tell us if you change your contact details.

Once we receive your application form, we will send you another document called a statutory declaration. We will send you instructions on what to do with this.

When we have your application and statutory declaration, the Senior Master will look at them. If we called or visited you, the Senior Master will also take this into account. If the Senior Master approves your application, we will transfer your money to your bank account.

This process usually takes around one month. If you need the money urgently, please tell your CLO.

If you have any questions, please contact us on 1300 039 390 or [requests@fundsincourt.vic.gov.au](mailto:requests@fundsincourt.vic.gov.au). We also have more information on our website [fundsincourt.vic.gov.au](http://fundsincourt.vic.gov.au).



## Is there any reason why you may not be paid out?

Most people get their money when they turn 18. However, the Senior Master may not pay out the money if you have a disability that makes it hard for you to look after money. If this happens, you will still be a client of FIC and the Senior Master will still manage your money. This is to protect you and your money.

You will still be able to use your money by talking to your CLO, just like when you were under 18. Your CLO will still be there to help you.

If this happens, we will contact you or your primary caregiver to explain why this is happening. You can contact your CLO to talk about your options together if you want to.

## Why is the amount of money you got paid out different to a family member's amount?

Sometimes multiple members of one family will have funds paid into Court because of the same incident. The amount of money paid out when they turn 18 may be different.

This is because of:

- the amount of time the money has been invested by the Court
- how the money has been invested by the Court.

For example, a brother and sister had the same amount of money paid into Court at the same time. They were paid out different amounts of money when they turned 18.

The brother was 13 when the money was paid into Court. His money had been invested for five years by the time it was paid out when he turned 18. His money was invested in Common Fund No. 2.

The sister was eight when the money was paid into Court. Her money had been invested for 10 years by the time it was paid out when she turned 18. Because her money was going to be with the Court for more than six years, some of it had been invested in Common Fund No. 3.

See the '[What will happen to your money at FIC?](#)' section above for more information about how funds are invested.

## Who has access to your information?

Information about you and your money is private.

We will not give your information to any person:

- without the Senior Master's approval
- where appropriate, without your approval
- where appropriate, without the approval of your primary caregiver.



## What other support services can you use?

### Victims of Crime Helpline

Call or text the helpline to:

- find other services that can help you
- get information about the court process
- get help applying for compensation and financial assistance.

This is a free service. They are open 8am to 7pm Monday to Friday, and 8am to 5pm on Saturday, Sunday and public holidays. You can contact them by:

- calling 1800 819 817
- texting 0427 767 891.

There is more information on the Victims of Crime website [www.victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au](http://www.victimsofcrime.vic.gov.au).

### Victims and Witness Assistance Service

This service is available to victims and witnesses of serious crime during prosecution for cases being handled by the Office of Public Prosecutions.

This is a free service. They are open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. You can contact them by:

- calling (03) 9603 7425
- calling 1800 641 927
- emailing [wasadmin@opp.vic.gov.au](mailto:wasadmin@opp.vic.gov.au).

They have more information on their website [www.opp.vic.gov.au/victims-witnesses](http://www.opp.vic.gov.au/victims-witnesses).

### Youth Central

Youth Central is a Victorian Government website for people aged 12–25.

Visit the website [www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au](http://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au) for information about:

- how to find a job
- study and training options
- moving out of home
- getting your driver license
- travelling around Australia or overseas
- managing your money
- your rights as a young Victorian.

## What can you do if you are not happy with FIC?

If you are unhappy with how we have acted, you can make a complaint.

You can make a complaint by:

- calling us on 1300 039 390 and speaking to your CLO or the Complaints Officer



- emailing us at [requests@fundsincourt.vic.gov.au](mailto:requests@fundsincourt.vic.gov.au) with 'Attention: Complaints Officer' in the subject line
- filling in the complaint form on our website [fundsincourt.vic.gov.au](https://fundsincourt.vic.gov.au)
- calling us on 1300 039 390 to get a printed copy of the complaint form mailed to you.

If you want to find out more you can read our 'Making a Complaint and Giving Feedback' Information Sheet.

This is available on our website [fundsincourt.vic.gov.au](https://fundsincourt.vic.gov.au) or you can call us on 1300 039 390 to get a printed copy mailed to you.

## How to contact FIC

We are open from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

### Located at:

Level 5, 469 La Trobe Street  
Melbourne, Victoria 3000

### Postal address:

Funds in Court  
Supreme Court of Victoria  
210 William Street  
Melbourne, Victoria 3000

Phone: 1300 039 390

Fax: 1300 039 388

Email: [requests@fundsincourt.vic.gov.au](mailto:requests@fundsincourt.vic.gov.au)

Website: [fundsincourt.vic.gov.au](https://fundsincourt.vic.gov.au)

## If you are outside Australia

Phone: +61 3 9032 3777

Fax: +61 3 9032 3792

## Contacting FIC in a language other than English

We will help you if you need to talk to us in a language other than English.

You or your representative can call us and arrange an interpreter. Please call on a weekday between 9am and 5pm.

You or your representative can write to us in your language by letter or email. We will get it translated into English.

We will not charge you for the interpreter or translation service.