



*“Dedicated to Justice” • «Au service de la justice»*

October 11, 2016

The Honourable Stéphanie Vallée, Minister of Justice and Attorney General  
Ministère de la Justice  
Édifice Louis-Philippe-Pigeon  
1200, route de l'Église, 9e étage  
Québec (Québec) G1V 4M1

Dear Minister Vallée,

The Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime (CRCVC) is a national agency which aims to provide support for victims of serious crime, as well as advocate for victims' rights. One area which we often assist victims with is dealing with provincial compensation programs.

The Quebec Ombudsperson, Raymonde Saint-Germain, recently released a report highlighting concerns with the current public compensation plan (IVAC) for crime victims in Quebec. Having heard many of the complaints highlighted in the report echoed by victims who contact us, we urge you to improve how IVAC responds to applications from persons affected by violent crime in Quebec.

In the Ombudsperson's report, several key problems were identified with the current program, which we would like to bring to your attention. These issues can be summarized in the following points:

- Victims feel that there are too many stipulations and requirements to meet in order to get compensation, especially for out of pocket expenses (e.g., therapy and lost wages when a victim is unable to work).
- IVAC is too confusing for victims, and many find it difficult to follow the correct course of action when it comes to their case.
- Reasoning for the denial of compensation is often very unclear, and victims are rarely given well-defined justification for why their application was not accepted.
- Wait times for receiving compensation are too long, as many victims/survivors may have to go months without a viable source of income.
- Information for victims surrounding how the compensation plan works is vague and incomplete, meaning individuals don't know how to properly pursue their options.
- IVAC's interpretation of the *Crime Victims Compensation Act* is frequently too restrictive, resulting in conditions being applied that are rigid or not found in the Act at all. Saint-Germain said that crime victims must not only prove that a criminal act has

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been committed, but also include the motive for the crime "which is not what the law requires."

Saint-Germain made 33 recommendations to adjust the act and the bureaucratic handling of victims, including reducing red tape, processing applications quicker, and routinely communicating with victims to assess their needs. The CRCVC believes that the 33 recommendations deserve your utmost attention, and we hope you agree the Act in Quebec should be amended accordingly to better serve applicants. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Heidi Illingworth', written in a cursive style.

**Heidi Illingworth  
Executive Director**