

Proposed Criminal Injuries Compensation Reforms

On the 30th January 2012 Justice Secretary Ken Clarke announced proposals to reform the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme.

A Scheme to compensate victims of violent crime was first introduced in 1964. All “blameless” victims of violent crime who have been either physically or mentally injured are potentially eligible and under the current Scheme individual payouts range from £1,000 to £500,000.

Under the proposed reforms Mr Clarke announced that changes to the Scheme would include removing lower value claims from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme, and allowing UK citizens who have been victims of terrorism abroad to be entitled to claim compensation under the Scheme for the first time as well as proposals limiting how criminals can claim compensation.

Removing lower value claims

Mr Clarke’s proposed reforms are unclear at the present time, however it seems he is determined to remove access to compensation for those people with minor injuries. He has said that in future payments will only go to the “most serious” cases with claims for minor injuries such as fractured ribs or broken toes being refused. It has already been estimated that around 15,000 people a year will lose out as a result of these reforms.

The President of the Association for Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL) issued a statement against this proposal, stating that “Crime victims with less serious but still significant injuries must be allowed to claim full and fair redress like anyone else.” These proposals risk cutting genuine claimants off from the compensation they need and deserve.

**** NEW ** - Claims for victims of terrorism abroad**

Mr Clarke told MPs that all those affected by terrorist attacks abroad since 2002 will become eligible for support from April 2013.

From next year, those affected by incidents abroad in the past ten years - such as the terrorist attacks in Sharm-el-Sheikh in 2005 and Mumbai in 2008 - could apply for retrospective financial support.

Russell-Cooke are members of APIL and as such will be involved in any lobbying or consultations with the government regarding these reforms. We recognise that falling victim to any violent crime can be a harrowing experience, regardless of the level of injury and it is only right that victims receive compensation.

For more information or initial advice about claiming Criminal Injuries compensation, please contact:

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