



STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
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## **Ruling Protects Victims Involved in Prostitution**

### *Board decision amends eligibility criteria for receiving state assistance*

Sacramento, CA (December 12, 2013) – The California Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board (Board) today announced a decision eliminating California Code of Regulations Rule 649.56, Involvement in the Qualifying Crime of Prostitution, to allow victims of violent crime who were engaged in an act of prostitution at the time of attack to potentially be eligible for state assistance.

“Sexual assault, in any context, is absolutely a violation of basic human rights,” said Marybel Batjer, Secretary of the Government Operations Agency and Chairperson of the Board. “Victims of this violent crime deserve compensation, regardless of circumstance.”

Currently, a claimant applying for aid through the California Victim Compensation Program (CalVCP) must comply with eligibility requirements prohibiting involvement in activities leading up to the qualifying crime. As defined in Rule 649.56, “involvement” may be found if the victim was engaged in activity related to prostitution, or if the crime occurred as a direct result of the activity related to prostitution.

In May 2013, subsequent to an amendment to Rule 649.56 excluding victims of human trafficking from “involvement,” the Board requested that staff conduct a comprehensive review of Rule 649.56. After evaluating stakeholder input collected at multiple public hearings and via written submissions, the three-member Board determined that the existing regulation inappropriately restricted victims of violent crime from receiving necessary assistance.

As a result, the Board unanimously ruled that involvement in prostitution should no longer be a barrier to receiving help from CalVCP.

“While recognizing the act of prostitution as a crime under California state law, we uphold our commitment to putting victims first,” said Board Executive Officer Julie Nauman. “As the state’s leading provider of victim compensation, we want all victims to know that CalVCP is available to help.”

Following today’s Board action, staff will begin the formal rule making process to eliminate the regulation that will include a public comment period and approval from the Office of Administrative Law.

For more information about CalVCP visit: [www.calvcp.ca.gov](http://www.calvcp.ca.gov)

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*The California Victim Compensation Program (CalVCP), a division of the California Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board (VCGCB), provides compensation for victims of violent crime who are injured or threatened with injury. Among the crimes covered are domestic violence, child abuse, sexual and physical assault, homicide, robbery, and vehicular manslaughter.*

*If a person meets eligibility criteria, CalVCP will compensate many types of services when the costs are not covered by other sources. Eligible services include medical and dental care, mental health services, income loss, funeral expenses, rehabilitation and relocation. Funding for CalVCP comes from restitution fines and orders, penalty assessments levied on persons convicted of crimes and traffic offenses, and matching federal funds. The program is not taxpayer funded.*