SYNOPSIS

Requires training or experience in crime victims’ rights for certain members of Victims of Crime Compensation Review Board.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.
AN ACT concerning compensation for victims of crime and amending P.L.2007, c.95.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. Section 2 of P.L.2007, c.95 (C.52:4B-3.2) is amended to read as follows:

2. a. There is hereby established in the Department of the Treasury the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency.

b. The chief executive officer of the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency shall be the executive director, who shall be appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate. The executive director shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Governor may appoint an acting executive director to serve as chief executive officer of the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency, who may be the person serving as chairman of the Victims of Crime Compensation Board on the effective date of P.L.2007, c.95 (C.52:4B-3.2 et al.), and who shall serve as the executive director of the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency until his successor is appointed and qualifies. The executive director shall, in consultation with the Review Board established pursuant to subsection c. of this section, develop, establish and supervise all practices and procedures of the agency.

c. There is hereby established in the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency the Victims of Crime Compensation Review Board which shall be composed of five citizens, to be appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, one of whom shall be designated chairman by, and serve as such at the pleasure of, the Governor. Four members of the board shall, by training or experience, have expertise in the rights of crime victims. At least one member of the board shall be an attorney admitted to the practice of law in the State of New Jersey and who shall have practiced law in the courts of New Jersey for a minimum of five years. The purpose of the Victims of Crime Compensation Review Board shall be:

   (1) to hear appeals of decisions of the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency involving issues of victim compensation;

   (2) to consult with the executive director in developing, establishing and supervising all practices and procedures of the agency;

   (3) to review individual and supplemental awards to a victim or a victim's family in excess of $10,000 in the aggregate, and awards of attorney fees for legal representation to victims;

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.
(4) to review, on at least a bi-monthly basis, information
detailing the aggregate claims received and paid by the agency, and
the operations of the agency; and
(5) to review and, if appropriate, approve any rules and
regulations, standards, and maximum rates and service limitations
for reimbursement proposed by the agency.
d. All the functions of the Violent Crimes Compensation Board
and the Victims of Crime Compensation Board are continued in the
Victims of Crime Compensation Agency and the Victims of Crime
Compensation Review Board. Whenever in any law, rule,
regulation, judicial or administrative procedure or otherwise,
reference is made to the Violent Crimes Compensation Board or to
the Victims of Crime Compensation Board, the same shall mean
and refer to the Victims of Crime Compensation Agency or the
Victims of Crime Compensation Review Board, as the case may be.
(cf: P.L.2007, c.95, s.2)
2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill requires that certain members of the Victims of Crime
Compensation Review Board (VCCRB) have expertise in crime
victims’ rights.
The purpose of the VCCRB is to:
(1) hear appeals from decisions of the Victims of Crime
Compensation Agency involving issues of victim compensation;
(2) consult with the executive director regarding the practices
and procedures of the agency;
(3) review certain individual and supplemental awards to a
victim or a victim’s family and awards of attorney fees for legal
representation to victims;
(4) review information regarding agency operations and claims
received and paid by the agency; and
(5) review and, if appropriate, approve any rules and regulations
pertaining to reimbursement proposed by the agency.
Under current law, the VCCRB members are not required to
have any background in or training pertaining to crime victims’
rights. Current law provides that the board is to be composed of
five citizens appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent
of the Senate. In addition, current law provides that at least one
member of the board is required to be an attorney licensed in this
State with five years of experience. Under this bill, four out of five
members of the VCCRB would be required to have expertise in
crime victims’ rights.