



State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, central to New York State's efforts as a national leader in the crime victims' rights movement is the understanding that crime victims must be treated with dignity, respect, and compassion; and

Whereas, New York was one of the first states to establish an independent state agency – the New York State Office of Victim Services – to provide an important safety net for men, women, and children who have been victimized by crime; in addition to providing compensation to victims, the Office of Victim Services supports a network of 228 programs that provide assistance and support to support crime victims and help them rebuild their lives; and

Whereas, in 2014, the Office of Victim Services provided funding to those programs and more than \$21 million in compensation to nearly 8,000 crime victims and/or their families; the agency's funding comes primarily from fines, mandatory surcharges, and crime victim assistance fees that certain offenders pay after conviction in either New York State or federal courts; and

Whereas, the Office of Victim Services has launched a Victim Service Portal for filing claim applications online, which will allow the agency to assist eligible crime victims and their family members more quickly and efficiently; streamlines the process to allow easier submission of forms and required documents; to check the status of a claim; and reduces staff time to process, review and decide claims; and

Whereas, to recognize the importance of crime victims' rights, communities across the nation will observe National Crime Victims' Rights Week with the theme of "Engaging Communities/Empowering Victims"; and

Whereas, each year, New York State solemnly remembers crime victims at a ceremony co-hosted by the Office of Victim Services and the Crime Victims' Assistance Task Force at the New York State Crime Victims' Memorial in the Capital City of Albany; this and other events are held across the state to highlight the importance of victims' rights, to support courageous individuals who are willing to speak about their experiences so as to educate and empower others, and to remember those whose lives have been altered by crime; and

Whereas, this week gives all New Yorkers the opportunity to reflect upon ways they can responsibly improve safety in their communities, support others who have been victimized and help ensure that all crime victims are afforded their rights;

Now, Therefore, I, Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim April 19-25, 2015 as

CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

the Empire State.



Given under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State
at the Capitol in the City of Albany this sixth day
of April in the year two thousand fifteen.

Governor

Walter J. Mahon
Secretary to the Governor