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Effective February 14, 2023, the Crime Victims Compensation Board adopted a policy allowing for the compensation of emotional support animals. Below is the precise language of the policy. Contact the Crime Victims Compensation Board office with any questions at 502-782-8255.

Emotional Support Animal Policy

The Crime Victims Compensation Board recognizes the benefits of owning an emotional support or companion animal. Emotional support animals, however, are not trained service animals. Trained service animals are potentially compensable as a medical expense.

1. The Board, in its discretion, may award up to \$1,000.00 to an eligible claimant for the purchase or adoption of an emotional support animal for the initial purchase price or adoption fee, spaying/neutering, and initial vaccinations.
 - a) The claimant shall only select either a cat or a dog as an emotional support animal.
 - b) A nexus must exist between the victimization and the recommendation for the claimant to purchase an emotional support animal for their wellbeing. A mental health counselor, physician, or other licensed medical professional must first prescribe or recommend that an emotional support animal is medically necessary to treat the claimant's mental health resulting from the victimization. The counselor or medical professional may also recommend a specific breed or special characteristics of the animal.
 - c) The Board shall only grant an award for one (1) emotional support animal per claimant.
 - d) The Board prefers that the emotional support animal be adopted from a Kentucky shelter. However, if the emotional support animal is not adopted from a Kentucky shelter, the Board prefers that the claimant purchase the animal from a Kentucky breeder.
 - e) The Board shall not pay for any maintenance costs, such as food or veterinary bills, except for the initial vaccinations and/or spaying/neutering costs.

- f) The claimant shall intend to keep the animal for the span of its life. However, if the claimant cannot keep the animal for whatever reason, the claimant shall return the animal to the shelter or breeder from which it was adopted or purchased. In the event the claimant relinquishes the animal, the claimant shall reimburse the Board for the amount awarded to the claimant for the adoption/purchase of the animal and any initial vaccinations and spaying/neutering costs, if any
2. Preauthorization from the Board is required before the animal can be purchased or adopted if the claimant seeks reimbursement or payment. Once authorized, the claimant shall choose the animal, then submit a copy of the purchase or adoption contract or an itemized receipt showing the purchase of the animal. The contract or receipt shall enumerate the following:
- a) Name, address, and signature of the buyer and seller;
 - b) Date of purchase and purchase price/adoption fee;
 - c) Animal's date of birth, if known;
 - d) Gender and breed of the animal; and
 - e) Any terms regarding the return and/or placement of the animal in the event the claimant must relinquish the animal

Effective Date: February 14, 2023