Compensation for Victims of Violent Crimes
1999, January

Foreigners who have become victims of a violent crime in Germany can be compensated by the state if they have suffered injuries to their health.

If you have become a victim of an intentional unlawful bodily attack, of an act of arson or of a bomb attack; you can receive compensation under the Victim Compensation Law (Opferentschädigungsgesetz) on application.

The following benefits might apply:

- curative and medical treatment;
- pensions for disabled and surviving dependants;
- death benefit, funeral benefit;
- further benefits in individual cases.

You will receive benefits at the same rate as German victims of violent crimes, as long as you have been staying in Germany legally for a minimum of three years, otherwise to a lesser extent. Tourists and visitors may receive benefits in exceptional cases only.

You cannot receive benefits if you have caused the damages yourself or if you have been or currently are involved in political or military disputes in your native country or if you are or have been a member of a violent organisation and if the damage is related to this.

These regulations apply to all violent crimes after 1st July 1990. For members of a European Union state or a country that provides comparable benefits to Germans these regulations also apply to violent crimes before 1st July 1990.

So as not to loose your entitlement to compensation, you should bring charges without delay if you were victim of a violent crime.

Further information about qualifying, type and extent of benefits is available from the, where you also need to apply.