LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
SENATE, No. 4342
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

DATED: JANUARY 15, 2026

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Makes victims of motor vehicle accidents eligible for VCCO compensation under certain circumstances; establishes Traffic Crash Victim's Bill of Rights.

Type of Impact: Annual increase in State and local expenditures.

Agencies Affected: Department of Law and Public Safety; Administrative Office of the Courts; State, county, and municipal law enforcement; and Motor Vehicle Commission.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Annual Fiscal Impact	
State Expenditure Increase	Indeterminate
Local Expenditure Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) finds the annual expenditure increases associated with this bill to be indeterminate. There are no data with which to evaluate the fiscal impact on the Department of Law and Public Safety's Victims of Crime Compensation Office (VCCO) resulting from additional administrative expenses and the payment of additional claims. Additionally, the OLS does not have any data on the expenditure increases that will be incurred by State, county, and municipal law enforcement to fulfill the obligations of the Traffic Crash Victim's Bill of Rights established under the bill.

- This bill expands the instances for which VCCO compensation is available to include a motor vehicle crash involving a fatality or the removal of a victim from the scene of the crash by an ambulance. As a payer of last resort, the office would incur these costs in situations where insurance or medical coverage has not made these payments otherwise.

- The office will also have an increased administrative workload under the bill to respond to and process additional claims due to the expansion of compensation. Depending on the office's resource allocation policies, however, the added workload may or may not augment its administrative expenditures.

- The bill establishes the Traffic Crash Victim's Bill of Rights which requires State, county, and municipal law enforcement to provide certain reports and information to traffic crash victims and the victims' families. Depending on State, county, and municipal law enforcement resource allocation policies, however, the added workload may or may not augment its administrative expenditures.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill provides that victims of motor vehicle accidents are eligible to receive compensation from the Victims of Crime Compensation Office under certain circumstances and establishes the Traffic Crash Victim's Bill of Rights.

Under current law, victims of certain crimes are eligible to receive compensation from the office for certain expenses, including certain medical bills, counseling, loss of earnings, and funeral costs. This bill expands the instances for which this compensation is available to include a motor vehicle crash involving a fatality or the removal of a victim from the scene of the crash by an ambulance.

Finally, the bill establishes the Traffic Crash Victim's Bill of Rights, which entitles traffic crash victims and the victims' families to: 1) obtain, upon request, a free, timely copy of the initial police report and, upon completion, any investigation report, evidence, and certain materials related to the crash; 2) be notified of court proceedings and be permitted to give an impact statement in related adjudicatory proceedings, including any hearing regarding the suspension or revocation of the driver's license of the other driver; 3) have the right to reasonable leave from the person's employer to participate in any hearings conducted by the Motor Vehicle Commission that are related to the motor vehicle crash or exercising any other rights provided by law; 4) be free from intimidation, threats, or harassment from the other driver; 5) be eligible to receive compensation and assistance pursuant to the provisions of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act of 1971; and 6) receive, upon request of information from a law enforcement agency regarding the crash, a copy of the provisions set forth in the bill and information provided by the office regarding the rights set forth in the bill.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS finds the annual expenditure increases associated with this proposed legislation to be indeterminate. There is no data with which to evaluate the fiscal impact on the Department of Law and Public Safety's Victims of Crime Compensation Office (VCCO) resulting from additional administrative expenses and the payment of additional claims. Additionally, the OLS does not have any data on the expenditure increases that will be incurred by State, county, and municipal law enforcement to fulfill the obligations of the Traffic Crash Victim's Bill of Rights established under the bill.

VCCO Expenditures: This bill expands the instances for which VCCO compensation is available to include a motor vehicle crash involving a fatality or the removal of a victim from the scene of the crash by an ambulance. As a payer of last resort, the office would incur these costs in situations where insurance or medical coverage have not made these payments otherwise. The office may experience a workload increase as a result of increased claims.

The Department of Law and Public Safety's website indicated there were 574 fatal crashes in New Jersey in 2023 and 646 in 2022. Depending on the number of claimants and the resource allocation policies of the office, the added responsibilities may or may not augment State administrative expenditures.

Law Enforcement Expenditure Increase: The OLS notes that current law provides that crime victims are not to be charged any fee otherwise prescribed by law or regulation to obtain copies of the victim's own records to which the victim is entitled to access as provided in the Open Public Records Act. These records include any follow-up reports and documents, photographs taken at the scene of the crash or during postmortem examination, audio and video recordings from body worn cameras, audio and video recordings from the motor vehicle, any other audio or video recordings of the crash, and any summonses that were issued. This bill may expand the types of records which may be requested by these victims to traffic crash related reports. The OLS also does not have information on the counties or municipalities that may already provide this information to victims. The expanded access to records under the bill may result in an increase in requests for the reports, possibly increasing expenditures to State, county, and municipal law enforcement agencies which are not currently issuing the reports without a formal Open Public Records Act request.

Section:	*Law and Public Safety*
Analyst:	*Kristin Brunner Santos* *Lead Fiscal Analyst*
Approved:	*Thomas Koenig* *Legislative Budget and Finance Officer*

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).