

ADVISORY BULLETIN

TRANSMITTAL NO. 2016-4

**TO: ALL FUNDED PROGRAMS
ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**FROM: ELIZABETH CRONIN, ESQ.
DIRECTOR**

**SUBJECT: REVISED Emergency Awards for Moving Expenses (supersedes
Advisory Bulletin NO. 2016-3)**

DATE: June 21, 2016

Effective immediately, it will no longer be the practice of OVS to use its procurement cards for moving expenses during the processing of Emergency Awards (EAs). While it was initially thought that using a procurement card would be to the benefit of both victims and the Office, it has in fact had negative, unintended consequence for both. Some companies, seeing the same procurement card number involved, have gone so far as to refuse to release trucks to subsequent victims if the payments on previous claims had not been made for one reason or another. It has also become routine practice for moving and truck rental companies to charge OVS for expenses over the awarded amounts – after the awards are made. That results in either increased liens against the claimant or overpayment decisions having to be issued by OVS.

Checks for EAs will instead be used and overnighted to the VAPs for pick-up by claimants. VAPs will continue to have the claimant sign the “Verification of Check Receipt” form and return to OVS. OVS will no longer require multiple estimates, simply a contract from the moving or truck rental company signed by the claimant as the responsible party will be required before a final determination on the claim, not for the EA. If a contract is not submitted verifying payment to a moving company **before a decision on the claim is issued**, the Emergency Award may need to be repaid. If there are incidental charges to the claimant above the EA amount, the claimant will be able to submit those to the Office for consideration for reimbursement during the investigation of the claim and as part of the capped, \$2,500 amount allowed for moving expenses.

On behalf of the New York State Office of Victim Services, thank you for working with us to provide the highest quality services to crime victims.



Elizabeth Cronin, Esq
Director