



FEMA photo by Andrea Booher

Debris removal continues as workers search through the 1.2 million tons of steel, glass and concrete from the World Trade Center terrorist attack site.

State benefits offered to WTC victims

The New York State Crime Victims Board (CVB) provides awards for physically injured victims and families of deceased victims of the World Trade Center attack. It also will pay for counseling for those who witnessed the attack or the immediate aftermath and for recovery workers at the scene.

Benefits include:

- Reasonable burial expenses, including memorials
- Loss of earnings, or loss of support. This is capped at \$600 per week and \$30,000 total
- Medical expenses
- Counseling for victims and family members
- Lost or destroyed personal property essential to the health, welfare or safety of the victim, up to \$500 of which \$100 can be for cash. This benefit is limited to those who were personally injured, or those over 60 years of age, under 18, or disabled
- Rehabilitative occupational training

The board can issue an emergency award if it appears a victim is eligible and the victim would suffer undue hardship absent the emergency award.

Crime Victims Board workers are at the following locations to assist in completing claims: the Disaster Assistance Service Center, 141 Worth St. Manhattan; Pier 94 at 55th Street and 12th Avenue, Manhattan; and 55 Hanson Place, 10th Floor, Brooklyn. There are also offices in Albany and Buffalo.

Victims who need information on the closest CVB office can call **1-800-247-8035**. Forms and information can be found on the internet at www.cvb.state.ny.us. There are also many local programs funded by the Crime Victims Board, such as Safe Horizons at **1-800-621-4673**, that can assist victims in filing claims.

Empire State Development Corporation: Business recovery assistance available

Gov. George E. Pataki has directed the Empire State Development Corp. (ESDC), the state's economic development agency, to lead a coordinated effort to assist businesses affected by the horrific tragedy.

The governor designated the state **800-I LOVE NY (800-456-8369)** toll-free phone number as a means for New York businesses and companies that were displaced or otherwise impacted by the attack to acquire business assistance information. Companies that wish to donate goods, services or space also can call the hotline.

Businesses may come to ESDC's offices at 633 Third Avenue where a Business Resource Center (BRC) has been established. Businesses may also be served at 80 Pine Street and 110 William Street. The BRCs and hotline are open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

ESDC in cooperation with CoStar Group is offering affected New York City businesses access to its database of New York area leasing brokers and available office properties in New York City. To access the database, users should visit the ESDC Web site at www.nylovesbiz.com

The Real Estate Board of New York is also providing businesses with relocation assistance at www.rebny.com.

The state banking department recommends that financial institutions consider modifying existing loans to borrowers, waiving penalties or fees or making other temporary adjustments for customers affected by this disaster. Financial institutions needing additional guidance should contact the department's Albany office at **518-473-6160**.

Finally, Gov. Pataki has directed the State Dept. of Taxation and Finance to postpone a variety of tax filing and payment deadlines by up to 90 days for taxpayers affected by terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

Disaster assistance benefits will not affect your eligibility for Social Security, welfare, food stamps or other federal benefits