

California Victim Compensation Board CaIVCB Public Awareness Campaign Final Report

May 28, 2026

Background

The Budget Act of 2022 allocated \$3 million for CaIVCB to conduct a statewide public awareness campaign. It further stated that efforts and strategies shall prioritize outreach to underrepresented or marginalized communities, including non-English speaking communities, immigrant communities, and individuals in unstable housing situations.

In July 2023, the Board approved a \$3 million contract with Civilian Inc. to provide a comprehensive statewide marketing campaign to increase awareness among Californians regarding CaIVCB's programs and services. In April 2024, following campaign development and creative message testing, Civilian began running statewide advertisements. The purpose of this informational item is to update the Board on the results of Civilian's marketing campaign, which ended in February 2026.

Marketing Strategies

Civilian's marketing campaign involved multiple strategies to prioritize inclusivity through a diversified approach.

- A baseline campaign targeting English and Spanish speakers in 15 counties based on population, crime rates, and application numbers.
- Four emphasized campaign flights in three priority counties (Kern, Los Angeles, and San Diego).
- Ethnic media, low-income, and influencer campaigns specifically designed to target underserved audiences in-language.



Civilian ran advertisements on social media platforms, websites, through streaming platforms like Spotify, and on radio stations. Additionally, large posters and billboards were placed in the three priority counties.

Ad copy was changed in May 2025 to limit confusion around the term “rebuild” in light of the Los Angeles fires. Ads were visually refreshed in August 2025 to address audience fatigue and improve performance.

Campaign Performance Summary

The CalVCB Public Awareness Campaign achieved its primary goal of increasing awareness and significantly extended reach into multicultural and underserved audiences in multiple languages.

- The post-campaign survey showed that there was a statistically significant increase in awareness from 25% statewide to 31%, with 53% of self-reported victims sharing they were aware of the program.
- Engagement was high, with 72% of ad-aware respondents acting after seeing an ad, including visiting the CalVCB website or searching for more information.
- Spanish language ads outperformed English ads and 49% of low-income Spanish-speaking Californians recalled seeing one or more ads.
- Emphasized market flights in the three priority counties delivered between 9.6 to 53.3 million impressions per market.
 - The post-campaign survey showed a statistically significant increase in awareness in Southern California (not including San Diego) of 7%.
- An ethnic media campaign targeting Black/African Americans as well as Mandarin, Cantonese, Tagalog, Hindi, Punjabi, Hmong, and Vietnamese speakers delivered 23.6 million impressions and 72,000 website clicks.
 - The post-campaign survey showed a statistically significant increase in awareness among Black/African Americans of 12 percent compared to the pre-campaign survey.
- A targeted low-income campaign delivered 22.9 million impressions and 75,000 website clicks in 15 priority counties.



While more than 64,000 applications were received during the campaign, the total number of applications received is down overall. In addition to statewide reductions in violent crime, this trend may also be due to the larger socio-political climate. Civilian found in the post-campaign survey that a lack of trust or skepticism toward government agencies has replaced process complexity as the top concern among those unlikely to believe CalVCB could help.

Paid Media Performance Summary

Over the course of the 23-month campaign, we achieved:

- 280.5 million impressions across all media
- 1.5 million clicks across all media
- 109 million impressions to primary campaign audiences
- 48.5 million Spanish-language impressions

Paid media continued to be a key driver to the website and resulted in new applications:

- 1.6 million new users accessed the website during the campaign and there were 3.2 million campaign-driven page views
- Monthly page views hovered around 130,000, with a high in October 2026 of 200,000 views
- 9,000 high-intent users who click the "Application Start" button

Future Recommendations

While awareness grew over the course of this campaign, Civilian highlighted that future efforts could focus on both increasing awareness and increasing the emphasis on education and application outcomes. The post-campaign survey found that respondents' understanding that CalVCB reimburses victims of violent crime for expenses after bills have been paid remains limited, holding steady at 47% which was similar to benchmark levels.

Many of Civilian's other recommendations align with continuing the best practices established in this campaign, including strategically using ads to sustain visibility and drive engagement, targeting in-language populations, leaning into high-performing audience segments, and carefully managing ad placements to balance efficiency and performance.