California Victim Compensation Board

ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

CALIFORNIA
CalVCB
VICTIM COMPENSATION BOARD

Mission, Vision & Values

Our Mission

CalVCB is a trusted partner in providing restorative financial assistance to victims of crime.

Our Vision

CalVCB helps victims of crime restore their lives.

Our Values

Integrity We are honest and ethical.

Respect We treat everyone with courtesy and decency.

Compassion We care about victims and their well-being.

Dedication We serve with devotion and professionalism.

Collaboration We create an atmosphere of teamwork.

Innovation We find creative ways to solve problems and provide support.

CALIFORNIA CalVCB VICTIM COMPENSATION BOARD

Strategic Framework 2025-2028

Goal I - Promote Access and Equity to CalVCB Services

OBJECTIVES

1. Increase applications from eligible victims.
2. Support stakeholder engagement.
3. Expand access in identified languages for materials and systems.

Goal II - Enhance the CalVCB Experience

OBJECTIVES

1. Use technology to enhance service delivery.
2. Modernize technology to ensure the most efficient service delivery.
3. Use plain language to simplify communication.

Goal III - Foster a Strong Workforce to Best Serve Victims

OBJECTIVES

1. Ensure appropriate staffing levels to meet statutory and service level expectations.
2. Promote professional development of staff and management.
3. Encourage a shared vision and strategy through teamwork.

Message from the Executive Officer

CalVCB remains committed to expanding access, modernizing our services, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring that every eligible crime victim has the opportunity to receive the support they deserve.

At CalVCB, our work is guided by a simple but important mission: to serve as a trusted partner in providing financial assistance to victims, survivors, and their families after violent crime.

As we reflect on Fiscal Year 2025-26, I am proud of the strides CalVCB has made to meet victims where they are, expand awareness of our program, and remain accountable stewards of the public funds entrusted to us.

Through the dedication of our staff, strong partnerships, and responsible management, we have worked to ensure that eligible victims can access the assistance they need during some of the most difficult moments of their lives.

We have expanded our statewide efforts to connect victims with our program. We broadened the translation of our outreach materials and application, which are now available in 20 languages, helping better serve California's diverse communities.

We increased statewide outreach through multilingual awareness campaigns, in-person presentations, and strengthened partnerships with community and faith-based organizations, victim advocates, and law enforcement.

Notably, CalVCB has established law enforcement liaisons with 96% of agencies statewide, creating stronger connections to victims at the earliest stages of recovery.

Our commitment to serving victims was especially evident in our response to multiple mass violence incidents this year. Following tragic events in Esparto, Stockton, San Diego, and Oakland, CalVCB quickly coordinated with local and state partners.

To ensure affected communities could readily access support, materials were translated into additional languages and distributed alongside statewide communication, including coordinated public awareness efforts with the Governor's Office following the Stockton and San Diego incidents.

This year, CalVCB received strong validation from both federal and state oversight agencies regarding financial accountability and processes. Independent reviews conducted by the federal Office for Victims of Crime,

Message from the Executive Officer cont.

Through the dedication of our staff, strong partnerships, and responsible management, we have worked to ensure that eligible victims can access the assistance they need during some of the most difficult moments of their lives.

the State Controller's Office, and the California State Auditor affirmed that CalVCB continues to administer its programs with integrity, transparency, and fiscal responsibility.

The audits did not identify findings or recommendations for CalVCB, reinforcing our commitment to complying with state and federal requirements while appropriately managing the funds entrusted to us on behalf of victims.

It is also important to recognize that California continues to make encouraging progress in reducing violent crime rates. Data released by the California Department of Justice indicates more than a 10% decrease in overall violent crime from the previous year, and an 18.6% decline in murders, the lowest level ever reported. These positive trends have contributed to fewer compensation applications.

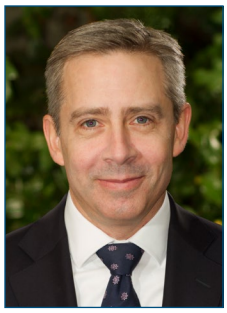
The accomplishments highlighted throughout this report reflect the dedication of CalVCB employees, board members, victim advocates, law enforcement partners, service providers, and community organizations across California. Their collaboration strengthens our ability to deliver compassionate service and respond to the evolving needs of crime victims.

CalVCB remains committed to expanding access, modernizing our services, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring that every eligible crime victim has the opportunity to receive the support they deserve.

We will continue to adapt to changing needs, invest in improvements that reduce barriers, and uphold the public's trust through responsible stewardship of the resources entrusted to us.

Lynda Gledhill, *Executive Officer*

Board Members



Nick Maduros

Secretary of the Government Operations Agency and Board Chairperson

Nick Maduros was appointed Secretary of Government Operations by Governor Gavin Newsom in March of 2025. He was named to the position after previously serving as Director of the Department of Tax and Fee Administration. Maduros previously served in the Obama Administration as chief of staff of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Hon. Malia M. Cohen

California State Controller

Hon. Malia M. Cohen was elected State Controller in November 2022, following her service on the State Board of Equalization (BOE), the nation's only elected tax commission responsible for administering California's $100 billion property tax system. She was elected to the BOE in November 2018 and was Chair in 2019 and 2022.

Diana Becton

Contra Costa County District Attorney

District Attorney Diana Becton was appointed to the Board by Governor Newsom in January 2021. She was sworn in as the 25th District Attorney for Contra Costa County in 2017 after previously serving on the Board of Supervisors. District Attorney Becton served for 22 years as a judge in Contra Costa County.

Executive Staff

Lynda Gledhill

Executive Officer

Lynda Gledhill has served as Executive Officer of CalVCB since December 2019. In that time, she has led a transformation of the organization that included hiring a new executive team, reorganizing staff, and implementing measures to improve efficiency. Previously, Gledhill served for seven years as the Deputy Secretary of Communications at the Government Operations Agency, where she worked on projects to modernize the Department of Motor Vehicles, establish the Department of Tax and Fee Administration, and make all state government websites accessible. She also held executive-level communications positions in the Attorney General's Office and the State Senate, after starting her career as a journalist.

Natalie Mack

Chief Deputy Executive Officer

Natalie Mack joined CalVCB as Deputy Executive Officer of the Victim Compensation Program in May 2020 and became Chief Deputy Executive Officer in July 2021. Before coming to CalVCB, Mack spent eight years at the Employment Development Department. Mack began her state service in November 2001. She has held positions with the State Controller's Office, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Department of Health Care Services, Department of Social Services, and Department of Justice.

Katie Cardenas

Deputy Executive Officer, External Affairs and Compliance Division

Katie Cardenas joined CalVCB in June 2023 as the Deputy Executive Officer of External Affairs and Compliance. Prior to coming to CalVCB, Cardenas spent 10 years at the State Auditor's Office, where she held positions in the administrative division, and as both senior auditor and auditor evaluator.

Kim Gauthier

Chief Counsel

Kim Gauthier became Chief Counsel at CalVCB in June 2020. She previously served as Special Counsel/Assistant Chief Counsel for the Secretary of State, where she also held the position of Deputy Secretary of State for Operations during her 10 years with that office. Gauthier served as Chief Counsel at First 5 California, Senior Corporations Counsel for Department of Corporations, and Staff Counsel at the Department of Health Services.

Executive Staff cont.

Shawn Ramirez

Deputy Executive Officer, Administration Division

Shawn Ramirez became the Deputy Executive Officer of the Administration Division in May 2023. Ramirez has most recently served as the Assistant Chief of Human Resources and the Departmental Labor Relations Officer for the Department of Motor Vehicles. She has held roles with Correctional Health Care Services, the Department of Human Resources, Franchise Tax Board, Department of Developmental Services, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of State Hospitals, and California Public Employees' Retirement System.

Jennifer Rocco

Deputy Executive Officer, Victim Compensation Division

Jennifer Rocco joined CalVCB as Deputy Executive Officer of the Victim Compensation Division in July 2024. Prior to coming to CalVCB, Rocco served as the Assistant Deputy Director of Employment at the Civil Rights Department. Rocco also served as the Assistant Division Chief of the Employer Account Management Division at Public Employees' Retirement System and worked in several leadership and analytical roles for the State Controller's Office.

Overview

CalVCB continues to make significant progress helping victims and communities. This report will review our accomplishments, which are directly linked to our updated 2025-2028 Strategic Plan.

Compensation at a Glance

***29,031** Applications Received*

***$38 Million** Compensation Paid*

***$13.45 Million** Largest Compensation Category - Funeral and Burial*

Promote Access and Equity to CalVCB Services

Assisted with Four Mass Violence Events

Expanded Language Access and Created New Resources

- 44 Translated Materials Published
- Four New Fact Sheets

Increased Outreach Efforts

- 60 In-Person Presentations
- 76 Virtual Presentations
- 17 Webinars
- 96% of Law Enforcement Liaisons Identified
- 50 Executive Officer Stakeholder Meetings

Completed Three-Year Awareness Campaign

- More than 50% of Victims Are Aware of the Program
- Ethnic Media Helped Expand Reach

Enhance the CalVCB Experience

Passed Three External Audits

- No Findings or Recommendations for CalVCB

Streamlined Appeals Processes

- Strategic Efforts Increased Appeals Processed

Implemented Regulatory Changes

- Income Loss and Appeals

Improved Technology

- Increased Access to the CalVCB Online Portal

Foster a Strong Workforce

Supported Staff Development

- Low Vacancy Rate and Expanded Staff Training

Other Ways CalVCB Assists

As part of our important work, CalVCB also helps victims as outlined below.

Restitution to Victims

CalVCB efficiently disbursed millions to victims in restitution collected by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

$5.7 million in Restitution Paid to 2,226 Victims to Support Recovery

Criminal Restitution Compacts

CalVCB assisted 22 counties in imposing direct restitution orders for CalVCB benefits paid to victims.

$10.7 million in Restitution Orders Imposed on Offenders by County Partners

Trauma Recovery Centers

CalVCB funded Trauma Recovery Centers (TRCs) statewide during Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26. TRCs provide trauma-informed mental health treatment to crime victims who may not be eligible for CalVCB services.

22 TRCs Funded

More than 3,200 Victims Served

Wrongful Conviction Claims

CalVCB compensates those who are erroneously convicted of a felony. Compensation for approved claims is calculated at the statutory rate of $140 per day of wrongful incarceration.

64 Claims Processed

Five Administrative Hearings Held

$1.4 Million Paid in Compensation for One Approved Claim

Records Requests

Each year, CalVCB processes hundreds of records requests, including:

- Requests from victims for their confidential records
- Subpoenas and requests for victim compensation to support court proceedings
- Public Record Act requests

Nearly 350 Responses Provided, Including Thousands of Pages of Records

Fiscal Year 2025-26 Statistics

Application Data	
Applications Received	**29,031**
Applications Processed	**28,278**
Allowed	*19,768*
Denied	*8,426*
Duplicate	*84*

Applications Received by Race/Ethnicity	
American Indian/Native American	*294*
Asian	*1,021*
Black/African American	*5,135*
Hispanic or Latino	*10,564*
Multiple Races	*1,422*
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	*166*
Not Reported	*5,160*
Not Yet Determined	*144*
Some Other Race	*271*
White Non-Latino/Caucasian	*4,854*
Total	**29,031**

Fiscal Year 2025-26 Statistics cont.

Payments by Benefit Category	
Crime Scene Cleanup	$35,901
Dental	$801,687
Funeral and Burial	$13,454,401
Home Modification	$15,324
Income/Support Loss	$8,324,163
Medical	$2,964,549
Mental Health	$7,638,557
Relocation	$4,240,604
Residential Security	$500,603
Vehicle Purchase or Modification	$119,624
Total	**$38,095,413**

Payments by Crime Category	
Arson	$22,817
Assault	$10,805,935
Child Abuse	$2,229,991
DWI/DUI	$1,169,308
Homicide	$13,331,612
Kidnapping/ Human Trafficking	$5,257,702
Unspecified	$19,212
Other	$951,173
Other Vehicle	$1,591,679
Robbery	$943,758
Sexual Assault	$1,632,418
Stalking	$128,532
Terrorism	$11,276
Total	**$38,095,413**

CalVCB Financial Information

CalVCB spent $77.7 million or 65% on direct and support services for victims through compensation payments, local assistance through joint powers partners, services provided via the TRCs, and payments to those proven to be eligible for compensation due to being erroneously convicted of crimes. The remaining funds were expended on state operations including restitution collection and staffing.

Fiscal Year 2025-26 Expenditures	
Compensation Payments to Victims	$42,172,000
Trauma Recovery Centers	$18,416,000
Local Assistance	$14,774,000
Erroneous Conviction	$2,375,000
State Operations	$42,673,000
Total	**$120,410,000**

CalVCB's Budget Fiscal Year 2025-26

CalVCB's budget is comprised of four funding sources. This year, the cumulative budgeted authority for the following funding sources was $170,779,000 as detailed in the Governor's Budget.

State Restitution Fund*	$83,618,000
Federal Trust Fund	$36,014,000
Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Fund	$9,112,000
State General Fund*	$42,035,000

**The Restitution Fund includes $29,500,000 in spending authority from General Fund backfill. This amount is not included in the General Fund amount.*

All four funding sources include restrictions. This means that funding can only be spent on items authorized by state law and federal grant agreements. CalVCB cannot reallocate remaining funding for other purposes.

CalVCB's funding sources reflect an authority to spend. They are not spending forecasts. For example, the Federal Trust Fund budget ensures CalVCB can apply for and spend federal funding. This is important if an urgent need arises like responding to a mass violence event.

CalVCB's Accomplishments

Promote Access and Equity to CalVCB Services

Responded to Mass Violence Events

CalVCB supports county and state partners in responding to mass violence incidents across the state and provides updated online information to help victims in the aftermath of these events. In FY 2025-26, CalVCB responded to four mass violence events. Victims of mass violence events have seven years to apply.

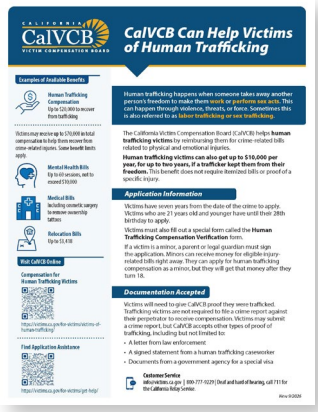
CalVCB created and shared fact sheets and other education materials for local distribution. CalVCB's outreach team visited communities to present program overview information to local advocates, community organizations, and faith-based ministries to ensure every eligible victim is aware that financial assistance is available for recovery expenses.

2025-2026 MASS VIOLENCE EVENT	VICTIMS CAN APPLY UNTIL
Esparto Fireworks Explosion	July 1, 2032
Stockton	November 29, 2032
Oakland	May 16, 2033
Islamic Center of San Diego	May 18, 2033

Expanded Language Access and Created New Resources

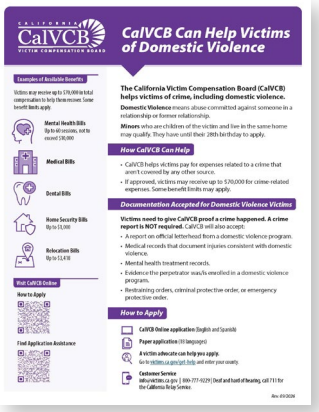
To best serve California's diverse communities, CalVCB continues to build partnerships with organizations that serve all Californians. Many materials have been translated into 20 languages and are available to print or download from CalVCB's website.

This year, dedicated **fact sheets** were created using plain, clear language, so specific victims can easily understand available benefits and what is needed to apply for compensation.

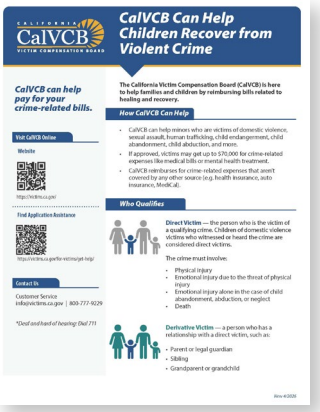


Human Trafficking Victims

Sexual Assault Victims



Domestic Violence Victims



Minor Victims

CalVCB's Accomplishments cont.

Increased Outreach Efforts

CalVCB's outreach team achieved a record-setting year for in-person outreach. A data-driven strategic outreach plan enabled the team to identify and prioritize underserved communities. The outreach team traveled across the state providing almost 60 presentations to advocates, community-based partners, faith-based organizations, and more.

The team also provided 76 virtual presentations and 17 webinars. Outreach presentations focus on helping partners understand the application process and benefits of applying to CalVCB.

(From left to right) CalVCB attends community events and conferences across California to reach victims, advocates, and providers. In these photos, staff attend California Native American Day at the State Capitol, the Annual Funeral Burial Association Conference, and a health fair in Solano County.

CalVCB continued collaborating with law enforcement agencies across the state and identified a law enforcement liaison for 96% of police and sheriff departments, strengthening communication and coordination.

This effort is critical because many CalVCB applications are denied due to missing crime documentation. CalVCB maintains regular communication with liaisons through webinars, newsletters, and providing outreach materials that officers can distribute directly to victims.

CalVCB Executive Officer Lynda Gledhill also prioritized targeted outreach to local, state, and federal stakeholders, increasing program awareness and strengthening collaboration with community partners. She led strategic engagements with more than 45 leaders from organizations serving underserved victims of crime across California. Gledhill presented at several conferences to promote equitable access to services and foster ongoing collaboration and trust among victim services organizations.

Notably, Gledhill hosted three unique webinars highlighting state-specific resources to support victims of human trafficking, sexual assault, and domestic violence. Hundreds of advocates participated in these sessions, learning about efforts to enhance the CalVCB experience and expand access to services. Participants also heard

CalVCB's Accomplishments cont.

Executive Officer Gledhill led three crime-specific webinars, including a panel of statewide leaders who support domestic violence victims. Watch recorded webinars on our website.

from other state agencies and partner organizations that serve victims.

Additionally, strong relationships with federal victim service providers continued throughout the year. Gledhill attended the National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards' annual conference and was re-elected by peers to the board of directors.

She also met with international delegates to share California's best practices and approaches to victim compensation to better serve victims worldwide.

Completed Three-Year Awareness Campaign

The CalVCB public awareness campaign achieved strong results and expanded reach into underserved and multicultural communities.

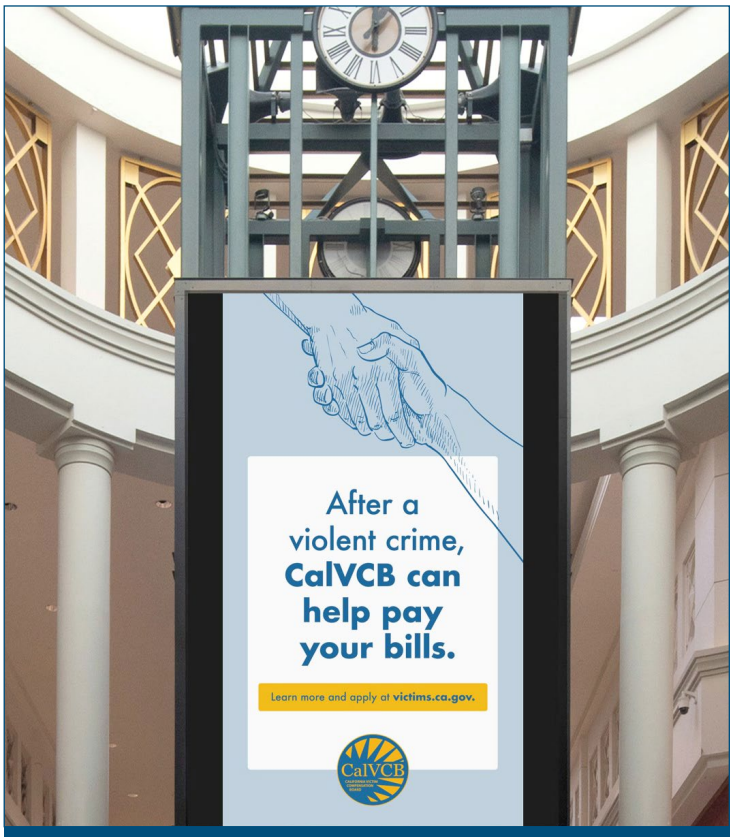
Awareness grew from one in four Californians being aware of CalVCB to one in three Californians. More than 50% of self-reported victims are now aware of the program.

In Fall 2025, CalVCB launched a dedicated ethnic media campaign to communities that have historically been underserved by mainstream media outreach.

The campaign reached audiences who speak Mandarin, Cantonese, Tagalog, Hindi, Punjabi, Hmong, and Vietnamese through paid social, radio, and print ads in these languages.

The campaign also targeted Black and African American communities, which saw a 12% increase in awareness at the end of the campaign.

More details about the campaign can be found in CalVCB's report to the Legislature.



A CalVCB advertisement is displayed at a California mall.

CalVCB's Accomplishments cont.

CalVCB staff wear purple to stand in solidarity with victims during Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Enhance the CalVCB Experience

Passed Three External Audits

In FY 2025-26, the state and federal government audited CalVCB to evaluate financial accountability and processes. There were no findings or recommendations for CalVCB from these three reviews, which is evidence of CalVCB's commitment to accountability and compliance with statutes and regulations.

In March, the California State Auditor (CSA) released a report that included an evaluation of CalVCB's budget and the processing of victim compensation claims. CSA determined that CalVCB cited valid legal reasons for denying victim compensation claims. It was noted that the denial rate increased because of a renewed emphasis on processing applications within legislatively mandated time frames.

CSA also concluded that CalVCB will continue to require appropriations from the State General Fund to remain solvent and that CalVCB's administrative costs were comparable to the other departments they reviewed.

The federal Office for Victims of Crime performed an onsite monitoring review and concluded in April that there were no issues with CalVCB's compliance with federal law and guidelines. Federal oversight officials highlighted in their final report CalVCB's awareness campaign, Advocate Portal, and extensive outreach as best practices for a compensation program.

Lastly, the State Controller's Office (SCO) reviewed CalVCB's administration of TRC grants. They reviewed the grant award process, program monitoring, and processes for expenditure approval and found no issues. SCO also found CalVCB's administrative costs were allowable and properly supported.

Streamlined Appeals Processes

The Appeals Unit engaged in multiple strategic efforts to process appeals more quickly for the benefit of claimants. The team processed nearly 2,200 appeals. In August 2025, CalVCB suspended the practice of denying mental health bills that are not submitted within 90 days of service. The Legal and the Victim Compensation Divisions worked together closely to reevaluate the applications associated with these bills and reprocess them appropriately. This effort moved just under 600 appeals out of the appeals process and helped reduce the number of pending appeals. Since the appeals were overturned, more benefits were approved for payment, and this resulted in more payments to providers.

CalVCB's Accomplishments cont.

In April, CalVCB hosted an in-person all-staff meeting on Denim Day. Staff heard from two powerful public servants, Government Operations Secretary Nick Maduros and Dr. Sarai Crain from the California Department of Justice, who reflected on the impact of CalVCB's work and the importance of continuing to improve the CalVCB experience.

Implemented Regulatory Changes

CalVCB successfully completed a package of regulatory changes related to victim compensation, which became effective on April 1, 2026.

The package modernized regulations related to the reimbursement of income and support loss to reflect that more people are working for the gig economy or are otherwise self-employed. The regulations acknowledge that not all victims receive a traditional paycheck. The regulations also clarify eligibility, processes, and the evidence required for reimbursement.

Additionally, the new regulations make the appeals hearing process more clear and transparent, including consolidating and adding definitions and clarifying requirements that only apply to erroneous conviction claim hearings.

Improved Technology

CalVCB's Information Technology (IT) team also made improvements to help victims, ensure compliance, and improve efficiency. A major improvement is that CalVCB's online application system now allows victims who originally applied by paper application to create online accounts through a secure verification process. Once this process is complete, applicants can review information about their application and bills in real time. Additionally, in response to a federal regulation change governing the use of victim funds, the IT team quickly implemented a new process to ensure CalVCB uses only state funds when appropriate. The team also streamlined the process to request crime reports from law enforcement, reducing manual work.

CalVCB's Accomplishments cont.

CalVCB staff wear denim in recognition of Denim Day and Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Foster a Strong Workforce

Supported Staff Development

CalVCB invested more than 7,000 hours in professional development and leadership training this year, building employees' skills and expertise to strengthen the department's capacity to serve California's crime victims.

Training opportunities included in-person professional development sessions, workshops focused on the victim compensation program, LinkedIn Learning courses, and Franklin Covey leadership development for supervisors and managers. Many new employees were also supported through the onboarding process as CalVCB reduced its vacancy rate to 7% as of June 2026.

CALIFORNIA
CalVCB
VICTIM COMPENSATION BOARD

victims.ca.gov