***Victim Witness Protection Criteria and Guidelines***

***Mandatory Case or Victim/Witness Protection Criteria***

1. ***Victim or Witness is at Risk of Harm****:* A victim or witness who, as a result of cooperating in an investigation or prosecution of a ***serious felony offense*** has been subjected to violence or other forms of intimidation, or who is the subject of a substantial threat to commit violence.
2. ***Serious Felony Offense***: This means one of the following offenses, including, an attempt, solicitation or conspiracy to commit one of the following offenses: murder, manslaughter, sexual battery, aggravated stalking, aggravated battery, carjacking, home invasion robbery, burglary, arson, robbery, kidnapping, racketeering or trafficking in a controlled substance.

*Per 914.25(4)(b)F.S. states, “Protective services, including temporary relocation services, may initially be provided for up to 1 year or until the risk giving rise to the certification has diminished, whichever occurs sooner.”*

The submitting agency will complete and submit the Victim/Witness Protection Application (Part 1 & 2) to the Investigations and Forensic Science (IFS) Program Office. In addition, the agency will submit a “brief” independent case summary of the investigation. Agency investigative reports and excerpts from search warrant data ***cannot*** substitute for the required “independent case summary”.

The application ***must*** contain the following information:

* The State Attorney or Statewide Prosecutor’s signature and date. (**Note**: No application will be accepted with the Assistant State Attorney’s or Assistant Statewide Prosecutor’s Signature.)
* Signature of the Agency Head and the Agency Chief Financial Officer
* All receipts from expenses incurred within the ***agency’s current fiscal year***.
* The victim/witness can be certified for 1 year and up to 3 additional years thereafter if deemed in need of protective services. After the first year, and each following year, the agency ***must*** demonstrate that the threat continues (current & credible) when requesting additional reimbursements.
* The victim/witness must be re-certified annually by either the Statewide Prosecutor or a State Attorney.

The requesting agency must complete the application (Part 1 & 2) to include ***all*** required signatures (Agency Head and the Agency Chief Financial Officer).

Part 1 of 2 – Victim Witness Protection Application

Part 2 of 2 – State Financial Assistance Form

**Note:** No application will be accepted if it does not contain all of the required data and signatures, or if it is received after the deadline designated by IFS.

**Eligible Expenses**

When a victim or witness is certified, a law enforcement agency, in consultation with the certifying Statewide Prosecutor or State Attorney, may provide appropriate protective/relocation services. The services and expenses incurred for such services could be:

a. Other costs directly incurred by reason of providing protective services

b. Temporary relocation services to include expenses to transport a victim/witness to another location, monthly rental of temporary abode…***however, do not claim expenses that would not be regularly incurred by the victim or witness had he or she not been in the protection program.***

**Limitations**

* Monthly rental will be limited to $1200 a month

**Ineligible Expenses**

* Deposits
* Gift Cards
* Food

**Required Documentation**

* Receipts/Invoices
* Rental Contracts for apartments
* Proof of payment