

# Cy Pres Awards

*to Help End  
Sexual Violence*

Cy pres awards use residual funds from class action cases to help charitable organizations with a like-minded mission reduce future harm.



## What are cy pres awards?

Cy pres means “as near as possible,” and was originally used to distribute an estate or trust fund whose purpose could not be fulfilled. The cy pres doctrine enables funds to be distributed to the next best use which can include distribution to charity organizations.

## How do cy pres awards work?

In a class action case a fund with settlement monies may be created and class members are notified. However, sometimes not all funds can be distributed due to unforeseen circumstances such as not being able to contact claimants or they may not want to accept their award. This results in residual monies being left in the fund after the claim period expires. The cy pres doctrine allows courts to allocate these funds for purposes similar to those in the original class action.

## Who needs to be aware of cy pres awards?

Courts can apply the cy pres doctrine with agreement by the judge, lawyers, and mediators involved in a case. We encourage legal counsel and jurists to consider PCAR for cy pres awards in cases involving sexual abuse to prevent future harm.

## Why direct cy pres awards to PCAR?

PCAR works to end sexual violence through prevention education, legal counseling, and technical assistance. Cases involving sexual assault, abuse, and harassment may share the goal of prevention education or providing support services to survivors of sexual violence.

### This can come in many forms including:



**Workplace training** to create a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace through Respect at Work™ – a training program that includes components of sexual harassment training as well as respectful communications among co-workers and customers.



**Free and confidential legal counseling** through the Sexual Violence Legal Assistance Project providing trauma informed legal advice and short-term legal representation to victims of sexual assault, abuse, and harassment.



**Free resources through SafeSecureKids.org** for trusted adults such as family members, teachers, and extracurricular leaders of elementary age children to help provide a support network for children to feel confident about their boundaries and avoid child abuse with a proactive, trauma informed curriculum.



**Prevention education resources** for the general public as well as training materials for subject matter experts to provide direct services to survivors and their loved ones.

**The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) was founded in 1975 with a mission to end sexual violence and advocate for the rights and needs of all sexual assault victims.**

PCAR provides prevention and education training for the public, free legal counseling for survivors, and partners with a network of rape crisis centers that serve all 67 counties in Pennsylvania to provide free and confidential counseling.

PCAR also founded the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) to further expand prevention education resources nationally.

Cy pres awards have been successful tools to help charitable organizations with like-minded missions to plaintiffs reduce future harm using residual funds from the class action.

For more information on our organization and how an award may be used to help survivors of sexual assault, abuse, or harassment please contact Jim Willshier at [jwillshier@pcar.org](mailto:jwillshier@pcar.org) or 717-728-9740, ext. 144.



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