

VOCA Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) 2014-2015 Competitive Process:  
Including Questions for the Sawyer County Victim Services Competitive Process

These questions were submitted during the previous VOCA Competitive Process. The FAQs now include questions that we submitted to the VOCA program regarding the Funding Announcement for Sawyer County Services. If applicants have any further questions outside of the ones listed here, they are encouraged to review the [VOCA Program Guidelines](#). OCVS can no longer answer questions related to this VOCA competitive process.

I. General

**A. New Questions added for Sawyer County Competitive Process**

1. Do we have to have 501(c) 3 status in order to be eligible to apply for VOCA?

**A: VOCA applicants are not required to have 501(c) 3 status but rather must be operated by a public or nonprofit organization, or a combination of such organizations, and provide services to crime victims.**

2. Can DCF funds be used as match?

**A: Yes, as DCF funds are state (non-federal) funds, they can be used as match in the VOCA grant. Please do not overmatch the grant; only include the required match amount in the budget.**

3. When is the application due?

**A: Applications are due before 11:59pm on January 15<sup>th</sup>. Please make sure to allow extra time for Egrants to upload the information.**

4. If our Full Board of Directors have not convened yet to give approval to the grant application, what should we do?

**A: Please submit what you have no later than the deadline listed above. If you have any other documentation showing that the Board has knowledge of applying for VOCA funds attach that documentation.**

B. Questions specific to the previous competitive process

1. As this is a competitive cycle, can we apply for more money than we currently receive under VOCA?

**A: As stated in the funding announcement: “Funding may or may not remain at the same level. Therefore, successful applicants may receive awards at or below the previous year’s funding level.” No awards will be given for over the current funding amount.**

2. If we are not a current subgrantee are we likely to be funded; are current subgrantee applications reviewed alongside prospective subgrantees?

**A: This year is a competitive process for the VOCA grant and no one is guaranteed funding. OCVS intends to sustain current subgrants (at or below their current level of funding). However, we are aware that new services and agencies continue to develop, and OCVS will balance the need to sustain existing services with the need to support emerging services and programs. All applications will**

**be reviewed and scored by the rating panel. In conjunction with the rating panel, OCVS will be making strategic funding decisions based upon (not in any order): overall score; program funding turn back; program history; availability of funds; and the need of a new program(s).**

C. Attachments –

1. Is there any specific size font we should use for the documents that we are attaching?

**A: Please use Times New Roman, font size 12 with 1” margins.**

2. Is there any minimum or maximum number of pages required for any of the attachments?

**A: If there are any minimum or maximum pages required, the limit is listed in the VOCA Funding Announcement under the corresponding section heading.**

3. Should each section where attachments can be made include an attached Word document with the same information as entered in the response box for the section?

**A: Correct, the response included in the response box should be the same as the information in the attachment. The reason for this is twofold – OCVS uses the responses entered directly into the Egrants response box to report to the federal government but we use the attachments to review the application as it is easier to read.**

D. Provision of Services –

What is VOCA’s definition of cost-effective provision of services?

**A: There is no definition specific to VOCA. However, any costs should be reasonable and allowable per the VOCA Program Guidelines.**

E. Eligible Services and Expense

**\*Please refer to the VOCA Program Guidelines for a complete list of ineligible services and activities.**

1. Can VOCA funds be used to fund support groups for incarcerated persons?

**A: No, VOCA funds cannot be used to offer rehabilitative services to offenders. Likewise, VOCA funds cannot support services to incarcerated individuals, even when the service pertains to the victimization of that individual.**

2. Can we include mortgage payment of office space that is owned (and not rented)?

**A: No, both the Federal and State VOCA Guidelines clearly state that mortgage payments are non-allowable costs as it is an indirect organization cost. However, rent expenses are allowable but subgrantees must submit a written certification that rental rates are consistent with prevailing rates in the local area.**

3. Can VOCA funds be used for volunteer appreciation?

**A: We encourage subgrantees to do some form of volunteer appreciation at their agency; however the amount of VOCA funds used for volunteer appreciation should be minimal and reasonable.**

4. Are services to human trafficking victims eligible under our VOCA project?  
**A: Yes, human trafficking victims are eligible to be served by a VOCA funded project.**

II. Specific to VOCA Funding Announcement Sections

**\*If you have any technical questions related to Egrants call the Egrants helpdesk**

A. Main Summary

1. If our organization serves all of a county and thereby multiple state assembly and state senate districts, do you just want us to select the one for where our building is actually located?  
**A: No, please enter all the state assembly and state senate districts that are included in the VOCA project services area.**
2. How do you select more than one Congressional/Assembly/Senate District?  
**A: Use the drop down menu to select the desired district. Then, click select. You can then add another district by repeating the process. You should see the districts you have selected in the box below the drop down menu. Please use the Egrants Helpdesk if you are still unable to add multiple districts.**
3. Do we need to list school districts?  
**A: No, you do not need to list school districts for the VOCA grant.**
4. How do you add new names for Project Director, Financial Office, etc.?  
**A: Next to each position is an “add” button, click the add button. You then have to do a search first. Enter the first few letters of the last name you would like to enter/search for and click search. Then, under the search results, there should be an “Add New Contact” or “Add New Project Director” button next to the “cancel” button. Click on “Add New Contact” and fill in the required information.**
5. Is “Project Contact” in the VOCA program guidelines the same as “Project Director” in Egrants?  
**A: Not necessarily, Project Director is the person in charge of the VOCA project whereas Project Contact is the principal person with whom OCVS will communicate with regarding the project.**
6. Can “Project Director” and “Signing Official” be the same person?  
**A: No, they must be two different people. Signing Official must be the highest elected official in the organization.**
7. If our agency is a county/city agency, is the SAMS (CCR) registration done for all county/city agencies within that county/city?  
**A: Probably, but to be sure county or city agencies should check with the county or city clerk. Also if you have any questions about the SAM website and**

registration you can also contact their Helpdesk. See their website for information: <https://fsd.gov/fsd-gov/home.do>.

8. Do we need to attach anything to show SAMS (CCR) is registered and up to date?  
**A: No, nothing needs to be attached. OCVS will be checking the SAM website for registration and renewal verification.**

9. How does our agency get former employees' names taken out of the contact information listed for our agency?  
**A: Contact the Egrants Helpdesk for assistance with removing agency contacts from Egrants.**

B. Approval Checklist -

1. I cannot find the DOJ Administrative Guide, is it necessary?  
**A: It is not necessary to locate the DOJ Administrative Guide as it does not relate specifically to VOCA but rather all DOJ grants. This question is part of the Egrants structure, and cannot be changed. Use the VOCA Program Guidelines on the VOCA webpage as a guide.**

2. I am confused by #8 on the approval checklist. If I answered "No" on #7, what should I enter for #8?  
**A: If you answered #7 "No" then #8 is "N/A" since you did not answer "yes" to the previous question (#7).**

C. Performance Measures

1. All we need to do for this section is mark complete and save – correct?  
**A: Yes, this section only needs to be marked complete and saved.**

2. Are the performance measures related to what goes into the goal/objective spreadsheet that we complete? Are we given a choice as to whether or not we identify performance measures in this section? –  
**A: No to both questions, this section can only be marked complete and saved. No other action can be taken and no other action is required.**

D. Budget Detail

**\*Current VOCA subgrantees should continue to budget as they have done in the past. OCVS will follow-up with subgrantees regarding any major changes from past budgets.**

General

1. The Funding Announcement states that match is 20% but the VOCA program guidelines states match is 25%, which is it?  
**A: The 25% match was a typo in the program guidelines. Match is 20% of the total VOCA Project which is equal to 25% of the federal amount requested.**  
**Example: If the request amount is \$10,000**  
**Total Budget: \$10,000 ÷ .80 = \$12,500**  
**Required Match: \$12,500 x .20 = \$2,500**

(You can also figure match by  $\$10,000 \times .25 = \$2,500$ )

2. In the response box used for justification for each budget category (i.e. Personnel, Employee Benefits, etc.) can it truly be a brief explanation under the Personnel section? Example: These funds will pay for salaries of personnel assigned to work specifically under this grant if approved.

**A: For each budget category used please enter a justification/brief explanation that describes how the items in that category will be used during the course of the grant period and make sure to include specific details for each budget line item.**

3. Please give an example of how to list in-kind and cash matches?

**A: In addition to the information included in this response, please refer to the VOCA Program Guidelines Appendices – Local Match Contributions. Match values for in-kind contributions should be established at the project’s actual cost. Match must come from a non-federal source.**

**For in-kind match, Volunteers can be used at a rate that is consistent with those paid for similar work in other activities of the state or local government or nonprofit organizations. Example: 200 volunteers hours x \$10 an hour = \$2,000 in-kind match.**

**For cash match, an agency could pay for the use of a copier for the VOCA funded staff out of a non-federal source. Example: \$50/month for copier use by VOCA funded staff x 12 months = \$600 cash match.**

#### Personnel

1. Does vacation time go under employee benefits or is this considered part of salary?

**A: This is something that should be determined by the agency. Please continue to do what has been done before as we have not noticed any issues with this in the past.**

2. Can we include supervisor salary/fringe of those providing direct services?

**A: Yes, VOCA guidelines allow for the reimbursement of administrative staff only in relation to the provision of direct services. However, VOCA Guidelines stipulate that other paid staff (i.e. supervision of direct service providers) can be funded only if it can be demonstrated that they are essential and necessary to support the delivery of direct services. For example, a volunteer coordinator or a supervisor that is providing “hands on” oversight of the direct services and consults with direct victim service providers on cases, in contrast to general supervision of all employees.**

#### Employee Benefits

1. For employee benefits, can they be grouped as one benefit line item per employee (with computation showing the rates for each benefit) or should each benefit for each employee be a separate line item?

**A: Employee benefits should be grouped as one benefit line item per employee showing the computation rates for each benefit.**

2. Do you want all fringe listed as a total (i.e. Health Insurance, Retirement, Social Security = \$1,500) or do you want fringe listed separately with a total (i.e. Health Insurance \$500, Retirement \$500, Social Security \$500 = \$1,500)?  
**A: Please list the fringe separately with a total for each item. Additionally, if benefits and benefit rates are the same agency wide, an agency may include the computations showing the rates for each benefit in the main justification section for Employee Benefits and then the percentage that VOCA is paying per employee.**
3. Can the total number of benefits for all personnel outlined in the personnel section be a line item or should the benefits be entered per person in this section?  
**A: Benefits should be listed per employee rather than all fringe benefits for all VOCA project employees grouped together as one line item.**

#### Staff Development

1. Under Supplies and Operating Expenses paper is an allowable expense, however in Staff Development the development of training manuals is unallowable. If we use our copier to recreate our advocate volunteer manuals is that allowable?  
**A: Under Staff Development, the VOCA Program Guidelines are referencing the development of training manuals for use outside of the organization which is non-allowable. Additionally, if you are only using the copier to recreate/copy/print the advocate volunteer manual then you are not developing new material but merely printing more copies for use within your organization, which is allowable.**
2. The Funding Announcement states that travel for training purposes is included in the Staff Development section, however on Egrants the Travel section states: "Travel (including training)," where should travel for training purposes go?  
**A: Travel for training purposes should go under Staff Development. For VOCA purposes we need to see training separate from travel but the budget sections in Egrants are used by other grants in the DOJ, so we were unable to change the heading for travel. While it states Travel (including training) please only include travel for training purposes in the Staff Development section.**
3. Is training for supervisors under VOCA allowable?  
**A: VOCA guidelines state that VOCA funds designated for training are to be used exclusively for developing the skills of direct service providers so that they are better able to offer quality services to crime victims. This may include volunteers and paid direct services staff whose salary is not funded under the VOCA staff. Keep in mind that VOCA funds may not be used to train persons who do not provide direct victim services, such as executive directors, administrative or clerical assistants and board members. Additionally, all training must be related to direct victim services; training for grantwriting, fundraising, lobbying, general administrative/management or prevention education are not allowable.**

Other (Miscellaneous)

1. What can emergency financial funds be used for? Are there any restrictions? (To clarify the term submitted through survey monkey was “client financial funds” but it was assumed that the person was asking about emergency financial funds).

**A: An Emergency Financial Fund can be used to meet the critical emergency financial needs of crime victims as detailed in the VOCA guidelines. There are restrictions for use and special conditions that must be met; subgrantees that are considering budgeting for an Emergency Financial Fund should reference the VOCA program guidelines to be sure expenses are allowable and special conditions are met. If a program chooses to budget for an Emergency Financial Fund, the subgrantee should send OCVS the agency’s policies regarding the Emergency Financial Fund within 30 days of award.**

E. Victim Rights Compliance

Under the Victim Rights Compliance section, do we have to attach a separate explanation or can we just explain in the response box?

**A: As with other sections in Egrants, fill out the answer in the response box, and also attach a response to the section.**

F. Agency Profile

1. I assume I complete the three forms (Agency Profile, Agency Victim Services Budget Profile and Project Allocations), save them as three separate documents and attach them separately. Is that correct, that more than 1 attachment can be included in this section?

**A: Correct, there can be three attachments in this section.**

2. Since the response to this question is in 3 attachments, what should be included in the Section Response box?

**A: As stated in the VOCA Funding Announcement, for the response box please state the forms have been completed as requested.**

3. For Project Allocations, we are asking for funding to support half of a full time position, should we put in the number of clients served by all of the position or just the VOCA funded half?

**A: Please put in only the VOCA funded portion as the total number of clients served. It should be your estimation of victims to be served by the VOCA project and not your whole agency. Therefore the allocation of federal VOCA funds and allocation of match funds should match your totals in the budget section for the VOCA project as well.**

4. For VOCA Project Staffing (section E) – Our agency is open 37 hours/week, not 40. Is an employee considered full time if they work 32 hours? If the definition of full time is 40 hours, can we add another employee’s 8 hours to total 40 and allocate those costs accordingly?

**A: Each agency can determine what they consider to be a full time employee. For the purposes of VOCA, a full time employee works 40 hrs/wk and 2080 hrs/year. What this section is asking for is the total number of full time**

**equivalents for the VOCA project. In your example if you had one employee who worked 32hrs/wk (1664 hrs/year) on the VOCA project and another who worked 8hrs/wk (416 hrs/year) on the VOCA project, those two employees would be 1 FTE (2080 hrs/year) and the VOCA allowable project costs could be allocated accordingly.**

5. Should we present financials for 2014 or 2015? If 2015, are we to list foundations/corporations from which we may consider seeking funding?

**A: For the Agency Victim Services Budget Profile, please use your agency's current fiscal year. Additionally, if your agency has any planned or pending applications for funding or other foundations/corporations from which you are considering seeking funding, please include those in the space located at the bottom of the form.**

G. Problem or Needs Description

1. Is the Problem or Needs Description section new?

**A: No, this section was formerly Project Justification and the questions and content are no different from previous VOCA applications.**

2. Can I include a chart in this section to show statistics for our area?

**A: A chart can be included in the word document that is attached to this section but be sure that the information contained in the chart is also included in the response box on Egrants.**

H. Goals and Objectives

1. What kind of information do you want under each section of the Goals and Objectives chart? Can you provide a general example of what you would like to see under each section?

**A: A general example has been included at the end of this document.**

2. Instructions ask for applicants to break down goals by identifying the extent to which each is expected to be attained by the end of each quarter – where do you want this information or which section of the VOCA Goals and Objectives Chart should it be in?

**A: Please include this information either in the “Indicators to Measure Objectives” or “Evaluation Plan” sections.**

3. Are the questions listed in the Funding Announcement (A-D) supposed to be entered in the response box on Egrants with the chart attached?

**A: The questions listed are a guide to filling out the chart, if you find it useful you could answer them in a paragraph included with the chart. The information from the chart should be copied and pasted into the response section in Egrants.**

I. Project Description

1. Is “Project Description” the same as “Project Summary” from previous years?

**A: No, Project Description is the same as it has been before, no changes. What was “Project Summary” previously is now the paragraph included in the Main Summary section of Egrants.**

J. Staffing/Qualifications

1. No resume is required for Volunteers, correct?

**A: Correct, only a position description for the volunteers is required.**

2. May we consider the roles of the agency’s executive director, administrative assistant and grant writer in this section?

**A: For the chart, only as their position relates to the VOCA project and the provision of direct services. If they will not be providing direct services at all (as part of the VOCA project), please do not include them in the table. Remember, per VOCA guidelines VOCA funds cannot be used for indirect organizational costs nor can VOCA funds be used for administrative staff expenses unless incurred while providing direct services. However, if these staff are part of the key agency staff responsible for the management and oversight of the proposed project, as mentioned in the Funding Announcement, please describe their role and qualifications in the response section.**

3. This section requests that we describe “the amount of time associated with those duties” – how do you want this recorded? Should it be recorded as a percentage, such as 80% of time spent doing one duty or as hours per week?

**A: Whether the time is represented as a percentage or as hours per week is up to the applicant but be consistent throughout the chart. However, the chart should clearly show how many hours the person works per week in total and then the percentage/hours of that time that are dedicated to VOCA duties and are VOCA funded.**

4. For the Staffing/Qualifications spreadsheet, what information do you want entered under “Source”?

**A: We are looking for the source of funding for the non-VOCA duties.**

5. What do you mean by VOCA and non-VOCA duties? Do you want an all inclusive list?

**A: VOCA duties are the duties that position does under the VOCA project and are funded with VOCA dollars (and thereby allowable activities under VOCA guidelines). Non-VOCA duties are the duties that a position performs that are not performed as part of the VOCA project and are not funded by VOCA dollars. We would like to see a complete picture of the position and the duties associated with that position. Please provide us with the necessary information to understand on an average day/week what that position would be expected to do both as part of the VOCA project and outside of the VOCA project.**

6. For volunteers and their non-VOCA duties, do you want listed any other things they might do as volunteers for the agency that are not VOCA or crime victim service related?

**A: For Volunteers, please only list the VOCA duties that volunteers perform as part of the match portion of the project.**

7. If a VOCA funded position is shared, should resumes for each VOCA funded person be included?

**A: Yes, please include resumes for all VOCA funded employees. The only exception is for volunteers. We do not need resumes for volunteers.**

## VOCA Goals & Objectives Chart

### 8. Goals and Objectives

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**GOAL #1: Lessen some of the financial impact crime victims experience due to victimization**

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<b>Objectives for Program</b>	<b>Indicators to Measure Objectives</b>	<b>Evaluation Plan</b>
<p>Objective 1: Increase awareness and utilization of the Crime Victim Compensation Program and the SAFE fund within our agency and for the people we serve.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. All VOCA funded staff members will attend one CVC/Rights/SAFE Fund training every three years. Those that attend any given year will update other agency staff (both VOCA and non-VOCA funded) on CVC and SAFE Fund information.</li><li>2. Provide assistance in filling for Crime Victim Compensation benefits to 25 victims each quarter for a total of 100 victims during the grant year.</li><li>3. Display CVC information in English, Spanish and Hmong around the agency.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Update records to ensure that agency staff is attending training every three years.</li><li>2. Track clients assisted filling for CVC benefits in ALICE throughout the grant period.</li><li>3. Contact OCVS to ensure that we have the most up-to-date information, brochures and applications for CVC.</li></ol>

## VOCA Goals & Objectives Chart

### 8. Goals and Objectives

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#### GOAL #2: Provide legal advocacy services to domestic violence victims

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Objectives for Program	Indicators to Measure Objectives	Evaluation Plan
Objective 1: 48 victims of domestic violence cases will file restraining orders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Legal Advocate will assist 48 victims, 12 per quarter, in filing a restraining order.</li> <li>2. Legal Advocate will also provide resources and referrals as needed to all victims.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1a. Use ALICE to track number of restraining orders filed.</li><li>1b. Track number of restraining orders granted.</li> <li>2. Use ALICE to track number of victims offered resources and referrals through Legal Advocate.</li></ol>