

Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)

2018 Competitive Grant Announcement for One-Time Expenses

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. If my agency does not provide direct victim services, can we still apply for the VOCA funding?
 - a. No. VOCA is specifically for the provision of direct victim services. To be eligible for VOCA funds, agencies must:
 - Have a record of providing effective direct services to crime victims or have financial support from other sources (at least 25% from non-federal sources).
 - Utilize volunteers to provide direct victim services
 - Assist crime victims in seeking available crime victim compensation benefits.

2. We are considering applying for funding for something that may not fall within one of the four listed focus areas. We are not sure, so should we still apply?
 - a. Applications will only be considered if the requests fall within one of the four focus areas that are listed in the Funding Announcement. If you are not sure if the item(s) will fall into one of these areas, please provide as much information as possible in one of the areas, and we will make the final determination.

3. The Funding Announcement states that applicants must be current on all reports to be eligible for this funding. Our agency has been late on several fiscal reports, but we do get them in eventually. Will we be disqualified?
 - a. Awards for this funding opportunity are being supported by our Federal 2015 VOCA Grant, which ends on September 30, 2018. It is imperative that all funds are spent by that date, and that our reports to the Federal Government are on time. Dealing with late reports from our subrecipients may jeopardize our federal funding. OCVS will determine if an applicant will be disqualified. If you feel that you need assistance in getting your fiscal reports in on time for your current grant, your VOCA Grant Specialist will be happy to help you or come up with ideas for timely submission.

4. Do all grant award funds need to be expended by September 30, 2018?
 - a. YES.

5. I see on the Funding Announcement that the award period is January 1- September 30th. Can we retroactively be reimbursed for training occurring in January/February before the application is due?
 - a. Yes. Any project-related expenses after January 1st can be covered.

6. The Child Advocacy Center staff, as well as the Sexual Assault Center, receive VOCA dollars in our 2017-18 grant but the CAC did not receive any dollars in 2015. Does this matter for this competitive grant for onetime expenses? In other words can we include the CAC program in our proposal?
 - a. Yes, you can include the CAC program in your proposal, as long as the requested funds are used for direct victim services. The funds are coming from the FFY2015 VOCA grant but that does not mean that a program had to receive funds during that timeframe.

7. Does a provider of emergency and non-emergency legal services for victims, along with general advocacy but no other social services, qualify as a "direct service" provider?
 - a. Yes, providing emergency and non-emergency legal services, and advocacy, for crime victims would be considered a direct service. These services must be related to the crime, and cannot be related to civil procedures such as divorce.

8. Are car repairs for a victim an allowable emergency expense?
 - a. Yes, if these repairs respond to the immediate emotional and physical needs for the victim and provide victims with a measure of safety (for example, fleeing their abuser).

9. We want to provide Emergency Legal Assistance to victims. Can we provide assistance such as the cost associated with the U-Visa, such as, attorney fees to assist with the U-Visa, and court costs? This is a needed service, because these victims have no status, this legal help will keep these victims from returning to the victimizer.
 - a. Yes, this type of emergency legal assistance is allowable under this funding source.

10. Can an agency submit an application under Emergency Services or Assistance to Victims for mental health services (specifically trauma-related counseling on site)...because I don't see mental health services listed as an allowable emergency need (Or is there another category it should be listed under?). If so, since the funding announcement indicates that an unallowable use of funds is personnel (i.e. for providing a mental health counselor on site), should this be considered contracted or something else?
 - a. Emergency mental health services would be considered for this grant opportunity, under the emergency assistance category. This could be in both the

form of a contract with another organization(s) (“Contractual” budget category), or vouchers (“Other” budget category) with this organization(s). The biggest concern would be: would you be able to spend/use all of the grant by the end of the cycle? Perhaps you have collected data to support that you would be able to utilize X amount of \$\$ or vouchers by the end of the grant cycle – that would be something to add into your application.

11. National Trainings:

Can we apply for our direct services staff to attend a national training?

a. Yes. With the following conditions:

- Only staff or volunteers who provide direct victim services can attend the training.
- The training must be VOCA-allowable, and relate to enhancing the provision of direct victim services. See VOCA Guidelines. If the training is questionable, you must clearly articulate how this training will improve your staff’s ability to serve crime victims.
- Clearly describe the calculations for travel, including airfare, lodging, meals, etc. for each training. Rates must not exceed State Rates.
- Include an agenda or link to the requested training.
- Please include all information that will assist us in making the decision.

Will we need additional approval for the trainings if we receive the grant?

a. Again, please include as much information as possible for us to make a decision. We will not have the capacity to go back-and-forth with applicants. If your application is approved, you can consider the requested training approved as well.

12. Tablets. We are having a difficult time gathering feedback from victims. We hand out, or mail paper copies to victims, but don’t receive much back from them. Can we purchase laptops, tablets, or iPads for advocates to use to obtain and track this information? We want to begin to have victims fill out surveys, or their feedback directly into a tablet that the advocate can hand to the victim, so the client can enter in their own feedback right there and then while the client is in the office, or working with the advocate. These tablets, iPads will help us to get client feedback, or answers to our surveys.

a. Yes, this is allowable. This is a good time to update computers, computer programs, software (Adobe), and other technology. As a reminder, if your items aren’t dedicated 100% for victim services, please prorate.

13. If we are planning to purchase computers for our VOCA-funded staff, how do we budget for this?
- a. Computers (items with an acquisition cost of under \$5,000) can be listed under Supplies & Operating. Please list out each unit: computer, monitor, printer, etc. separately. VOCA guidelines permit VOCA funds to be used to fund the entire cost of an item if purchasing that item is used only for direct victim services and is consistent with the scope of the VOCA project's services and activities. Please clearly describe your calculations.
14. We would like to buy furniture for our waiting rooms. Is this allowed?
- a. VOCA funds can be used if the waiting room is used for direct victim services. VOCA funds may be used for repair or replacement of items that contribute to maintaining a healthy and safe environment for crime victims. Please refer to the Essential Property Repair/Replacement in the VOCA guidelines.
15. We are applying for items that would go under Supplies & Operating Expenses in the budget. However, we are not sure where to explain these items in the narrative.
- a. In the Project Narrative section, please choose the closest focus area that the items would fall under, and provide as much detailed information as possible. For example, in #13 above, furniture for a waiting room for victims would probably be discussed in Facility Accessibility and Security Needs, because these items may contribute to a healthy and/or safe environment for crime victims; or may increase accessibility for certain clients who may not otherwise have access to/or feel safe in the current environment.
16. We want to upgrade our security needs that will go over \$5,000. Is there a maximum equipment amount that we are limited to? Can we request more than \$5,000 for security, server and equipment needs?
- a. There is no maximum amount for equipment, or property. What this section in the Funding Announcement is talking about is the process for items that are \$5,000 or more. Items that have a unit price of \$5,000 or more are classified as "equipment" and need to follow a procurement process, either the agency's procurement policy or WI DOJ's procurement policy. If you have separate budget items that are under \$5,000, but add up to \$5,000, or more, then these multiple items over \$1,000 would be considered "nonexpendable personal property" (property) and not equipment. See Examples below:

Example 1 – Property

- Server \$3,000 (Property)
- Part \$1,500 (Property)
- Monitor \$1,000 (Property)
- Installation \$1,500 (Not property or equipment)

Example 2 – Equipment and Property

- Server \$5,000 (This is considered equipment - follow procurement policy)
- Part \$1,500 (Property)
- Monitor \$1,000 (Property)
- Installation \$1,500 (Not property or equipment)

17. If we have a web design vendor offer to price on a product / design we want to accept, **and also** offers a discount because of our mission and that we are non-profit, can we use that discount as a match? Essentially, the match would be the compensation forgone by the company for a portion of a product or service the company would, in typical situations, have billed a customer for.

- a. This can be an acceptable form of match as long as it is thoroughly documented. Since this is a donated service, it would be in-kind match, so specifically you'd want documentation from the company that provides the total cost (service hourly rate/software/any needed hardware), discount percentage/amount, and amount billed on company letterhead.

18. The Funding Announcement states that there is a 20% match requirement. Is there an opportunity to request a match waiver for this grant?

- a. For the 2017-2018 grant year, OCVS has already submitted the match waiver request to OVC for our subrecipients. However, we will attempt to submit a late match waiver request. It is not a guarantee that match waivers will be approved by OVC; therefore we recommend exploring all options of cash and in-kind match. There is specific information you will need to provide us after the applications are due. We will do our very best to get these approved.

19. Proration: How can I calculate proration for website redesign (community-based victim services agency)?

- a. VOCA guidelines permit VOCA funds to be used to fund the entire cost of an item if purchasing that item is used only for direct victim services and is consistent with the scope of the VOCA project's services and activities. If the items are used for non-direct victim services, then it must be prorated. One method to determine proration is by the number or percentage of FTEs in your agency that provide direct services.

20. Is a billboard that an allowable cost for this funding announcement?

- a. Yes, this would be an allowable expense. As with many requested expenses, you should clearly explain how this is essential to reach all victims and why it is needed. If you can, please provide a quote and proof of the design prior to the grant being due. Otherwise, just know that we will need this information soon after the grant award date, if you were awarded a grant.