

Colorado – Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Update on the New Funds Coming to Colorado

Here is What We Know

Colorado will receive over 30 million dollars, which will go toward providing direct services to victims of crime. As mentioned at the forums, the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) has proposed changes to the current VOCA Guidelines. These new VOCA regulations have not yet been approved by the Department of Justice. We have been hesitant to send out a grant funding Announcement until the new regulations are adopted, since the new proposed regulations will allow more services to be funded with VOCA dollars than are currently allowed. However, that being said, we are going to begin the grant process by announcing the opportunity to apply for one-time nonrecurring funds, as detailed below so that we can get the funds out as quickly as possible. We are hoping the new VOCA regulations will be approved before our funding process begins.

Distribution of the VOCA Funds

The Division of Criminal Justice – Office for Victims Programs (OVP) will have two different competitive grant funding opportunities with these additional VOCA funds. There will also be a special projects funding process, but this will not be through the competitive funding process. (The funding amounts are estimates at this time and are dependent on funds available and requests.)

1. There will be approximately 3 million dollars set aside for one-time nonrecurring projects.
2. There will be approximately 16 -18 million dollars in VOCA funds that will be utilized for our regular Crime Victim Services funding opportunity. (The exact amount will be determined prior to the release of the Announcement depending on funds available.) Just as a reminder, this process makes funding awards for VOCA, VAWA, SASP, and State VALE funds in one grant funding process. The Announcement for these funds will be released at the end of January/early February 2016 for funding that will begin on January 1, 2017 and will be for a two year period of time, as is currently done. The grant funding process will not change, but will include the additional VOCA funds so the amounts that are awarded through this process will increase dramatically.

There will also be 7 million dollars set aside for three statewide projects (2 year grant period). These projects will address:

Civil legal services for crime victims
Housing needs for crime victims
Emergency funds for crime victims

These three special projects will be addressed through a collaborative approach and will not be part of the one-time or the two year (2017-18) competitive grant processes. The reason for this is that through several

needs assessments and forums conducted throughout the years, these issues have been identified as significant areas of need throughout the state. Victim service providers have offered feedback for a very long time that these issues are complex and need a comprehensive approach that benefits all communities in Colorado. We thought these additional VOCA funds would give Colorado an opportunity to address these issues through a thoughtful and collaborative approach.

Next Steps and Upcoming Dates

One-time nonrecurring requests

Due to the delay in new VOCA regulations being approved by the Department of Justice, we have delayed our application and funding process for one-time nonrecurring VOCA funding. It is anticipated that the Announcement for the Availability of Funds (Announcement) for one-time nonrecurring funds will be released on **Friday, August 28, 2015**. We anticipate going forward with this Announcement even if the new VOCA regulations have not yet been approved. However, please know that if we delay the release of the Announcement, it is only because we want to be able to allow the funds to be used as broadly as possible. We will let you know if there are additional delays. For those agencies that receive a one-time nonrecurring VOCA grant, the contract for these grant awards will be from May 1, 2016- April 30, 2017.

The purpose of doing a one-time nonrecurring funding process is to address those one-time needs that agencies often do not have the resources to fund. We have developed a sheet of examples of eligible types of VOCA projects (anticipating the new regulations) on page 3 of this document.

Requests for VOCA, VAWA, SASP and State VALE funds As Part of the Regular Crime Victim Services Funding Process

For on-going services such as victim advocate personnel, supplies, operating, travel, etc. those types of requests should occur in the regular funding cycle. The Announcement for our regular grant process will be out in late January/early February 2016.

Additional VOCA Funds Specifically for Training

Colorado will be receiving approximately \$416,000 in addition to the \$30 million to provide training. We are in the process of determining how those funds will be utilized based upon the training needs identified in the survey and at the forums.

Who Should I Contact with Questions?

For information about these additional VOCA funds, please contact Debbie Kasyon, VOCA Administrator at Debbie.Kasyon@state.co.us (303-239-5703) or your grant manager:

Louise Esquibel – louise.esquibel@state.co.us (303-239-4402)

Jill Nore – jill.nore@state.co.us (303-239-5714)

Ashley Riley Lopes – ashley.lopes@state.co.us (303-239-4529)

Toll-free number (Colorado only): 1-888-282-1080

One-Time Nonrecurring VOCA Funding: Examples of Eligible Projects

All projects must be (1) for one-time nonrecurring costs, and (2) support the expansion or enhancement of delivery of direct services to crime victims.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate how these one-time expenditures will support the expansion or enhancement of the delivery of direct services to crime victims. VOCA funds may support only the prorated share of an item that is not used exclusively for victim-related activities. If an item is not used exclusively for VOCA eligible victim services, you may apply only for the prorated items that serve crime victims. [Example: a shelter that serves 20% non-VOCA eligible crime victims (i.e. homeless persons), therefore the agency is requesting 80% of the cost to replace shelter furnace.]

Eligible Projects

- **Time-limited support of personnel charged with implementing the eligible project**
- **Equipment & Technology** (prorated share of an item that is not used exclusively for victim-related activities) (may support monthly maintenance/service fees, but only for the duration of the grant period)
 - Telephones/Cell phones for Hotline
 - Braille, TTY/TDD Equipment, or other auxiliary aids for deaf and hard of hearing clients
 - Computers
 - Printers
 - Forensic Interviewing Equipment - but only when the results of the interview are used to identify needs of victims in addition to the investigation process utilized by law enforcement and prosecution. It must be used in MDT setting or specialized setting such as a CAC, and completed by a trained forensic interviewer (i.e. video and recording software, two-way mirrors)
 - Medical Equipment (Colposcopes)
 - Automated Systems and Technology:
 - Automated information and referral systems
 - E-mail systems that allow communications among victim service providers
 - Automated case-tracking and management systems (customizing databases to fit agency needs and new demographic-tracking requirements)
 - Victim notification systems
 - Encryption
 - Server
 - Security System (equipment and installation, but not monthly monitoring fees)
 - Website (prorated to exclude ineligible activities such as fundraising, lobbying, etc.)
- **Furniture** (prorated share of an item that is not used exclusively for victim-related activities)
 - Shelter furniture
 - Children's play area furniture
 - Work space furniture
 - Waiting area furniture

- **Physical Improvements** (prorated share of an item that is not used exclusively for victim-related activities; only expenses that are not eligible for insurance claim purposes are allowable)
 - ADA Compliance (renovations to enable compliance and access, such as wheelchair lift, ramp, etc.)
 - Maintenance or replacement or repair of essential items
 - Equipment repair or replacement (i.e. Shelter furnace, boiler)
 - Window, door, lock replacement or repair (energy efficiency is not an allowable justification)
 - Area/facility to shelter companion animals (“pets”) of shelter clients
- **Outreach materials** (prorated share of an item that is not used exclusively for victim-related activities)
 - Public awareness and education presentations that are made in schools, community centers, and other public forums, and that are designed to inform crime victims of specific rights and services and provide or refer to needed services and assistance
 - Development and production of materials (publications)
 - Brochures that describe available services
- **Contracts for professional services** (prorated share of an item that is not used exclusively for victim-related activities)
 - Language translation of materials and websites (prorated to exclude ineligible activities such as fundraising, lobbying, etc.)
 - Development of materials for underserved victims (i.e. needs of LGBTQ victims; intersection of human trafficking and DV; services available for incarcerated victims)
 - Development of databases for client services
- **Training** (prorated share of an item that is not used exclusively for victim-related activities)
 - skills training for staff and training-related travel
 - training for therapy animals or Courthouse dogs
- **Project Evaluation**
 - Only programs that serve 100% VOCA-eligible crime victims

Non-allowable costs include, but are not limited to:

- Ongoing personnel costs*, ongoing contract professional costs, and management expenses
- Lobbying
- Perpetrator rehabilitation and counseling
- Research and studies
- Criminal Justice System Improvement
- Fundraising
- Capital Expense/Improvements
- Victim Compensation payments
- Most medical care
- Victim attendance at conferences
- Funding other organizations
- Purchasing vehicles
- Crime prevention

** Recurring personnel costs will be considered an allowable expense if your program has a unique situation where it has recently been subject to a demonstrated significant funding loss directly affecting the organization’s ability to support essential staff positions. These costs may only be requested for personnel costs for the period of 5/1/2016 to 12/31/2016 (i.e. approved funds for this area must be expended during this time period).*

