

VICTIMS OF CRIME ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION



Law Enforcement Planning Commission

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LAW ENFORCEMENT PLANNING COMMISSION

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Government of the United States Virgin Islands through the Law Enforcement Planning Commission will utilize grant funds under the **OVC VOCA Victim Assistance Grant (VOCA)** to support eligible crime victim assistance programs in the territory. Eligible crime victim assistance programs are those that are “operated by a public agency or a nonprofit organization, and provide services to victims of crime, and that meet the other requirements set out in 42 U.S.C. § 10603(b) (1). Services generally include efforts that (1) respond to the emotional and physical needs of crime victims; (2) help primary and secondary victims of crime to stabilize their lives after a victimization; (3) help victims to understand and participate in the criminal justice system; and (4) provide victims of crime with a measure of safety and security. This grant is funded through the Victims of Crime Act of 1984, Public Law 98-473, 42 U.S.C. §§ 10603(a) and (b).

The Crime Victims Fund (the Fund) was established by the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) of 1984. The Fund is financed by fines and penalties paid by convicted federal offenders, not from tax dollars. The Fund balance includes deposits from federal criminal fines, forfeited bail bonds, penalties, and special assessments collected by U.S. Attorneys’ Offices, federal U.S. courts, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Federal revenues deposited into the Fund also come from gifts, donations, and bequests by private parties, as provided by an amendment to VOCA through the USA PATRIOT Act in 2001 that went into effect in 2002.

On July 22, 2021, President Biden signed the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021 (VOCA Fix). The VOCA Fix became effective immediately and the provisions of the Act—

- Required monetary penalties from federal deferred prosecution and non-prosecution agreements to go into the Crime Victims Fund.
- Provided the Attorney General with the authority to provide no-cost extensions to all VOCA award recipients.
- Allowed state VOCA Administrators to waive, or requires them to waive, subgrantee match requirements.
- Increased the federal grant calculation for funding to victim compensation programs to 75 percent of state-funded payouts.
- Instructed the OVC not to deduct restitution payments recovered by state victim compensation funds when calculating victim compensation awards.
- Clarified that state programs may waive the requirement to promote victim cooperation with law enforcement in order for victims to receive compensation.



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VOCA PROGRAM-SPECIFIC INFORMATION / SCOPE OF WORK

VOCA funds may be used to support eligible crime victim assistance programs that provide direct services to crime victims. For the purpose of the VOCA crime assistance grant program, a crime victim is a person who has suffered physical, sexual, financial, or emotional harm as a result of the commission of a crime. Such direct services may include:

- crisis counseling,
- follow-up therapy,
- group treatment/support,
- shelter/safe house,
- information/referral,
- personal advocacy,
- assistance filing for victim compensation,
- criminal/civil justice support/advocacy, not all inclusive.

VOCA PRIORITY AREAS

Priority shall be given to victims of sexual assault, domestic abuse, and child abuse and underserved populations. The underserved victims of either adult or juvenile offenders may include, but are not limited to, victims of federal crimes; survivors of homicide victims; or victims of assault, robbery, gang violence, hate and bias crimes, intoxicated drivers, bank robbery, economic exploitation and fraud, and elder abuse.

For the purposes of this program, a victim of federal crime is a victim of an offense that violates a federal criminal statute or regulation. Federal crimes also include crimes that occur in an area where the federal government has jurisdiction, such as Indian reservations, some national parks, some federal buildings, and military installations.

For the purposes of this program, elder abuse is defined as the mistreatment of older persons through physical, sexual, or psychological violence, neglect, or economic exploitation and fraud.

ALLOWABLE DIRECT SERVICES ACTIVITIES

The following is a listing of services, activities, and costs that are eligible for support with VOCA Victim Assistance grant funds within a subrecipient's organization:

- Immediate Health and Safety:*** Services which respond to the immediate emotional and physical needs (excluding medical care) of crime victims such as crisis intervention; accompaniment to hospitals for medical examinations; hotline counseling; emergency food, clothing, transportation, and shelter (including emergency, short-term nursing home shelter for elder abuse victims for whom no other safe, short-term residence is available); and other emergency services that are intended to restore the victim's sense of security. Also allowable is emergency legal assistance such as filing restraining orders and obtaining emergency custody/visitation rights when such actions are directly connected to family violence cases and are taken to ensure the health and safety of the victim.



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- b. ***Personal Advocacy and Emotional Support:*** Personal advocacy and emotional support, such as working with a victim to assess the impact of the crime; identification of victim's needs; case management; management of practical problems created by the victimization; identification of resources available to the victim; provision of information, referrals, advocacy, and follow-up contact for continued services, as needed; and traditional, cultural, and/or alternative therapy/healing (e.g., art therapy, yoga).
- c. ***Mental Health Assistance:*** services and activities that assist the primary and secondary victims of crime in understanding the dynamics of victimization and in stabilizing their lives after a victimization such as counseling, group treatment, and therapy. "Therapy" refers to intensive professional psychological/psychiatric treatment for individuals, couples, and family members related to counseling to provide emotional support in crises arising from the occurrence of crime. This includes the evaluation of mental health needs, as well as the actual delivery of psychotherapy.
- d. ***Peer-support:*** Peer-support such as activities that provide opportunities for victims to meet other victims, share experiences, and provide self-help, information, and emotional support.
- e. ***Assistance with Participation in Criminal Justice Proceedings:*** In addition to the cost of emergency legal services noted above in section a. "Immediate Health and Safety", there are other costs associated with helping victims participate in the criminal justice system that also are allowable. These services may include advocacy on behalf of crime victims; accompaniment to criminal justice offices and court; transportation to court; child care or respite care to enable a victim to attend court; notification of victims regarding trial dates, case disposition information, and parole consideration procedures; and assistance with victim impact statements. State grantees may also fund projects devoted to restitution advocacy on behalf of specific crime victims.
- f. ***Legal Assistance:*** Legal assistance services (including, but not limited to those provided on an emergency basis), where reasonable and where the need for such services arises as a direct result of the victimization. Such services such as those (other than criminal defense) that help victims assert their rights as victims in a criminal proceeding directly related to the victimization, or otherwise protect their safety, privacy, or other interests as victims in such a proceeding; motions to vacate or expunge a conviction, or similar actions, where the jurisdiction permits such a legal action based on a person's being a crime victim; and those actions (other than tort actions) that, in the civil context, are reasonably necessary as a direct result of the victimization;
- g. ***Forensic Medical Evidence Collection Examinations:*** For sexual assault victims, forensic exams are allowable costs only to the extent that other funding sources (such as state compensation or private insurance or public benefits) are unavailable or insufficient and, such exams conform with state evidentiary collection requirements. The use of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners is encouraged.
- h. ***Forensic Interviews: Forensic Interviews, with the following Parameters:*** Results of the interview will be used not only for law enforcement and prosecution purposes, but also for identification of needs such as social services, personal advocacy, case management, substance abuse treatment, and mental health services; interviews are conducted in the context of a multi-disciplinary investigation and diagnostic team, or in a specialized setting such as a child advocacy center; and the interviewer is trained to conduct



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forensic interviews appropriate to the developmental age and abilities of children, or the developmental, cognitive, and physical or communication disabilities presented by adults.

- i. **Transportation:** Transportation of victims to receive services and to participate in criminal justice proceedings.
- j. **Public Awareness:** Public awareness and education presentations (including, but not limited to, the development of presentation materials, brochures, newspaper notices, and public service announcements) in schools, community centers, and other public forums that are designed to inform crime victims of specific rights and services and provide them with (or refer them to) services and assistance.
- k. **Transitional Housing:** Subject to any restrictions on amount, length of time, and eligible crimes, set by the state VOCA administrator, transitional housing for victims (generally, those who have a particular need for such housing, and who cannot safely return to their previous housing, due to the circumstances of their victimization), including, but not limited to, travel, rental assistance, security deposits, utilities, and other costs incidental to the relocation to such housing, as well as voluntary support services such as childcare and counseling.
- l. **Relocation:** Subject to any restrictions on amount, length of time, and eligible crimes, set by the SAA, relocation of victims (generally, where necessary for the safety and well-being of a victim), including, but not limited to, reasonable moving expenses, security deposits on housing, rental expenses, and utility startup costs.

ALLOWABLE COSTS FOR ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING DIRECT SERVICES

The following is a listing of services, activities, and costs that are eligible for support with VOCA Victim Assistance grant funds: We are striking this phrase because the first one is not necessarily at the subgrant level.

- a. **Coordination of Activities:** Coordination activities that facilitate the provision of direct services, include, but are not limited to, State-wide coordination of victim notification systems, crisis response teams, multidisciplinary teams, coalitions to support and assist victims, and other such programs, and salaries and expenses of such coordinators;
- b. **Supervision of Direct Service Providers:** Payment of salaries and expenses of supervisory staff in a project, when the SAA determines that such staff are necessary and effectively facilitate the provision of direct services.
- c. **Multi-System, Interagency, Multidisciplinary Response to Crime Victim Needs:** Activities that support a coordinated and comprehensive response to crime victims needs by direct service providers, including, but not limited to, payment of salaries and expenses of direct service staff serving on child and adult abuse multidisciplinary investigation and treatment teams, coordination with federal agencies to provide services to victims of federal crimes and/or participation on Statewide or other task forces, work groups, and committees to develop protocols, interagency, and other working agreements.



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d. ***Contracts for Professional Services:*** Contracting for specialized professional services (e.g., psychological/psychiatric consultation, legal services, interpreters), at a rate not to exceed a reasonable market rate, that are not available within the organization.

e. ***Automated Systems and Technology:*** Subject to the provisions of the DOJ Grants Financial Guide and government-wide grant rules relating to acquisition, use and disposition of property purchased with federal funds, procuring automated systems and technology that support delivery of direct services to victims (e.g., automated information and referral systems, email systems that allow communications among victim service providers, automated case-tracking and management systems, smartphones, computer equipment, and victim notification systems), including, but not limited to, procurement of personnel, hardware, and other items, as determined by the SAA after considering whether such procurement will enhance direct services; how any acquisition will be integrated into and/or enhance the program's current system; the cost of installation; the cost of training staff to use the automated systems and technology; the ongoing operational costs, such as maintenance agreements, supplies; and how additional costs relating to any acquisition will be supported;

f. ***Volunteer Trainings:*** Activities in support of training volunteers on how to provide direct services when such services will be provided primarily by volunteers.

g. ***Restorative Justice:*** Activities in support of opportunities for crime victims to meet with perpetrators, including, but not limited to, tribal community-led meetings and peacekeeping activities, if such meetings are requested or voluntarily agreed to by the victim (who may, at any point, withdraw) and have reasonably anticipated beneficial or therapeutic value to crime victims. SAAs that plan to fund this type of service should closely review the criteria for conducting these meetings, and are encouraged to discuss proposals with OVC prior to awarding VOCA funds for this type of activity. At a minimum, the following should be considered:— (1) The safety and security of the victim; (2) The cost versus the benefit or therapeutic value to the victim; (3) The procedures for ensuring that participation of the victim and offenders are voluntary and that the nature of the meeting is clear; (4) The provision of appropriate support and accompaniment for the victim; (5) Appropriate debriefing opportunities for the victim after the meeting; and (6) The credentials of the facilitators.

VOCA funds cannot be used to pay for non-emergency legal representation such as for divorces, or civil restitution recovery efforts.

OTHER ALLOWABLE COSTS AND SERVICES

The services, activities, and costs listed below are not generally considered direct crime victim services, but are often a necessary and essential activity to ensure that quality direct services are provided. Before these costs can be supported with VOCA funds, the state grantee and subrecipient must agree that direct services to crime victims cannot be offered without support for these expenses; that the subrecipient has no other source of support for them; and that only limited amounts of VOCA funds will be used for these purposes. The following list provides examples of such items:



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ALLOWABLE SUB-RECIPIENT ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

- a. **Personnel Costs:** VOCA funds designated for personnel costs directly related to providing direct services and supporting activities, such as staff and coordinator salaries expenses (including fringe benefits), and a prorated share of liability insurance.
- b. **Skills Training for Staff:** VOCA funds designated for training are to be used exclusively for developing the skills of direct service providers including paid staff and volunteers, so that they are better able to offer quality services to crime victims. VOCA funds can be used for training both VOCA-funded and non-VOCA-funded service providers who work within a VOCA recipient organization, so that they are better able to offer quality direct services, including but not limited to, manuals, books videoconferencing electronic training resources, and other materials and resources relating to such training. **VOCA funds cannot be used for management and administrative training for executive directors, board members, and other individuals that do not provide direct services.**
- c. **Training Related Travel:** VOCA funds may be used for training related costs such as travel (in-State, regional, and national), meals, lodging, and registration fees for paid direct service staff (both VOCA-funded and not).
- d. **Organizational Expenses:** VOCA funds may be used for organizational related expenses that are necessary and essential to providing direct services and other allowable victim services, including, but not limited to, the prorated costs of rent; utilities; local travel expenses for service providers; and required minor building adaptations necessary to meet the Department of Justice standards implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or modifications that would improve the program's ability to provide services to victims
- e. **Equipment and Furniture:** VOCA funds may be used to purchase furniture and equipment that provide or enhance direct services to crime victims, as demonstrated by the VOCA subrecipient such as expenses of procuring furniture and equipment that facilitate the delivery of direct services (e.g., mobile communication devices, telephones, braille and TTY/TDD equipment, computers and printers, beepers, video cameras and recorders for documenting and reviewing interviews with children, two-way mirrors, colposcopes, digital cameras, and equipment and furniture for shelters, work spaces, victim waiting rooms, and children's play areas). VOCA funds cannot support the entire cost of an item that is not used exclusively for victim-related activities. However, VOCA funds can support a prorated share of such an item. Refer to the OJP Financial Guide, effective edition, before these types of decisions are made.
- f. **Operating Costs:** Examples of allowable operating costs include supplies; equipment use fees, property insurance, printing, photocopying and postage; courier service; brochures which describe available services; and books and other victim-related materials; computer backup files/tapes and storage; security systems; design and maintenance of Web sites and social media; and essential communication services, such as web hosts and mobile device services.
- g. **VOCA Administrative Time:** VOCA funds may be used to support the costs of administrative time spent performing duties such as completing VOCA-required time and attendance sheets and programmatic



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documentation, reports, and statistics; collecting and maintaining crime victims' records; conducting victim satisfaction surveys and needs assessments to improve victim services delivery in the project; and funding the prorated share of audit costs.

h. **Leasing or Purchasing Vehicles:** Subrecipients may use VOCA funds to purchase or lease vehicles if they can demonstrate to the state VOCA administrator that such an expenditure is essential to delivering services to crime victims. The VOCA administrator must give prior approval for all such purchases.

i. **Maintenance Repair and/or Replacement of Essential Items:** VOCA funds may be used for repair or replacement of items that contribute to maintaining a healthy and/or safe environment for crime victims, such as a furnace in a shelter. In the event that a vehicle is purchased with VOCA funds, related items, such as routine maintenance and repair costs, and automobile insurance are allowable.

j. **Project Evaluation:** VOCA funds may be used to support the costs of evaluations of specific projects (in order to determine their effectiveness), within the limits set by state VOCA administrator.

UNALLOWABLE SERVICES, ACTIVITIES

The following services, activities, and costs, although not exhaustive, cannot be supported with VOCA victim assistance grant funds at the subgrantee level:

Notwithstanding any other provision of this subpart, **no VOCA funds** may be used to fund or support the following:

- a. **Lobbying**—Lobbying or advocacy activities with respect to legislation or to administrative changes to regulations or administrative policy (cf. 18 U.S.C. 1913), whether conducted directly or indirectly;
- b. **Research and Studies**—Research and studies, except for project evaluation under §94.121(j);
- c. **Active Investigation and Prosecution of Criminal Activities**—The active investigation and prosecution of criminal activity, except for the provision of victim assistance services (e.g., emotional support, advocacy, and legal services) to crime victims, under §94.119, during such investigation and prosecution;
- d. **Fundraising**—Any activities related to fundraising, except for fee-based, or similar, program income authorized by the SAA under this subpart.
- e. **Capital Expenses**—Capital improvements; property losses and expenses; real estate purchases; mortgage payments; and construction (except as specifically allowed elsewhere in this subpart).
- f. **Compensation for Victims of Crime**—Reimbursement of crime victims for expenses incurred as a result of a crime, except as otherwise allowed by other provisions of this subpart;
- g. **Medical Care**—Medical care, except as otherwise allowed by other provisions of this subpart; and



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- h. ***Salaries and Expenses of Management***—Salaries, benefits, fees, furniture, equipment, and other expenses of executive directors, board members, and other administrators (except as specifically allowed elsewhere in this subpart).



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GRANT MONITORING

LEPC will monitor each subaward through the submittal of monthly or quarterly reports. LEPC will also conduct announced and unannounced on-site visits and monitoring visits to sub-grantees. For the announced monitoring visits, the sub-grantee may be required to present additional, pertinent information that will allow the LEPC to conduct a constructive, proficient and successful visit.

MANAGEMENT CONTROL OF THE PROGRAM

The sub-grantee has complete management responsibility for this award. While the LEPC staff may be consulted for their expertise, they will not be directly responsible for the selection of vendors, nor will they be directly involved in the expenditure and payment of funds.

The sub-grantee must provide services to crime victims, at no charge, through the VOCA-funded project.

Conference Planning and Expenditure Limitations

Applicants should be aware of all applicable laws, regulations, policies and guidance (including specific cost limits, prior approval and reporting requirements, where applicable) governing the use of federal funds for expenses related to conferences (which is defined to include meetings, retreats, seminars, symposiums, training and other similar events), including the provision of food and/or beverages at such events, and costs of attendance at such events. Information on pertinent laws, regulations, policies and guidance is available at <http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/grantees.html>.

Applicants should also be aware of the following specific restrictions on conference planning and expenditure limitations:

- Cost of Logistical Conference Planning
- Cost of Programmatic Conference Planning
- Conference Space and Audio-Visual Equipment and Services
- Prohibition on Trinkets at Conferences
- Entertainment at Conferences
- Food and Beverages at Conferences

Food and Beverage/Costs for Refreshments and Meals

Generally, food and beverage costs are **not** allowable, and under no circumstances may OVC funding be used to supply food and/or beverages during refreshment breaks.

CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE

Federal laws that apply to recipients of financial assistance from the Department of Justice prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or disability in funded programs or activities, not only in employment but also in the delivery of services or benefits. A federal law also prohibits recipients from discriminating on the basis of age in the delivery of services or benefits.



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STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

Organizations must ensure that all USDOJ's funded program staff has adequate time to execute their duties. LEPC will evaluate the management plan, including staffing, based on the fundamentals to implement the project and adhere to program requirements. **LEPC reserves the right to require changes based on this review.**

PROJECT DIRECTOR

The project director will be responsible for managing and implementing the program and budget described in the approved application to ensure that the entity meets its responsibilities to LEPC under the sub-grant agreement in a timely manner. This person will be responsible for the daily operation, coordination and delivery of services at their respective program sites. The project director will be responsible to ensure required progress and fiscal reports are completed and submitted timely to LEPC.

COLLECTING AND SUBMITTING PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Law Enforcement Planning Commission will collect and report on the performance measures as reported by sub-grantees funded through the **Victims of Crime Assistance Grant**. Performance measures information should be submitted within the required quarterly progress reports. The reports will maintain data on the number persons served, types of services, and type of victimization.

Performance Indicators and Assessment are due no later than the 10th day of the month at the end of each fiscal quarter. The report must measure and assess, on a quarterly basis, program activity conducted in relation to the project's goals and objectives. Copies of all publications, brochures, newsletters, public service announcements, training material, evaluations, etc. prepared and/or distributed in relation to grant activities shall be included with each Quarterly Progress Report.

The Quarterly Progress Report must also include anecdotal information about project activities and, as appropriate, concerns encountered in the implementation of the grant program.

All assets purchased with USDOJ grant funds must be reported to LEPC for tagging and tracking purposes; in accordance to CFR 200 Super Circular requirements.



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APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA

All applicants for federal financial assistances must maintain current **System for Award Management (SAM)** registration in the SAM database. **SAM** is the repository for standard information about federal financial assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. Applicants must **update or renew their SAM registration annually** to maintain an active status.

Non-profit organizations applying **must** submit a Certificate of Incorporation, IRS Determination Letter regarding 501(c)(3) status, Articles of Incorporation and a current certificate of Good Standing from the Lt. Governor's Office. Failure to submit all documents at scheduled deadlines will result in your application's disqualification for funding. Projects will be awarded based on the proposed services, delivery of service, specified target population, statistical data, coordination with other non-profit, local government and other federal agencies, as well as community support and cost effectiveness.

NOTE: All LEPC subawards are managed as reimbursable projects. Subgrantee will be expected to provide proof of expenses/activities for reimbursement. Approved projects are not provided any upfront monies.



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APPLICATION CHECKLIST BEFORE SUBMISSION

The grant application must include the following components to be considered; failure to submit could result in the rejection of the proposal:

- Signed Grant Application (*Unsigned Applications and Applications that do not include all required forms and sections are subject to rejection without further evaluation.*)
- Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws
- Tax Exemption Determination Letter – 501(c)(3)
- Certificate of Good Standing
- Active System for Award Management (UEI) Registration
- Signed statement from a Certified Public Accountant that the organization has a financial management system in place that meets standard accounting procedures.
- Balance Sheet and Income Statement
- Project Narrative
 - Section A. Organization/Agency Summary
 - Section B. Problem Statement
 - Section C. Program Description
 - Section D. Goals, Objectives, Activities, and Performance Measures
 - Section E. Implementation Schedule
 - Section F. Coordinated Services Statement, Volunteers, and Letters of Support
- Application Budget Worksheet
- Signed Assurances
- Signed Statement Regarding Lobbying, Debarment and Suspension with original signatures.
- Copies of all Job Descriptions and Resumes of perspective program staff
- Copies of any Professional Services Contracts
- Copies of Rental/Lease Agreements (if applicable)

Please note that all applicants must ensure, pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, that their proposed program site is accessible to persons with disabilities.

Make sure that all questions have been answered, all necessary documents are attached, and that all signatures have been provided.

Applicants are urged to contact the Law Enforcement Planning Commission via phone, email or visit the office located on the second floor, Nisky Center for further information and assistance in the preparation of grant applications. For more information contact:

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