**Request for Match Waiver**

*Background:*

VOCA regulations require grantees to contribute to the total cost of their VOCA-funded project by providing not less than 20% match, either cash or in-kind, from non-federal sources. VOCA regulations also allow for match waiver requests to be submitted to the federal Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) by the state on behalf of the grantee. OVC reviews these requests from grantees and makes a decision as to match waivers for individual projects.

*Requesting a Match Waiver:*

If your agency would like to request a match waiver, you should submit a letter, on your agency’s letterhead, to the Office for Victims Programs (OVP) at the Division of Criminal Justice after you receive notice of your award. The letter should outline the reasons why your agency will have trouble meeting the full match requirement and should indicate the amount of match you are able to provide. CJCC staff will review your waiver request to determine eligibility and if it should be forwarded to the federal OVC. CJCC will compile all of the eligible match waiver requests and send them to OVC at one time. In order to request a match waiver, you should submit your letter with your award package. If you have already submitted your award package, you should mail your request to CJCC by January 25, 2016 at the following address:

Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

Grants & Policy Division

104 Marietta Street, Suite 440

Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Your letter requesting a match waiver should include the following, minimum elements:

* A brief description of your agency and your VOCA-funded project
* A brief explanation of why the full match amount is a hardship for your agency
* A brief description of how not receiving a match waiver may result in fewer victims being served
* If using volunteers for match, describe why you are not able to retain the number of volunteers needed to meet the match requirement
* Indicate how much match you are able to provide and what amount you are requesting to be waived
* Any other important information you want to add

**Keep in mind we have been told that OVC is unlikely to approve match waivers for the full amount of match. We have also learned that OVC expects that you will continue to provide the same amount of match that you have in the past. It is important that you consider the amount of match you are able to contribute to the project. For an example of how to structure your letter, please see the attached sample match waiver letter. Do not copy this example; instead, use it as a guide for writing your own letter that is applicable to your agency’s circumstances.**

AGENCY LETTERHEAD

December 8, 2015

Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

Grants & Policy Division

104 Marietta Street, Suite 440

Atlanta, Georgia 30303

RE: VOCA Waiver Request for 2016/2017 One Time Award (from FFY 2015/FFY 2016 funds)

Subgrant #: C15-8-\_\_\_

This letter is written on behalf of The ABC Victims Program to request a hardship waiver of our VOCA match requirement in the amount of $5,000, which constitutes a partial match waiver request. The full amount of our match requirement is $37,500, which includes $12,500 that is required due to an increase to our VOCA subaward.

Without the positions funded by this subgrant, victims in ABC Judicial Circuit (a rural area) would not have access to needed services to assist them in healing and enable them to return to their previous state of well-being. The ABC Victims Program has been in existence for 15 years and provides crisis intervention and hospital accompaniment services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. We serve approximately 500 rural, non-English speaking victims per year.

The ABC Victims Program has used volunteers since its inception, however, in last 3 years we have faced several challenges in recruiting enough volunteers such as:

* Our volunteers are required to commit to 40 hours of training before they can start working with victims. In addition, volunteers are required to attend monthly training sessions. We currently have a core group of five volunteers that are committed to the program, but this is not enough to provide the full amount of match required on the grant.
* The ABC Judicial Circuit is a seasonal tourism hub with many transient residents during the winter months.
* The ABC Judicial Circuit is made up of two distinct populations; the rural community with a majority of low income, Spanish-speaking residents and the more affluent community. Many of our low-income residents do not have the ability to volunteer because of the costs involved, including gas, car insurance and car maintenance. In addition, many of these residents do not have childcare available.
* Our more affluent residents say they are interested in volunteering for our program, but are not willing or able to commit to the amount of time we need them to train and volunteer. In addition, because we respond to victims twenty-four hours per day, many families find this disruptive to their employment or lifestyle.
* The ABC Judicial Circuit does have a community college nearby whose students could do an internship with our program; however, these internships are generally 6 weeks long. Because they would be required to complete the certification training before they could officially start their internships, they would not have much time to do actually work with clients, which is what they want to do.

As a non-profit agency, the ABC victim program does not foresee an increase in other funding over the next year. Without a partial waiver to the match requirement, we will not be able to accept the full amount of the increase that has been allocated. Furthermore, without the ability to accept these funds, our program will not be able to fully fund an additional victim advocate position that is anticipated to serve an additional 100 victims per year.

The VOCA match requirement as it relates to the additional funding received this year will create a huge burden that will hinders our ability to provide critical victim services to all that need them in the ABC Judicial Circuit. We try very hard to meet the match requirement; however, we do not want to turn down additional VOCA funds that could be used to provide additional services to victims. We therefore respectfully request a partial waiver of the match requirements.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ima Sample
Executive Director