



# **FY2023 Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Competitive Release for Applications Frequently Asked Questions As of June 13, 2023**

## **General Application Questions**

Q: Would you prefer for an agency to submit one application for the agency or one for each program that we are requesting funding for?

A: Applicants that are umbrella organizations that have distinct programs that support different crime types should submit an application for each program (i.e. DV, SA, CA, HT, Previously Underserved, etc.). For example: If we are a dual center but also serve underserved populations, what should we choose under crime type? Should we submit a separate application for each crime type? A dual center should submit a minimum of two applications, one per primary crime type served. As a reminder, OVC has determined that victims who fall under the first three priority categories (sexual assault, domestic violence, and child abuse) will not be eligible for consideration under the category of "previously underserved." While you may serve underserved populations or communities, you should submit applications under your primary purpose.

Q: Are there word count limits or character limits in any section of the application?

A: The abstract is limited to 800 characters including spaces and punctuation. All other narrative questions do not have character or word limits. All proposals should be concise, clearly written and should fully convey the project for which funds are being requested. Major points must be supported by current local facts and data, and appropriate citations. Please respond to each question accordingly. CJCC did not place a limit on words or characters for responses to ensure applicants had the ability to respond accordingly.

Q: Most of the narrative questions state to "give a brief description." With this being a competitive application, what do you mean by brief?

A: All proposals should be concise, clearly written and should fully convey the project for which funds are being requested. Major points must be supported by current local facts and data, and

appropriate citations. Please respond to each question accordingly. CJCC did not place a limit on words or characters for responses to ensure applicants had the ability to respond accordingly.

Q: How many pages count as a large document that should be emailed?

A: While completing the online application via Formstack, please note that you may only upload up to 25 MB per form submission. Therefore, all your uploads must be equal to or less than 25 MB. The online application will require you to upload documents in the required upload fields, but in place of the large attachment(s) please create a dummy document in "Microsoft Word" that states "Emailed "attachment name" to victimassistance@cjcc.ga.gov". Upload this document and email the actual document to the victimassistance@cjcc.ga.gov email address and await a confirmation of email receipt.

Q: Should we email each document separately? Or should we email multiple attachments in one email either as a ZIP file, or by grouped among multiple emails (for example: "Email 1 of 3: MOUs and Letters of Support").

A: Please submit larger attachments in zip files per the instructions above. Ensure that the email message includes the organization name and the specific application that the attachments are being submitted to support.

Q: For brand new applicants, do you provide any assistance for formulating the grant application?

A: This is a competitive funding opportunity. CJCC may not provide assistance in developing grant applications for interested applicants. The organization may refer to [Grants 101 | Write the Proposal | Office of Justice Programs \(ojp.gov\)](#) for some grant writing tips and the CJCC [website](#) for additional grant program information.

Q: What assistance does the grant staff at CJCC provide to applicants to meet grant compliance?

A: CJCC staff provides technical assistance and will conduct grant workshops for selected awardees.

Q: "Please state the number of individuals you plan to serve with this project?" When answering this question should the applicant include victims and non-offending caregivers or specifically identify the number of direct victims?

A: Yes, please include secondary victims/non-offending caregivers, if supportive services are provided.

Q: Should program participants served include all participants served by the program, or a prorated rate reflecting the amount of VOCA funding versus the overall program budget?

A: Please include the total number of participants served by the program.

### **Federal Guidelines/Regulations**

Q: Are for profit agencies that provide mediation services eligible for these funds?

A: No, eligible organizations include a solvent non-profit organization as designated by the Internal Revenue Service or a public government entity, and provide services directly to crime victims.

Q: In the application, it states that 10% of VOCA funds must also be allocated to victims who are "Previously Underserved," but seems to define previously underserved by underserved crime types, rather than communities. Would an organization serving multiple crime types for an underserved community select this option also?

A: Yes, the underserved category is inclusive of underserved crime types and underserved populations. Please note OVC has determined that victims who fall under the first three priority categories (sexual assault, domestic violence, and child abuse) will not be eligible for consideration under the category of "previously underserved."

Q: What is considered victimization? Does the victimization have to occur immediately prior to a client's contact with the organization or can it be in the past?

A: No, it does not matter when or where the crime occurred to be eligible to receive VOCA funded services. As a reminder, the definition of a crime victim for VOCA funding – "Crime victim' or 'victim of crime' means a person who has suffered physical, sexual, financial, or emotional harm as a result of the commission of a crime".

Q: In lieu of recent challenges facing emergency service personnel is it possible for a long-standing agency to focus primarily on providing crisis intervention and counseling for first responders? Of course, citizen victims would also receive services.

A: No. For the purpose of the VOCA crime victim assistance grant program, a victim of crime is a person who has suffered physical, sexual, financial, or emotional harm as a result of the commission of a crime.

What happens if the majority of an organization's services are free of charge but some are charged for? Can you still apply for VOCA funds? Yes, but applicants must explain how this is not the same as charging clients for grant-funded services or for profit. Also, applicant should review the VOCA Guidelines and Federal Financial Guide to understand whether any charges would constitute program income. If program income is expected, estimate and identify any program income that the project may generate. CJCC will work with agencies to determine whether or not program income will be allowed for the project.

Q: Our organization does not have paid staff, but we would like to be able to pay our volunteer staff, case manager, counselling therapist, group therapist, shelter house attendant/security can we apply for a grant to pay these?

A: If the organization meets application eligibility criteria, the organization may submit a request to support direct service personnel, direct service contractors, and personnel to meet grant administration requirements. A request to pay volunteers would be unallowable.

Q: What does the acronym SAA stand for?

A: SAAs refers to State Administering Agencies. CJCC is the SAA for the VOCA grant program in Georgia.

Q: What staff within the organization needs to attend civil rights training and how often does the training need to be reviewed?

A: Subrecipients must view the OJP Civil Rights Non-Discrimination Training, accessible online at <https://www.ojp.gov/program/civil-rights/online-training>. Subrecipients acknowledge viewing the OJP Civil Rights Non-Discrimination training with submission of signed VOCA Award Documents. OJP Civil Rights Non-Discrimination Training (six training videos) can be viewed on the OJP website at <https://www.ojp.gov/program/civil-rights/online-training>. All staff within an organization should review civil right non-discrimination training annually.

Q: Are background checks every 3 years required for officers who have initial contact with victims?

A: Criminal background checks and suitability determinations to work with minors are required. The determination of suitability to interact with minors special condition, as released by Office of Justice Programs, does require a fingerprint search or, if not legally available, a name-based search. Full details, as outlines by OJP, can be found [HERE](#). As a reminder, VOCA funds support direct services to victims of crime and generally, funding cannot be used for the investigation of crimes or collection of evidence to further the prosecution of crimes.

### **Budget**

Q: Should we use the same budget detail worksheet as in the past VOCA applications?

A: Click [HERE](#) to access the budget detail worksheet form.

Q: Equipment, Travel, Printing, and Supplies are not on the priority list, but can an applicant include these items in a budget request?

A: The applicant may include requests with appropriate justification. While the equipment, travel, printing and supply budget categories are allowable expenses under the VOCA grant program, CJCC and reviewers will focus on identified priorities. **Please note, all awards are subject to the availability of funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by USDOJ or CJCC.**

Q: Do the fringe rates need to be itemized (FICA, retirement, health, etc.) or can we utilize an overall rate that encompasses all fringe benefits for the project employees?

A: Best practice is to itemize the fringe benefits for each employee. However, you may elect to state an overall rate for each employee provided that a detailed breakdown of the overall rate is given in the "Budget Narrative", to inform reviewers and CJCC of the type(s) of fringe benefits and the respective percentages that will be charged to the grant award.

Q: Can you please specify if vehicle purchases are allowed in this application?

While vehicles have been allowable expenses in the past, vehicles are not listed as an identified priority in this funding opportunity. The organization may apply with appropriate justification, but CJCC and reviewers will focus on identified priorities. **Please note, all awards are subject to the availability of funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by USDOJ or CJCC.**

### **Match & Award Limits**

Q: How does match work?

A: If I propose a project with a total cost of \$120,000 (VOCA + Match) would that require \$100,000 in VOCA and \$20,000 in match? No, a project with a total cost of \$120,000 would require \$96,000 in VOCA funds and \$24,000 in match. You can figure out the required match amount by multiplying the total cost of the project by .2. The federal VOCA Guidelines provide the following explanation: "Matching contributions of 20% (cash or in-kind) of the total cost of each VOCA project (VOCA grant plus match) are required for each VOCA-funded project and must be derived from nonfederal sources..."

Q: Do we still include match in budget for total project cost for FY2023, knowing that it will be waived in FY2023?

A: No, but the applicant should consider match requirements that will go into effect as of 10/1/2024, as the blanket match waiver required by the VOCA Fix Legislation will expire.

Ex: Provided that CJCC has the funding available, in year two your agency would receive a continuation award at the same amount you received in year one. The match would be added on to the grant which would increase your agency's total project cost, not the total federal award amount. For example, in year one your award was \$100,000, match \$0, for a total project cost of \$100,000. In year two your award would be \$100,000, match \$25,000, for a total project cost of \$125,000.

Q: Do unpaid undergraduate student interns count as volunteers if they receive course credit for their work?

A: Yes, if the intern is not paid, they can be counted as a volunteer.

Q: Is there a budget request limit/cap for interested organizations?

A: If the applicant has not been awarded VOCA funds in the past, the organization may apply for up to \$125,000. For applicants that have received VOCA funds in the past, there are no specified caps. Prior to application submission, please note the reduction of available funds and the priority areas identified. Please review the request to ensure justification and that project requests are reasonable, allowable and allocable. **Please note, all awards are subject to the availability of funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by USDOJ or CJCC.**

Q: Is a Family Justice Center that is currently funded going to be considered a new applicant since the current funding only supports site coordinator?

A: No, projects have been supported in the past by VOCA funding do not have identified caps. The \$125,000 cap only applies to organizations and projects that have never been supported by VOCA funding.

### **Indirect Cost**

Q: Can indirect costs be used as our match?

A: If you request indirect costs, they cannot also be considered match.

Q: Would an executive director salary be indirect or direct?

A: Per the VOCA regulations, salaries, benefits, fees, furniture, equipment, and other expenses of executive directors, board members, and other administrators are expressly unallowable and cannot be charged to the grant award. However, if the Executive Director is providing a direct service to victims of crime and/or providing direct supervision of direct service providers, their salaries, benefits may be charged directly to the grant award at a prorated amount provided your agency keeps adequate support documentation on the Executive Director's time and activities performed. Indirect costs are costs of an organization that are not readily assignable to a particular project but are necessary to the operation of the organization and the performance of the project. Examples of costs usually treated as indirect include those incurred for facility operation and maintenance, depreciation, and administrative salaries. For more information on indirect costs see the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide, Section 3.11](#).

Q: Would you prioritize indirect cost rate over personnel?

A: No. While indirect costs are allowable, the priority are direct costs; such as personnel.

### **Funding Prioritization Form**

Q: Where is the funding prioritization form located?

A: Click [HERE](#) for the funding request prioritization form.

Q: Should the applicant rank each line item within those particular categories, or rank the whole sheet?

A: The ranking should be provided for each line item requested in the submitted application budget.

Q: If an organization has many direct care staff, can they list that position on the Funding Priority Worksheet rather than list every staff member by name as it is listed on the Detailed Budget Worksheet?

A: The applicant should provide priority rankings for each position requested. The applicant may rank by position title versus specific named staff, but please ensure the titles are included on the budget detail worksheet. Due to the reduced level of available VOCA funding, CJCC likely will not be able to meet all applicants' full requests. As a result, CJCC is asking organizations to rank their

requests in order to make clear recommendations for awards to the Victim Assistance Grants Committee and Full Council.

Q:

### **Risk Assessment**

Q: If an organization is submitting more than one application, do we need to complete a Risk Assessment for each application, or do we need to complete only one total risk assessment, regardless of the number of applications submitted?

A: An organization will complete one risk assessment per umbrella organization with multiple programs.

Q: Can we complete the risk assessment BEFORE we complete the VOCA funding application?

A: Yes, both the risk assessment and VOCA application are due on July 17, 2023 at 5PM ET.

### **Attachments**

Q: Our MOU was signed by all parties in March 2022. Does this meet CJCC's definition of a current MOU?

A: CJCC considers an MOU to be current if it is revisited and resigned annually.

Q: Should uploaded MOUs be specific to victim services, not other forms of interagency collaboration?

A: Yes, as the application is specific to victim services, the MOUs uploaded as attachments should support the narrative responses regarding intentional and meaningful collaboration and coordination.

Q: What is CJCC looking for in Letters of Support and how many are expected to be uploaded?

A: Letters of Support provided by partners and community members should support the proposed project that the organization is requesting funds to support. Letters of support are not a required attachment. There is no preference on how many letters of support organization may upload.

Q: If victim services program is part of larger organization, is strategic plan for entire organization or only victim services program?

A: The applicant may select either option, but reviewers will focus on the victim services program plan.

Q: Does an applicant need to submit a letter stating there are no conflicts of interest? Or does an applicant only submit a letter if there are conflicts of interest to disclose?

A: The applicant should only upload a disclosure letter if there is a conflict in appearance or in fact.

Q: Can CJCC provide an example of the Sustainability and Fund Diversification Plan? What should the plan look like and include?

A: Click [HERE](#) for resources regarding Sustainability Plans.

Q: Can CJCC provide an example of a logic model?

A: Click [HERE](#) for an example of a logic model.

Q: Can the project timeline be in chart form and/or less than 12 pt. font and/or single spaced?

A: There is no set formatting for the timeline and/or other resources that will be uploaded as supporting attachments. The attachments should support the narrative responses.

Q: Is Citation Listing only requested for evidence-based programs?

A: If a program is proposing any new, innovative, or evidence-based programing, CJCC is requesting a citation listing that supports the program design or proposed project. This is also an identified priority area.

Q: Do you have a preference on a Project Timeline, Logic Model, or Other Resource?

A: No. The attachment should support the proposed project, but the applicant may select what resource best supports the proposal. CJCC does not have a preference. A logic model example has been posted on the current funding opportunities webpage. [Current Grant Opportunities | Criminal Justice Coordinating Council \(georgia.gov\)](#)