



**New York State Office of Victim Services (OVS)
2025 Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Victim Assistance Grant Program
Request for Applications (RFA) Response to Questions**

The responses to questions included herein are the official responses by the State to questions submitted by potential applicants and are hereby incorporated in the 2025 OVS VOCA Victim Assistance Grant Program RFA issued on January 6, 2025. Potential applicants are encouraged to read all responses contained in this document. In the event of any conflict between the RFA and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail. Please note that the questions below are entered as they were received by OVS.

1. When will this recording and presentation be made available/published on the OVS website?

The recorded video and PowerPoint slides from the Optional Bidders' Conference are available on the OVS website at: <https://ovs.ny.gov/2025-voca-rfa>

2. Sorry to be late! Is it best to what the recording later?

Please see the response to Question #1.

3. At the Webinar/Optional Bidders Conference held on 27th January 2025, I believe a commitment was given by the Office of Victims Services (OVS) that a copy of the PowerPoint presentation used in the Conference would be shared with participants. Please advise as to when this information will be made available.

Please see the response to Question #1.

4. What types of nonprofits are eligible for this funding opportunity?

All pre-qualified not-for-profits that are located in New York State and provide direct services to victims of crime are eligible to apply for funding under this RFA.

5. Pages 10-11, Section A Would anti-violence agencies that respond in-person to victims/survivors within various systems (police precincts, hospitals/emergency departments, courts, college campuses, etc.) be categorized under, "other"? If so, is there an opportunity for the agency to further describe their classification to reflect the comprehensive structure?

Yes, these types of programs may be eligible. Additional detail about your proposed services and organizational structure should be included in the Narrative Submission Form.



6. How does the RFA process work differently for NYS Agencies?

Executive level New York State agencies are not eligible to apply under this RFA.

7. Is the RFA process any different for State Agencies and if so, how? Is there a point person for State Agencies?

Please see the response to Question #6.

8. We just noticed on the new RFA that under Ineligible Activities and Entities it states that NY State govt agencies are not eligible for funding. We operate out of Erie County Medical Center which is a safety net hospital/ public benefit company which sometimes falls under a govt. agency like Jacobi in the Bronx and assume U Albany maybe?

Yes, municipal entities can apply for funding under this RFA. The term "NYS governmental agency" for ineligible entities only applies to NYS Executive-level Agencies (e.g. NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services).

9. I'm wondering if you can clarify eligibility for me. P. 11 under 'Other' it states, "...local public child and adult protective services..." are eligible. Further down under 'Ineligible Activities and Entities' it states NYS governmental agencies are not eligible to apply. My CAC is operated under the umbrella of Department of Social Services/Child Protective Services, which is considered a NYS governmental agency. Would this make us eligible to apply or not? "

Yes, you would be eligible to apply. Please see the response to Question #8.

10. We just noticed on the new RFA that under Ineligible Activities and Entities it states that NY State govt agencies are not eligible for funding. We operate out of Erie County Medical Center which is a safety net hospital/ public benefit company. This seems new this year and we have been eligible in past as have other safety net hospitals/ public benefit (NY Health + Hospitals). Please advise on our eligibility to apply. Thank you.

Yes, you would be eligible to apply. Please see the response to Question #8.

11. To clarify a public benefit organization/ hospital is allowable as long it is not an "executive" level agency?

Please see the response to Question #8.

12. If you already have an OVS contract are you considered pre qualified.

No, you must prequalify annually in SFS.



13. Is prequalified an annual event? If we have previously prequalified do we have to do this again?

Yes, prequalification must be maintained annually in the SFS system.

14. How can we check our pre-qualification status? I believe our pre-qualification is active but I want to confirm.

For assistance with prequalification, please reach out to the SFS Helpdesk at 518-457-7717 or helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov.

15. Do government agencies need to pre-qualify in the SFS?

No, only Not-for-Profits need to prequalify.

16. Do municipal County entities/gov't have to seek preapproval like the non for profits?

Please see the response to Question #15.

17. Do municipalities need to be prequalified ?

Please see the response to Question #15.

18. Do the District Attorney's Office need to prequalify?

Please see the response to Question #15.

19. If my prequalification terms after the current submission date, am I still required to prequalify for a new year. i guess is my prequalification a 360 day to month or does it term at the end of a fiscal year?

Yes, prequalification must be maintained annually in the SFS system (after a full calendar year from the last prequalification). Prequalification is required prior to grant application and execution of contracts.

20. Do Counties need to receive prequalification to apply for this RFA?

Please see the response to Question #15.



21. Are government agencies considered a “not for profit” organization for the purposes of prequalification?

No, government agencies are not considered a not-for-profit organization. Government agencies do not need to prequalify in SFS.

22. Does a county probation department need pre-certification?

Please see the response to Question #15.

23. Can you please guide me on the required paperwork for reapplication for the years 2025 to 2028. Is the VOCA application completed fully again or is there a re-application process required instead of the application sent out for this year by VOCA? Thank you.

Every applicant (whether new or existing grantees) must complete the full application to receive funding for the three-year period beginning 10/01/2025 and ending 9/30/2028.

24. Is there a limit on the number of applications a single organization is allowed to submit?

There is no limit on the number of applications a single organization may submit. Submitting multiple applications will result in separate administrative tasks that are associated with contracting with the State of New York (such as separate payment vouchers). For this reason, OVS encourages, but does not require, applicants to consider submitting one application per organization.

25. If an applicant is applying for the same program type in multiple counties, should they submit separate applications for each county?

Applicants do not need to submit separate applications for services provided in different geographic areas. Please also see the response to Question #24.

26. Can an organization currently providing VOCA-funded services apply to continue those services?

Yes. Please see the response to Question #23.

27. If anything is missing from an application, will we receive a notice (providing it's submitted early) or is it immediately dismissed?

The SFS system will not allow you to submit your application without all required uploads and responses. Applicants may be requested to provide clarification based on the State's evaluation procedure. Any clarification will be considered a formal part of the Applicant's original application. If further clarification is needed during the evaluation period, OVS will contact the Applicant.



28. How much weight is given to the fact that an agency was a past recipient?

OVS will not consider prior funding or performance data as part of the evaluation process under this RFA.

29. For a HVIP - are separate applications required for funding requests - for example 10% of funding is directed towards gun violence - 10% of the funding is directed towards domestic violence.

Applicants do not need to submit separate applications for services provided in different categories. Please also see the response to question #24.

30. Can agencies submit more than one application?

Please see the response to question #24.

31. Can current VOCA grantees apply to continue the same services?

Yes. Please see the response to Question #23.

32. Can a single agency submit multiple responses to the RFA?

Please see the response to question #24.

33. Can organizations submit multiple applications if they have more than one eligible program?

Please see the response to question #24.

34. If an agency runs more than one Child Advocacy Center would that be one RFA application or more than one?

Applicants do not need to submit separate applications for services provided in different geographic areas. Please also see the response to question #24.

35. Can charts be included?

The Narrative form does not allow for charts. Additional documents beyond the required forms will not be accepted.



36. How much flexibility will we have to change our program activities and budget in Years 2 and 3, given that we are only submitting documents for year 1?

For successful applicants, the contract budget will be renewed annually. While changes between budget categories may be allowable as long as they are within the proposed project scope and OVS guidelines, the overall awarded grant budget will be flat for each contract year.

37. Can applicants upload additional material if an answer does not fit in the allotted space in SFS?

No. Additional documents beyond the required forms will not be accepted.

38. May multiple departments within the same county apply for the grant. Example May the County Office for Women and the County Department of Probation apply separately or must they apply together as the victim programming would be different.

Applicants do not need to submit separate applications for different service areas or departments. Please also see the response to question #24.

39. Can we submit more than one proposal for the same organization?

Please see the response to question #24.

40. Can one agency submit multiple applications under this RFA?

Please see the response to question #24.

41. On page 22 of the RFA: The first bullet under 1. Problem Statement asks for evidence-based data - do we need to footnote or provide citations (for example, page numbers)?

No, applicants are not required to include specific citations.

42. On page 22 of the RFA the first bullet under 1. Problem Statement has a 2,500-character limit on the narrative template to address 4 main components: gaps in service, evidence-based data, examples of current problems, and need for services. In the previous RFA, the Problem Statement question was allotted 5,000 characters. With the 2,500 character limit, which of these 4 main components should we prioritize?

The Problem Statement section in the Narrative Submission Form is broken into multiple questions: the first has a 2,500 character limit; the second has a 1,500 character limit; and the third has a 2,500 character limit. This is a combined total of 6,500 for the Problem Statement section. Applicants should thoroughly address each of the questions in the allotted space.



43. I'm writing with a question on the VOCA RFA. Can a current VOCA grantee apply to continue the same services funded by the current grant? If so, would an application for continued services be scored lower than an application for new or enhanced services?

Please see the responses to Question #23, Question #26, and Question #28.

44. Can you clarify whether the "Your Unit Bid Price" under the Lines section of the SFS application should be for 1 year of funding or for the full 3-year grant cycle?

The budget entered in SFS should be for 1 year of funding.

45. We were planning to apply respond to the 2025 RFA and I have access to SFS. However, I do not see where within SFS we can search for the opportunity and apply. Is there a tutorial you can refer us to?

You can search for grant opportunities on the SFS Public Portal Homepage. Please see the recorded video and PowerPoint slides from the Optional Bidders' Conference, which are available on the OVS website at: <https://ovs.ny.gov/2025-voca-rfa>.

If you need additional assistance, please reach out to the SFS Help Desk at 518-457-7717 or helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov.

46. Will there be character limits for responses in SFS and will spaces be included in character count?

The direct questions in SFS have a 2,000 character limit; however, these should require very brief informational answers.

The longer narrative questions will be answered in the Narrative Submission Form. Specific character and page limits are listed for each question. Spaces are included in these character limits.

47. Will any training or guidance be provided on submitting through SFS?

The SFS Grantee User Manual can be referenced for submitting a Bid Response. Please also see the recorded video and PowerPoint slides from the Optional Bidders' Conference, which are available on the OVS website at: <https://ovs.ny.gov/2025-voca-rfa>.

If you need additional assistance, please reach out to the SFS Help Desk at 518-457-7717 or helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov.

48. Who do we put for the Bidder contact Information (does it need to be CEO)?

It does not need to be the CEO. Your Agency must choose the appropriate contact for this application.



49. Can the Bid Response Initiator be the same person as the Bid Response Submitter?

Yes.

50. When filling out the SFS questions and textboxes, is it a situation where when you answer a question (such as a Yes - No question), then other sub-questions will pop-up based on how you answered that first question? i.e., is there branching that we should prepare for?

There is no branching of questions in this SFS bid event.

51. This will be our first application in SFS. Once we search for OVS01 by Funding Agency and click on the Event ID, do we click "Accept Invitation" or "Bid on Event" to begin the application in SFS?

You would select "Bid on Event" to begin the application. Please also see the response to Question #47.

52. Can you save and edit later in SFS before submission?

Yes, you will be able to save and edit in SFS before submission.

53. After the webinar I signed onto the SFS and searched for the RFA per the instructions. However all that can up was the grant information for the contract I have now. When will we be able to access the RFA on the SFS?

The RFA is currently available in SFS. Please see the response to Question #45.

54. If one staff person from our team establishes a bid ID # on SFS to enter bid information, will other staff be able to enter information in the same bid response? To put it another way: Can multiple SFS users enter information on a single Bid ID#? Or must only 1 staff person enter all the bid information?

Yes, as long as the users have the correct Vendor roles assigned in SFS, they can work on the same (or any) bid events. They shouldn't try to work in and save the same page at the same time.

55. I have not submitted applications in SFS. How is this done? What are the steps/processes?

Please see the response to Question #47.



56. Can you share screenshots demonstrating how to enter values into the Period Budget Summary chart in SFS? I'm able to see the budget template but am not able to fill it out, as it seems the cells are not editable.

Please see the response to Question #47.

57. The submission component C on the submission checklist indicates that the following are to be completed on SFS as part of bid application:

- **Project Budget**
- **Budget Narrative**

We see the question for budget narrative question listed in the Narrative Form, however, could you please provide instructions on how to access Project Budget within the application on SFS?

Please see the response to Question #47.

58. In SFS, will applicants be required to complete the "Work Plan"?

OVS has opted to not utilize a Work Plan in SFS for this RFA.

59. On page 16 of the RFA, under Submission Component C: Budget, it states that "the budget submission outlines the proposed project expenditures. Should the budget include projected expenditures for all three years of the project, or should it focus solely on the first year? If it is limited to the first year, how should we account for potential personnel cost increases, such as cost-of-living adjustments and grade/step increases, in future years?"

The budget submitted as part of the RFA application should be for the services and budget proposed for Year 1. Documents for Year 2 and Year 3 of an awarded grant will be submitted through the annual contract negotiation process at a later date. Awarded applicants will need to manage increases in personnel and fringe costs within their approved annual allocation.

60. This is what I understand is needed for the budget in addition to the 3 attachments: In the Lines: Period Details – 1 section, enter annual requested amount and click on the comment box, attach budget and budget narrative and add narrative to comments section. If that is correct, what budget and budget narrative forms should I use.

The proposed budget should be entered directly into SFS (Budget Properties section). Narrative can be added for each budget category in SFS and there is additional space for budget narrative summary in the Narrative Submission Form. This form is found on the OVS Website <https://ovs.ny.gov/2025-voca-rfa>.



61. If a staff member is budgeted less than 100% FTE and surpasses their budgeted FTE, would we be able to put in a modification to request that change in allocation and bill for that funding?

Budget modifications may be allowable as long as they are within the proposed project scope and OVS guidelines. The overall awarded grant budget will be flat for each contract year.

62. Our employee union is currently negotiating 2025 - 2029 CSEA salaries and there may not be a contract in place before the grant cycle begins - Can salaries from year 1 be paid retroactively, either in year 2 or as a supplemental voucher for year 1 if a contract is not approved until the year 2 cycle? The RFA states that there could be different Federal awards for each contract year which would lead me to believe that the only way to collect reimbursement for the retroactive pay will be to submit a supplemental voucher.

Retroactive salary increases as the result of collective bargaining agreements could be paid through a supplemental voucher in certain circumstances; however, awarded applicants will need to manage increases in personnel and fringe costs within their approved annual budgets.

63. Are all 3 year budgets being put in SFS and not on a budget worksheet?

Please see the responses to Question #59 and Question #60. The only additional required budget worksheet is the Fringe & Prorating Form.

64. Kathleen indicated the budget is for year 1, not the entire 3 year request. correct? .

Yes. Please see the response to Question #59.

65. If a staff member is a part time employee, how does the allocated time get expressed on the budget detail? For example, if they will only work on this grant, do we use 100%?

For part time employees you will indicate the number of hours they work and the percent of effort that is OVS funded on the budget and on the position description form.

66. I understand that we have to enter 1 year budget in SFS but do we also have to submit a 3 year budget, as has been required in previous RFAs?

Please see the response to Question #59.

67. When budgeting for the first year, how do we account for increase in personnel and fringe costs for the following 2 years?

Please see the response to Question #59.



68. Would COLA adjustment be available for year 2 and 3?

Please see the response to Question #59.

69. Do we need an excel budget to attach in the budget section of SFS or just the line items?

Please see the responses to Question #59, Question #60, and Question #63.

70. If you have foreseeable increasing costs over the three years, do you want the one year budget to reflect an average of those costs?

Please see the response to Question #59.

71. How do we demonstrate increases needed over the course of the 3 years if only 1 budget is being completed?

Please see the response to Question #59.

72. We will submit the one year documents but will we need to submit additional pages for year 2 and 3 to OVS or as an attachment?

Please see the response to Question #59.

73. SO it is assumed that employees do not receive any raise or increases during the 3 year period? As each of the three years will be awarded for the same amount.

Please see the response to Question #59.

74. Do you know what budget document we are using to show the breakdown of staff salaries, expenses, etc.? I only see the document that has the fringe and prorating.

Please see the responses to Question #59, Question #60, and Question #63.

75. Should our budget narrative include all three years, or should it just reflect the first year?

Please see the response to Question #59.

76. Is there a standalone budget sheet in which we should enter our budget figures? In the previous RFA submission, we entered our figures into the B-1 Expenditure Based Budget form.

Please see the responses to Question #59, Question #60, and Question #63.



77. How is the actual proposed project budget submitted – is there a worksheet or form that should be used? The Budget Worksheet Form (described on page 18 of the RFA) (section 3.f. Submission Component D: Required Forms), seems to include only fringe and prorating costs.

Please see the responses to Question #59, Question #60, and Question #63.

78. We should submit a one year budget that includes matching funds, correct?

Yes, the budget should include matching funds. Please also see the response to Question #59.

79. What are the budget modification requirements and thresholds? (For instance, would a modification be required for a 5% or 10% change in the overall budget? Would a modification need to be submitted to shift funds to a budget category that was not previously in an approved budget?)

Please see the response to Question #61. In addition, please note that OSC approval is required for any change that is at least 10% of the total three-year budget.

80. To confirm, applicants should only provide a budget for the first year of the proposed grant period as stated on page 16 of the RFA, and budgets for years two and three are not needed. Is that correct?

Please see the response to Question #59.

81. Is there a required fringe rate for personnel costs? Is there a maximum fringe rate for personnel costs?

There is no required or maximum fringe rate. Applicants should review and complete the Fringe tab in the Budget Worksheets (Fringe & Prorating Form) to document their rate.

82. In the project budget, should we include any domestic violence service program expenses that we are not requesting VOCA grant funds for but are also not being used as matching funds for our VOCA RFA submission in the “Other Funds” category?

Expenses that are not being requested under this funding opportunity and are not being used as match should not be reflected in your SFS budget entry. However, non-OVS funds that support domestic violence services should be reflected as "Other Funds" in the Annual Funding Form.



83. Does OVS require us to justify rent costs by square foot and/or per staff person? If so, what is the requirement?

OVS does not require justification related to specific rental costs; however, operational costs should be reasonable. Please utilize Tab E (the Sq Foot Method) in the Budget Worksheets (Fringe & Prorating Form) to prorate any shared space.

84. Can you please share the financial reporting requirements including:

o How often are invoices due and what is the backup required for submission? o Are there narrative components to financial reporting? O Do awardees need to complete an FFR and if so, how often are those due?

All OVS reporting is quarterly. The level of required backup documentation depends on the organization's Management Assessment Plan (MAP) fiscal tier. There are no narrative requirements as part of the financial reporting. Grantees are not required to submit Federal Financial Reports (FFR) - they are submitted centrally by OVS. Grantees are only required to submit quarterly Fiscal Cost Reports (FCRs) to their OVS Contract Manager.

85. Something that our team desperately needs is a full-time individual who focuses on data quality and completeness in our victim database, as well as the ongoing training of staff on how to input all client data. This person would track progress toward OVS goals and objectives and intervene whenever service numbers are low. They would also have the main role in completing OVS PMTs. My question is, would a position like this be considered VOCA-Required Reporting (VRR) and, as such, only be eligible for 20% of their time (per page 31 of the RFP)? Or would this position be eligible for more than 20% on the admin line because they do more than the VOCA-Required Reporting? For example, my understanding is that we could request this individual's full salary as: 20% VRR duties + 80% VOCA Administrative Time of ""maintaining victims of crime's records"", as well as ""programmatically documentation, reports, and statistics""?

Yes, such a position could be funded using VOCA funds. Please note there is a 20% administrative cap on personnel costs directly charged to the grant, which refers to the percentage of an FTE that may be supported by OVS funds for VOCA Required Reporting. The cumulative 20% of an FTE may be split amongst more than one position. Please refer to the Descriptions tab of the Position Description Form for more detail. If this was a 100%-funded position, the balance of time could be assigned to Other VOCA-allowable activities (such as maintaining victim records). OVS would require additional detail regarding the nature of these activities to review the specific percentages as part of the annual contract negotiation process.



86. Just following up on the budget amount question - so we should build our budget based on our internal structure, but is there a threshold that we cannot surpass?

There is no minimum or maximum budget. The budget must be reasonable, appropriate for the number of positions to be funded, and in compliance with funding restrictions and limitations noted in the RFA. Prior funding levels will not be considered as part of the evaluation under this RFA.

87. Do you anticipate that we will not be awarded what we request, as has happened in the past? As you know the well established VINE and OP programs require a minimum dollar amount for keeping the important system in place. Should we estimate high, assuming we will have it reduced? Last time we requested \$650K, and got \$468K. Let me know your thoughts?

OVS cannot speculate as to what programs will be awarded. All submitted applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in the RFA; funding determinations will be based on final application scores.

Please also see the response to Question #86.

88. The solicitation does not specify the amount of awards. How should we determine how much funding to request? Is it likely we can increase our current award to provide additional needed services?

Please see the response to Question #86.

89. Is it possible to request an increase of the budget based on the increased need and growth of individuals served?

Please see the response to Question #86. Prior funding levels will not be considered as part of the evaluation under this RFA. Please also note that the overall awarded grant budget will be flat for each contract year.

90. Is there guidance for the budget dollars requested that can be provided? For example, should prior grantees not expect more than a 2-3% COLA over current funding?

Please see the response to Question #86 and Question #89.

91. Will the grant award be the same dollar amount for each of the three years of funding?

Successful applicants will receive awards that are funded at a consistent level for each year of the award period and will not include escalations to the annual award total.



92. RFA p. 25, 7.a Will awarded grantees be allowed to carry over unspent funds? Is it possible to overspend in one year and underspend in another year?

No, unspent funds cannot be carried over to later budget periods. Successful applicants will receive an annual grant total for each year and will not be able to exceed that amount.

93. While the RFA states a total amount of funding to be distributed, can you clarify the maximum or typical amount each grantee can receive?

Please see the response to Question #86.

94. Is the NYS allocation to OVS guaranteed? Or does it need to be approved every year? Just wondering if we need to continue to advocate for its approval every year or if it is already set, at least for this RFA.

New York State funding is subject to an annual appropriation process in the State Budget. However, Governor Hochul has committed to three years of State funding to keep overall funding consistent with the amount available during the most recent funding period.

95. It is our understanding that funding will remain flat for years 2 and 3 of the award. Will we be able to adjust our goals for those years to account for increases in costs related to COLA adjustments or other changes in compensation for staff on the program?

Anticipated services can be adjusted based on justification provided by the program and subject to OVS approval.

96. What is the maximum individual grant allotted to each vendor.

Please see the response to Question #86.

97. Is there a minimum/maximum monetary request?

Please see the response to Question #86.

98. Will the award amount be the same for each of the three years of the award?

Please see the response to Question #91.

99. What is the max award allowable per program?

Please see the response to Question #86.



100. Is the main objective for the VOCA grant based on the total of compensation claims? Also, is there a database given to grantees for recording work done?

Applicants must demonstrate a willingness to assist victims of crime in the completion and submission of compensation applications.

Each grantee is responsible for their own database or records management system.

101. Last funding round saw awardees lose funding as more programs were funded. is there any hope to restore prior funding levels this time?

Please see the response to Question #89.

102. What is the maximum grant request amount?

Please see the response to Question #86.

103. How many agencies does OVS expect to fund under the RFA, specifically for underserved populations?

OVS cannot speculate as to how many agencies will be funded under this RFA. All submitted applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in the RFA. Funding determinations will be based on final application scores.

104. How much funding is expected to be allocated to the component of the underserved populations?

VOCA guidelines require that New York State allocates at least 10 percent of each Federal VOCA Victim Assistance grant award to each of the four priority categories, including underserved populations. These percentages apply to total VOCA funding, not individual grants to service providers.

105. Is there a predetermined formula/criteria that determines how much each vendor receives per year?

All RFA applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in the RFA and funding will be distributed accordingly.

106. Hello! Overall, are there more funds set aside for the current RFA compared to the previous RFA and should we expect an increase in awards per agency?

There is \$126.5m per year available for grant awards under this RFA. Please also see the response to Question #89.



107. Do you know how many awards you will be making?

Please see the response to Question #103.

108. Is there a maximum award amount per organization?

Please see the response to Question #86.

109. Is there an award ceiling or floor?

Please see the response to Question #86.

110. How many awards will be issued statewide? How many awards will be issued for New York City? Within New York City, how many awards will be issued for the Bronx?

Please see the response to Question #103.

111. What system would an awardee be using to draw down this funding?

Successful applicants will be required to submit quarterly Fiscal Cost Reports (FCRs) to request reimbursement in the Statewide Financial System (SFS).

112. Is there a set percentage cap on administrative costs?

Please refer to Appendix B of the RFA for allowable administrative costs. Programs may use a 15% De minimis rate for indirect costs if they do not have a Federally negotiated indirect cost rate.

Please note there is a 20% administrative cap on personnel costs directly charged to the grant, which refers to the percentage of an FTE that may be supported by OVS funds for VOCA Required Reporting. The cumulative 20% of an FTE may be split amongst more than one position. Please refer to the Descriptions tab of the Position Description Form for more detail.

113. Is there a limit to administrative staff being included on the budget?

Please see the response to Question #112.

114. Can you please clarify what is or is not included in eligible administrative costs? Is there a set % cap based on the total project budget?

Please see the response to Question #112.



115. In Appendix B - Allowable Sub-Recipient Administrative Costs (page 31), it states that VOCA-Required Reporting (VRR) is “capped at 20% of any one FTE”. On the Definitions page of the Position Description Form, under VOCA Required Reporting, it states, “Note: Allocation capped at 20%”. Does this mean that all personnel time spent on OVS fiscal duties and program reporting is capped at 20% FTE across all positions included on the Position Description form, OR does it mean VOCA Required Reporting is capped at 20% FTE per position? "

Please see the response to Question #112.

116. We appreciate the importance of minimizing administrative costs as a New York State Office of Victim Services subgrantee. We also recognize that the 2025 RFA (p31) caps at 20% of any one FTE the time that may be devoted to OVS fiscal duties (e.g. budget negotiation including amendments and completing Fiscal Cost Reports) and programmatic reports (PMT). We wanted to confirm, though, that there is not a specific cap of other allowable administrative time in this RFA. Is that accurate?

Please see the response to Question #112.

117. Is there a set cap on the percentage of grant funds that can go toward administrative costs- and if so, what is it?

Please see the response to Question #112.

118. Is there a percentage of the budget that must be dedicated to direct services as opposed to admin/oversite/management? There is no percentage that must be dedicated to direct services.

Please also see the response to Question #112.

119. Regarding the 25% upfront each year, do we need to have our contract approved each year before the funds become available? Usually the contract takes months to get approved before we can get funds

Advances may be requested at the start of each contract year once the contract has been executed.

120. Can we request 25% advance funds at award start date or only when the contract has been executed? (2025 OVS RFA Page 24; Section 6f)

Please see the response to Question #119.



121. On page 22 of the RFA as referenced in the fourth bullet under 2. Organizational Capacity, what is considered “public” and “private”? Is a non-profit considered “public” and for-profit entities “private”? What is a state agency? A state coalition?

Not-for-profits, State and municipal entities, and coalitions would generally be considered "public" entities. For-profit entities can generally be considered "private" entities. The applicant can make reasonable assumptions about how to categorize their community partners in this section of the Narrative Submission Form.

122. On the Position Description form, does the "Location" column refer to the physical location the staff person works? If not, please explain.

Yes.

123. Are spaces included in character count?

Yes.

124. You mentioned extra boxes? Are there extra boxes for all narrative questions?

Please review the Narrative Submission Form, which lists the overall character limits and number of pages for each question. For questions where the total character limit is applied to multiple pages, the text will not automatically continue onto the next page. The applicant may need to manually split the answer across each page to use the full character limit.

125. Does this apply to this program only or the entire organization? “Annual Funding from All Other Sources Form: Demonstrate financial support received from sources other than the VOCA Crime Victims Fund. Applicants must demonstrate substantial financial support from sources other than the Crime Victims Fund (at least 25% of the organization’s funding must be from other sources). Enter all organizational funding that supports victim services.

Per VOCA Rule 94.112(b)(2), substantial financial support is shown when at least 25% of the program's funding comes from other sources.

126. How can we better understand prorating for our program budget?

Please review tabs A and B in the Budget Worksheets (Fringe & Prorating) Form for instructions and examples related to prorating.



127. You did say you would show us how to make a fillable PDF a flat one?

Please see the appendix section of the Optional Bidders' Conference presentation, which is available at <https://ovs.ny.gov/2025-voca-rfa>.

128. In the position description form, there is a box to enter location - is this asking for the physical office address? if the program operates at multiple building locations, how should these be entered? Or can we just use the main office address?

When completing this form, you should enter the primary work location for each staff member.

129. For the required substantial funding from other sources, do you require other funding for the program we are requesting funding for, or the organization as a whole?

Please see the response to Question #125.

130. Can you talk again about the Narrative Form and clarify a bit more about how the character limits work? Can you screen-share to show what the Narrative Form looks like? (For example, you mentioned the Narrative Form is a fill-able PDF. Is the character limit part of the fillable PDF or part of the SFS textbox portal)? Possible to show your example again or offer any other visuals?

The Narrative Submission Form will be used to answer programmatic questions and provide additional budget narrative. Applicants will need to complete the Narrative Submission Form and upload the document to SFS as part of the application. The character limits apply to the fillable PDF, which will be used to capture responses. Your responses will not be able to exceed the character limits contained in the PDF.

131. Will you please explain the extra narrative process

Please see the response to Question #130.

132. Is there a defined percentage for substantial financial support ?

Please see the response to Question #125.



133. In the Annual Funding From All Other Sources Form (described on pages 17-18 of the RFA) (section 3.f. Submission Component D: Required Forms), should we include the current VOCA grant funds we receive from the 2022 RFA award or is this asking for anticipated funding for next year? If some of this other funding is not designated for victim services but for other agency work, must it be included on this form?

The Annual Funding Form should not include OVS funding. The form should only reflect funding related to the organization's victim services program.

134. I am working on the OVS RFA and noted that the Annual Anticipated Services Form is not a fillable PDF, nor am I able to fill it out if I convert it to WORD. Is there another format available or should I write it by hand and save as a flat PDF?

The Annual Anticipated Services Form and the Priority Categories Form are Excel documents.

135. Will the number of compensation applications a program say they will submit in the “Annual Anticipated Services Form” (line 6) be taken into consideration in scoring? In award amounts?

No, this information is not factored into the evaluation process or the scoring methodology.

136. Hi – we have an approved flat rate for fringe (much lower than the actual cost of fringe) and only cover salary and fringe in our request. Is there anything we would need to prorate?

No, if you have no other proposed budget items you would not need to prorate.

137. In the Position Description Form (described on pages 17-18 of the RFA) (section 3.f. Submission Component D: Required Forms), there is a box for “location” for each position title. Is this asking for the physical office address? If our program is spread amongst multiple office buildings with different addresses, should we list each different address or can we use the main address for our program?

Please see the response to Question #128.

138. In the form for annual funding from other sources, should a current VOCA grant award be included in this form?

No. Please see the response to Question #133.



139. RFA p. 30 states the “VOCA Required Reporting” (VRR) section [position description form] is to be completed for staff producing fiscal and program reports. Is it correct that in prior RFA’s it was previously called VOCA Administrative?”

Yes, 'VOCA Required Reporting' was previously known as 'VOCA Administrative.'

140. Annual Anticipated Services Form: We understand that Applicants must be able to provide a match from non-federal sources (page 17), but should the application include services to be funded by the match for the purpose of calculating anticipated services?

Yes, applicants should include those anticipated match services.

141. Do your word count maximums for your narrative submission forms include spaces, or are they calculated without spaces?

The character limits include spaces.

142. With regard to the Position Description Form: If staff provide services that are allowable under VOCA, but their time for those services are not charged to VOCA (for instance, if they are helping a client reported under another grant), should those hours be accounted for under Direct Service, Other VOCA Allowable Activities, or Non VOCA Allowable Activities?

VOCA-allowable activities should be accounted for in the activity represented regardless of funding source.

143. On page 16 of the RFA, it states that applicants should “Demonstrate the use of an evaluation process that will be used to measure the effectiveness of the program. Evaluations should be used to continuously make needed adjustments to meet the overall outcome(s). Note that VOCA funds can be used to cover the cost of the project evaluation and programs can decide which form of evaluation to use.” Which category of the Position Description Form would these evaluation activities fall into?

Evaluation activities would fall under "Other VOCA Allowable Activities."

144. During the RFA Bidders’ Conference, I believe it was mentioned that current grantees’ past data/performance would not be factored into the evaluation of 2025 applications. I just wanted to confirm that current grantees are still allowed to reference their past data/performance in the Narrative Submission Form—specifically in responding to Organizational Capacity item that asks for applicants’ experience/record in providing victim services. Is that accurate?

Yes, applicants may reference experience providing victim services in the Narrative Submission Form. Please note that OVS will not consider prior funding or performance data as part of the evaluation process under this RFA.



145. In the Annual Anticipated Services Form, should we include all services provided by our victim service program, or only services that would be funded by a VOCA grant?

The Annual Anticipated Services data should include only services funded by OVS or through matching funds.

146. Does the statement below apply to the entire agency or is it specific to this program? (page 17)“Annual Funding from All Other Sources Form: Demonstrate financial support received from sources other than the VOCA Crime Victims Fund. Applicants must demonstrate substantial financial support from sources other than the Crime Victims Fund (at least 25% of the organization’s funding must be from other sources). Enter all organizational funding that supports victim services.”

Please see the response to Question #125.

147. There seems to be a discrepancy between the description tab on the Excel position description form and the RFP p.31. RFP p.31 Allowable Sub-Recipient Administrative Costs #3." states 3 types of record keeping. On the position description form, the first tab called " Descriptions" states that "Staff completion of VOCA Required Reporting" is to be categorized on the Position Description form as "Other VOCA Allowable Activities". Please confirm whether those 3 types of activities are to go under VRR or Other VOCA allowable

VOCA Required Reporting consists of budget negotiation and completing Fiscal Cost Reports (FCRs), Budget Amendment Requests (BARs), and Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) reports.

Other VOCA Allowable Activities include collecting and maintaining victim records, completing time and attendance sheets and programmatic documentation, and conducting victim satisfaction surveys and needs assessments to improve victim services delivery in the project. Staff completion of VOCA Required Reporting should not be included under Other VOCA Allowable Activities.

The Descriptions tab in the Position Description Form has been updated to remove this discrepancy. Please refer to the 2025 VOCA RFA Change Notice dated February 26, 2025, for additional information.

148. RFA pp.16-17 Budget Narrative: For the budget narrative, what is the preferred format for explaining expense?

The project budget and budget narrative must be submitted in the Budget Properties section of SFS. Applicants should provide a description in SFS for each budget category that is requested, and additional supporting narrative for the budget justification should be included in the Narrative Submission Form.



149. RFA p.18 .3 Should applicants list all sources including federal pass-through? Or strictly non-federal?

Enter all funding that supports victim services, including federal funds. At least 25% of funding should be from sources other than the VOCA Crime Victims Fund.

150. Hello. Can you repeat the q&a about work plan being put narrative.

OVS is not utilizing the workplan function in SFS for this RFA. You should submit information about your proposed services in the Narrative Submission Form.

Please also see the response to Question #130.

151. IS THERE A CHARACTER LIMIT FOR THE TOTAL SUBMISSION?

Please refer to the Narrative Submission Form for the character and page limits for each programmatic question and additional budget narrative.

152. P.24 of the RFA states, “Grants must comply with the development and implementation of the Evaluation Plan included in their response to the RFA. In addition to collecting the data as identified in the Evaluation Plan, the data may be requested by OVS for the purpose of evaluating grantee performance.” P. 16, “Demonstrate the use of an evaluation process that will be used to measure the effectiveness of the program. Evaluations should be used to continuously make needed adjustments to meet the overall outcome(s). Note that VOCA funds can be used to cover the cost of the project evaluation and programs can decide which form of evaluation to use.” Can you share samples of what OVS finds to be effective evaluation processes?

Evaluation processes may vary significantly among Victim Assistance Programs and should be geared towards the individual needs of each program and the services offered. OVS will not provide any examples of current documents for the purposes of this application.

153. Other than the switch to sfs, are there are any significant changes in the requirements for this year’s program?

Applicants are encouraged to carefully read the full RFA document and required forms to ensure they understand all requirements for this RFA.

154. If we are a current VOCA awardee will past PMT data/ performance be factored into our evaluation?

OVS will not consider prior funding or performance data as part of the evaluation process under this RFA.



155. Would a timesheet in which a VOCA-funded staff member and their supervisor attest to the percentage of time working on the program in the given time period (i.e. in January this staff member attests to spending 15% of their time working on behalf of clients reported under this grant) be sufficient, or is a more detailed breakdown of time required? If more detail is required can you please provide details about the exact information that needs to be captured on timesheets?

At this time, a Functional Time Record representing the number of hours a day staff spends in each VOCA-allowable activity is sufficient to meet this requirement. OVS will be issuing additional guidance on the completion of Functional Time Records at a later date.

156. If we were an awardee from the VOCA 2022 RFA, can we request our scores or comments from our application?

To request information related to a 2022 RFA application, resulting contract, or any other related information, please contact your Contract Management Specialist.

157. Is the RFP on SFS or is it on the OVS website?

The OVS website has all of the forms, resources, and documents for the RFA (please see <https://ovs.ny.gov/2025-voca-rfa>). Applications must be submitted through SFS.

158. Please explain further the "Civil Rights Compliance" aspect.

Information on current Civil Rights Compliance requirements may be found on the OVS website at <https://ovs.ny.gov/victim-assistance-program> under the header "Civil Rights Compliance." Please also refer to VOCA Rule 94.114: Prohibited Discrimination.

159. Should you address your current grant at all in this current RFA.

Applicants may reference experience providing victim services in the Narrative Submission Form. However, please note that prior awards are not considered as part of the evaluation process under this RFA.

160. Are nonprofit victim service providers required to partner (subgrantee) for this RFA?

No, applicants are not required to partner or include subgrantees on their application.

161. What type of nonprofits will be competitive for this funding opportunity?

All pre-qualified not-for-profits that are located in New York State and provide direct services to victims of crime are eligible to apply for funding under this RFA.



162. Can you explain the exemption to the victim compensation requirement? I looked up the code cited and didn't see a clear explanation. (p15)

The cited code refers to crime victim notification systems.

163. We understand from information shared on the bidders conference webinar that, for current grantees, data from prior PMT reports will not be taken into consideration when reviewing proposals for the 2025 RFA. How is this data currently used to evaluate success and compliance of current grantees?

PMT data is a federal requirement. OVC uses it to generate an annual report on the program and respond to specific inquiries. Grantees can use it to monitor program performance. OVS evaluates whether the quarterly report that is sent to us aligns with the data submitted by the organization.

164. Can OVS provide us with a list of the current awardees, the amounts they have received, the length of current awards, and the county or counties for which the awards were issued?

The Office of the New York State Comptroller's Open Book website lists all State Contracts and is filterable by agency. This information is available by performing a NYS Contract Search.

In addition, OVS maintains a map and searchable directory of funded programs on our Resource Connect platform (ovs.ny.gov/connect).

165. Is there a list of current awardees available by county?

Please see the response to Question #164.

166. Are support letters or memoranda of understanding (MOUs) required for applications submitted in response to this RFA?

No. Applicants should not submit any additional documents with their application beyond the required forms and questions in SFS.

167. Please explain what you would consider a "culturally-specific service" or please specify?

Services that are provided to one or more specific populations, including but not limited to: Indigenous, Asian, Native Hawaiian, and other Pacific Islander, Black, and Latino populations.



168. Is OVS open to program expansions into new Counties? For example, a longstanding victim service program offering a service in a new county in order to meet a gap in services?

Yes. Applicants should demonstrate the need for services, as well as how they propose to address any identified gaps in services, in the Narrative Submission Form.

169. Is it possible for us to add/include support letters in our RFA submission and if so, where can we include them?

No. Please see the response to Question #166.

170. "Page 15, Section D, #1How will the inclusion of community-specific data in the application, and to what extent should applicants demonstrate the use of such data to address local needs and priorities? "

Detail about the identified gaps in services, how this links to your proposed services to address local needs, and collaboration with community partners should be included in your Narrative Submission Form responses.

171. When asking about coordinating public and private efforts, does this mean pro bono services?

The coordination of public and private efforts is not limited to pro bono services. Examples of coordinating public and private efforts include, but are not limited to, serving on federal, State, local, or tribal work groups to oversee and recommend improvements to community responses to crime victims, and developing written agreements and protocols for such responses.

172. Do applicants to the VOCA Assistance Grant Program RFA need to provide all of the services to victims?

Applicants are not required to provide services under all priority categories listed in the RFA; however, they are required to provide assistance to anyone that presents for services. Providers may refer victims to other providers if they are unable to provide a specific service.

173. Concerning Legal Services on p. 13 of the RFA, if a program provides legal services and other victim advocate services, can it apply for VOCA money for both?

Yes, both legal services and victim advocate services may be eligible under this RFA. Please also see the response to Question #24.



174. When an applicant applies to the VOCA Assistance Grant Program RFA, is the applicant required to serve anyone (or everyone) in the county who wants VAP assistance?

Programs are required to provide assistance to anyone that presents for services under the parameters of this RFA. Providers may refer victims to other providers if they are unable to provide a specific service.

175. When an applicant applies to the VOCA Assistance Grant Program RFA, is the applicant also applying to the NYS Office of Victims Services to become a VAP provider?

OVS does not require a separate application or designation to become a Victim Assistance Provider. This RFA is to award funding to organizations that provide direct services to victims of crime.

176. Can the State provide a minimum set of assistance that needs to be provided to victims under the VOCA Assistance Grant Program RFA?

Applicants must demonstrate a willingness to assist victims of crime in the completion and submission of compensation applications. Information on other types of assistance and expenses that may be eligible for funding under this RFA are listed in the appendices of the RFA.

177. Will OVS be allowing a 15% de minimis rate (increased from 10%) for organizations that do not have a negotiated Indirect Cost Rate?

Programs may use 15% Deminimis if they do not have a Federally negotiated indirect cost rate.

178. How much can we request in indirect cost?

Please see the response to Question #177.

179. Just confirming the 15 % indirect cost line

Please see the response to Question #177.

180. I would like some clarification on direct vs indirect costs. We would like to include a Junior Accountant who oversees all financial operations for our Crime Victims Program. We have determined that 7% of their time is dedicated to the work they do for this program. In the current RFA, do we include that 7% salary as a direct cost? Or must it be an indirect cost because the other 93% of their time is not part of this OVS project? And if we submit the salary as a direct cost for reimbursement, must we also keep a Functional Time Sheet for that position.

Examples of allowable activities that can be directly charged to the OVS grant for VOCA Required Reporting and Other VOCA Allowable Activities can be found on the 'Descriptions' tab on the Position



Description Form. Please also see the response to Question #112 and #177. If the position does not participate in any of those activities, then the position could be supported through indirect costs.

For any salary costs that are directly charged to the OVS grant, a Functional Time Record would be required for that position.

181. Regarding the ICR, while applying for other federal funds, we discovered that the new allowable de minimis rate is 15%, effective October 1, 2024. Could you please confirm if this rate will apply to this new contract, and if we can proceed with designing the budget using the 15% rate?

Please see the response to Question #177.

182. Is the de minimis rate for indirect costs 10%?

Please see the response to Question #177.

183. Is there a maximum for fringe and/or indirect that is allowable? Would the indirect be based on the 15% federal de minimis rate or the state rate currently used by the organization?

Please see the responses to Question #81 and Question #177.

184. Is administrative overhead (indirect costs) allowed?

Please see the response to Question #177.

185. Correct that as subrecipients, applicants are allowed up to 15% on indirect costs?

Please see the response to Question #177.

186. Are attorneys funded under this program required to become referral partners in the “centralized legal network for crime victims in New York State” referenced on page 13 of the RFA? If so, are the expectations for referral partners listed on that same page a requirement for these attorneys? Lastly, is there an estimate for the volume of referrals one should expect to receive through this network?

All attorneys providing services to victims of crime will be invited to be referral partners to a centralized legal network for crime victims in New York State. OVS does not have information on the anticipated volume of referrals at this time.



187. Are we required to participate in the referral network for legal partners if we provide legal services with VOCA funds? (p13)

Please see the response to Question #186.

188. In the Period Budget Summary in SFS, the Match % required column is automatically set to 25% of grant budget. How should an organization adjust this if they choose to use 20% of total project budget as the match instead?

Please see Page 17 of the RFA. The calculation for match is either 25% of your OVS Grant funded amount or 20% of your OVS Grant plus Match funded amount. However, the final value of required match is the same with either calculation method. For example if you are awarded \$100,000 your match requirement is \$25,000. This represents 25% of \$100,000 or 20% of \$125,000. Applicants should ensure the total value entered for match meets this requirement.

189. Is a waiver of the match requirement anticipated?

OVS is currently operating under a blanket match waiver for all contracts through September 30, 2025. OVS is evaluating the need for a continuation of the waiver period and will communicate with funded programs when an update is available.

190. If requesting a match waiver, when does it have to be submitted by? (page 17)

Please see the response to Question #189. In the event that OVS does not issue another blanket match waiver, information on the individual match waiver request process and any required dates will be communicated at a later date.

191. If requesting a match waiver, when is that submission due by?

Please see the responses to Question #189 and Question #190.

192. Can the match requirement be satisfied by fringe?

Yes, all VOCA allowable expenses can be used for Match.

193. Are we showing match for y1, or Y2-3?

The proposed budget in SFS, including information on proposed matching funds, should reflect Year 1. However, please note that applicants must be able to meet the match requirement for each year of an awarded contract.



194. Is a match required?

Match is a Federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) requirement and applicants must be able to meet this requirement. More information is available in the DOJ Financial Guide. However, OVS is currently operating under a blanket match waiver for all contracts and is evaluating a potential extension of this waiver.

195. Is there a match requirement?

Please see the response to Question #194.

196. Where can I find the instructions for calculating the match?

Please see the response to Question #188.

197. Good morning, could you please provide information in regarding the match required for this grant? In addition, what is the hourly rate and fringe amount for volunteers and interns to be used as match.

Please see the response to Question #188.

When used as match, the value of volunteer time should be calculated in accordance with 28 CFR §94.118 (c)(2). The following resource may also be helpful: <https://independentsector.org/resource/value-of-volunteer-time/>

198. Can you amend what you use for match during the executed grant or do you have to maintain that form of match throughout?

Yes, you can do this through the Budget Amendment process.

199. Can the efforts of non-grant supported staff to provide VOCA services during off hours be used for the match?

Yes, this may be eligible for matching funds if the staff are performing VOCA-allowable activities.

200. Over the next few months, as you said you'll be considering a review of the blanket match waiver, what factors will you be using to consider whether or not to enact that blanket match waiver (and what led you to enact it in the current/past budget period)?

The process and criteria considered for a potential blanket match waiver are specified in the OVS Match Waiver Policy that is available on the OVS website at: https://ovs.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2024/05/ovs-match-waiver-policy-updated-january-2024_0.pdf.



201. When we submit our initial application, should we assume that match will be required and fill out the application accordingly?

Yes. Please also see the response to Question #194.

202. Can you explain what it means that OVS operates on a blanket match waiver for all grantees?

When OVS issues a blanket match waiver, the match requirements are temporarily waived for all grantees and there is no requirement for individual requests. If a blanket match waiver is approved by OVS for the upcoming contract cycle, this information will be communicated to grantees at a later date.

203. Can you please review the match requirement again? I am confused by the 20% vs 25% outlined in the RFA document.

Please see the response to Question #188.

204. Do you have to list specific grant matching sources?

Match detail can be provided in the Budget Narrative in SFS or on the Narrative Submission Form. No other documentation is needed with the application. Matching funds must be non-federal, support VOCA allowable activities, and not be used as match under another federal grant.

205. What is the match requirement for this grant?

Please see the response to Question #188.

206. Can match sources be changed post-award?

Please see the response to Question #198.

207. Can you please explain this more: match must be either 20% of the project total, or 25% of the total grant funds?

Please see the response to Question #188.

208. Can funds from another NYS grant be used toward match?

Yes, if the funds are not federal, are supporting VOCA allowable activities, and are not being used as match under another federal grant.



209. Does OVS anticipate waiving the match requirement and if so, when would that match waiver announcement be made?

Please see the response to Question #189.

210. Can fringe be used towards the match requirement?

Yes, all VOCA allowable expenses can be used for Match. The fringe expenses must be related to a position that is performing VOCA allowable activities.

211. Concerning Matching Funds, on p. 17 of the RFA, can other state grants or state funds that are not federal in origin be used as a match?

Yes. Please see the response to Question #208.

212. Please explain the difference between 20% project total and 25% total grant funds when it comes to the matching funds request.

Please see the response to Question #188.

213. Do organizations have to proactively request a match waiver at the time of application, or only if the match requirement is later reinstated? (2025 OVS RFA Page 17; Section 3e)

Please see the response to Question #189. Organizations do not need to submit a match waiver request at this time.

214. Is it permissible to use multiple funding sources to meet the match requirement, or does the match all need to come from a single source?

Match requirements can be met with multiple funding sources. Please also see the response to Question #208.

215. Do staff funded through other non-federal sources and volunteers who provide in-kind services count towards the required match?

Yes, staff funded through non-federal sources and volunteers who provide in-kind services may be eligible to count toward matching fund requirements.

OVS would require additional detail regarding the nature of the staff and volunteer activities.



216. Do applicants need to specify in the application the source of the matching funds?

Applicants may provide additional detail on their proposed sources of matching funds in the budget narrative in SFS or in the Narrative Submission Form.

217. How should matching funds be reflected in the application?

Match funds are reflected in your budget submission in SFS. Please also see the response to Question #216.

218. Is the agency expecting for the matching costs requirement to be removed or reduced?

Please see the response to Question #189.

219. Could VOCA-allowable services funded via Medicaid potentially serve as match?

Victim services funded through non-federal sources may be eligible to count toward match requirements. OVS would require additional detail regarding the nature of these activities and the funding source.

220. Could VOCA-allowable services funded under NYS Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative (ESSHI) program potentially serve as match?

Please see the response to Question #219.

221. Could VOCA-allowable services provided by our VAP's community-based partners (i.e. nonprofit collaborators not funded by our agency) potentially serve as a match?

Yes. Please see the response to Question #219.

222. In the Match Worksheet on the budget page in SFS, there is a column titled "Form of Documentation Required." Can you clarify what this means – what documentation is required for each source of match? Is there a link that can be provided that shows what documentation is required for each source of match? And how should this part of the Match Worksheet be filled out – should we answer Yes/No in this column, or describe the type of match we should include with the application?

This document is not required as part of the applications submission in SFS. Applicants may provide additional detail on their proposed sources of matching funds in the budget narrative in SFS or in the Narrative Submission Form.



223. Can an organization use an unpaid social work intern's time as a source of match?

Yes. An unpaid intern could be used as a source of Match but they must perform VOCA allowable activities.

224. Can a portion of our domestic violence service program's indirect expenses (that we are not requesting VOCA grant support for) be used as a source of match? We would be including indirect in our grant request at our federally approved rate for the staff positions/expenses that would be supported by VOCA, but the program has other indirect costs for victim services that are not covered by VOCA, budgeted at our federally approved rate. Are there are indirect costs that are non-VOCA allowable expenses?

All costs that are utilized for Match purposes must adhere to the same allowability guidelines as VOCA funds. OVS would require additional detail regarding the nature of these activities and the funding source.

225. Does a source of match have to be expenses of the same program that is partially supported by VOCA? Or can it be a different program within the social service agency as long as the matching funds are used to provide services to victims of crime?

Yes. Please see the response to Question #219.

226. Can rent and other space-related expenses (utilities, etc.) be used as a source of match?

Yes, all VOCA allowable expenses can be used for match. The expenses must be related to the provision of victim services.

227. What information will need to be provided for each source of match?

Please see the response to Question #204.

228. Can administrative staff be used as a source of match? Can administrative staff providing in-kind support for the domestic violence program be used as a source of match?

Yes, all VOCA allowable expenses can be used for match. The expenses must be related to a position that is performing VOCA allowable activities.

229. Can a volunteer intern who works on activities funded by VOCA also provide services to survivors of crime that are not covered by VOCA, but are part of the same domestic violence service program?

Yes.



230. The RFA indicates a match requirement. What will be the sources of the BronxWorks match? (The match requirement is 20% of the project total or 25% of the grant funds sought.)

Specific match sources are determined by the applicant and will be reviewed and approved by OVS. Please also see the response to Question #188.

231. In regards to match funds, we are a county based VAP within a district attorney's office employed by the county. Our funds consists of our existing OVS budget and a small amount given to the VAP by the county. Would we be subject to 20% or 25% of match?

Please see the response to Question #188.

232. Good morning. Where can we find allowable expenses for the match? And the dollar amount for the category as match.

Please see the responses to Question #188 and Question #210.

233. We are trying to work on the new Victim's Assistance opportunity application. I was wondering if you could possibly send me the instructions on how we can calculate a match for a budget. I want to make sure that we do it correctly and I cannot seem to locate the instructions. Your help will be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Please see the response to Question #188.

234. Can you talk about the match requirement?

Please see the responses to question #188, Question #189, and Question #194.

235. Will applicants be scored on the basis of their ability to attract and retain volunteers?

No. VOCA mandates an agency's use of volunteers (94.113(a)), but OVS does not score applications based on the ongoing status of volunteers. There will be a specific yes/no question in SFS that asks about this requirement.

236. If we are counting volunteer time as a match in our budget, do we list the volunteer time as "revenue" on the "annual-funding-form"?

Only actual funding is included on the Annual Funding Form. Volunteer time is not counted as revenue on this form.



237. Does that requirement that applicants demonstrate the use of volunteers require that volunteers are used to provide voca-allowable activities (direct services or other voca-allowable)?

Yes, volunteers must perform VOCA allowable activities.

238. Will Interns be counted under volunteer hours?

An unpaid intern could qualify as a volunteer. Volunteers being used as Match must perform VOCA allowable activities.

239. All members of our board of directors are volunteers, do we need to include them in discussion of volunteers?

Yes, board members can be utilized to meet the volunteer requirement at the discretion of the applicant.

240. We also use pro-bono attorneys who volunteer their expertise, do we need to include them in our discussion of volunteers?

Yes, pro-bono attorneys can be utilized to meet the volunteer requirement at the discretion of the applicant.

241. Regarding the requirement of using/seeking volunteers- we are a prosecutors office with a victim's center. Would we be excused from that requirement or do we need to still demonstrate the use of volunteers?

All applicants must meet the requirement to be using or seeking volunteers.

242. Can you say more about what qualifies as a "volunteer"? Could law school interns be considered volunteers?

Yes. Please see the response to Question #237.

243. Can you provide more detail around the expectation around volunteers? Do you have any examples of a successful volunteer component of a funded program?

Please see the response to Question #237. Each applicant should follow their own policies and procedures regarding the use of volunteers.



244. If we use volunteers for match - how do you determine value? Is it at agency at discretion? Would you include in budget narrative the rate you are using?

When used as match, the value of volunteer time should be calculated in accordance with 28 CFR §94.118 (c)(2). The following resource may also be helpful: <https://independentsector.org/resource/value-of-volunteer-time/>.

Detail on the proposed matching funds may be provided in the budget narrative in SFS or the budget narrative section of the Narrative Submission Form.

245. Can interns be considered volunteers?

Please see the responses to Question #237 and Question #238.

246. Are MSW interns considered volunteers?

Please see the responses to Question #237 and Question #238.

247. Would interns qualify as volunteers?

Please see the responses to Question #237 and Question #238.

248. Can volunteers be used to satisfy the match requirements?

Please see the responses to Question #237 and Question #238.

249. Aare graduate social work interns considered to be volunteers?

Please see the responses to Question #237 and Question #238.

250. Do volunteers include unpaid interns?

Please see the responses to Question #237 and Question #238.

251. If interns receive a stipend from their school that we are not paying, do they count as unpaid?

An intern that is paid by their school but not paid by the victim services program could qualify as a volunteer. Please also see the responses to Question #237 and Question #238.



252. Just to clarify re: volunteers - so we need to have volunteers for the program for which we are asking for funds, or volunteers at our agency in general.

Your program must demonstrate that it currently has or is seeking volunteers.

253. What is the hourly rate and fringe amount for volunteers and interns to be used as match?

When used as match, the value of volunteer time should be calculated in accordance with 28 CFR §94.118 (c)(2). The following resource may also be helpful: <https://independentsector.org/resource/value-of-volunteer-time/>.

254. Where/how should we demonstrate the required use of volunteers? (p 11)

There will be a specific yes/no question in SFS that asks about this requirement.

255. If volunteer hours are used as match, do volunteers used as match need to maintain time and activity records like staff do?

Yes. Volunteers are subject to same standards as VOCA grant-funded staff.

256. What are the expectations for volunteers' responsibilities? Does this apply to organization as a whole or just this program? (page 11)

Volunteer responsibilities are determined by the program. Please also see the responses to Question #237 and Question #238.

257. How is "elder" defined in terms of starting age? (page 10)

The term "elder" refers to individuals that are 60 years of age or older.

258. One question on the changes to reporting D1. In assessing for future funding under the 25/26 RFA, will the lower number of overall services provided due to omission of D1 have a negative impact on how our application is scored? I recall in the past that the number of total services (or percentage of anticipated services achieved) was a key element in the scoring process.

Total anticipated services have no impact on the overall evaluation or scoring of submitted applications under this RFA.



259. Where can we find detailed explanations of the PMT services? (Annual Anticipated Services)

Please refer to the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) Dictionary and Terminology Resource:

https://ovcpmt.ojp.gov/documents/OVC_Performance_Measure_Dictionary_and_Terminology_Resource_Winter_2020_508c.pdf.

260. Does providing non-attorney legal assistance (eg KYR, information about the legal process, referrals,) qualify as providing legal services in the PMT? KYR is counted as A2 (Information about victim rights, how to obtain notification, etc.).

Information about the legal process can be counted as A1 (Information about the criminal justice process). Referrals are counted as A3 (Referral to other victim service programs) or A4 (Referral to other services, supports, and resources (includes legal, medical, faith-based orgs, address confidentiality programs, etc.).

261. Does OVS have definitions for the services listed on the 2025 OVS Performance Measurement Tool?

Please see the response to Question #259.

262. What does “assisted with a victim compensation application” (see Anticipated Services form, line 6) mean? Does it mean:

- **Helping someone fill out a claims application, even if they don't complete it?**
- **Helping someone complete and submit a claims application?**
- **Answering questions they have about the claims application?**
- **Helping someone determine if they are eligible for compensation?**
- **Providing someone with resources to help them fill out an application?**
- **Is it sufficient if we are providing them with information about their rights to file for crime victim compensation?**

Question 6 is meant to capture the number of individuals who received assistance with completing a victim compensation application, even if the application was not submitted. Simply providing an application or information does not qualify as assistance. The service is counted once per victim, per crime. After submitting, any monitoring or assistance with claim process is counted as personal advocacy #8B4 on the PMT.



263. We will affirm that we will assist victims in completing and submitting claims. However, most of the clients we serve either (1) are ineligible for victim compensation, or (2) have already submitted a claim with the assistance of another provider. Is it okay if we enter a small number in question 6 (Number of individuals assisted with a victim compensation application during the reporting period) of the “Annual Anticipated Services Form”?

Yes, the requirement is for applicants to acknowledge that they are required to provide assistance to victims of crime in the completion and submission of compensation applications. Applicants who fail to identify their willingness to provide assistance to victims completing compensation applications will not be considered for an award under this opportunity.

Total anticipated services have no impact on the overall evaluation or scoring of submitted applications under this RFA.

264. What happens if we are unable to assist victims in completing the number of claim applications that we estimated? Will we be penalized in any way?

No. The information entered into the Anticipated Annual Services Form is informational and based upon available information at the time of submission. OVS may follow-up with successful applicants if there are significant changes compared to their anticipated annual services; however, there are no penalties associated with actual results.

265. When we report on services provided under this grant, do we need to prorate each employee's services based on the percentage paid for by OVS? For example- if a counselor who is 50% funded under OVS provides 100 units of service, would we only report 50 units of service? Asking because it will impact how we fill out the anticipated services form. Thank you!

Yes, you would need to pro-rate the reported services. Please consult OVC's "Suggested Prorating Strategies for Victim Assistance Subgrantees" document for information on the pro-rating calculation. https://ovcpmt.ojp.gov/documents/Victim_Assistance_Prorating_Strategies_for_Subgrantees_Winter2020_508c.pdf.

266. In the previous iteration of the RFP we were required to provide an attachment with a performance measurement tool to evaluate our contracts. Will this still be required? Is there another space where this information should live?

Please complete the Annual Anticipated Services Form to reflect your performance measurement data.



267. Is there an expectation that we would be putting objectives in the narrative? Where should this live?

You should submit information about your proposed services in the Narrative Submission Form.

268. In SFS, it shows that the work plan is not required and is unchecked, can we confirm whether workplan information is included elsewhere?

Please see the responses to Question #130 and #150.

269. How is "elder" defined in terms of starting age? (page 10)

Please see the response to Question #257.

270. Regarding the Federal VOCA Funding Priority Categories, is an agency required to include all of the categories, or can it choose from the provided options based on its expertise and mission? (page 8)

The priority categories refer to overall OVS funding issued under this RFA; it does not apply to individual awards. Applicants should submit information on the priority categories that reflect their proposed services.

271. Can serving adult survivors of childhood abuse count qualify us for the "Victims of Child Abuse" priority category (p8)?

No, these services would not be counted under Victims of Child Abuse. They would be counted as Underserved D.3 (please refer to the Priority Categories Form).

272. Are older adults aged 60+ considered "underserved"?

Yes, these individuals may be counted under the "underserved" category.

273. Can we indicate we are serving one priority category?

Yes, it is acceptable to have 100% in a single category. Applicants should submit information on the priority categories that reflect their proposed services.

274. I'm looking at the Priority Categories Form. A2 says child sex abuse and C1 says Child sexual assault. What is the difference between the two?

Applicants should refer to the following OVC resource for questions related to federal reporting definitions: https://ovcpmt.ojp.gov/documents/OVC_Performance_Measure_Dictionary_and_Terminology_Resource_Winter_2020_508c.pdf. In instances where specific terms are not clearly defined in this dictionary,



applicants may make their own reasonable determinations about how to report data. For programs that primarily focus on child abuse, the “child sexual abuse” category may be more relevant, and for programs that primarily focus on sexual assault, the “child sexual assault” category may be more relevant. OVS is mainly concerned with ensuring that grantees record their data consistently when comparing the Anticipated Annual Services and any subsequent Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) reporting.

275. While it is not required that organizations cover all priority categories, will bidders that propose to cover all priority categories be evaluated more favorably?

No. Applicants should submit information on the priority categories that reflect their proposed services.

276. Is funding available for victims of labor trafficking?

Yes.

277. Can you provide more information about the state's priority of statewide service coverage and a 5% allocation for that priority? Was this approach used in the 2022 RFA?

The priority for Statewide coverage does not have an allocated percentage. Successful applicants may receive a percentage-based reduction to their proposed budget based on their overall score and any such weighting for geographic coverage or priority category allocations as determined by OVS. This option for weighting related to geographic coverage was also included in the 2022 RFA.

278. Is the grant only for indigenous victims of domestic violence?

No, this application is open to all priority categories and all victimization types.

279. Can we indicate we are serving MORE than one priority category?

Please see the response to Question #270.

280. If DV encompasses SA or that two priorities or one?

For the purposes of the Priority Categories Form, you should select the estimated breakout of overall services that will be provided by your organization.

For the purposes of performance reporting for successful applicants, you may report both service types if applicable.



281. If guns are used in many of the domestic violence incidents that an applicant addresses or prevents, could this prevention (and addressing DV work) be counted as part of the gun-violence-related priority?

Direct victim services related to domestic violence that include gun involvement may be counted as part of the gun violence priority category. Please note that prevention services may not be VOCA allowable.

282. Do you have any recommendations regarding how we determine our priority categories?

Please see the response to Question #270.

283. On the Priority Categories form, what is the difference between A2. Child Sex Abuse and C1. Child Sexual Assault?

Please see the response to Question #274.

284. Page 8 of the RFA cites priority funding categories. Must at least 40% of those served by an OVS award issued under this RFA come from the categories cited?

Please see the response to Question #270.

285. Does a victim need to have reported the crime for which they were a victim to be eligible for services under this program?

No. Organizations should implement and follow their own internal policies and procedures for determining service eligibility.

286. What proof of victimization will be requires?

OVS does not require or collect proof of victimization as part of the grants funded through this RFA. Please also see the response to Question #285.



287. I am not sure if my proposal fits the qualifications for the VOCA victims assistance grant program I am working with an emergency department physician to assist in identifying acquired brain injury in women who experience intimate partner violence (in the ER). (Blunt force trauma and strangulation) We would then refer them to our local crime victims center where we would have a mental health person . We would train this staff person to work with traumatic brain injury as well as trauma responsive treatment. The crime victims center has enthusiastically agreed as to well as the ED. Does the ER component of this proposal qualify under this grant ?

The percent of effort that could be charged to the grant OVS would likely apply only to the time spent referring the patient to your local victim services program. OVS would require additional detail regarding the nature of these activities.

288. Page 9 of the RFA mentions expanded access to mental health services. Should organizations responding to the RFA have a partnership with an Article 28 provider? Are responding organizations encouraged to have an Article 28 license?

Expanding Access to Mental Health Services is included as an OVS Service Value in the RFA. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to incorporate these values into their proposed services. There are no specific requirements related to this Service Value.

289. Would a history of child welfare involvement be considered victimization under this grant program?

Please refer to the following resource for definitions and information on the types of victimization that may be eligible for services under this grant opportunity:

https://ovcpmt.ojp.gov/documents/OVC_Performance_Measure_Dictionary_and_Terminology_Resource_Winter_2020_508c.pdf.

290. The RFA makes explicit mention of access to mental health services. Toward this end, should BronxWorks incorporate a mental health component into the proposed VOCA effort? Would it suffice to have a referral arrangement with a mental health provider?

Please see the response to Question #288.

291. Among other things, we would like to propose to use VOCA funds to enhance salaries for some staff in our existing NYC-funded DV shelters. Is this an allowable use of funds?

Yes, this may be allowable. Please note that raises provided to VOCA-funded staff must be consistent with raises for all staff regardless of funding source.



292. What services are covered?

Please carefully read the full RFA document for information on eligible services. Appendix A and B of the RFA contain additional examples of allowable services and expenses.

293. Can funds be used for gift cards for clients for essential needs like gas cards and groceries?

Yes. Funds can be used for emergency, essential needs. However, your program will be required to develop policies and procedures that define 'emergency' and 'essential needs.' OVS will provide additional guidance surrounding gift cards at a later date.

294. The RFA mentions "training" as an element that can be funded...does this include training of staff as well as training of community members or other program partners? or just one or the other?

Yes, VOCA funds can be used to train personnel and allied professionals providing direct assistance to crime victims.

295. Are there policy and procedures that will be provided to the vendor?

Each applicant is expected to have their own internal policies and procedures. There will be training provided to successful applicants on OVS requirements to be incorporated into those internal policies.

296. Is prevention education an allowable service for this RFA?

Yes, this may be allowable. OVS would require additional information about the purpose and content of any training or technical assistance to determine eligibility.

Please refer to VOCApedia, which has information on the different types of prevention activities that may be allowable (e.g. secondary or tertiary prevention). <https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/victims-crime-act-voca-administrators/victim-assistance/vocapedia>.

297. Is there a list of VOCA allowable budget items? I don't see it in the RFA.

Please see the response to Question #292.



298. I am not sure if my proposal fits the qualifications for the OVS victims assistance grant program I am working with an emergency department (ED) physician to assist in identifying acquired brain injury in women who experience intimate partner violence (in the ED). (Blunt force trauma and strangulation) We would then refer them to our local crime victims center where we would have a mental health person trained to work with traumatic brain injury as well as trauma responsive treatment. The crime victims center has enthusiastically agreed as to well as the ED. Does the ED component of this proposal qualify under this grant ?

Please see the response to Question #287.

299. In the context of coordinating and supporting a coalition of providers that directly assist victims (see page 31, Other VOCA-Allowable Activities):

- **Are we allowed to provide legal research, guidance, or advice to these providers?**
- **If so, where can these be included in the PMT Annual Anticipate Services form?**

Coordination activities that facilitate the provision of direct services may be allowable. This may include legal services. Please note that VOCA funding cannot be used for prosecution related activities. OVS may require additional information to determine allowability.

This would not be captured in the PMT, as the PMT only captures direct service. Time allocated toward allowable coordination activities should captured under the 'Other VOCA Allowable Activities' section of the Position Description Form.

300. Can programs provide training and technical assistance under this RFA?

Yes, this may be allowable. OVS may require additional information about the purpose and content of any training or technical assistance to determine eligibility.

Please also see the response to Question #294.

301. Besides volunteer training (see page 31, Other VOCA-Allowable Activities), are we allowed to conduct trainings to direct service providers to increase their ability to serve clients?

Yes, this may be allowable. OVS may require additional information about the purpose and content of any training or technical assistance.

302. Are activities involving planning and organizing trainings to help direct service providers increase their ability to serve clients allowed?

Yes, this may be allowable. OVS may require additional information about the purpose and content of any training or technical assistance.



303. Is the “centralized legal network for crime victims in New York State” (see page 13, Programs Providing Legal Services/Attorney Services) allowed to conduct trainings?

Yes, this may be allowable. OVS may require additional information about the purpose and content of any training or technical assistance.

304. One item in Appendix A (Allowable sub-recipient service & programmatic costs) reads, “Outreach such as presentations to public to help identify crime victims and increase access to services and public awareness and education presentations and material to inform crime victims of specific rights and services. Can these outreach presentations be to professionals in the crime victim field (so that they learn about resources to help their clients)? Other professionals?”

Yes, this may be allowable. OVS may require additional information about the purpose and content of any training or technical assistance.

305. We are a non-profit organization appointed by the NY Supreme Court under Article 81 Guardian for Incapacitated Persons, some of whom are victims of crime, elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. Is serving as Guardian for these victims a VOCA allowable service?

If the guardian performs VOCA-recognized direct services (94.119) on behalf of an incapacitated person who is also a crime victim, this may be allowable.

306. Previous contracts have allowed litigation expenses that are directly related to the legal cases derived from a client's victimization, such as expert witnesses, appraisals, forensic evaluations. Is this still an allowable expense? Do these litigation expenses allow for costs of court ordered supervised visitation, or court ordered payments of attorneys assigned for subject children in custody/visitation cases?

Legal assistance services are allowable if they arise as a direct result of victimization. Prosecution of criminal activity is not allowable under VOCA.

OVS may require additional information about the purpose of any proposed legal services to determine allowability.

307. Would screening for victim service and mental health needs be considered a VOCA-allowable direct service activity?

Yes, this may be allowable. OVS would require additional information about the nature of these services.



308. I have a question relevant to Section 3, (d)(3) Proposed Services, Implementation, and Evaluation, pages 15-16. I am the attorney on staff, and would like to know whether, in this next grant cycle, I could plan to incorporate representation of crime victims on their resentencing cases under the DVSJA. This is the law that allows for potential reduction in victims' sentences if they are convicted of a crime that was committed in connection with their status as a victim of domestic violence. While I understand that criminal defense is typically allowed, these cases would have already been adjudicated. The client's guilt would have been established already, by plea or trial, and I would just assist survivors in getting the fair lookback at their sentences. This would put these survivors on par with other survivors currently going through criminal court who will see potentially lesser sentences than those who were convicted prior to the law coming into effect. I am under the impression that there are not a lot of attorneys signing up to be assigned counsel for such cases. I believe that I could offer trauma-informed assistance to survivors in our region so they can exercise all their rights under the law. I would appreciate your feedback as to whether this is something we may be able to add to our proposed services. Thank you kindly for your time.

Legal assistance services are allowable if they arise as a direct result of victimization. Prosecution of criminal activity is not allowable under VOCA. Tort law is not allowable. OVS may require additional information about the purpose of any proposed legal services.

309. We are a current NYS OVS grantee, having launched a first-of-its-kind Emergency Department (ED) and hospital-based program to assess, provide services to, and ensure the safety of elder abuse / neglect victims while also collecting evidence when appropriate and working closely with the authorities. We are interested in potentially expanding elements of our program to other EDs/hospitals to improve the direct services they provide to victims and otherwise improve their coordination with Adult Protective Services and other community-based victim services providers. This may involve outreach, training, support, coordinating and collaborating with professionals from those EDs/hospitals who provide direct services to elder abuse victims, and developing and strengthening connections to community-based service providers. We believe, but wanted to confirm, that this potential expansion represents allowable activities because these represent activities that support a coordinated and comprehensive response to crime victims needs. Specifically: CFR 94-120 allows coordination activities that facilitate the provision of direct services CFR 94-120(c) and multi-system, multi-disciplinary response to crime victim needs CFR 94-120(c) CFR 94-110 allows training expenses include regional training of personnel providing direct assistance and allied professionals (including social service workers and mental health and medical professionals), including VOCA-funded and non-VOCA funded personnel

Yes, coordination and training activities are allowable. OVS may require additional information on the purpose and content of any coordination and training.



310. Can a VOCA-funded program provide services to persons causing harm (PCH) as well as survivors, as long as no VOCA funding is used to serve PCH? Can the same Program Supervisor or Director oversee services for PCH and services for survivors under one program, as long as VOCA funding is used only to serve survivors?

VOCA funded programs are not restricted from providing services to persons causing harm, but VOCA funding cannot be utilized for this. There is no restriction on use of the same Program Supervisor or Director for both programs as long as they are not 100% funded by VOCA.

311. On page 30 of the RFA, it states that “Outreach such as presentations to public to help identify crime victims and increase access to services and public awareness and education presentations and materials to inform crime victims of specific rights and services” is a VOCA-allowable expense. However, in the “Descriptions” tab of the Position Description Form, “training provided to professionals and community groups” is included as an example of a non-VOCA allowable expense. Can you clarify what kinds of community education are allowable and not allowable expenses for VOCA funding?

The reference to "training provided to professionals and community groups" on the Descriptions tab of the Position Description Form only precludes this from being included as part of a position's VOCA Required Reporting functions. These activities may still be included under "Other VOCA Allowable Activities" if they are related to the provision of direct services. OVS would require additional information on the nature of any such training or technical assistance to determine allowability.

312. Do government agencies have a NYS tax ID number?

Yes.

313. In the SFS application, it asks for the applicant's tax identification number. Is this different from a federal tax id number?

No, they are the same.

314. Is the 30% MWBE participation required and if so, does the percentage apply to the full grant award or only to certain budget categories? (2025 OVS RFA Page 27; Section 7i)

If awarded a contract, the MWBE Utilization plan may be required, and further instructions will be provided to successful applicants at a later date. MWBE requirements generally apply only to discretionary non-personal service costs.

315. Is the 30% MWBE participation required? (2025 OVS RFA Page 27; Section 7i)

Please see the response to Question #314.



316. I just wanted to confirm that MWBE Utilization Plans are not required to be submitted at the time of application. Is that correct?

Yes, this is correct. Further instructions and forms to meet MWBE requirements will be provided to successful applicants at a later date.

317. Can you please offer guidance on the inherent contradiction between what the RFA says about DEI and the current messaging from the federal government? On p. 9, the RFA states the following: "OVS recognizes the importance of a process for identifying and eliminating disparities and a commitment to the shifting of power and the removal of barriers that perpetuate inequity. OVS encourages organizations to incorporate intentional practices of change to actualize fair treatment, advancement, access, and opportunity for all to thrive." However, this runs counter to the recent messaging from the federal government to restrict DEI practices. Given that a substantial portion of this grant funding originates from federal funds, how should applicants handle this contradiction? Should we respond to the guidelines of the RFA as is and potentially risk that funding gets pulled down the road, or should we limit our discussion of DEI and potentially risk a poor score on this application? Please advise.

OVS acknowledges the concern from victim services providers related to recent federal executive orders. At this time, OVS is not making any modifications to our RFA as a result of federal actions, relevant portions of which have been preliminarily enjoined by a federal district court as of February 26, 2025. We would note that the OVS Service Value related to Principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility is something that applicants are encouraged, but not required, to incorporate into their proposed services. OVS cannot provide advice about how to respond to the RFA - applicants must make their own determination about the extent to which they address this Service Value in their submission. This component of the RFA is not scored as part of the evaluation process.

OVS remains committed to supporting victim services providers in New York State and ensuring equitable access to services for all New Yorkers, while recognizing the need to support specific cultural populations that often struggle to access services. We continue to monitor the federal landscape and will provide updates when additional information is available.

318. Related to the above question, does the federal government have access to our grant applications?

OVS does not routinely provide information to the federal government related to grant applications. However, please note that as part of the Special Conditions associated with our VOCA funding, OVS must provide the Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Justice Programs (OJP) with access to records that are pertinent to the federal award, including performance measurement information, financial records, supporting documents, and statistical records. Grant award applications may be requested and must be provided to the federal government as part of any grant monitoring activities or audits that are conducted by DOJ consistent with federal law.



319. Will the recent Executive Orders (EO) prohibiting the use of federal funds for DEI activities and programming impact the question: Describe any experience your organization has providing victim services that are culturally specific and explain how your organization is deeply embedded in the community

Please see the response to Question #317.

320. Does OVS anticipate any changes to the RFA requirements or priorities as a result of recent Executive Orders from the new presidential administration (for example, eliminating DEI programs, changes to the definitions of gender identity and sexual orientation, their position on immigration, etc.) since the VOCA grant involves federal funds? It seems some of these Executive Orders would conflict with OVS Service Values described on page 9 of the RFA. How would any such conflicts be resolved in terms of this RFA?

Please see the response to Question #317.

321. I have a follow-up question. We are in the process of writing our OVS grant. Do we need to be concerned about any of the language we use in the grant given the administration's position on how federal funding is used?

Please see the response to Question #317.

322. Diversity, equity and inclusion are referenced throughout the RFA – to provide one example, on page 9, the first value listed is incorporating principles of DEIA. Has this been impacted by the Executive Order “Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing,” and if so, how?

Please see the response to Question #317.

323. OVS Service values of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility are encouraged to be addressed in applications. While these are values in strong alignment with our agency values, given the current federal administration stance on DEI and the fact that federal funds support OVS grantees, do organizations need to alter how DEI is included in our applications?

Please see the response to Question #317.



324. Page 9, Section 1 (Service Values) What is your organizations guidance to ensure local agencies are supported as these principles and values are prioritized, should discrepancies arise between federal and state priorities?

Please see the response to Question #317.

325. We are not sure how to address the below RFA parameters within our narrative in light of the current federal freeze landscape. Can you provide some guidance? (2025 OVS RFA Page 08; Section 1f OVS defines underserved victims as populations who face barriers in accessing and using victim services, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities; transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary individuals (TGNCNB); populations underserved because of geographic location, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity; and populations underserved due to language barriers, disabilities, immigration status, or age. OVS encourages organizations to provide services that are culturally-specific, deeply embedded in their community, and/or are operated and led by and for the community or populations they serve

Please see the response to Question #317.

326. Question 1: Page 9, G. OVS Service Values, states the following: OVS encourages applicants to incorporate the following values into their proposed services: (1) principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility; (2) high quality services for historically underserved communities; (3) expanding access to mental health services; (4) improving access to housing services; and (5) sustainable and supportive employment practices. Applicants are encouraged to describe any such inclusion of these values in their application. 1. Incorporating Principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility: OVS recognizes the importance of a process for identifying and eliminating disparities and a commitment to the shifting of power and the removal of barriers that perpetuate inequity. OVS encourages organizations to incorporate intentional practices of change to actualize fair treatment, advancement, access, and opportunity for all to thrive. 2. Providing Services for Historically Underserved Communities: OVS recognizes that historically underserved communities and populations experience more barriers accessing services that reflect their unique needs. OVS encourages organizations to provide services that are culturally-specific, deeply embedded in their community, and/or are operated and led by and for the community or populations they serve. In light of the federal executive order “Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing”, could you please provide guidance on how applicants should address the language above?

Please see the response to Question #317.



327. Do you anticipate that the Executive Order issued yesterday (1/27/25) will have an impact on the RFA process or do you expect the process to proceed as planned on the timeline currently outlined in the RFA document?

Please see the response to Question #317.

328. Given that federal applications are currently being pulled after being released, are we confident that this application and funding will be awarded?

Please see the response to Question #317.

329. What are the implications of a federal funding freeze on this grant opportunity?

Please see the response to Question #317. OVS is not currently operating under a federal funding freeze.