

Request for Grant Application
Federal Fiscal Years 2021, 2022, and 2023
DPS-VOCA CRIME VICTIM ASSISTANCE GRANTS
Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Victim Assistance Funds, CFDA 16.575
Award period: October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2023
Amount available: approximately \$41.2 Million per federal fiscal year (\$123.6 Million total)

The Arizona Department of Public Safety's (DPS) administration of VOCA Funds:

The mission of the DPS-VOCA Administration Unit is to support the provision of a full range of direct services to victims of crime in Arizona. This is accomplished by assisting, training, and monitoring crime victim service providers throughout the state. This competitive grant solicitation process is being conducted to make multiple awards in support of direct services to crime victims.

What is the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Victim Assistance Fund?

The Victims of Crime Act was signed into law in 1984. The Act created a fund, administered by the United States Department of Justice, for victim assistance grants to the states. Federal funding received for victim service programs varies from year to year, depending on the amount of federal fines collected, using no tax dollars.

Who is eligible to apply?

Programs that are operated by a public agency or a nonprofit organization, or a combination of such agencies or organizations, which provide services to victims of crime, are eligible to apply. These organizations include, but are not limited to, police departments, county attorney offices, sexual assault and rape treatment centers, domestic violence programs and shelters, child abuse programs and children's advocacy centers, and mental health programs. A victim of crime is defined as a person who has suffered physical, sexual, financial, or emotional harm as a result of the commission of a crime.

What services and/or activities can be supported with VOCA grant funds?

Services to victims of crime that can be supported with VOCA grant funds include, but are not limited to, the following: crisis intervention, hotline counseling, and safety planning; case management; provision of information, referral, advocacy and follow-up contact; mental health counseling and care; peer-support; facilitation of participation in criminal justice and other public proceedings arising from the crime; legal assistance; forensic medical evidence collection examinations; forensic interviews; transportation to receive services; public awareness; transitional housing; and relocation.

Activities in support of direct services that can be supported with VOCA grant funds include, but are not limited to, the following: coordination of activities; supervision of direct service providers; multi-system, interagency, multi-disciplinary response to crime victim needs; automated systems and technology; volunteer training; and restorative justice.

The following **cannot** be funded with VOCA or matching funds: lobbying; research and studies; active investigations and prosecution of criminal activities; fundraising; capital expenses; compensation for victims of crime; medical care; salaries and expenses of management; grant writing; prevention; or offender related programs.

What is the amount of available funds and the award period?

Award agreements that are issued as a result of this Request for Grant Application will be for the term of October 1, 2020, through September 30, 2023 (federal fiscal years 2021, 2022, and 2023). It is anticipated that \$41.2 million will be awarded each fiscal year, for an approximate total of \$123.6 million over the course of the three fiscal years (contingent upon federal funding availability).

Since 2015, Congress has made large amounts of Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Victim Assistance funding available to states and territories for services that address the needs of crime victims. Initially, the balance of the Crime Victim Fund (the Fund) at the federal level was substantial (approximately \$12 billion), thus supporting the continuance of large funding disbursements for programs and services over the past five years. However, the current balance is significantly less (approximately \$4.4 billion) due to the large awards being disbursed as well as fewer deposits of federal fines and fees into the Fund. With approximately \$2.5 billion withdrawn each year, future award amounts are unpredictable.

Given the current environment, agencies and organizations should consider the health of the Fund when submitting grant applications. DPS encourages agencies and organizations to be mindful of the sustainability of projects which are reliant upon VOCA funding and to seek diversification of fund sources.

What are the criteria under which applications will be evaluated for award?

Applications are reviewed and evaluated based upon the following: compliance with the Victims of Crime Act and state program guidelines; completeness and clarity with which it addresses each section of the application; scope of the proposal in terms of the potential number of victims to be provided with appropriate services; the overall concept, feasibility and likelihood of success of the proposal through the applicant’s program and fiscal structure; accountability within the organization leading to quality service delivery; and a budget which represents reasonable grant expenditures and a cost effective proposal.

Applicants are urged to develop proposals that are concise, clearly written and contain eligible activities and costs as outlined in the DPS-VOCA Guidelines and the System for Administering Grants Effectively (SAGE) application instruction screens.

The point value of each evaluation criteria/factor of the application is as follows:

Services and Victim Population – 50 points

Agency Information – 150 points

 Mission Statement (20)

 Agency Summary (80)

 Volunteer Detail (30)

 Jurisdiction (20)

Project Information – 300 points

 Problem Statement (100)

 Project Summary (80)

 Victim Services Coordination & Collaboration (50)

 Project Assessment (70)

Performance Measures – 250 points
Budget – 200 points
Source of Funding – 50 points

A total score of at least 70% (700 points) is required for funding.

How/Where can applications be completed and submitted?

Applications will be accepted only through submission via the System for Administering Grants Effectively (SAGE). Applicants may access SAGE at <https://sage.azdps.gov/> to create an organization profile and to request/create an application for this solicitation. Applications must be submitted by 3:00 p.m. (MST) on April 24, 2020.

What is the VOCA Victim Assistance Grant Funding Schedule?

Below is an approximate timeline of the application process:

February 28, 2020 – Request for Grant Application Announcement
March 13, 2020 –VOCA Guidelines and SAGE pre-recorded webinars available
April 24, 2020, 3 p.m. (MST) – Application Deadline
August 3, 2020 – Award Notification

October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021 – VOCA Agreement Fiscal Year 1
October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022 – VOCA Agreement Fiscal Year 2
October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023 – VOCA Agreement Fiscal Year 3

Transition from Preapplication Conferences to Pre-Recorded Webinars

Historically, DPS has held in-person preapplication conferences in Phoenix; however, based on attendee feedback and input from those unable to attend, DPS will not hold in-person preapplication conferences for this RFGA process. In an effort to ensure the presentations are widely available to the victim services community throughout Arizona, DPS will publish two pre-recorded webinars – 1) an overview of the DPS-VOCA Guidelines to encompass program eligibility requirements, project requirements, description of eligible direct services, allowable/unallowable costs and subrecipient responsibilities and 2) a SAGE demonstration that will include instructions regarding how to complete the application forms and an overview of the application criteria.

DPS encourages all applicants to view both webinars. In addition to the pre-recorded webinars, DPS will publish a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document with actual questions posed from applicants in the past. The webinars and the FAQ will be available on the SAGE Home Page under DPS-VOCA Useful Links no later than March 13, 2020.

What do I need to know about Civil Rights Compliance?

All recipients of federal funds, regardless of the type of entity or the amount of money awarded, must provide assurance that they will not discriminate against any person on the grounds of race, color, national origin, disability, religion, sex, or age in any program or activity funded in whole or in part by federal financial assistance. The recipient must certify that it will comply with all applicable non-discrimination laws and regulations and must submit this assurance when accepting a DPS-VOCA Assistance award.

Specifically, the statute that governs OJP funded programs or activities, the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (34 U.S.C. 20110(e)) prohibits such discrimination, as follows:

No person shall on the ground of race, color, religion, national origin, handicap, or sex be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in connection with, any undertaking funded in whole or in part with sums made available under this chapter.

All recipients of OJP funding must also comply with the Department of Justice's regulations on Partnerships with Faith-Based and Other Neighborhood Organizations, 28 C.F.R. pt. 38. These regulations prohibit organizations from using financial assistance from the Department of Justice to fund inherently religious activities. While organizations can engage in non-funded inherently religious activities, they must be held separately from the Department of Justice funded program, and customers or beneficiaries cannot be compelled to participate in them. The regulations also make clear that organizations participating in programs funded by the Department of Justice are not permitted to discriminate in the provision of services on the basis of a beneficiary's religion.

The Assistant Attorney General of OJP has delegated the enforcement of civil rights compliance of all OJP grantees to the Director, Office for Civil Rights (OCR). The Director has civil rights enforcement responsibilities and determines through established policies and procedures whether any person is being excluded from participating in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in connection with the program or activity receiving OJP funds on these grounds. Where such discriminatory actions are found through compliance reviews or complaint processing the recipient agency may be determined to be in noncompliance for violation of the law and of its signed assurances. If attempts to secure voluntary compliance through negotiations are not successful, the sanction of suspension or termination of funding is required by statute. Some specific forms of discrimination that are prohibited are set out in the OJP program statute's implementing regulations 28 CFR 42.203. For more information consult the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) web site at <https://ojp.gov/about/offices/OCR.htm>.

Who can I contact if I need assistance?

For program content and application criteria, contact the VOCA Program Administrator, Kate Lyon, via email at klyon@azdps.gov or (602) 223-2661.

For SAGE technical assistance, contact the Agate Software Helpdesk at 1(866) 449-1425, Sheri Doll (sdoll@azdps.gov or (602) 223-2491) or Carla Uyeda (cuyeda@azdps.gov or (602) 223-2055).

DPS is an Equal Employment Opportunity Agency.