

## **Responses to VOCA RFP Questions**

**11/15/2019**

1. Is a Safe House for Victims of Human Trafficking in NH an allowable VOCA cost?

Response:

There is nothing in the RFP or VOCA rules that would exclude this type of funding generally. You would want to confirm that the status of the organization aligns with/meets the VOCA program rules. See attached 94.112 (b) 1&2 at page 17.

2. Is the VOCA funding available for animals/care of animals that are the victims of crime?

Response:

VOCA can only be provided for human victims of crime. The Federal VOCA rule defines victims of crime as “any person who has suffered physical, sexual, financial, or emotional harm as a result of the commission of a crime.” For this reason, the NHDOJ does not provide VOCA funding for animals that have been victims.

3. Part 6 of the RFP indicates that the funding is available above and beyond the current VOCA funds received by subrecipients and indicates award ceilings of \$600,000 and \$250,000 for statewide and regional/local projects respectively. Can you clarify whether a subrecipient can apply for both statewide and regional/local funding, and, if so, whether the ceiling award changes accordingly? Also, if a subrecipient can apply for both statewide and regional/local funding, do two applications need to be submitted or can the requests be submitted in one application with a budget narrative describing costs as statewide or regional/local?

Response:

An applicant can apply for both statewide and regional projects. If applying for both statewide and regional programs the cap remains at \$600,000 total. One application is allowable as long as the budget clearly delineates the funds that are being requested for the statewide project and the funds that are for the regional/local project.

4. The Budget Detail portion of Section 3 of the Application describes supplanting as “if an entity is currently paying for specific services with local funding, they cannot request federal funds to pay for that same service. Applicants may request funding to pay for an enhancement to that service, however only the enhancement will be eligible for funding and the original services must remain locally funded.” If programs and services are currently operating using federal (not local) funding subcontracted through the State of NH, but that federal funding will cease before accessing VOCA funds, is it accurate to state that is not supplanting?

Response:

Correct, if another source of federal funding is ending or depleted before accessing VOCA funds that would not be supplanting.

5. Can the funds be used in marketing and recruitment of staff?

Response:

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This is not expressly unallowable as long as it fits one of the funding priorities indicated in this RFP - if it were a piece of a larger application that was proposing other services and it was determined to be unallowable we would not disregard the entire application, if awarded, we would work with the organization to remove the unallowable components.

6. Are legal services allowable?

Response:

Yes

7. Is Pregnancy and postpartum transitional housing allowable for victims of crime?

Response:

Yes, see part 6.4.3 of the RFP, as long as a strong correlation is made that the need for housing is directly related to the crime victimization.

8. Can responses be provided earlier than November 22?

Response:

NHDOJ will make an effort to provide the answers by November 15, however some questions may have to be reviewed by legal counsel prior to release. If a question requires a review by legal counsel it could take the full time provided.

9. If a proposal involves a collaborative project, can the various organizations that are part of the collaboration submit separate proposals or does it have to be one joint proposal? If a separate collaborative proposals are allowed, can the organizations still get the five agency collaboration bonus points?

Response:

No, it must be a joint proposal, one primary applicant and other agencies are for collaboration. Please see section 6.3 and 10.3 of the RFP.

10. With regard to the 10% outreach requirement, can the outreach be focused in a specific area outlined in the proposal or does it have to be proportionate to the different services proposed in the application?

Response:

Yes, an organization can determine the focus area that the outreach is provided to, given that the outreach is to provide crime victims information on services available to them.

11. For Government agency applicants, the requirement for using volunteers is problematic. How is a waiver requested, and if a waiver is not approved, does that impact the chances of the application being accepted?

Response:

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The volunteer waiver will not impact the chances of an application being accepted. If a request for a waiver is not approved prior to award, NHDOJ will work with the subrecipient to come into compliance with this requirement. The waiver should be submitted with the application on agency letterhead.

12. If we do not have a formal independent audit does that make us ineligible? Due to our budget size, we have not had to have one.

Response:

You are still eligible to apply even if you do not have a formal independent audit.

13. If someone submits one or more projects, is the required page limit per project or per application?

Response:

The page limit holds if is for the same application. If separate applications, the 10 page limit for each application holds.

14. Is the department able to provide insight as to whether expectations of funding to be renewed or continued after the 2 year period?

Response:

No guarantees of renewing or continuing funding after the 2 year period. VOCA funding is not certain, so there are no guarantees of continuation of services beyond the 2 years.

15. For the 2 year grant, the first year may be considered a startup year, therefore may need more funding on the second year. Are budget revisions going to be allowed in the first year in recognition of this circumstance?

Response:

There will be allowable budget revisions in the pre-award period. Post award, there will be limited circumstances on budget revisions. VOCA has two different years of funding, sometimes funds are not available from first year to second year. However, if notified prior to awarding, adjustments could be made.

16. Are funds also available for individuals?

Response:

The VOCA funds are not set up in a way that would allow individuals to apply. The posted RFP is for non-profit, State and municipal organizations. We do not have a mechanism to allow individuals to apply for the funds directly through the NH Department of Justice.

17. Can the match be contributed from any project partner or must it come from the applicant agency?

Response:

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Match can be provided by any project partner as long as there is a mechanism in place that properly documents the in-kind match.

18. Can this grant pay overtime for ACERT?

Response:

Yes, the VOCA grant can pay for overtime. It is important to note that if overtime is used and billed to the VOCA grant the overtime used must be VOCA allowable. VOCA rule 94.122 dictates that Active Investigation and Prosecution of criminal activities, except for the provision of victims' services (e.g. emotional support, advocacy and legal services) is expressly unallowable. It would be important to document the amount of overtime used for victim service activities of the law enforcement partner and only use those hours as part of the program.

19. For 6.4.1. Legal services- does this only pertain to direct legal services provided by an attorney? Or would APS services, as mandated under NH statutes to investigate and respond to abuse allegations (both civil and criminal) qualify? Alternatively, would referrals to and collaborating with legal services from AG, law enforcement and lawyers to help the victims of crime qualify?

Response:

This reference is intended for civil legal assistance. Direct victim services are the goal of this funding. VOCA cannot fund active investigation and prosecution of criminal activities. VOCA cannot cover the 169-C process (civil or criminal), but rather it could cover advocacy for a child that is a victim because of 169-C. The investigative portion and due process portion is unallowable. I am unable to comment on a program regarding how victims of crime may qualify. The allowability depends on how the program is developed.

20. At 6.4.2. Crisis treatment services-does person-centered emergency response that APS provides to victims of crime fall under your definition of this? I think it does, particularly "teams that provide a shared community vision for victims of crime and secondary victims...specifically addressing intervention of additional ACES".

Response:

See VOCA rule 94.119 for allowable activities. Link provided on the RFP at 2.3. The allowability depends on how the program is developed. Generally, direct victim service response teams for individuals is allowable.

21. At 6.4.3. Housing needs provided to victims of crime. The lack of available housing is a huge crisis in NH. Based on this wording, does housing stabilization assistance, help securing a restraining order, accessing in-home medical care, paying cleaning costs, heating and electric bills, other housing costs to save, secure and stabilize a victim's housing if they want to remain in their home, qualify as "housing needs"?

Response:

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It depends, there is a requirement to demonstrate that the need for housing is a result of their victimization. If that criteria is met, most of the services listed in the question are allowable with some exceptions. Medical care and cleaning costs for individuals are generally unallowable.

22. Does providing information and referrals to legal services qualify as “legal Services”?

Response:

Yes, referrals to legal services can qualify as long as the primary goal of the funding requested fits under one of the priority areas indicated in part 6 of the RFP.

23. Would a homeless shelter that is serving victims of crime be eligible to apply?

Response:

Yes, as long as the need for housing arouse from their victimization. You would prorate the service costs for crime victims and non-victims.

24. What is required for proof of victimization?

Response:

The victimization can be self-reported by the victim. Many agencies have the victims self-report their victimization at intake.

25. Are you be looking for facilities that are mental health based or could a smaller program include mental health as part of their application?

Response:

There is nothing that prohibits a program from applying for a portion of their program application including mental health services. The majority of the funding requested should be in one of the RFP priorities indicated.

26. Does the victim have to be actively involved in the criminal justice process to qualify for VOCA programs?

Response:

No, there is no time requirement on accessing services for victims of crime

27. Does this RFP apply to comfort dog programs?

Response:

Yes, there is funding available for comfort dogs at part 6.4.2 of our posted VOCA RFP. Some allowable costs with VOCA are the purchase of a comfort dog, dog and handler training, dog food, and supplies. This has to be a new or improved program. Costs that have already been approved to be paid from, state, town or municipal funds cannot be replaced by VOCA funds. The application and request for proposal are posted at: <https://www.doj.nh.gov/grants-management/funding-availability.htm>. Under Victims of Crime Act “VOCA” Grant.

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Additional Information:

As of November 12, 2019, this is a complete list of questions posed within the allowable inquiry period and therefore we do not anticipate that this list of applicant inquiries will change between the period of posting and the deadline for agency responses to inquiries on November 22, 2019.

If additional clarifications are made, they will be posted to the website as a separate document.