



State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025 Competitive Victims of Crime Act (VOCA/VOCG)
Technical Assistance Questions

Question: If a program has a VOCA continuation grant with federal funds, a VOCA continuation grant with state funds, and a competitive grant with state funds, should all of these be put into one application?

- **Response:** Yes, only one application will be accepted.

Question: If a program currently has a VOCA grant, is this the only opportunity to re-apply?

- **Response:** Yes

Question: There has been a reduction in the collection/publication of up-to-date statistics on our geographic region since the pandemic. If the most up-to-date data set available is cited, how will the application be impacted if it is deemed outdated?

- **Response:** Applicants should research multiple sources, use the most recent data available, note the sources and explain, if applicable, why the data is older.

Question: Should other awards from your office that have been used to serve victims of crime be listed?

- **Response:** Yes, there is a section at the end of the narrative in the Grants Management System (GMS) titled “Applicants Disclosure of Pending Applications Statement” where applicants must include all current and requested related funding.

Question: What should be included on the Face Sheet?

- **Response:** Applicants should fully complete all fields in the Face Sheet tab in the GMS.

Question: If a program receives funding on a rolling basis from a variety of sources, they may not know the specifics of amounts/exact awards when submitting the application. What is the best way to handle this?

- **Response:** Applicants should include current funding as well as any funding the agency is applying for and the requested amount.

Question: For goals/objectives and performance measures – what will grantees be expected to report on? Should they design deliverables and metrics based on the state’s metrics or their own? Can the state provide definitions for their metrics?

- **Response:** Please reference the Project Goals and Objectives and the Program Measurements sections on both the [GMS Application Instructions](#) and the [FY25 SFY 25 Competitive Victims of Crime Act \(VOCA/VOCG\) NOFA](#).

Allowable/Unallowable Items

Question: Can client assistance funds (barriers to self-sufficiency) be included?

- **Response:** Yes, applicants should include information in the narrative as well as the budget justification to include: the number of victims proposed to be served and the breakdown per type of assistance requested (rental assistance, utilities, basic needs, transportation, etc.).

Question: Can VOCA funds be used to support victims in need of educational assistance or training such as vocational/trade training?

- **Response:** VOCA funds can be utilized to assist in the recovery and rehabilitation of victims of crime. Any training or education directly associated with the victim's recovery can be considered direct service and is allowable depending on justification. General training or education that is solely for personal betterment or otherwise not directly related to a victim's recovery is unallowable under VOCA funds.

Question: Can you define "trinkets" more thoroughly, and where the line is drawn between outreach materials versus the unallowable trinkets?

- **Response:** Personal gifts, novelty items, souvenirs, and similar items are considered trinkets and are unallowable under VOCA funding. Some programmatic and awareness/outreach items can be allowable depending on justification. Outreach/Awareness items must include contact information for the sub-recipient program. The need for these items must be justified including a description of how it will be utilized. Programmatic items are supplies that are needed to fulfill project goals and outcomes. These items also will require a justification on the need as well as a description of how they are necessary to fulfill the project goals and objectives.

Question: Are bonuses allowable?

- **Response:** While bonuses are technically allowed, salary increases are preferred. Requests for bonuses must have a written policy in place that meets all federal requirements. Bonuses must apply to all employees, not just VOCA employees. The bonus amount must be prorated. Applicants will need to provide a list of employees, how each position is funded (by percentages), the prorated amount per position, and a listing of any employee that is not funded through VOCA/VOCG.

Budget

Question: Can a percentage of the audit be in the budget?

- **Response:** Yes, VOCA can be used for the prorated share of audit costs based on the funding request and total operating budget.

Question: Is it okay to have a higher hourly contractual rate if GOCPP is only paying \$81.25?

- **Response:** Yes, provided the details on how the remainder of the hourly rate will be funded is detailed in the application narrative and within the contract. There is also a process in the NOFA to request an exception to the \$81.25 hourly max. Applicants should include this form with their application and detail this request within the narrative and the budget justification. Additionally, please provide documentation to support the increase such as screenshots from job search websites.

Question: If there is a position that is fully funded through different means but will work some of their time on this project, should this be included?

- **Response:** This would not be included in the budget but could be utilized as a match. This role could be described in the narrative to support the overall project and the applicant's ability to meet match. The narrative should clearly state that the position is not being requested within the budget.

Question: If a program has a federally approved Indirect (IDC) Rate higher than 10%, can they still use the de minimis rate?

- **Response:** Applicants can only use one or the other. Applicants that have a federally approved IDC rate can choose to use a percentage up to the federally approved rate. All applicants that plan to use their federally approved IDC rate must submit the agreement with the application.

Question: How should it be denoted that a program would like indirect costs applied based on final awarded direct costs?

- **Response:** There is a formula within the [GMS Application Instructions](#) to determine eligible line items towards the IDC requested amount. There are ineligible budget line items.

Question: How should items be prioritized in the budget?

- **Response:** Applicants should prioritize line items based on most vital victim service needs including IDC. GOCPP will adjust IDC, if needed, based on other line items adjustments.

Question: Does fringe need to be broken out by FICA, health insurance, SUTA, workers comp, etc?

- **Response:** Fringe should be one line item and applicants should break down what is included in the fringe calculation in the justification.

Question: Is there a maximum amount that a program can ask for?

- **Response:** No, there is no maximum but GOCPP is looking to fund the most critical victim services needs across the state.

Question: Contractual direct service providers are not consultants, how can this be differentiated to not exceed reasonable market rate vs. consultant rate?

- **Response:** Contractual direct service providers (other than full time employees) should be listed under the contractual budget category, as should professional services and other consultants. There is a process in the NOFA to request an exception to the \$81.25 hourly max. (See the Budget section of the NOFA under Contractual Services)

Question: Should each applicant determine their own methodology for allocating shared costs?

- **Response:** Yes, applicants must explain the process for using a consistent methodology across the entity's funding sources. This is very important in reporting performance measures as well. See additional guidance on page 22 of the [FY25 SFY 25 Competitive Victims of Crime Act \(VOCA/VOCG\) NOFA](#).

Match

Question: Can programs provide a partial match if they do not have a full 20%?

- **Response:** Yes, applicants should provide the percentage of the match they can support in the Sustainability section of the narrative, along with what comprises the match.

Question: Can you clarify the 20% match and the 25% from other sources?

- **Response:** Match is calculated on the total project cost (grant funds plus the match). The VOCA match requirement is 20% of the total project costs. For example, on \$100,000 in grant funds, the match would be \$25,000 (25% of the grant funds) and the total project costs would be \$125,000 (20% of the total project costs). Please see the match calculator on the GOCPP website for assistance with calculations:

<https://goccp.maryland.gov/grants/tips-and-guidance/grant-match/>

Question: Should programs state where the match comes from?

- **Response:** Yes, programs stating they can support a match in the Sustainability section of the narrative should also indicate what comprises the match.

Question: Does the match cover the 25% funding from other sources?

- **Response:** Funding from other sources, with the exception of federal funds, can count toward the match.

Question: Since programs don't know if they are getting VOCA or VOCA, how do they know whether to include the 20% match or not?

- **Response:** No applicant should include a match in their budget at this time. Instead, in the Sustainability portion of the narrative, all applicants are required to clearly state whether or not the agency has the financial capacity to provide a 20% cash or in-kind match.

Award Eligibility

Question: Are trafficking grants currently funded through state funds part of this NOFA?

- **Response:** No, a separate Regional Navigator NOFA will be posted in the coming weeks for all Regional Navigator programs regardless of the previous funding source. Regional Navigator programs should not apply under VOCA.

Question: Are SARC, SARC VOCA, and VOCA all separately awarded?

- **Response:** There will be a separate NOFA for SARC funding in the coming weeks regardless of the previous funding source.

Question: Are municipalities eligible?

- **Response:** Yes, local government agencies are eligible to receive VOCA/VOCA funding.

Question: Is human trafficking included as a category of underserved population?

- **Response:** Not for this purpose. The NOFA states "The following groups are designated as "underserved populations": victims of federal crimes; survivors of homicide victims; or victims of assault, robbery, gang violence, hate and bias crimes, intoxicated drivers, bank robbery, non-English speaking, economic exploitation and fraud, and elder abuse."

Question: If a program has two currently funded VOCA projects in different program areas, must the agency choose which of the currently funded VOCA programs may submit a competitive application?

- **Response:** GOCPP will consider an exception for complex organizations providing significantly different victim services (for example: university programs or units of government). To request an exception contact David Blum, VOCA Program Manager at david.blum@maryland.gov.

Question: Do children in foster care for neglect qualify, as well as those found to have been abused?

- **Response:** Victims of neglect would qualify. VOCA funding is for the provision of direct victim services for victims of violent crime. We understand that some agencies provide services to a larger population than victims of crime. In these cases, the application must be clear that the full project and budget line items will only support crime victims. Proration is critical to demonstrating the services requested are allowable under this program.

Question: Does this funding apply to victims of gunshot wounds?

- **Response:** Yes

Question: If a program is implementing support to victims of gun assaults within an established gun prevention program, will this grant still apply?

- **Response:** VOCA does not support primary prevention efforts, however secondary and tertiary prevention may be funded with VOCA. For example, secondary prevention could be a hospital-based intervention program that offers trauma-informed services to victims of violence to prevent ongoing violence while supporting survivors and communities in the aftermath of a crime.

Additional Documents/GMS

Question: Are support letters needed? If so, are there points associated with support letters?

- **Response:** Support letters are not required.

Question: Should additional documents be submitted with the application or uploaded after the award?

- **Response:** All required documents should be submitted with the application.

Question: If a program partners with another organization(s), are they required to submit an MOU with partner(s) when they apply?

- **Response:** MOUs are not required. The code of federal regulations distinctly differentiates between a contractual relationship and a subrecipient relationship, with a subaward relationship carrying significantly more requirements and monitoring. More information can be found here: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.331>

Question: Should the performance measures data for continuation projects be based on what programs have been reporting in the GMS previously? Or based on other metrics they had proposed?

- **Response:** Applicants should include any and all metrics that support the needs and documents the efforts made to address the need.

Question: How many people can request a GMS ID from one organization?

- **Response:** A single organizational account is required for each organization. Multiple user accounts can be provided for each organization.

Question: For these required documents that go along with the application, will programs also need to re-submit these upon award even if they don't change from time of application?

- **Response:** No, applicants will not need to resubmit post-award, provided the documents are completed correctly and submitted with the application.

Question: If a program has a formal logic model, should they attach that document as an attachment?

- **Response:** Please include this information in the narrative, not as an attachment. Applicants can paste an image into the narrative sections of the GMS.

Other

Question: Does bullet point #6 under "Bonus Points" on p. 13 of the NOFA mean bonus points are given if the applicant is a member of one or more of these groups (MCA, MCASA, MNADV)?

- **Response:** No, these points are referring to those agencies/organizations specifically

Question: How often do new criminal background checks and fingerprinting have to happen?

- **Response:** Federal guidance requires these safety checks at least every five years.

Question: When do you anticipate notification of award/nonaward?

- **Response:** May 2024

Question: Does GOCCP determine if funding will come from VOCA or VOFG?

- **Response:** Yes

Question: Will child trafficking victims align as victims of sexual assault or child abuse?

- **Response:** Yes, child trafficking victims can fall into these categories.

Question: Since helping victims apply for compensation benefits is a requirement, will the significant challenges with the victim compensation program as it currently is structured be taken into account?

- **Response:** All information submitted within each application will be considered.