

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

Crime Victim Compensation

What are the Grantee responsibilities in assisting victims to apply for Crime Victim Compensation?

ANSWER: Per the VOCA Rules, 28 CFR 94.113(d), Grantees are required to provide “assistance to victims in applying for compensation. Assistance to potential recipients (including potential recipients who are victims of federal crime) in applying for such benefits may include, but are not limited to, referring such potential recipients to an organization that can so assist, identifying crime victims and advising them of the availability of such benefits, assisting such potential recipients with application forms and procedures, obtaining necessary documentation, monitoring claim status, and intervening on behalf of such potential recipients with the crime victims compensation program.”

A “referral” consists of providing a verbal description of application benefits and process, providing written materials, informing the victim of their rights, and giving information on agencies that can help with the application process. Handing a brochure to a client without an explanation or additional assistance does not constitute a referral. See VOCA Grant Manual, p. 3.

Volunteers

Are Grantees required to have volunteers in its VOCA project?

ANSWER: Yes. The VOCA Rules mandate that the Grantee must use volunteers to be eligible to receive VOCA funding. 28 CFR 94.113(a). While the Grantee project itself may not use volunteers, if the Grantee is part of a larger organization or agency, the requirement may be applied to larger organization or agency if it uses volunteers.

However, the requirement may be waived if CPJAD determines there is a compelling reason to waive this requirement. A “compelling reason” may be a statutory or contractual provision concerning liability or confidentiality of counselor/victim information, which bars the use of volunteers for certain positions, or the inability to recruit volunteers after a sustained and aggressive recruitment effort. The written volunteer waiver request must be approved and signed by CPJAD. See VOCA Grant Manual, p. 3.

Insurance Requirements

What are the insurance requirements for non-profit organizations?

ANSWER: As a requirement to receive VOCA funds, non-profit Grantees must maintain insurance acceptable to CPJAD in full force and effect throughout the term of the contract from start date to end date. The policy or policies of insurance maintained by the Grantee shall provide the following limit(s) and coverage:

- Commercial General Liability (occurrence form): \$2,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence from bodily injury and property damage.
- Automobile, if applicable: Bodily injury \$1,000,000/person, \$1,000,000/occurrence.
- Professional Liability, if applicable: \$1,000,000/claim, \$2,000,000 annual aggregate.

A Certificate of Liability Insurance shall be provided to CPJAD by the Grantee. Each insurance policy required by the contract shall contain the following clause: “The State of Hawaii, including all of its departments and attached agencies, their officers, employees and agents, are named as additional insured, as respects the named insured’s activities on their behalf.”

The insurance policy must be in effect from the project period start date. Insurance policy coverage from the date of execution of the contract, if the date is after the project period start date, does not meet the insurance policy requirement. See VOCA Grant Manual, p. 4

Public Awareness Information

Do Grantees need to follow the OVC Publishing Guidelines for all multi-media public awareness information ?

ANSWER: Yes, in part. In general, print or electronic materials concerning an OVC-funded project that are intended for public dissemination require CPJAD approval at least 45 days before dissemination. The materials must include the following statement:

“This product was produced by (agency) and supported by grant number (federal grant number*) awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice through the State of Hawaii Department of the Attorney General. The opinions, findings,

and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this product are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the State of Hawaii Department of the Attorney General or the U.S. Department of Justice.”

*The Grantee should contact the assigned Criminal Justice Planning Specialist for the federal grant number.

Radio broadcasts do not need to include this statement during the broadcast; however, it should be included below the printed transcript. See VOCA Grant Manual, p. 11.

Culturally Appropriate Support Services

Are Grantees allowed to provide culturally appropriate support services to crime victims?

ANSWER: Yes. Traditional, cultural, and/or alternative therapy healing (e.g., art therapy, yoga) are authorized if the costs serve a programmatic purpose and are supported by evidence-based and trauma-informed or therapeutic standards. See 28 CFR 94.119(b)(7) and VOCA Grant Manual p. 21.

- Costs for these services are required to comply with the DOJ Grants Financial Guide, Section 3.13, which states “(e)ntertainment, including amusement diversion, social activities, and any associated costs (i.e., tickets to shows or sports events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, and gratuities) are unallowable. Certain exceptions may apply when such costs have a programmatic purpose and have been approved by the awarding agency.”
- The Grantee must provide information showing that the services are supported by evidence-based and trauma-informed or therapeutic standards for victims and/or the intended target population.
- The Grantee must collect performance information to measure the effectiveness of their services on the target population.

Housing and Related Expenses

Are Grantees allowed to provide housing and related assistance to victims?

ANSWER: Yes. Rental assistance is authorized. Due to the current lack of affordable housing, rental assistance may be extended up to 6 months, capped at up to \$2,500 a month, for a total of \$15,000 per client or victim household if the Grantee documents:

- Efforts to secure housing assistance from other sources.
- Works with the client to explore other alternate housing situations.

Rental payments must be made to the vendor.

Also, reasonable moving expenses, security deposits on housing, and utility startup costs can be provided for up to \$3,000 total in a 12-month period per household (no stacking) if the project documents: (a) efforts to secure housing assistance from other sources, and (b) works with the client to explore other alternative housing situations. Payments must be made to the vendor. See 28 CFR 94.119(k) & (l); VOCA Grant Manual p. 23.

The time and amounts authorized for rental assistance and related expenses listed above may change; please check with your assigned Criminal Justice Planning Specialist for the latest information.

Timesheets

Are Grantees required to keep timesheets?

ANSWER: Yes. Time and activity reports (timesheets) must be maintained for all grant- and match-funded staff. The timesheets must include the name and position of the employee, the date, hours worked, a description of activities specific to the project, and any fringe benefits (i.e., holiday, vacation, etc.) staff receives. If the employee is partially funded under VOCA, the time and activity should include sufficient information on non-VOCA funded hours and activities to support the allocation of time and activities listed in the budget. Timesheets must reflect *actual* work performed, and not a prorated estimate or projection of hours. Timesheets must also be signed by the employee and the employee's supervisor. See VOCA Grant Manual, p. 30 and Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, [Time and Effort Best Practices for VOCA-Funded Personnel \(ojp.gov\)](https://www.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/media/document/time-effort-guidance-voca-funded-personnel.pdf), <https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/media/document/time-effort-guidance-voca-funded-personnel.pdf>