



ALAN WILSON  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

## MEMORANDUM

TO: VOCA, VAWA, and SVAP Grant Applicants

FROM: Burke Fitzpatrick, Director *BF*  
Crime Victim Services Division

BJ Nelson, Deputy Director *BJN*  
Department of Crime Victim Assistance Grants

RE: Grant Application Procedures for Projects Beginning October 1, 2019

DATE: March 29, 2019

Thank you to all those who were able to attend our *Victims of Crime Grants Solicitation Workshop* held last week in Columbia. If you were there you know we had a packed house at the Department of Juvenile Justice. Thanks also to the 60 applicants who listened to the workshop via our live webinar. We have posted that webinar should you wish to review the guidance that was presented last Monday. The webinar may be found on the Crime Victims Grants Help Desk at <http://www.scag.gov/crime-victims-grants-help-desk>.

Since the grant application process has opened we understand that there have been a number of glitches in the first use of this new system. Thank you for your patience. We will continue to work with you over the phone and via email to resolve any issues you encounter. Staff is working every day with our vendor to resolve the software application problems that have arisen as well as the technical problems with our new grants revision process.

In the workshop perhaps the most important message was that it appears federal Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) grants to the states will be sharply reduced in this current fiscal year (which began October 1<sup>st</sup> of last year). None of the states, including South Carolina, have received either their VOCA award or notice of what the amount will be. But, based on our analysis of the national VOCA appropriations, all states could be subject to an approximate 30% cut in federal funding in this next grant cycle and perhaps in future grant years.

**VOCA, VAWA, and SVAP Grant Applicants**

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**As discussed at the workshop, we all must take prudent steps now to soften a possible hard budget landing in the future. Our highest priority is to enable local units of government and non-profit organizations to protect the hundreds of grant-funded victim advocates who provide direct services to victims of crime.**

**We are instituting some of these austerity measures now and applying them to current grant programs that are in progress. Chief among these is an immediate freeze on new positions. It would be irresponsible to allow projects to take on additional personnel when we anticipate multiple years of federal funding cutbacks.**

**Most of these new funding policies concern the forthcoming grant cycle beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>, but grant writers must take these restrictions into account now as you write your grant applications and get them approved on your agency or governmental level. The applications are due April 30<sup>th</sup> by 5:00. Late applications are not reviewed.**

**Since the workshop we have been asked to consider giving existing subgrantees another option to reduce program costs to accommodate these declining federal awards. Some of the larger non-profit agencies in particular would like greater flexibility in managing their personnel budgets for next year. We view all the agencies receiving sub awards from our department as our partners and make every effort to accommodate your requests and be responsive to your needs. Therefore, we have agreed to offer two budget reduction choices and these appear on the attached page.**

**In summary, subgrantees can incorporate the reductions that were presented at the workshop (e.g., no salary increases, no fringe benefit increases, etc.) or take percentage reductions in your overall award (5%, 8% or 10% based on the size of your current award) and largely manage your personnel budget as you see fit. In both cases, however, out of state travel for training, furniture and equipment purchases remain restricted.**

**Please call me or any of the grants staff with any questions you may have regarding the options presented on the attached page. We know that any kind of budget reductions are painful, but I am confident our ongoing partnership will provide the best possible services to victims of crime with the resources we have available.**

**:Attachment**

## **ATTACHMENT**

### **Option #1**

#### **(Applies to continuation projects and new project applications)**

1. These provisions apply to Victim of Crime Act (VOCA), Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and State Victim Assistance Program (SVAP) grants.
2. Your personnel budget category may not exceed what was awarded in 2018. A "current award amount" is the award amount that was approved by the Office of the Attorney General and began on October 1, 2018, expiring September 30, 2019.
3. No new personnel, either full time or part time, may be requested by continuation grant applications. New grant applications may apply for funding that includes a new position(s), however, any new position requests will be carefully scrutinized by staff in preparing their funding recommendations.
4. No increases in salary (based on salaries for continuation personnel approved by this office in your current award) will be approved. No increases in fringe amounts will be approved based on this same criteria.
5. No out-of-state travel will be approved for funding unless grant funded personnel must obtain or renew specific certifications that cannot be obtained in South Carolina. Documentation to support such a request for out-of-state training must be provided in the application.
6. No equipment will be approved for continuation grant projects. The equipment funding category should be left blank on all continuation applications (except for ballistic vests if needed). New grant applications may apply for funding that includes essential equipment (including software and contractual services), however, any new equipment requests will be carefully scrutinized by staff in preparing their funding recommendations.
7. Requests for furniture, billboards, banners, sheds and storage buildings will not be approved.
8. Requests for supplies in the "Other" category will be scrutinized on a case-by-case basis and reductions may be recommended based on past usage and projected needs.

### **Option #2**

#### **(Applies only to VOCA continuation projects, not new applications)**

1. Out-of-state training and travel is restricted (see Option 1, #5, above).

## Option #2 – Continued

2. Equipment and certain other items will not be approved (see Option 1, #6 & #7).
3. Requests for supplies in the “Other” category will be scrutinized on a case-by-case basis and reductions may be recommended based on past usage and projected needs.
4. Continuation applications for Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) awards will submit requests for funding reflecting reductions in the following percentages, below:
  - A. Agencies receiving less than \$500,000 in VOCA funds – 5% Cut
  - B. Agencies receiving \$500,001 - \$1,000,000 in VOCA funds – 8% Cut
  - C. Agencies receiving \$1,000,001 or more in VOCA funds – 10% Cut
5. These reduction percentages, above, are based on the federal award amount originally received on October 1, 2018 of each VOCA continuation grant. The percentage reduction (“cut”) category for an agency’s VOCA grant applications is determined by adding together the award value of each VOCA grant currently managed by that agency.
6. There will be no increases in the Personnel Category allowed. However, applicants are permitted to restructure within that category (e.g., salary raises, fringe benefit adjustments, level of effort increases or decreases, etc.). Please note that grants staff will review requests in all budget categories, including personnel, to ensure they are reasonable and are not prohibited by federal or state requirements. Staff may recommend case-by-case amendments to any budget category based on a number of factors including past performance, clarity of objectives, and documentation of effectiveness in providing direct services to victims of crime as well as an assessment of the probability of future success.