

PUBLIC NOTICE

Law and Public Safety

Division of Criminal Justice

Notice of Anticipated Availability of Funds

New Jersey Victim Assistance Grant (VAG) Program

Take notice that, in compliance with N.J.S.A. 52:14-34.4, the Department of Law & Public Safety (L&PS), Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ) announces the anticipated availability of the following grant program funds:

- a) **Name of the Program:** New Jersey Victim Assistance Grant (VAG) Program. This program is supported by the Federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Victim Assistance Grant Program.

- b) **Purpose:** The purpose of the NJ VAG program is to support the delivery of services to crime victims. Services are defined as those efforts that: respond to the emotional and physical needs of crime victims; assist crime victims stabilize their lives; assist crime victims understand and participate in the criminal justice system; provide crime victims with a measure of safety and security; and provide specialized services to domestic violence and/or sexual assault victims. Types of projects that may be considered for funding include, but are not limited to:

1. Crisis intervention, 24-hour hotlines, emergency shelter, transportation, food and clothing, or other services that respond to the immediate emotional and physical needs of crime victims.
2. Emergency legal assistance, such as filing restraining orders and obtaining emergency custody/visitation rights, when such actions are directly connected to family violence cases and would help in maintaining the health and safety of crime victims.
3. Information, referral, and community education programs.
4. Services and activities that assist crime victims stabilize their lives and understand the dynamics of their victimization through the use of support groups, individual and group counseling session, and therapy by a qualified professional mental health provider.
5. Criminal justice system assistance, including accompaniment to court, transportation to court dates, and child care during a crime victim's court attendance.
6. Planning, development, and implementation of new projects or initiatives for underserved populations.
7. Special consideration will be given to the following underserved victims and service areas:
 - a. **Underserved Victims:** developmentally disabled victims, elderly victims, urban and rural youth, military service members and PTSD sufferers, non-English speaking victims, minority victims, and LGBT victims.

b. **Service Areas:** housing, transportation, legal services, long term counseling and mental health services, bilingual/multicultural services, and child-victims' services.

i. **ADA Compliance:** Complying with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Pub. L. No. 101-336, 104 Stat. 328 (1990) and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 ("ADAAA") Pub. L. No. 101-325, 122 Stat. 3553 (2008) to ensure victims with developmental disabilities have equal access to critical services.

c) **Available Funding:** Pending the official Federal VOCA award to the Division of Criminal Justice, it is anticipated that approximately \$54 million will be available to support this program, a significant increase from last year's allocation of approximately \$12 million. Funds will be awarded on a competitive basis. Awards will be made based on the quality of the application submitted and the pending availability of Federal funding. Funding decisions will be made to ensure the broadest and deepest level of service coverage practicable, taking into account the type of services to be delivered, the types of victims to be served, and the geographic distribution of the project.

Applicants may apply for a maximum of \$150,000 per project for a 12-month grant period. The project period will be from January 1, 2016 until December 31, 2016. Only one application per project will be accepted. Continuation funding may be available for one (1) additional year, contingent upon the availability of Federal funding and the

subgrantee's compliance with grant conditions and performance of its goals and objectives. A 20 percent match, cash or in-kind, is required by all applicants. For example, a \$150,000 award requires a \$37,500 match for a total grant award of \$187,500.

Please note that if you are unable to fulfill the match requirement, the Federal Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) may grant a full or partial waiver on a case-by-case basis. A match waiver form will be included in the application package.

Please also note that your inability to meet the full match amount will not negatively bear upon the strength of your grant application.

- d) Organizations which may apply for funding under this program:** Private, nonprofit organizations and public agencies that provide crime victim services are eligible to apply. Public agencies must provide services to crime victims and cannot be part of a law enforcement agency or a prosecutor's office. Private, nonprofit organizations must be organized under Title 15A of the New Jersey Revised Statutes or be qualified for a nonprofit tax exemption under the Internal Revenue Code 26 U.S.C. Section 501(c)(3).

Preference will be given to victim assistance agencies that have longstanding and proven track records of service to their communities. Additionally, agencies that pursue projects tailored to serve underserved populations and/or promote innovative projects new in the state of New Jersey will be given preference.

e) **Qualifications needed by an applicant to be considered for funding:** Applicants must be in good standing with all State and Federal agencies with which they have had an existing grant or contractual relationship. Where appropriate, all applicants must hold current professional and State licenses and certifications.

Charitable organizations and professional fund raisers based, operating, or soliciting within New Jersey must register with the Division of Consumer Affairs Charities Registration Section, unless specifically exempted under the provisions of the Charitable Registration and Investigation Act, N.J.S.A. 45:17A-18 et seq. Proof of charity registration compliance or proof of exemption shall be submitted to the State Office of Victim Witness Advocacy with the organization's application.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) of 2006 requires a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and **registration with the System for Award Management (SAM), formerly the Central Contractor Registration (CCR)**, as unique identifiers for each entity receiving a Federal award or subaward. Applications without a completed FFATA Form, including a current DUNS number(s) and SAM registration, will be considered incomplete.

To be considered for funding, an eligible applicant must file a completed application, in accordance with the requirements of the program, by the submission deadline. **The following scored components must be included in the application:**

a. *Agency Background, Mission, Experience, and Capability. 10 points*

Please describe in detail the agency's mission, background and experience as it relates to the purpose and objectives of the proposed project. Explain the agency's knowledge and capability to carry out the project based on demonstrated experience in providing victim services to the target population. Public agencies must cite their statutory and/or local governing authority.

b. *Problem Statement/Needs Assessment. 15 points*

Please identify the specific problem(s), target population, and geographic area that the proposed project will address. Describe the needs and characteristics of the target population; local needs and conditions; describe existing services and identify gaps and/or barriers in services. Include current statistics and relevant facts to substantiate the need and selection of the proposed project.

**c. *Project Description, including Goals, Objectives, and Work Plan (Action Strategy).
30 points***

Please specify clear, realistic goals for the proposed project. Identify objectives that are concise, measurable and clearly relate to the goals, problem statement/needs assessment, and target population. Measurable objectives shall include, but are not be limited to, the level of service to be provided. Describe in detail the project's approach or strategy for attaining each objective. Include a project work plan that specifies each objective along with the major activities, responsible staff and feasible time frames for each objective and activity.

Please note that OVC and the State Office for Victim Witness Advocacy (SOVWA) will place a strong emphasis on the use of evidence-based programs and practices and the use of data and evidence in policymaking and program development. Agencies that strive to improve the quantity and quality of evidence and integrate that evidence into program, practice, and policy decisions will be looked upon more favorably than those agencies that do not employ evidence-based practices.

d. *Partnership, Collaboration, and Coordination of and Linkages to Services.*

10 points

Partnerships, collaboration and/or coordination of services are strongly encouraged for all projects. Describe the agency's partnership and/or coalition building strategy and use of volunteers. Applications for projects which require coordination of services among two or more agencies must contain a signed affiliation agreement. An affiliation agreement must define roles, responsibilities, referral mechanisms, collaboration, and coordination efforts necessary for successful implementation of the project and must be signed by all affiliating agencies. At least three letters of support for the specific project are required to be submitted with the application; and applicants are encouraged to have one letter of support from the County Prosecutor's Office of Victim Witness Advocacy.

e. *Project Management and Staff. 10 points*

Please identify all project management and staff. Describe how personnel are uniquely qualified to manage and implement the project. Provide current resumes along with job

descriptions for each position for which grant or matching funds are. The job description should detail the title and job responsibilities, as well as the education and experience necessary for the position.

Additionally, state if the position is full-time or part-time and the number of hours and percentage of time devoted to the project. Indicate if you will use existing staff or if you will recruit new staff for each position requested in the budget. Public agencies cannot use grant funds to supplant State and Federal funds otherwise available for crime victim services.

f. *Data Collection, Performance Measures, and Evaluation. 10 points*

Please list all data that will be collected. Describe the methods that will be used to measure the progress and impact of the project. (Subgrantees will be required to collect and report specific data relating to their project to DCJ). Client feedback is strongly encouraged, so if your measurements do not include client feedback, an explanation must be provided.

Please note that awarded applicants will be required to enter VOCA-required data via quarterly performance metrics through OVC's online Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) located at <https://www.ovcpmt.org>.

g. *Budget and Budget Narrative. 15 points*

Please provide a detailed narrative justification for both the requested funds requested and match funds itemized on the Budget Detail Form by Budget Category. Costs must be specific and tied to the project objectives. Applicants should refer to the Program Guidebook for a description of budget categories, allowable expenses and match requirements.

Please note that the new Federal VOCA program guidelines, which would supersede the existing VOCA Victim Assistance Program Guidelines published in the Federal Register on April 22, 1997, at 62 Fed. Reg. 19607, are not yet final and thus not yet in effect. We anticipate changes, especially in the areas of allowable costs, but until the final rule is issued, please continue to use the VOCA program guidelines currently in effect to craft your Agency's budget

<http://ojp.gov/ovc/voca/vaguide.htm>

As noted above, if you are unable to fulfill the match requirement, the Federal Office for Victims of Crime may grant a full or partial waiver on a case-by-case basis. Please note that your inability to meet the full match amount will not negatively bear upon the strength of your grant application. If you request a match waiver, please provide a letter-form justification to the SOVWA, and include it with your application package.

f) Procedures for Eligible Organizations to Apply:

Application packages are available by contacting the Division of Criminal Justice, State Office of Victim Witness Advocacy at (609) 292-6766 or on the website at www.njvw.org. Applicants must complete and submit *one original and three copies* of the application by the submission deadline. Applications that do not comply with the requirements of this Notice of Availability of Funds or the Program Administration and Funding Guidelines will not be considered. The Division of Criminal Justice reserves the right to decline any and all applications for funding and to award grants in amounts that may be other than requested. Agencies previously funded are not guaranteed continued funding or funding at previous levels. The submitted application may be subject to disclosure pursuant to the Open Public Records Act, N.J. S. A. 47:1A-1 et seq.

g) Address of the State agency receiving the application:

Phoenix Smith, Chief
State Office of Victim Witness Advocacy
Division of Criminal Justice
Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex
Fifth Floor Reception
25 Market Street
P.O. Box 085
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0085

h) Deadline by which applications must be submitted:

Applications must be completed and filed before 4:00 P.M. on **October 28, 2015**.

Facsimiles or electronic mail will not be accepted.

i) Date by which notices shall be mailed of approval or disapproval of applications:

All applicants will be notified in writing on or about **mid – late December of 2015** as to whether or not the agency's proposed project will be funded.

Elie Honig, Director
Division of Criminal Justice

Date