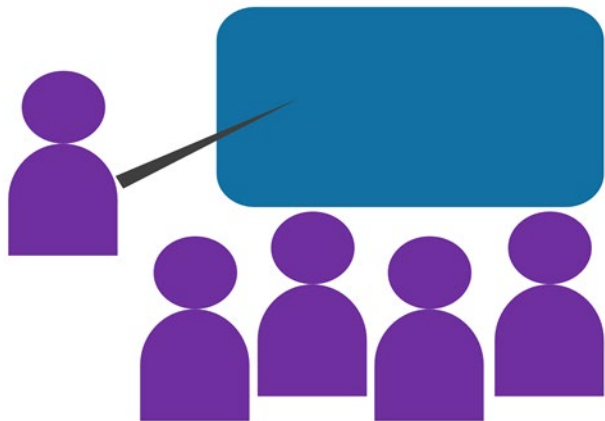


What APS Needs to Know About Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Funding



Introduction

State Adult Protective Services (APS) programs are generally funded by either Social Services Block Grant funding and/or state general funds. However, APS programs are struggling to meet the demands of their programs and are looking at ways to supplement their funding. Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding can be a way to increase services to APS clients who are victims of criminal abuse. This brief will explain:

- What VOCA funding is.
- How it can be used.
- What the important differences and similarities are between VOCA and APS approaches and terminology.
- What the basics are of how to apply for VOCA funding.
- What the highlights are of three VOCA-funded APS programs.

VOCA Background

The Victims of Crime Act, passed in 1984, is the primary federal support for programs serving victims of crime. At the state level, it funds both Victim Assistance and Victim Compensation programs. At the federal level, it funds Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) discretionary grants, victim-witness coordinators and FBI victim specialists; provides a tribal set aside; and much more.

The Act also established the [Crime Victims Fund](#), which is funded by federal criminal fines, penalties, forfeited bail bonds, and special assessments. None of the funding comes from taxpayer dollars.

VOCA Funding

In 2015, Congress raised the cap on VOCA state victim assistance program funding, quadrupling the Fiscal Year 2014 funding. According to [OVC](#), the 2016 [VOCA Formula Victim Assistance Rule](#) “clarified and expanded states’ allowable uses of VOCA victim assistance funding. With this clarification, states were able to identify more ways to support all victims, including victims of elder abuse.”

OVC administers the Crime Victims Fund and each year funds are allocated according to the VOCA formula in federal statute ([34 USC §20101](#)). The amount available annually is set by statute. The first \$20 million each year goes to child abuse prevention and treatment programs. Thereafter, sums are allocated to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Attorneys Offices to operate a victim notification system and to improve victim services.

There is also a small set aside for tribes. The remainder is allocated as follows:

- OVC's Victim Compensation Program = 47.5%
- OVC's Victim Assistance Program = 47.5%
- Discretionary Awards = 5%

The funds are distributed to the states via a formula as mandated by VOCA, at 34 USC §20101. Each state receives a base amount (presently \$500,000 for each state and the District of Columbia and \$200,000 for each eligible territory), and the remainder is distributed proportionately, based on population. Each state has a VOCA administrator who manages these federal funds (in most states, Victim Compensation and Victim Assistance programs are in two separated offices).

The Difference Between Victim Compensation and Victim Assistance

Both Victim Assistance and Crime Victim Compensation funding are intended to help victims overcome the effects of victimization, but the assistance is distributed differently.

The Crime Victim Compensation Program is administered at the state level and **reimburses victims** directly for out of pocket expenses resulting from the crime. It can pay for such things as:

- emergency food, clothing, transportation and shelter
- mental health counseling and care or peer support
- short term (45 days) in-home care and supervision when offender/caregiver is removed
- short term (45 days) nursing home, adult foster care, or group home placement for adults whom no other safe, short-term residence is available
- legal assistance

- facilitation of participation in criminal justice and other public proceedings arising for the crime
- relocations

The Victim Assistance Program Grants are formula grants to states to **fund programs and services** for crime victims. This can include funding to APS to provide specific services, such as:

- intake units
- specialized programs such as forensic centers

It is important to note that Victim Assistance Program Grants cannot be used to fund services to self-neglect victims or to provide any aspect of the APS investigation.

Due to the differences between Victim Compensation and Victim Assistance, individual APS clients may be eligible to receive compensation from their state's Crime Victim Compensation Program (and therefore should be referred to that program) but APS programs need to apply for state Victim Assistance grants in order to receive funding for their programs.

It is important to note that victims **do not** have to report the crime to law enforcement or participate in the criminal justice process to be eligible to receive Victim Assistance services under VOCA funding. A report to APS meets the eligibility criteria for Victim Assistance services. In addition, victims do not have to prove their immigration status to be served.

It is important to note that Victim Assistance Program grants cannot be used to fund services to self-neglect victims or to provide any aspect of the APS investigation.

The Goal of VOCA Victim Assistance Grants that Address Elder Abuse

According to VOCA funding announcements, elder abuse solicitations are “intended to improve outcomes, minimize additional trauma, and restore safety and security to older adult victims of abuse and financial exploitation.” Any application by APS for VOCA funding will need to address this goal.

Where to Find Grant Applications

APS programs can find information on their state’s VOCA Victim Assistance Administration at either the [U.S. Resource Map of Crime Victim Services & Information](#) or the National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators [State Administrators Directory](#). It is important to note that VOCA funding goes to “local services”, therefore, if APS is administered at the county level, the county would need to [apply](#). If the state is the most “local” level of service delivery, then the state may apply.

Additionally, each state and territory determine which types of organizations will receive funding based on the eligibility requirements for sub-recipient programs contained in VOCA, the victim assistance guidelines, and the needs of crime victims in that state or territory.

While states have a significant amount of discretion on how to allocate funds, [there are some mandated categories as follows](#):

- 10% of the funds must be used for child abuse services
- 10% for underserved populations
- 10% for domestic violence victims
- 10% for sexual abuse victims

The last three categories include elder abuse victims, with elder abuse specifically mentioned as an underserved population in the current guidelines.

Elder abuse could also fall, in some cases, within the remaining 60%.

Elder Abuse Related Services That Can Be Provided Under VOCA Victim Assistance Funding

Below are several examples of services that can be provided under VOCA Victim Assistance funding:

Multidisciplinary Teams and Fatality Review Teams:

Both types of teams can improve the response of community agencies to elder abuse victims and historically have been funded by VOCA grants. Cases reviewed by the teams must include potentially criminal conduct and exclude the review of self-neglect cases.

Safety Planning: Victims need information about their legal rights, and the services APS, aging, and domestic violence programs can provide. Victims may need additional assistance linking to those services.

Medical Care: Victims of physical abuse, sexual abuse, and criminal neglect often need assistance accessing and navigating the healthcare system to get the medical services they need to mitigate and document the damage caused by the abusive situation.

Shelter: Victims often need to be relocated away from abusive care providers for their own safety and to ensure that their care needs are met. In these cases, victims may need help locating a safe shelter or finding new housing options and hiring new care providers. If the victims can stay in their own home after the abusive caregiver is removed, they may need help getting phone numbers changed or getting new locks for the doors.

Information: Victims need information about the criminal justice system provided in a clear and prompt manner. Information should include

explanations of the court system and what to expect as a case moves through the system and a victim's related rights. Due to potential vision and hearing issues, materials provided should be available in multiple formats and written materials should use large fonts and a high contrast between paper and ink. Victims also need information about the availability of, and eligibility for, a variety of services that can mitigate the effects of the abuse and make them feel safe. In addition, victims may need help applying for victim compensation to replace lost property and to pay for crime-related expenses. Provision of such information may be funded by VOCA victim assistance grants.

Emotional Support/Professional Counseling:

Referrals to counseling and support groups may benefit all victims. Emotional support and/or professional counseling, especially by professionals working in domestic violence and/or providing trauma informed support, can reduce isolation, create hope, promote healing, enhance safety and validate the victim's experience.

Help for Victims of Financial Abuse: In the past, VOCA victim assistance funding could not be used for victims of financial crimes. However federal regulations now allow the use of these funds to provide services to ensure immediate health and safety, respite care and services for victims with disabilities, mental health services and support groups, credit counseling and other services such as public education, restitution advocacy, access to publications, and use of technology.

Civil Legal Services: Victims may also need help connecting with service providers to access civil legal services to establish or revoke a power of attorney, obtain a protection order, contest guardianships, file for divorce or recover assets. They may need help establishing that they are a victim of identity theft or other scams.

Criminal Investigations and Court Procedures: APS can help criminal justice officials communicate with victims with disabilities by recommending assistive devices and arranging for mental status/capacity assessments. Additionally, APS can:

- Provide transportation to court and support persons during court proceedings.
- Make sure that victims are accommodated while at court by ensuring victims have a comfortable place to wait to testify, get their medications on time, get breaks when they need them, or by advocating for shorter court sessions.
- Help with coordination of any procedures allowable by state law to obtain and preserve their testimony, including video or audiotape recordings of testimony, if victims cannot come to court. APS may be able to work with the criminal justice system to advocate for court personnel to come to the victim's home to obtain testimony if they qualify under the American's with Disabilities Act.
- Help the criminal justice system to memorialize the victim's testimony in the event they are unavailable later to testify if allowed by state law. This memorialization may be called conditional examinations or depositions.
- Help the victim appeal for leniency or request substance abuse treatment for the offender.
- Help the victim report any threats or intimidation to the criminal justice system and assist in securing orders of protection for victims.
- Help the victim apply for full restitution.

Compensation: APS can help clients apply for victim compensation. Victims may need help filling out forms and providing information to the state's [Crime](#)

[Victims Compensation Program](#). Financial compensation may be critical if the victim is living on a fixed income. They may need help to maintain their home and pay utilities. They may need help replacing assistive devices or durable medical equipment like wheelchairs or eyeglasses. In some states, older adults or persons with disabilities may be eligible for some costs that are not normally covered by state crime victim compensation, including funding to victims of financial crimes.

Projects Using VOCA Funding for APS to Consider

Projects that APS may consider developing/applying for fall into three distinct categories:

- **Enhancing the work that APS is already doing.** Such projects must focus on victims of crime. Examples may include enhanced case management services, specialized intake personnel, and community outreach staff to help prevent abuse. They cannot include the APS investigation. Philadelphia’s Elder Victim Support Program is an example of this type of work (see State Highlight box below).

- **Adding new specialized services to the APS team.** Such projects can include the addition of nurses to provide sexual assault services, adding experts to assess victims’ capacity, and experts to provide on-going counseling to victims. The Disabled Persons Protection Commission in Massachusetts provides an example of adding specialized sexual assault services (see State Highlight box below).
- **Partnering with other agencies to enhance victim services.** The Elder Forensic Center in Riverside County California is one of many examples of this type of project (see State Highlight box below).

For a complete list of VOCA-funded elder abuse programs, visit the [Office for Victims of Crime website](#).



State Highlight: Philadelphia Corporation for Aging’s Elder Victim Support Program (VSP)

The Philadelphia Corporation for Aging’s (PCA) Office of Adult Protective Services (OAPS), operates the Elder Victim Support Program (VSP). The main objective of this program is to address and eliminate or reduce the abuse/neglect/exploitation that older adult victims have experienced by responding to their emotional and physical needs. The ultimate goal is restoring victims to their pre-victimization state, maximizing their level of health, independence and productivity and improving their overall quality of life. The program does this by providing dedicated Victim Support Coordinators to provide support after the APS investigation has concluded. The coordinators provide emotional support and guidance, information and referral, assistance with appointments and, when needed, accompaniment to legal proceedings. These enhanced services reduce the chances of revictimization.

The number of cases seen by PCA's OAPS department had grown steadily over the years, but funding had remained flat, or near flat, for more than a decade. To continue to meet the needs of the changing and growing population of older adults in Philadelphia, PCA had to find new sources of funding to provide critical services. Therefore, PCA sought VOCA funding to hire additional employees to manage some of the more complex and time intensive cases and to augment the resources available to meet the needs of those victims.

The creation of a specialized VSP allowed PCA's OAPS department to provide a single point of contact for these victims and be solely victim focused. Other APS staff continue to conduct investigations and refer victims to the VSP program upon confirmation of the allegations. This results in an increase in the availability of resources provided to the victims.

The team consists of one VSP Supervisor and four VSP Coordinators. The VSP assists the victim with:

- reporting to law enforcement
- coordinating with legal service providers, getting to and from court and have ongoing supporting throughout the entire process
- communicating with financial institutions (e.g., if a victim needs to do paperwork to stop the money from leaving his/her account)
- transportation to and from the hospital for medical/forensic evaluations, court hearings, etc.
- safety planning in hopes of stabilizing lives and providing security for the victim
- language translation and interpreter services
- referrals for ongoing counseling to restore emotional security and well-being and to programs to provide social support and reduce isolation

By consolidating victim support efforts into one team within OAPS, PCA has strengthened and grown the services it has long provided to the under-recognized and underserved populations.

Challenges included initially determining the focus of the project and identifying the goals, as well as determining whether the scope of such a project was manageable. Grant management includes learning a new government system including how to adhere to the requirements of the request for proposals process, learning the VOCA standards, learning and managing data collection and reporting requirements, and understanding VOCA allowable direct services. In addition, VOCA has training requirements that must be met for every position funded.



State Highlight: Massachusetts Disabled Persons Protection Commission's Sexual Assault Response Unit (SARU)

In 2017, the Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC), supported by the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance through a VOCA grant, launched an innovative Sexual Assault Response Unit (SARU) designed specifically to help adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) cope with the aftermath of sexual abuse. Since its inception, SARU has expanded to serve all sexual assault victims with disabilities served by the DPPC. Utilizing the Principles of Trauma Informed Care

([Guidelines from SAMSHA](#)), SARU works on an individual, community and state level to promote increased and meaningful access to trauma services for sexual assault survivors with disabilities.

SARU is comprised of four components:

- **Protective Service Navigators (PSN):** PSNs in collaboration with partner agencies, provide regional mobile statewide services to reduce barriers and ensure meaningful access to trauma supports, resources and referrals to sexual survivors with disabilities.
- **Peer Support Leaders (PSL):** PSLs are sexual assault survivors with intellectual/developmental disabilities, who promote empowerment, education and accessibility for their peers, sexual assault survivors with disabilities.
- **Clinical Matching:** Clinical Matching builds options and matches survivors with disabilities for therapy with clinicians who have expertise in trauma and disabilities.
- **Advisory Council:** The Advisory Council is comprised of key stakeholders and leaders and works to advance SARU's statewide efforts.

From the inception of SARU, reports of sexual assault/abuse to the DPPC 24-hour Hotline have grown from 878 calls in FY 2018 to a projected 2,500 calls in FY 2020 – indicating a 185% increase in just three years.

As SARU continues to meet the increased demands, the PSL's contribution to this work is paramount as they are not represented in most, if any, sexual assault service provision. It is critical that victims/survivors with a disability are at the table and their voices are heard at every aspect of the work to ensure effective access and appropriate system change.



State Highlight: Riverside County's Elder Abuse Forensic Center (EAFC)

The Riverside County Elder Abuse Forensic Center (EAFC) is an evidence-based program striving to improve the community's ability to combat, investigate, and prosecute elder and dependent adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The Center was developed in response to a typical case that required weeks to months of phone calls between agencies with very distinct, and at times, conflicting perspectives and goals. The medical, social, legal, and financial complexity of elder and dependent adult abuse cases requires the involvement of an array of disciplines. Investigators from multiple agencies who investigate elder and dependent adult abuse spend a significant amount of time trying to address the multiple needs of high-risk clients. Additionally, local investigative/prosecutorial agencies often lack resources to connect the circumstances of a case to abuse/neglect.

The EAFC enhances collaboration and service provision among partner agencies by providing vital supports to agencies to strengthen their investigations and improve outcomes. Services offered by the EAFC include, but are not limited to, in-home geriatric medical assessments, in-home neuropsychological evaluations (capacity assessments), forensic evaluations, case consultations with the EAFC multidisciplinary team, and public outreach/education.

The EAFC was established to achieve the following goals:

- Reduce fragmentation and improve communication/problem solving related to preventing and addressing elder/dependent adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Raise public awareness about the multidimensional nature of and challenges associated with elder/dependent adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Educate and improve the competency of service professionals working with the elder/dependent adult population.

The EAFC has allowed Riverside County APS to collaborate better with community partners in a creative/innovative way, directly resulting in a better coordination of effort, and the avoidance of unnecessary duplication of services and resources in a challenging climate of extraordinary population growth and shrinking budgets/resources. Additionally, this EAFC is able to provide unique resources that most other counties lack. Overall, the enhanced level of coordination has allowed agencies to establish a safety net around elder/dependent adult victims, providing better support and preventing revictimization.

Funding for the EAFC Program Coordinator position is provided almost entirely by the Department of Public Social Services. The California Office of Emergency Service's VOCA grant covers the following types of expenses for the program:

- The EAFC Program Coordinator to coordinate all programmatic elements of the EAFC, including but not limited to managing EAFC referrals, coordinating all aspects of the multidisciplinary meetings, tracking outcomes of all Coordinated Response Plans, grant management, and tracking case data/outcomes.
- A neuropsychologist to conduct in-home neuropsychological evaluations to assess the cognitive status of the referred individual in order to assist in determining the individual's ability to make sound financial, legal, and medical decisions.
- Geriatricians to conduct in-home geriatric assessments, which evaluate a broad range of health conditions and environmental risks that may impact an individual's quality of life and ability to remain safely in one's home.
- Forensic evaluations to determine the nature and extent of injury or abuse. These evaluations assist investigative agencies in differentiating medical findings that are indicative of abuse/neglect from those that can be explained by other medical conditions or an accident.
- A team of medical professionals to participate in the EAFC multidisciplinary team meetings and ad hoc discussions related to complex cases that require additional collaboration and follow-up.
- Education and training related to working with victims of elder and dependent adult abuse. For example, funding helps support an annual Dependent and Elder Abuse Symposium, which promotes awareness and support about elder and dependent adult abuse and improves collaboration and service provision among partner agencies and organizations throughout the county.

All the community partners who participate in the bi-monthly multidisciplinary team meetings and coordinated response efforts do so voluntarily and therefore do not result in any additional expense.

Things to Keep in Mind for a Successful Grant Application

Translating VOCA Terminology into APS Terminology

Although APS and VOCA programs both serve abuse victims, the terminology used by VOCA is different than APS terminology and using APS terminology may distort the message of your grant application.

Below are some common terms used for VOCA applications and the equivalent terms used by APS.

VOCA Terminology	APS Terminology
“Victim”	“Client”
“Perpetrator”	“Person of Interest” or “Alleged Abuser”
“Crime”	“Abuse Type”
“Community Outreach Coordinator”	“MDT Coordinator”
“Provide Services”	“Arrange for Services”
“Victim Support Coordinators”	“Case Managers”
“Safety Planning”	“Service Planning”
“Prevention Activities”	“Outreach Activities”

In a brief addressing [alternative sources of funding for APS](#), the National Adult Protective Services Association pointed out the following are general differences between VOCA and APS service providers. These are general differences and do not represent the perspective of all participants in either system of services. The point is to be sensitive to general mission and philosophy differences between the systems.

System Differences

Some differences between the two systems:

- Victim services believes in self-determination and may feel APS is too paternal with some clients (mentally ill, cognitively impaired, demented) forcing interventions upon them. Victim services would never provide an involuntary intervention.
- Victim services require the person to come to them and ask for help. APS initiates contact even when the person might not want help and typically conducts an investigation, although APS usually does not provide services, without the client’s consent.
- Victim services assumes victims have mental and physical capacity to seek help and to make their own decisions.
- Victim services providers may feel that mandatory reporting puts victims at risk and may not want to make a report.
- Victim services providers may not like the concept of an “investigation” – victim’s status should be sufficient – and don’t view it as a service. To reiterate, the investigative portion of APS cannot be funded with VOCA dollars.
- Victim services “provides” services and APS, in many cases, “arranges for” services.
- APS may be perceived as non-responsive by victim services providers and others in the community due to eligibility requirements and confidentiality requirements.

System Similarities

Some similarities between the two systems:

- Both focus on increasing victims' safety while honoring their wishes
- Both separate the victim from the abuser/offender
- Both use multi-disciplinary teams

The Elements of a VOCA Grant Application

The elements of a VOCA Victim Assistance grant application are detailed in the following.

Need Statement

In developing a VOCA application, it is essential to explain why there is a need to address this issue. You will want to pull together statistics to:

- Describe the demographic makeup of the area to be served through your project.
- Discuss the prevailing socio-economic conditions in the area to be served by the project.
- Describe the types of crime victimizations most prevalent in the area to be served.

Here's an example from the PCA's Elder Victim VSP application:

"Abuse of older adults is one of the most under-recognized and under reported social problems in the United States. Abusers are often caregivers, family members or others upon whom the senior is dependent. They may be the senior's only source of support, making the victim unwilling or unable to seek help. The problem is particularly disturbing given the estimated global population growth of people aged 65 from 2010 to 2050, is predicted to triple and reach 1.5 billion individuals or 16% of the world's population. In our community, the increase in the service population is expected to be..."

Goals and Objectives

When developing a VOCA application, you will need to identify the goals and objectives of the project. Some potential goals and objectives to consider may include:

- maintain core direct services to victims
- expand or enhance service provision
- increase the diversity and scope of services available
- provide new services to fill gaps in service delivery
- provide services to underserved/unserved victim populations

Another example of several goals from PCA's Elder VSP VOCA application:

"The goals of the Victim Support Program will expand and enhance the OAPS Department's already existing services to older victims of abuse, neglect and/or financial exploitation. This program will develop into a team designated to address abuse, neglect and/or financial exploitation of older victims while also preventing the revictimization of the older victims. Goals of this program are:

- Create the Victim Support team - VOCA funding will allow the development of a specialized team within the Victim Support Program to enhance and expand already existing services provided to victims of elder abuse.
- Consolidate victim resources within the Victim Support Program - Establishing a victim support team will allow OAPS to bundle the services offered to older victims of abuse, neglect and/or financial exploitation.
- Increase education and outreach efforts regarding available victim services and victim identification in the community - VOCA funding will provide staff to

enable this program to expand outreach and education throughout the Philadelphia region.

- Maximize use of the Victim Support Program to create personalized care plans for identified victims of abuse, neglect and/or financial exploitation.
- Safety planning will be done with the victims and the Victim Support Program staff under the supervision of the Victim Support Program Supervisor. This safety care planning will employ a wide variety of services keeping in mind that older victims often have unique needs.
- This program will be able to provide emergency needs such as food, clothing and medication.”

Problems/Need to Be Addressed Through this Project

In this section of the application, you will need to clearly state how your project will address a specific aspect of the problem. Examples from previously referenced programs include:

- PCA - their program was designed to provide personalized services to each victim. The services are specific, appropriate, culturally and physically accessible and driven by victim needs. The program also educates the community on how to recognize the signs of elder abuse thus increasing the number of identified victims while working to provide them the services, dignity, and support they deserve in late life.
- MA DPPC - their program was designed specifically to help adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) cope with the aftermath of sexual abuse.
- Riverside County APS - their program was designed to provide better collaboration

between community partners in a creative/innovative way, to result in a better coordination of effort, and the avoidance of unnecessary duplication of services and resources.

Describe How the Need Was Determined

In this section of the application, clearly state how the identified need was determined.

For example, PCA OAPS' application identified a need for support in various forms to strengthen a victim's ability to follow-through and remain steadfast when working on eliminating/reducing the risk and impact on themselves. PCA OAPS stated that VSP would maintain and enhance the core direct services to older victims while enhancing their ability to continue supporting and providing services to this underserved population.

They also provided statistics to support their stated need:

- During the last fiscal year, Philadelphia saw the greatest number of reports of need to Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) of all Pennsylvania counties.
- Over 15% of the statewide substantiated investigations are within Philadelphia.

After conducting more than 3,200 investigations (18.2% of all AAA investigations statewide), PCA served the victims of 943 substantiated cases. They concluded that the creation of a specialized VSP would allow a single point of contact for these victims and allow staff in this team to be solely victim focused. This allows existing agency staff to conduct investigations. This will increase the availability of resources provided to the victims and reduce isolation to prevent further victimization.

If Services Currently Exist and Are Insufficient

Make sure to explain why current services are insufficient and discuss why the introduction of new services will not be duplicative. If services do not currently exist, be sure to make this clear. Here's another example from the PCA's Elder VSP application:

"OAPS has provided victim support services since 1988 although this grant will allow the department to expand and enhance the quality of these services. Older victims require a variety of tailored services to accommodate the specific needs and challenges facing older adults. The services that this project will enhance include specialized staff to provide more attention to these victims and referrals to supportive services that will reduce the chances of revictimization.

Over the years the number of cases seen by PCA's OAPS department has grown steadily, in 2008 PCA reported conducting approximately 2,000 investigations and by 2016 over 3,200 investigations occurred. While it is clear the need for Older Adult Protective Services has grown, the funding has not grown along with it. Philadelphia Corporation for Aging has faced flat, or near flat, state funding for more than a decade. To continue to meet the needs of the changing and growing population of elders in Philadelphia, PCA must continue to find new sources of funding to provide these critical services."

Provide Statistical Data Specific to the Intended Service Delivery Area to Support/Justify the Need

This data may include data from universities, census data, county specific data on child or elder abuse reporting, 911 statistics, other county specific data or other pertinent information.

Again, another example from the PCA's VSP application:

"Philadelphia contains just over 9% of the total number of older adults in Pennsylvania, it is also home to 17% of older adults who are living at less than 100% of the federal poverty level.

Reports of elder abuse have steadily risen in Philadelphia over the past few years. In FY 2014 there were 3,392 reports of need (RON) made to PCA, in FY 2016 the number of reports had grown to 5,437. Philadelphia consistently has the greatest level of RONs of all Pennsylvania Area Agencies on Aging. While rates of crimes are declining across Philadelphia (according to UCR Report data, violent crime decreased from 46,612 incidents in 2010 to 40,164 in 2014 and property crime declined from 276,366 incidents in 2010 to 247,016 in 2014), rates of elder abuse are on the rise. The number of substantiated elder abuse investigations in Philadelphia rose from 387 in 2009 to 943 in 2016. What remains constant is Philadelphia's place as the highest rate in the state. Nearly 30% of all investigations conducted by PCA result in a substantiated case.

Of the substantiated cases seen in Philadelphia and across the state, 18.7% are victims of caregiver neglect, 17.3% are victims of financial exploitation, 13.3% are victims of emotional abuse and 41.6% are self-neglect. Individuals who are neglecting themselves are at an increased vulnerability to be victims of other types of elder abuse. OAPS frequently receives reports of need containing allegations of multiple types of abuse, this polyvictimization increases the complexity of navigating the needs of the victim."

Qualifications

In this section of the application, provide an organizational chart and explanation of the agency's capacity to manage the project.

Budget

In this section of the application, provide a detailed budget that includes salaries, training, and other expenses.

Potential to Waive Match Funding

Victim Assistance Program State Administering Agencies have the option of developing a policy to waive the requirement that programs provide match funding. Such waivers, whether full or partial, must be well justified. That justification might consider documentation of the following:

- practical and/or logistical obstacles to providing match (e.g., APS is not allowed to engage in private fundraising and may have limitations on soliciting contributing funds) or,

- local resource constraints (e.g., your rural community has limited local funding availability or volunteer capacity).

Contact your [State VOCA Administering Agency](#) to see whether a match waiver may be considered.

Conclusion

This brief covered the basics of VOCA – what it is, what it funds, examples of successfully funded programs, and a step-by-step walk through of the application process. VOCA funding can be a way to increase capacity to serve APS clients who are victims of criminal abuse, create new services, and/or facilitate effective collaborations within and outside of APS programs. But ultimately, the greatest success is serving victims of abuse, neglect and exploitation, decreasing the chance of revictimization and increasing safety and well-being.

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