

Reference C

Allowable Direct Services, Activities, and Costs

The primary purpose of VOCA grants is to support the provision of direct services to victims of crimes. These services are defined as those activities that directly benefit individual crime victims. Other auxiliary services, activities and costs may be supported with VOCA grant funds provided direct services cannot be offered without them; the program has no other source of support for them; and only limited amounts of VOCA funds will be used to support them. Examples of such expenses include skills training for direct service staff and supervision of direct services staff and volunteers.

Some of the services, activities, and costs addressed in this section are not generally considered direct crime victim services. They may, however, be necessary to ensuring that quality direct services are provided. For example, staff training is not a direct service but may be necessary to ensure employees provide quality, direct services to crime victims. Other costs described in this section may be similarly tied to direct services, although in a more remote way.

To help ensure victim assistance grant funds are best used to serve crime victims most effectively, VOCA gives states latitude for establishing additional criteria for administering VOCA grant funds. Accordingly, for purposes of grants awarded under this solicitation, the OVS has established parameters for allowable/unallowable costs in addition to the requirements of VOCA and the VOCA Final Program Guidelines.

These additional parameters are addressed in the following non-exhaustive list of services, activities and costs that are considered to be eligible for support with VOCA grant funds:

- Services that immediately respond to the emotional and physical needs (excluding medical care) of crime victims such as: crisis intervention; accompaniment to hospitals for medical examinations; hotline counseling; emergency food, clothing, shelter and transportation; emergency legal assistance such as filing restraining orders; and, other emergency services intended to restore the victim's sense of security.
- Services and activities that assist the primary and secondary victims of crime in understanding the dynamics of victimization and in stabilizing their lives after a victimization, such as short-term counseling, group treatment, and therapy.
- Costs associated with helping victims participate in the criminal justice system. These services may include advocacy on behalf of crime victims; accompaniment to criminal justice offices and court; transportation to court; child care or respite care to enable victims to attend court; notification of victims regarding trial dates, case disposition information and parole consideration

Reference C: Allowable Direct Services, Activities, and Costs

procedures; assistance with victim impact statements; and, restitution advocacy. VOCA funds cannot be used to pay for non-emergency legal representation such as divorce or civil litigation.

- Services which assist crime victims with managing practical problems created by the victimization such as acting on behalf of the victim with other service providers, creditors, or employers; helping the victim recover property that is retained as evidence; assisting in filing for compensation benefits; and helping to apply for public assistance.
- Services offering an immediate measure of safety to crime victims, such as boarding up broken windows and replacing or repairing locks.
- Costs directly related to providing direct services through staff. Such costs may include: salaries and fringe benefits; costs of advertising to recruit VOCA-funded personnel; and, the cost of training paid and volunteer staff.
- Costs necessary and essential to providing direct services such as prorated costs of rent, telephone service, transportation costs for victims to receive services, emergency transportation costs that enable a victim to participate in the criminal justice system, and local travel expenses for direct service providers.
- VOCA funds may be used to support skills training for paid staff and volunteers. VOCA funds designated for training are to be used exclusively for developing the skills of paid and volunteer direct service providers so they are better able to offer quality services to crime victims. An example of skill development is training focused on how to respond to a victim in crisis. This type of training differs significantly from forums intended to provide legislative updates or to present recent research findings regarding victims of crime.
 - o VOCA funds can support costs associated with attendance at training activities held within the State or a similar geographic area, such as travel, meals, lodging, and registration fees. VOCA funds cannot be used to support attendance at local, regional, or national-level conferences that do not focus on skill development for direct service providers but focus, instead, on national issues, networking, legislative updates, presentation of research papers, etc. Travel rates are limited to current federal reimbursement rates which can be found at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21283>.
- Specialized services for which there may be an infrequent need and that may be supported with VOCA funds include emergency psychiatric services and sign and/or interpretation services for the deaf or for crime victims whose primary language is not English.
- Operating costs directly related to serving crime victims that may be supported with VOCA funds include office and program supplies; equipment use fees, when

Reference C: Allowable Direct Services, Activities, and Costs

supported by usage logs; printing, photocopying, and postage; brochures which describe available services; books and other victim-related materials.

- VOCA funds may support only a portion of administrative time to complete VOCA-required time and attendance sheets and programmatic documentation, reports, and statistics; administrative time to maintain crime victims' records; and the pro-rated share of audit costs required to comply with the requirements of OMB circular A-133.
- VOCA funds may be used to support public presentations designed to identify crime victims and provide or refer them to needed services. Examples of VOCA-allowable costs related to such programs include presentation materials, brochures, and newspaper notices.
- Staff time to complete programmatic documentation, reports, and statistics only to the extent these activities are essential to complying with the performance reporting requirements of the VOCA grant.
- VOCA funds may be used to support the supervision of direct service providers only to the extent that such supervision is necessary and essential to providing direct services to crime victims. For example, using VOCA funds to support a volunteer coordinator position responsible for recruiting, screening, training, and supervising volunteers may be a cost-effective way of serving more crime victims.
- Staff time to prepare fiscal reports, agreement budgets, budget amendments and similar financial documentation only to the extent these activities are essential to complying with the financial reporting requirements of the VOCA grant.

UNALLOWABLE SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND COSTS

The following services, activities, and costs cannot be supported with VOCA funds. This is not an exhaustive list but is representative of costs excluded from funding.

- VOCA funds cannot support management and administrative training for executive directors, board members, and other individuals that do not provide direct services.
- VOCA funds generally should not be used to support agreements for professional services. At times, however, it may be necessary for VOCA sub-recipients to use a limited portion of their grant to contract for specialized services not available within the organization. In such situations, the sub-recipient organization must demonstrate that it is not cost-effective to employ an individual with the skills to perform the needed service, either on a part-time or full-time basis. VOCA sub-recipients are prohibited from using a majority of their award for contracted services that have administrative, overhead, and other indirect costs included in the hourly or daily rate.

Reference C: Allowable Direct Services, Activities, and Costs

- VOCA funds may not be used to support costs related to crime prevention activities and activities intended to raise public awareness about crime.
- VOCA funds cannot support lobbying and administrative advocacy for victim legislation or administrative reform, whether conducted directly or indirectly.
- Sub-recipients cannot use VOCA funds to offer rehabilitative services and counseling to offenders. Likewise, VOCA funds cannot support services to incarcerated individuals, even when the service pertains to the victimization of that individual.
- VOCA funds may not be used to pay for needs assessments, surveys, evaluations, studies, and research efforts conducted by individuals, organizations, task forces, or special commissions, to study and/or research particular crime victim issues.
- Activities directed at prosecuting an offender and/or improving the criminal justice system's effectiveness and efficiency, such as witness notification and management activities and expert testimony at a trial, cannot be supported with VOCA funds. Additionally, victim/witness protection costs and expenses such as travel to testify in court and subsequent lodging and meal expenses are considered part of the criminal justice agency's responsibility and cannot be supported with VOCA funds.
- VOCA funds cannot be used to pay for any activities or costs related to fundraising.
- Indirect organizational costs such as real estate purchases, mortgage payments, capital improvements, construction costs, property losses and expenses, liability insurance on buildings and vehicles, and security guards and body guards may not be supported with VOCA funds.
- VOCA victim assistance funds may not be used to reimburse victims for expenses incurred as a result of a crime or to supplement compensation benefits awarded to crime victims for costs such as funeral expenses, lost wages, and medical bills.
- VOCA victim assistance funds cannot support medical costs resulting from a victimization including nursing home care, home health care costs, in-patient treatment costs, hospital care, and other types of emergency and non-emergency medical and/or dental treatment.
- Relocation expenses for victims such as moving expenses, security deposits on housing, ongoing rent, and mortgage payments cannot be supported with VOCA funds. However, VOCA funds may be used to support staff time to locate resources to assist victims with these expenses.
- VOCA funds cannot be used to pay for professional dues and memberships in the name of a specific individual. However, VOCA funds may be used to

Reference C: Allowable Direct Services, Activities, and Costs

purchase agency memberships in crime victims' organizations if such membership will provide necessary, timely, and relevant information on victim services and issues that will assist direct service providers so they are better able to offer quality services to crime victims.

- VOCA funds may not be used to support salaries, benefits, fees, and other expenses associated with administrative staff including, but not limited to, board members, executive directors, consultants, coordinators, and other administrators unless, and to the extent that, these expenses are incurred while providing direct services to crime victims.
- The development of protocols, interagency agreements, and other working agreements that benefit crime victims are considered examples of the types of activities that organizations undertake as part of their role as a victim service organization, which, in turn, qualifies them as an eligible VOCA sub-recipient. Accordingly, VOCA funds cannot be used to support these activities.
- Prospective applicants should already have appropriate internal policies and procedures in place to ensure effective direct services are provided through their paid staff and volunteers. Therefore, VOCA funds may not be used to pay for the costs of developing an organization's own training programs, manuals and similar resource materials.
- VOCA victim assistance funds cannot be used to send individual crime victims to conferences.
- VOCA funds cannot be used for victim-offender meetings that serve to replace criminal justice proceedings.
- VOCA funds cannot be used to pay for legal costs or legal representation for divorces, child custody or visitation rights litigation, etc., for victims of spousal or child abuse.
- Any medical or evidentiary activities.
- SANE Coordinator activities other than counseling or accompaniment of victims to a forensic exam.
- Administrative salaries (except as noted above).
- Employee bonuses.
- Buyout payments to employees electing not to participate in insurance plans or other benefit programs offered by their employer.
- General liability insurance.
- Interest on purchases made with credit cards.
- Monthly service charges from banks.
- Food for support groups or refreshments for agency staff meetings.

Reference C: Allowable Direct Services, Activities, and Costs

- Training costs that are not direct service or computer related.
- Training non-direct service staff (i.e. Administrators).
- Audit costs not associated with an OMB-133 federal audit.
- Computers for use by crime victims or non-program staff.
- Payroll EDP costs.
- Water and/or coffee service.

QUICK REFERENCE CHART: VOCA ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE COSTS	Allowable	Unallowable
Administration time (to complete VOCA documentation)	X	
Activities in support of opportunities for crime victims to meet with perpetrators	X	
Allow service providers to facilitate victim participation in any public proceedings arising from the crime, not merely CJ proceedings	X	
Allows services for incarcerated victims	X	
Allows for multi-system, interagency, multi-disciplinary support teams	X	
Allows for services to assist crime victims with managing practical problems created by the crime	X	
Allows victims to file a motion to vacate and/or expunge certain convictions based on their status of being a victim	X	
Audits not required (receiving less than \$750,000 in federal funds)		X
Bonuses		X
Building purchase		X
Capital improvements and construction		X
Cell phones for staff and volunteers	X	
Cell phones for victims		X
Coffee, tea and water for staff		X
Computers for victims and non-funded staff		X
Conference costs for victims	X	
Contractors for professional services (limited)	X	
Coordination of activities	X	
Counseling, group treatment, and therapy	X	
Design and maintenance of website and social media	X	
Essential communication services, such as web hosts and mobile device services	X	
Evaluation cost and permits cost of evaluations of specific projects (in order to determine their effectiveness)	X	
Expenses of procuring furniture and equipment that facilitate the delivery of direct services	X	
Expenses typically associated with transitional housing	X	

Forensic examinations for sexual assault victims	X	
Forensic interviews and sets forth parameters	X	
Forensic Medical Evidence Collection Exams to the extent that other funding sources are insufficient	X	
Fundraising activities		X
Heat and electricity (for program)	X	
Health Insurance Buy Out		X
Immediate health and safety needs for crime victims	X	
Indirect organizational cost	X	
Investment of VOCA grant funds		X
Legal assistance services for non-emergency and emergency basis where reasonable and where the need for such service arises as a direct result of the victimization	X	
Leasing vehicles		X
Liability insurance for buildings, property		X
Liability insurance for staff	X	
Lobbying and administrative advocacy		X
Lunch		X
Maintenance, repair, and replacement cost of items that contribute to maintenance of a healthy or safe environment for crime victims	X	
Membership fees/dues to victim services & issues (for agency, not individuals)	X	
Mileage for agency car	X	
Mortgage payments		X
Most medical costs		X
Needs assessments and victim satisfaction surveys	X	
Non-emergency legal representation (i.e., divorces)		X
Operating costs (providing direct services to victims)	X	
Parking related to direct services	X	
Payroll Processing Fees		X
Peer Support	X	
Phones/Pager for staff and volunteers	X	
Prohibits those costs for criminal defense and tort lawsuits		X
Presentations: crime prevention/community education		X
Presentations: to public to help identify crime victims and increase access to services	X	

Reference C: Allowable Direct Services, Activities, and Costs

Prevention activities		X
Property insurance on equipment (pro-rated)	X	
Prosecution activities		X
Public awareness and education presentations and materials to inform crime victims of specific rights and services	X	
Reimbursements to crime victims' property losses		X
Rent (for victim services program)	X	
Restorative justice/victim-offender meetings	X	
Repair or replacement of essential items	X	
Safety Planning	X	
Salaries and benefits of victim services staff	X	
Short term (up to 45 days) in home care and supervision for children and adults who remain in their own homes when the offender/caregiver is removed	X	
Security systems	X	
Substance abuse treatment	X	
Telephone service	X	
Trainings and travel for VOCA and non-VOCA funded staff	X	
Training for victims		X
Transportation expenses (does not require for it to be an emergency)	X	
Utilities-electric,gas, heat, water, garbage, sewer	X	
Vehicle purchase		X
Victim relocation expenses	X	
Victim attendance at conferences	X	
Victim-offender meeting which serve to replace criminal justice proceedings		X
Volunteer coordinator position	X	
Volunteer Trainings	X	
Witness activities (for those who are not crime victims)		X
2017 New VOCA Guidelines are in BOLD print		