

VOCA Regional Meeting: April 7, 2022

Frequently Asked Questions

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VOCA Updates

1. When would the Request for Proposals (RFP) or Funding Announcement come out for the next Competitive VOCA grant?

A: We anticipate Spring or Summer 2024 would be the next competitive Funding Announcement released or RFP for VOCA. VOCA is in the middle of a five-year competitive grant cycle that started October 1, 2019. Meaning, anyone can apply during a competitive grant application (which was in 2019) and the intervening years are continuations applications where only currently funded VOCA subrecipients can apply. We are currently in year 3 and a continuation application will be needed this year for year 4 of VOCA funding. So here is the overview of the VOCA funding years:

Year 1: 10/1/2019 - 9/30/2020

Year 2: 10/1/2020 - 9/30/2021

Year 3: 10/1/2021 - 9/30/2022

Year 4: 10/1/2022 - 9/30/2023

Year 5: 10/1/2023 - 9/30/2024

2. When will the VOCA Continuation RFP or Funding Announcement come out for the grant period starting October 1, 2022?

A: We anticipate the Continuation RFP or Funding Announcement to be released in May or June of this year. We will keep subgrantees posted and announce the release on our listserv and VOCA webpage.

VOCA Reductions

1. Can you help me understand correctly, that even though the Governor made his announcement last October that the ARPA funding is supposed to save VOCA from cuts, OCVS cannot help relieving our minds about suffering 15% VOCA budget cuts?

A: Thanks for the question. The planned VOCA cuts were 15% in the 4th year and additional 15% in the 5th year. This VOCA reduction will still happen. As Amanda stated, the VOCA Fix will take time to impact each state. However, ARPA funds will be utilized to make up for the VOCA reduction. As Amanda mentioned, these funds will be released in one funding announcement to address the planned 15% reduction.

2. So we won't be having a reduction in each of the next two years?

A: That is correct. VOCA will still be reduced by the planned 15%, however, ARPA funds will supplement subgrantee awards and therefore, the agency will still receive their full VOCA award (split funded between VOCA and ARPA).

3. Is year 2024-2025 the 5th year of this VOCA grant?

A: 2023-2024 is the 5th year.

4. It's always been my understanding that if you are in a VOCA continuation year, you keep basically the same goals & budget.

A: Historically this has been the case, however, subrecipients will receive the outlined 15% reductions from VOCA in years 4 and 5 of the grant cycle. ARPA funds will be utilized to make up for the VOCA reduction. As Amanda mentioned, these funds will be released in one funding announcement to address the planned 15% reduction.

ARPA Funding

1. Will subrecipients have to apply for the ARPA funds or will they automatically be awarded, based on each recipient's needs?

A: We hope to release a combined funding announcement for both VOCA and ARPA. It will be a continuation application for all current VOCA subrecipients (not competitive). This includes subgrantees who receive VOCA funds through the Immigrant and Refugee Family Strengthening subgrants, Jefferson County Services subgrants, and Mental Health Records - Legal Services subgrants.

2. Are there any restrictions for ARPA funding through OCVS?

A: At this time, OCVS has received direction that ARPA funds can be used for the same purposes as VOCA funds.

3. So the ARPA funds can be used for the same services as VOCA funds?

A: Yes, OCVS' understanding is that if we keep ARPA fund administration aligned with how we administer VOCA funds, nothing programmatic should change.

4. If we use the ARPA/VOCA funding for a staff person, will there be support around how to run these reports correctly in Osnium?

A: Yes, but these are the details we are still working through. We may recommend that you choose positions to be either VOCA funded or ARPA funded, to streamline the reporting process.

5. Would it be wiser to not use ARPA funds for staff to not mess up the OVC PMT?

A: We may recommend that you do not split-fund positions between ARPA and VOCA. That may be easier to direct staff on how to track data in Osnium.

6. If our agency is already receiving ARPA funds, are we still eligible to receive these ARPA funds through OCVS since we are current VOCA recipients?

A. Yes. All current OCVS VOCA subrecipients are eligible to receive ARPA funds through our office. Additionally, agencies should be able to clearly identify ARPA funds received through OCVS versus ARPA funds received from another source.

7. Can ARPA funds be used for the 10% indirect funds?

A. At this time, our understanding is yes, but the indirect amount would have to be proportional to what ARPA funds in the rest of the budget based off the 10% de minimus federal guidance.

8. Can ARPA funds be used for Professional Development and Client Assistance funds?

A. Yes, any VOCA line item/budget category is eligible.

9. If ARPA funds can be used for anything VOCA can be used for, but it is important for us to track time and expenses between the two funding sources, why doesn't DOJ just select some grantees to be fully ARPA-funded and some to be fully VOCA-funded so we don't allocate between two funding sources?

A. We were awarded ARPA funds from the Governor's office specifically to offset the VOCA cuts. The Governor's office was provided with a list of current VOCA subrecipients and the amount of funds that the agency would need to be awarded from ARPA to offset VOCA reductions. Our understanding is that we are not able to adjust the parameters for which we were awarded ARPA funds.

10. Are there going to be any opportunities to help cover some of the additional grant administration costs, with being split between VOCA and ARPA?

A. Once our office knows more specific information, we will be able to assist programs when it is time to apply for the continuation grant.

12. For agencies that meet the threshold for audits under Uniform Guidance (\$750,000 or more in federal expenditures during the agency's fiscal year), will the ARPA funds be delivered to subrecipients with accompanying contracts by VOCA Assistance Listing which will then appear on the SEFA?

A: The intention is to issue one award contract that encompasses and outlines VOCA and ARPA funds. Agencies would be able to see the total amount of VOCA funds and ARPA funds in the award along with the fundings' corresponding CFDA number.

ARPA CFDA#: 21.027, Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

VOCA CFDA#: 16.575, Crime Victim Assistance

13. Is there going to be a meeting scheduled once ARPA funds details are known so everyone can have an opportunity get the info and ask questions?

A: OCVS will provide more information once we get finalized details on ARPA. Our intention is to hold an additional webinar or meeting to ensure subgrantees' questions are addressed and provide clarity on grant expectations and reporting requirements.

Timesheets

1. Can you give more direction as to Time/effort reporting? What are the parameters?

A: Please refer to the Time and Effort Best Practices link and/or reach out to your financial grants specialist. <https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/media/document/time-effort-guidance-voca-funded-personnel.pdf>

2. Where can we find the Time and Effort Best Practices Link?

A: Federal OVC Best Practices can be found here:

<https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/media/document/time-effort-guidance-voca-funded-personnel.pdf>

Additionally, OCVS also has guidance on Timesheet to Payroll best practices:

<https://www.doj.state.wi.us/sites/default/files/ocvs/OCVSGuidanceTimesheetandPayrollDocumentationAug2021%281%29.pdf>

3. Please clarify the distinction between staff knowing their overall funding sources and approximate percentage of time that should be spent on each grant and reporting actual time and effort spent on each grant.

A: In general, OCVS sees the benefit and necessity for direct services staff to understand how their position is funded (as a guide) with approximate percentages AND that the staff should report their actual time spent on the grant. For example, a full-time staff member is funded 30% SAVS (prevention) and 70% VOCA. The staff member is overall able to assess that approximately 624 hrs./year (2080 hours x 30%) on prevention work. However, their weekly time on the grant project may fluctuate where one week they spent 50% of their time on prevention (SAVS) and 50% on VOCA. The following week may be different. The key piece here is that the staff member should report their time as they actually spend on the project rather than as a standard percentage each week. Further, OCVS encourages agencies to assess their VOCA budget on a regular basis to determine if modifications are needed to adjust for actual time spent on the project as the year progresses.

OIG Audit

1. Does OCVS have a timeline for when the OIG may audit VOCA subgrantees in Wisconsin?

A: OCVS does not have a timeline for when the US DOJ OIG may begin to audit VOCA subgrantees in Wisconsin. It is our understanding that the process has begun in other states. When OCVS knows more we will update VOCA subgrantees.

2. How far back will the OIG audit go?

A: The OIG would notify VOCA subgrantees of which specific years of VOCA funding they will review. When OCVS was audited by the OIG, they reviewed VOCA grants that were open and one that had recently closed.

3. Will the OIG audit last 17 months for VOCA subgrantees like it did for OCVS?

A: Hopefully not, but every audit is different and as OIG audits of VOCA subgrantees has just begun in other states, we are not able to reference those to see how long those audits lasted for subgrantees.

EEO Certifications


1. Do these Equal Employee Opportunity Program (EEO) policies have to be done every year? Are any new from the last continuation grant?

A: The EEO Certification form must be completed every year. It is a federal requirement. If your agency is required to have an EEO and complete an EEO Utilization Report, you will have to check for the frequency. FAQs through US DOJ Office of Justice Programs: <https://www.ojp.gov/program/civil-rights/eeop/faqs?msclkid=2c75172bb69411ecb263ad695ddfb5e>

Miscellaneous

1. Can you share the OCVS website with the bulletin please?

A: <https://www.doj.state.wi.us/ocvs/ocvs-grant-programs>, scroll down the page about halfway:

OCVS Grants & Training Updates Bulletin - 2022
January 2022 

OCVS Grants Updates Bulletin - 2021

 January 2021 

September 2021 

2. Where can we find the handouts and/or PowerPoint?

A: 2022 Subgrantee Training Handouts are located at webpage link under presentation material: <https://wisdoj.eventsair.com/the-office-of-crime-victims-service-ocvs-virtual-spring-2022-victims-of-crime-act-voca-subgrantee-regional-training>

3. Is it recommended we print our final OVC PMT report?

A. You should keep all reports and/or reporting tools that show the information was entered into your OVC PMT report.