**VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT (VOCA)**

**2019 TRANSITIONAL HOUSING**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**REVISED November 22, 2019:**

Q. We have had a VOCA Transitional Housing grant in FY18 which was expanded for 6 additional months and will be finished February 29 of 2020. Are we eligible to apply for this grant as a continuation of our current grant?

A. Yes.

Q. If our program had some beds dedicated for victims of crime (dedicated DV beds), could we do that? We would have units that are not funded by this grant and units that are in the same program.

A. Yes, but this program is for housing units, not shelter beds. Programs that provide housing units to both victim populations, as well as non-victim populations can apply. The services for victims must be developed as well, as listed on page 8 of the NOFO. And services would need to be prorated for those VOCA funded clients.

Q. How is eligibility determined for victims of crime?  What are the parameters for the crime they were a victim of?  And would we be responsible for providing documentation of the victimization or is this just determined by the participant's self report?

A. For the purpose of this NOFO the victim “eligibility” is explained on page 2 of the NOFO. The victim must be of a crime recognized by statute, but cannot be a victim of a property crime.

Although no documentation related to the victimization is required, such as a police report, a victim assessment should be explained in the Program Narrative, and include how services are determined that alleviate the victimization.

Q. The ICJIA VOCA FFY18 grant application identifies the Elderly population as an underserved community. Could you tell me, what age timeline does ICJIA consider as Elderly i.e. 50 and over? 60+? 65+?

A. We use the Illinois Department on Aging category of 60+.

Q. I noticed in the NOFO for the transitional housing opportunity that federal funds cannot be used as match. I just want to verify that this applies to all federal funds, not just other VOCA funds. For example, could it be matched with federal VAWA funds awarded for transitional housing?

A. No federal funds of any kind may be used as required match for any federal grant.

Q) Is this funding allowed to support a Domestic Violence program that serves women (and their children, both male and female) only? In other words, is it acceptable to apply for this funding for a program that does not/is unable to serve men? Services to male victims of the crime victim population identified must be made available.

A) If you program primarily services females and their children, if a male comes to you for services under this program accommodations must be made available.

Q) Is it acceptable for the program to only serve survivors of Domestic Violence, or will the grant require that the program serves victims of all the types of violence identified in the NOFO (trafficking, community violence, LGBTQ+, violence, forced labor).

A) Program may server only one particular crime victim population, such as domestic violence, or multiple crime victim populations, such as domestic violence and human trafficking. Programs that serve multiple crime victim populations should detail how each population is served and explain how different service approaches are designed and why.

Q) Page 8 of the NOFO says “Housing units and services offered for a minimum of 24 months.” Page 7 says “Grant awards must be spent over a period of 12 months. Additional funding to extend the grant period will depend on both the availability of funds and project performance during the first 12months.”   Can you clarify the incongruence?  Are we required to offer a client housing for up to 24 months with only a confirmation of 12 months of funding from the VOCA grant at the start of the program?

A) Your transitional housing program must offer a minimum of 24 months of housing/services to victims, but each grant period will be for 12 months. There is a maximum of 36 months total funding for the program.

Q) If the client is signing a lease for 12 months, is that okay?

A) Yes.

Q) Under lessons learned we it states to include at least one example and describe how this lesson informs the proposed program design. – Are we to provide an anecdote of the project (if it is a reapplication - success from previous project)?

A) Yes.

Q) I saw mention of screening done by the grant recipient agency, but are there specific eligibility criteria dictated by the ICJIA?

A) Eligibility is restricted to victims of crime and your agency should describe what assessment tool is used to certify eligibility.

Q) In the application, there is a requirement for Letters of Commitment from each collaborative partner in this role. My agency has numerous partnerships, both formal (recognized in MOUs) and informal. My question is if there is a minimum or maximum number of Letters of Commitment that is sought, or if this requirement applies to all collaborative partners.

A) I would limit your list of collaborative partners to major relationships relevant to the application. Every collaborative partner mentioned in the application should submit a letter of commitment.

Q) I’m reviewing narrative portion of the application materials I have, the Community Characteristics of Area to Be Served section has a table that asks for demographic information. In the copy I have, the table asks for data from 2015 and 2010-2014. Is this accurate, or should I reply with the most current data accessible (2018)?

A) As for community characteristics of area to be served, use the most up to date data available for your area.

Q) In **Section 1. Purpose**, it states “ICJIA has made available $5 million in VOCA grant funding for the **development** or expansion of transitional housing and related support costs for victims of crime.” How is “development” defined as it relates to this NOFO? Does this mean acquiring new units?

A) Development would be a new transitional housing program to your agency. New units to an already established program would be expansion.

Q) Will the transitional housing funds pay for new job postings?

A) I am not clear what you mean by job postings. If you mean advertisement for open positions, yes. Grant funds can be used for filling grant funded positions if costs are reasonable.

Q) Under the NOFO Program Staffing it states that staff will be given skills training on vicarious trauma. Is this to be done with supervision or will be on going trainings offered for staff to attend? A) This is not clear either. Trauma training should be provided to all VOCA funded staff at a minimum of once. Ongoing training would be preferable for new employees or different levels of training. This would need to be explained in the narrative.