Questions and Answers
Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) - 2022

The deadline for receipt of written questions is closed.

Q1. Is there a limit on ask for large capital expense such as a vehicle?

A1: 2 CFR § 200.33 Equipment means tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $5,000. Any vehicle that exceeds $5,000 meets this requirement.

The (federal) DOJ Grants financial Guide also states that the cost must be reasonable and necessary charge for the grant.

If it is purchased using federal funds or declared as match then the vehicle can only be used for that federal funding sources allowable services. If they use it for something other than those then they must charge the other program a usage fee, that in turn gets reported federal program income.

A yearly inventory must also be submitted until the vehicle has been disposed of.

Q2. Previously when applying for a VOCA grant, tribes were told they did not have to provide a match. Is this still true?

A2. Yes, that is true – the language is a follows: applicants that are a Federally Recognized Tribe or provide services on a Native American reservation are not required to provide match.

Q3. Regarding the award range, is the $250,000 the ceiling for both years or $250,000 per year?

A3. The $250,000 ceiling, for VOCA, is for both years.

Q4. It shows if we provide services on a reservation, we don't have to have a match. Does that mean our office needs to be located on a reservation or just that our service area includes a reservation?

A4. Applicants that are a Federally Recognized Tribe or provide services on a Native American reservation are not required to provide match. The office needs to be located on a reservation and services need to be provided on the reservation as well.

Q5. On the Financial Resources Disclosure Template, you are requesting information for the current period and next period. Are you defining the period as the grant period or a fiscal year? More specifically, we currently have a VOCA grant for the period from 7/1/20 to 6/30/22. Is that the current period or is it our fiscal year ended 6/30/22?

A5. Please use your fiscal year for the Financial Resources Disclosure form.

Q6. Does the $250K ceiling include the match?

A6. No, the $250K ceiling does not include the match portion.

Q7. We plan to work with several contractors (e.g., web design, communications specialist, bookkeeping/accounting) during the upcoming fiscal year, and want to be sure we're including all of the necessary information in the budget narrative. We're located in a remote area with limited options for qualified contractors (and would prefer to hire locally, if possible). The work will not exceed the Simplified Acquisition Threshold. Do we need to include information about our acquisition process in that case, or simply include the name/service/rate/etc. for each individual contractor?

A7. If the amount falls under the simplified acquisition threshold then you do not need to include any information about the process. You need to ensure that the rate does not exceed the federal allowed limit of $650 a day or $81.25 per hour for up to 8 hours in a day.

Q8. How do we best determine whether a budget item falls under Contracted Services or Other? For example, we have a contract in place for janitorial and security services, both of which are listed as examples under the "Other" category in the application guidelines. How do we differentiate between different types of contracted work -- e.g., grant writer vs. janitor vs. accountant, etc.?

A8. If the client receives direct benefit of the service then it goes into contracted services. Contracted Services generally include those services that are benefiting an applicant's clients. For example: A contract with a licensed therapist. Other: rent, reproduction, telephone, janitorial or security services, and investigative or confidential funds.

Q9. On the logic model under Inputs, are you wanting funding etc. for just the VOCA project and match or all our program's funding?

A9. The logic model should be based on the overall program. This may be your entire organizational mission, or it might be one area that you work in. Many parts of the VOCA project will be included in the logic model, but there could be elements of the program that fall outside the VOCA funding. The inputs should be all those pertaining to the program.

Q10. Is it possible to use VOCA funds for improvements on a building we own -- e.g. fence installation for increased client safety/privacy, tree removal to allow for more usable yard space for clients, etc.?

A10. Improvements for security and safety of clients are allowable. If the fence exceeds $5,000 then it becomes an equipment and must be tracked for its useful life. As for the tree removal you would have to show how the expense is reasonable and necessary as a benefit to the program's services.

Q11. For the budget narrative, how granular/specific should we be for each category? For example, under Office Supplies, should we break it down by each individual type of supply and cost (e.g., paper - $100, postage - $250, pens - $25. Total: $375) or is it sufficient to simply provide the list of supplies and provide a total (e.g., Office Supplies -- paper, postage, pens. Total: $375)?

A11. Easily trackable items such as postage should receive their own line item. The other times can be grouped together in an office supply line, the description should include a list of the types and expense for each office supplies you plan on purchasing. Computers, projectors, televisions, and technology related items are not considered office supplies.

Q12. Is the logic model restricted to one page? If yes, then how small can the font be?

A12. The logic model is not restricted to one page.

Q13. Is there an error in cell B41 of the Financial Disclosure Template?

A13. You are correct, there is an error in the Financial Disclosure spreadsheet. We are unable to change the spreadsheet that is attached to the RFP. This spread sheet has no bearing on the scoring of your grant as long as it is completed. Please fill out the form and attached it to your submission.

Q14. In my past VOCA grant, I was able to contract with therapists for periodic sessions at $100/hr. Am I understanding correctly that this year I can’t go above $81.25?

A14. If the amount falls under the simplified acquisition threshold then you do not need to include any information about the process. You need to ensure that the rate does not exceed the federal allowed limit of $650 a day or $81.25 per hour for up to 8 hours in a day. If the client receives direct benefit of the service, then it goes into contracted services. Contracted Services generally include those services that are benefiting an applicant’s clients.

For example: a contract with a licensed therapist. Other: rent, reproduction, telephone, janitorial or security services, and investigative or confidential funds.

Q15. In Supplement – 3. MOUs, could you please clarify when it is required to include a Collaboration MOU? If required, could you please define the format of the MOU that you would like grant applicants to submit?

A15. The VOCA funding opportunity does not require Collaboration MOUs. If an applicant does have MOUs in place and would like to submit those to support collaboration that is presented in the application, they may do so. MOUs for Crime Data Reporting are strictly for Law Enforcement Agencies. There is no required MOU format.

Q16. Good Morning, I was wondering if you have any examples of the Evidence based goals and objectives for the Amplifund?

A16. We do not provide specific goal or objective examples, but please see the question regarding goal format for guidance on formatting your goal.

Q17. For the Project Survey Area portion of the grant, are we supposed to put an “x” in each box that applies to our program or write a description in each box of how the category applies to our program?

A17. Put an ‘X’ using the dropdown arrow.

Q18. I want to confirm we are not required to create an account or use the EEO reporting tool for the 2022 VOCA grant.

I just went to the website to sign up and saw this concerning information, which stated that by using the website, I'm consenting to "no reasonable expectation of privacy" and "at any time, the government may monitor, intercept, search and/or seize data transmitted or stored on this information system". It states that "this information system" includes my computer, my computer network, and all computers connected to my network. Considering our program has confidential information, and I have two attorneys who use the same wifi network as me, I cannot consent to this notice.

A18. The EEO is a requirement of all our subgrantees. If you have previously applied with MBCC your agency should have log-in information.

Q19. In Application Forms, under Program Information, the RFP says the program must use volunteers “to the extent required by the state administrative agency”. Can you quantify that, or explain where I can find information on the actual requirement?

A19. If you are to use volunteer hours for in-kind match you need to include that line so later, you will be able to report that in-kind match. You do not need to include names as volunteers often change, just include Volunteer line with your budgeted amount.

Q20. Although we originally submitted for a 2 yr grant, we are currently operating under the separate second 1 yr grant because MBCC asked that we split off the previous year to help with their funding. On this form, should we be inputting the numbers for just this current 1 yr grant or should we be inputting resources for both of the 2 years on the original application (2020-2022)? If we report on the two separate grants, the 2020-2021 resources will be somewhat skewed because they included some one time COVID funding that was used for specific COVID related expenses.

A20. For the financial disclosure form you should be reporting the amount of funding that you plan on spending in your current fiscal year in the current period column.

Q21. I'm working on our VOCA grant and I have a question regarding the EEOC form. My organization does EEO-1 reporting every year but does not get a certification form. I have copies of the EEO report, is that sufficient for this grant or must I get a certification form using the method outlined in the guidance?

A21. The EEO is a requirement of all our subgrantees. Please refer to the EEO Reporting Tool Instructions in supplement 5 of the application for detailed guidance.

Q22. In the past, I was told tuition for training went under operating expense. Should I put it in "other" as I don't see it listed? Or can it go in the travel area with the rest of the training expense?

A22. Yes, the "other" category is for operating expenses that don't fit correctly in any of the other sections.

Q23. I am requesting funding for housing scholarships for my multidisciplinary team members to attend training- they are not employees of my agency but connected to us through linkage agreements. In the past, I was directed to put that expense under contracted services but most recently directed to put it under travel. I just want to double check where you prefer it is reflected. And if I pay for tuition for their training, where would you like it?

A23. For travel/lodging for a member of your team weather they are an employee or volunteer the expense would go into the travel section. The only exception being if the person is under contract to provide services, then the expense would be built into the contract amount.

Q24. In the Employee Health and Welfare Process part of the requirements, do I just address by discussing that Yellowstone county's health, vision and dental insurance is provided to eligible employees, is self-funded and administered by Blue Cross Blue shield - with more words?

A24. If you are including health and welfare costs in your project budget, a health and welfare policy is required following the Board's decision to award funding. Health and Welfare benefits are outside of and in addition to health insurance. i.e. employer paid gym memberships for employees. Please refer to the MBCC Employee Health and Welfare Procedure for more information.

Q25. On the Performance plan, if our goal has numbers, and we choose "numeric" under goal type, but our goal has more than one number goal, for instance " serving 30 clients and providing 400 services", which number do we put in the number to be achieved box? does it matter? Do we need to explain why there's more than one number in the description?

A25. Goals should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) and include one goal per entry. In the question posed, if you have 2 different numbers you are tracking, that would be 2 different goals.

Q26. On the financial resource disclosure form, there is a current period and a next period. We have a fiscal year that goes from Oct 1 to Sep 30. We can give you exact funding sources from the fiscal year that ended 9/30/21 but it seems to say that we should be providing information from this fiscal year that is a little more than 25% complete. Should we be estimating our funding sources for this fiscal year and then projecting them for the next fiscal year. Or does the next period mean the VOCA period of 7/1/2022 - 6/30/2024?

A26. You should be providing information for your current fiscal year and your next fiscal year. We realize that there will be forecasting/estimation used in both the current and next fiscal year amounts.

Q27. In the Application Forms, Performance Measures Outcomes, the part of the form that asks for a list of expenditures for Priority and Underserved Requirement areas: The instructions say the total of all categories must be equal to the sub-award amount awarded by the state. That means the amount we are requesting, right? So the requested sub-award amount? And does the sub-amount include the local match?

A27. On the SAR, the sub-award amount is the federal amount requested. Match is in addition to the federal amount requested.

Q28. This is a follow-up to previous question/answer # 19: I am still confused about what the actual numeric requirement is for the use of volunteers. It only says "to the extent required". Does MT have a "requirement"? In other words, are there a required number of volunteer hours per project period, or number of volunteer hours necessary to meet the requirement? For example, if a program has enough personnel (enough man-power to get the job done) and enough local match without claiming volunteer hours, does the program still have to use volunteers to satisfy this VOCA requirement? I don't know how I can claim volunteer hours in a budget if I don't know how many hours are actually required.

A28. VOCA does have a requirement to use volunteers. If you do not use volunteers, you must request a waiver with adequate documentation as referenced in 28 CFR 94.113. Volunteers do not have to be used as in-kind match in the budget, they can be referred to in the narrative on how they are used or what they provide for your agency. MBCC does not have a set amount of hours or number of volunteers necessary to meet the requirement, the only requirement is that you use volunteers.

Q29. Under Budget Instructions, Cash or In-Kind Match explanations, the 6th bullet point says that in-kind matches must be supported by documentation to show fair market value and the documentation must be available upon request. Just to confirm, the fair market value documentation does not need to be uploaded into Amplifund, but needs to be kept on file and readily available if/when it is requested?

A29. Yes, that is correct.

Q30. Can we use a cost application plan based on % cost of VOCA project as related to total budget rather than square footage, particularly if our physical space is not separated among different projects?

A30. All cost allocation plans must be based in fact. Budgeted amounts are not facts so it is unallowable.

Q31. Could the allocation be based on previous year's % VOCA to total expenses?

A31. Yes, provided you mean prior years actual VOCA expenses compared to the entity's actual total expenses.

Q32. Why did you select 'Non-Grant Funded' for each line item?

A32. I do that as a personal preference when setting up each line item budget. I view it as giving me more control over each item. If you know that a budgeted line item will not be providing match you do not need to select "Non-Grant Funded."

Q33. How about on the Financial disclosure form? Just our VOCA project or our whole program?

A33. The Financial Disclosure From is for the entire entity/organization/agency.

Q34. I couldn't scan all my MOUs into one document as it was too big. I could separate them into two, but I don't see a way to attach two. Suggestions?

A34. Please try saving the file as a pdf and shrinking the file size. If It is still too big, you may email the additional MOU attachment to the MBCC email address (mbcc@mt.gov). MOUs are not scored or required, so they will not impact application scores or awards.

Q35. Some of the money toward child abuse will be for an underserved population due to location? Do you want me to reflect those dollars under child abuse or under underserved D7 and explain in D8?

A35. You may split up the funds or put them all under child abuse, it is up to the program to determine the best allocation. Diversifying fund allocations paints a fuller picture of a projects activities and is recommended where applicable.