

Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) Assistance funds

The VOCA Assistance funds are a formula grant program administered through the Office for Victims of Crime as a formula grant program. In Wyoming, the Office of the Attorney General, Division of Victim Services (DVS), is the state administering agency. The purpose of the VOCA Assistance programs is to fund direct services to victims of crime that 1) respond to the victims; 2) assist victims of crime to stabilization their lives after a victimization; 3) assist victims to understand and participate in the criminal justice system; and 4) provide victims of crime with a safe and secure environment. Federal Guidelines require that each state allocate a minimum of 10% of its total victim assistance grant funds to each of the four priority categories: (1) child abuse (sexual and physical); (2) adult sexual assault (includes adults molested as children); (3) domestic violence; and (4) designated "previously under-served" victim populations which include: victims of federal crimes; survivors of homicide victims; victims of assault, robbery, gang violence, hate and bias crimes, bank robbery, economic exploitation and fraud or elder abuse; victims of vehicular homicide, intoxicated drivers (DUI/DWAI) or careless driving resulting in death; non-or-limited English speaking victims; and victims who are at-risk adults.

There is \$100 million allocated to the VOCA program in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (the stimulus bill), with \$47.5 million for VOCA Assistance and \$47.5 million for VOCA compensation, and 5% reserved for discretionary grants. Wyoming is scheduled to receive \$535,000.00 in the VOCA Assistance category.

Eligible applicants must be operated by public or nonprofit agency, or a combination of such agencies, and provide direct services to crime victims. Programs must also demonstrate a record of providing effective services to crime victims. This includes having community support and approval of its services, a history of providing direct services in a cost-effective manner, and financial support from other sources. Application for VOCA Assistance funds is made annually by DVS and funds must be used within four years from the date of award though DVS awards the full amount each year based on need. These funds are received by DVS annually and are allocated each state fiscal year. In SFY 2009, Wyoming received \$978,000.00 and DVS awarded \$929,100 to local community victim services providers.

Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Compensation funds

The VOCA Compensation funds are a formula grant program administered through the Office for Victims of Crime as a formula grant program. In Wyoming, the Office of the Attorney General, Division of Victim Services (DVS), is the state administering agency. Crime victim compensation is a direct reimbursement to or on behalf of a crime victim for the statutorily identified crime-related expenses of medical costs, funeral and burial costs, mental health counseling, lost wages or loss of support. Other compensable expenses include the replacement or repair of eyeglasses or other corrective lenses, dental services and devices, prosthetic devices, and crime scene cleanup. However, property damage and loss are not covered.

VOCA allows states to use up to 5% of crime victim compensation grant funds for administering the crime victim compensation grant program. Any portion of the allowable 5% that is not used for administrative purposes must be used for awards of compensation to crime victims.

There is \$47.5 million allocated to the VOCA program in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (the stimulus bill) for VOCA compensation. Wyoming is scheduled to receive \$174,121.00 in the VOCA compensation category. In SFY 2009, Wyoming received \$486,000.00 and \$461,700.00 was paid on behalf of victims of violent crimes.

Eligible applicants must be state agencies or US territories and must agree to provide services for victims of federal crimes and compensation to people who are victimized in the state (even when the victim resides in another state). The amount of VOCA compensation grant funding a state receives is based on a percentage of the payments to crime victims from state funding sources in the previous year.

Wyoming pays out over \$1 million annually on behalf of victims of crime and would not be able to cover all expenses were it not for this federal grant award.