

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How much can we apply for?:

1. I don't see the \$ amount of this funding opportunity.

There is no dollar amount – we are asking what your agency needs and for evidence that the request is reasonable.

2. It would help to know how much we can ask for because it will cost approximately XXX just to increase wages throughout our compensation ranges. This doesn't include increasing positions or hour in part-time people.

There is no dollar amount – we are asking what your agency needs and for evidence that the request is reasonable. . To obtain the additional funds, current service providers are required to submit an application detailing the strategies they wish to use to address the recruitment and retention issues they are confronting.

3. Is there a cap on either the dollar amount or the total percentage of our current total allocation that we are allowed to request? If so, what is that cap?

There is no dollar amount cap – we are asking what your agency needs and for evidence that the request is reasonable.

4. How much money are we talking about per program as a percentage – like a 10% increase maybe? If I know it is much easier to craft my application.

There is no dollar amount cap – we are asking what your agency needs and for evidence that the request is reasonable.

5. How much is it OK to ask for?

There is no dollar amount cap – we are asking what your agency needs and for evidence that the request is reasonable.

6. Is there an average or limit to the funding for each program?

There is no dollar amount cap – we are asking what your agency needs and for evidence that the request is reasonable.

7. Is there a cap, either in dollar amount or in % of current budget, on what you can apply for?

There is no dollar amount – we are asking what your agency needs and for evidence that the request is reasonable. . To obtain the additional funds, current service providers are required to submit an application detailing the strategies they wish to use to address the recruitment and retention issues they are confronting.

8. Are there specific criteria/guidelines for the “inadequate FTEs” component of the application?

You would need to make a case for needing additional FTE to handle current services.

9. What are the allowable expenses from this grant? Are we able to move money in current budget to increase goods & services and utilize this funding more for compensation & benefits? Will each program get a set amount to apply for or are we making an educated guess on what we think we should receive?

These funds are for compensation & benefits. Goods & services are not an allowable expense.

10. Are you more inclined to fund less organizations for the full amount and others will stay where they currently are, or is there a commitment to try to fund as many as possible but maybe not fully fund?

We will not know the answer to your question until we see what is requested. Our intention is to fund all requests that are reasonable and supported by need.

11. Is it all or nothing or if we submit an application, is there a possibility that we could get less than we asked for?

We will not know the answer to your question until we see what is requested. Our intention is to fund all requests that are reasonable and supported by need.

12. Are they competitive? Will some programs not receive funding?

These funds are not competitive but do require a compelling description of need and must be reasonable.

Is this sustainable?:

1. Is this sustainable; meaning, once the contract is amended to the new amount that includes appropriate FTE compensation and total positions, does that become the baseline of the formula grant in coming years? If yes, for how many years, or indefinitely?

These funds will not be added to formula funding but will be considered separate at this time. While no funding is ever guaranteed, sustainability of these increases is a priority and will remain at the increased level as long as funding allows.

2. What happens after that (the 3 to 10 years)?

While no funding is ever guaranteed, sustainability of these increases is a priority and will remain at the increased level as long as funding allows.

3. Is this anticipated to be an on-going grant?

This will be an amendment to your regular grant. While no funding is ever guaranteed, sustainability of these increases is a priority and will remain at the increased level as long as funding allows.

4. Is this permanent funding?

These funds will not be added to formula funding but will be considered separate at this time. While no funding is ever guaranteed, sustainability of these increases is a priority and will remain at the increased level as long as funding allows.

5. The application instructions say that these increases will remain a priority at the increased level as long as the funding allows-that is not so specific.

Sustainability is important and while no funding is guaranteed, making this available is a priority for DSHS and OCVA.

6. Are there particular things OCVA is looking for? Will these funds be stable for three years? Longer?

Sustainability is important and while no funding is guaranteed, making this available is a priority for DSHS and OCVA.

7. If we raise compensation for staff is there going to be additional funding opportunities to support those changes after the VOCA Application goes away?

Sustainability is important and while no funding is guaranteed, making this available is a priority for DSHS and OCVA.

8. How long will this grant be available? Can we apply every year?

These funds will not be added to formula funding but will be considered separate at this time. While no funding is ever guaranteed, sustainability of these increases is a priority and will remain at the increased level as long as funding allows.

Increased Rate of Pay:

1. Is increasing pay for on-call coverage (e.g., staffing crisis line at night) eligible for VOCA compensation funding? Yes, if they are already being paid to provide direct services either from OCVA or DSHS, you can apply to raise their compensation/benefits.

Yes, increasing pay for current on-call staff is eligible for this funding.

2. Can we pay bi-lingual staff with a pay differential?

Yes. The purpose of these funds is to address staff recruitment and retention challenges. If an organization has been unable to compensate bilingual staff at a competitive and sustainable rate, this funding is an opportunity to address that issue.

3. If we are planning enhancements in the coming months, can we apply for those to be funded through this application?

An application for enhancements and new services will be coming out in the fall. This application is for current need only.

4. Does the bilingual differential have to apply to a specific position, or can we request the cost of a differential if we want to generally increase bilingual staffing in the program?

Yes. The purpose of these funds is to address staff recruitment and retention challenges. If an organization has been unable to compensate bilingual staff at a competitive and sustainable rate, this funding is an opportunity to address that issue.

5. When calculating COLA, should only the initial increase be included? If we hope to make a market rate adjustment next fiscal year, can that be included?

This application is for current need only.

6. In determining living wage for a diverse staff how do I come up with a good figure?

You can look at the WSCADV Wage Study and other materials referenced in the application.

7. We would like to raise our entire compensation schedule rather than just increasing the lowest paid direct service positions. Will we be able to do this?

Yes, if they are already being paid to provide direct services either from OCVA or DSHS, you can apply to raise their compensation/benefits.

Increased Number of Hours/FTEs:

1. FTE Enhancement: if 1 FTE is doing a more than 1 FTE position, can we request more FTE in effect splitting out the job?

Yes, you will need to make your request based on need and it must be reasonable.

Increased Benefits:

1. In 2015 we made an organizational decision to increase staff compensation, with a particular eye toward lifting up advocate compensation. We undertook a thoughtful process of creating a compensation philosophy, utilizing the Washington Employers compensation survey, etc. Instituting this new plan involved an initial compensation adjustment in 2015, and subsequent 3% increases annually. While we have increased our contributions, it is not enough to cover all of our increased costs, including the higher wages we are now paying staff.

- a. Can we apply funds to cover increased wage costs we've already committed to?

Your agency can certainly use and follow your existing compensation plan in proposing the compensation increase request; however, awarded funds cannot be applied retroactively to off-set increased costs of compensation/benefits already paid.

- b. Would this funding only be for staff that are currently funded by our DSHS contract, or could it include advocates throughout our programs?

The purpose of this funding and application is to support the services currently being funded by VOCA and being provided pursuant to the DSHS CBDVP-Emergency Shelter contract and the OCVA Sexual Assault and Crime Victim Service Center grants. Proposals to fund staff not currently funded under the DSHS contract and/or OCVA grant(s) must be providing contract/grant services and/or supervising staff providing these services.

2. Retirement plans

Yes, you can request assistance in offering retirement plans for staff supported by DSHS CBDVP-Emergency Shelter contract, OCVA Sexual Assault and Crime Victim Service Center grants.

Applicable Programs:

1. Our agency has a compensation schedule for each direct service and all positions based on requirements of experience, program direction, and/or supervision requirements. Will there be enough funding opportunity to allow adjustments to each compensation schedule accordingly or will there be limitations on our request? In other words, increasing our wages of our advocate staff could create a situation where they could be making a similar amount to those that support them unless our compensation schedules are revised accordingly.

Your agency can certainly use and follow your existing compensation plan in proposing the compensation increase request; however, awarded funds cannot be applied retroactively to off-set increased costs of compensation/benefits already paid.

The purpose of this funding and application is to support the services currently being funded by VOCA and being provided pursuant to the DSHS CBDVP-Emergency Shelter contract, the OCVA Sexual Assault and Crime Victim Service Center grants and the Crime Victim Service Center grants. Proposals to fund staff not currently funded under the DSHS contract and/or OCVA grant(s) must be providing contract/grant services and/or supervising staff providing these services.

2. Is only one application required or do we need to complete one for each program we receive funding for?

Only one application should be submitted – there are areas in the application to clearly state which program the staff increases are for.

3. Will we be able to increase all staff, only program staff, only government-contract-funded staff, only CVSC staff?

The purpose of this funding and application is to support the services currently being funded by VOCA and being provided pursuant to the DSHS CBDVP-Emergency Shelter contract, the OCVA Sexual Assault and Crime Victim Service Center grants and the Crime Victim Service Center grants. Proposals to fund staff not currently funded under the DSHS contract and/or OCVA grant(s) must be providing contract/grant services and/or supervising staff providing these services.

4. We would like to raise our entire compensation schedule rather than just increasing the lowest paid direct service positions. Will we be able to do this?

VOCA funds may be used to support personnel costs (compensation and benefits) for staff providing direct services and for supervision of direct services staff. This funding *may not* be used to support personnel costs for staff who are providing other agency functions but are not providing or supervising direct services. Your agency may include indirect costs or administrative costs (of up to 15% of your proposed budget total) in your proposed budget.

5. What about STOP? And, just to clarify... all SA programs (i.e. SASP)?

The purpose of this funding and application is to support the services currently being funded by VOCA and being provided pursuant to the DSHS CBDVP-Emergency Shelter contract, the OCVA Sexual Assault and Crime Victim Service Center grants and the Crime Victim Service Center grants. Proposals to fund staff not currently funded under the DSHS contract and/or OCVA grant(s) must be providing contract/grant services and/or supervising staff providing these services. STOP funding and SASP are not VOCA funds and cannot utilize this opportunity.

6. I do still have the question about if we have a 1.0 FTE serving all crime types can we have a part time advocate specializing in human trafficking?

This would be an enhancement and you should apply in the fall under the enhancement application.

Match:

1. Do we need to supply match?

Sexual assault and domestic violence programs may be able to use their state funding for match. Crime victim service center programs will be responsible for match.

2. Can you please talk about the match requirement on the FTE enhancement piece?

Sexual assault and domestic violence programs will be able to use their state funding for match. Crime victim service center programs will be responsible for match.

3. Can you please comment on whether the match requirement could be waived for this new funding? This is a major issue for smaller programs wanting to apply for additional FTE's.

Agencies who will need to provide match can request a waiver – however match waivers must be reviewed and approved by the Department of Justice/Office for Victims of Crime. OCVA is not able to approve/disapprove match waiver requests.

Overtime/Attorney/CPA Questions:

1. What impact does this have with the new overtime rules? [See below](#)
2. Is this grant intended to solve programs that may arise from implementation of the FLSA in December? [See below](#)
3. I am confused about the on call portion. Does this mean that if someone is on call for 20 hours and works 35 hours in a week,,,, this means that they are working 55 hours and get 15 hours of OT? [See below](#)
4. It might also be useful to go over what is considered a work week for the new federal stuff. I believe it starts Saturday...clarity would help around this too. [See below](#)
5. Since we don't know if future funding is available and programs can't sustain the increased wages (for example) will it be legal for programs to reduce the staff wages once they have been increased? [See below](#)
6. Can we have staff flex out overtime hours if it is in the same pay period? [See below](#)

This is a determination each organization will need to make on their own, and we have included a number of resources that may be helpful to reference.

- **501 commons Workbook:** <http://www.501commons.org/resources/tools-and-best-practices/human-resources/501CommonsWorkbookforFSLAOvertimeRules.xlsx>
- **Overtime Final Rule and the Non-Profit Sector**
<https://www.dol.gov/sites/default/files/overtime-nonprofit.pdf>
- **Guidance for Non-Profit Organizations on Paying Overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act**
<https://www.dol.gov/whd/overtime/final2016/nonprofit-guidance.pdf>

Questions should be directed to your agency attorney/CPA and/or board. This application is about compensation & benefits, the impact on specific agencies is not known as this would be determined on an agency by agency basis.

Is it allowable:

1. The only question I have at first is this: we have one 1.0 FTE Forensic Interviewer. That's inadequate to meet our needs. I would like to apply for an additional position. I'm looking at FTE enhancement on Page 2 of the application and wondering if this –
"has less than 1.0 FTE currently dedicated to providing direct services **and/or** has need for additional FTE to provide basic services" means we can apply even if we have 1.0 FTE already?

OCVA and DSHS do not have a history of supporting forensic interview activities. We will begin supporting these activities in August. With this application, you cannot apply for a need for a service that has not been funded for a regular funding cycle. You can apply in the fall under the specific services, child services, specific crime types, and/or enhancement applications.

2. Can we ask for incentive/bonus pay as part of the application?

This funding is to assist programs in raising basic wages for advocates and not for incentive/bonus pay.

3. Can we ask for goods & services to get computers, office supplies, etc. for new staff?

The purpose of this funding and application is to support the services currently being funded by VOCA and being provided pursuant to the DSHS CBDVP-Emergency Shelter contract and the OCVA Sexual Assault and Crime Victim Service Center grants. This support is through increased compensation and/or FTE enhancement only. Funding is not available for supplies, training/travel, and operating expenses.

4. Can we utilize this grant to build much needed management position?

This funding is to raise the compensation of direct service staff and their supervisors.

5. What are the allowable expenses from this grant? Are we able to move money in current budget to increase goods & services and utilize this funding more for compensation & benefits? Will each program get a set amount to apply for or are we making an educated guess on what we think we should receive?

Allowable requests are for raising compensation and benefits for direct service staff and supervisors and/or to increase FTE. You are not able to move line item expenses (in essence

creating a need for more FTE or salary by shifting money) – these funds will be added to current grants/contracts. Moving money in this manner is not an allowable request. Goods & services cannot be added. There is no set amount – you need to make a case for any request you submit.

6. If we have already instituted wage increases but are still struggling to fully fund them, can we apply for VOCA funds for that purpose?

Your agency can certainly use and follow your existing compensation plan in proposing the compensation increase request; however, awarded funds cannot be applied retroactively to off-set increased costs of compensation/benefits already paid.

7. Is the 6.1 million only for advocacy or can any be allocated to therapy dollars?

If there are therapists on staff, and you can make a case for need, you can request funding under this offering. If you want to subcontract therapy or begin offering therapy by hiring a therapist, there will an opportunity in the fall to apply for therapy funding.

8. I will need more goods & services with more staff. We desperately need larger offices, how do we address this under these two grants? It is enhancement, but no goods & services in the budget.

No, this funding cannot be used for anything but compensation and benefits.

9. Another priority for us is administrative help, which isn't fully funded by the grant we get.

This funding is for direct service staff and their supervisors only. Administrative positions cannot be funded through this application.

10. So if administrative staff support is a need that isn't currently supported, is this something that can be advocated for through this process?

Unfortunately, no. The only option would be to use any increased indirect funding to pay for administrative staff support.

11. Is expanding training budget and possibly travel to national conferences considered a "benefit" that could be integrated into this plan?

No, you can only apply for standard benefits – there is another application for training.

12. An overview of what the VOCA application will fund –

This application will fund compensation & benefits for direct service staff (and their supervisors) only. The intent is pay a higher compensation to have less turnover and to be able to compete with other employers. In addition, FTE can be applied for if a case can be made for an increase based on current workload. This is not for expansion of services, that application will be released later this fall.

13. We would like to raise our entire compensation schedule rather than just increasing the lowest paid direct service positions. Will we be able to do this?

The purpose of this funding and application is to support the services currently being funded by VOCA and being provided pursuant to the DSHS CBDVP-Emergency Shelter contract and the OCVA Sexual Assault and Crime Victim Service Center grants. Proposals to fund staff not currently funded under the DSHS contract and/or OCVA grant(s) must be providing contract/grant services and/or supervising staff providing these services.

14. This is compensation only for staff currently funded by VOCA/DSHS, so no support staff?

That is correct, unless you use any indirect funding increases for that purpose.

15. Scenario: We may have a 1.0 FTE providing direct services, but only allocate 75% to VOCA applicable funding sources now and make up the other 25% with fundraising or local foundation, or???? We do what we can to get someone to a full FTE to keep them. Can we ask for the 25% FTE, to get the position to a full FTE with VOCA funded programs. Then use those other "make up" dollars for other things?

It is not possible to ask for funding in cases such as you describe. These funds are to increase compensation & benefits or add FTE because service needs cannot be met by existing staff. These funds are not to increase or free-up agency funds for other costs.

16. Therapy as a benefit for staff?

No, but a clinical supervisor is a good idea to assist and support staff in providing services. This would need to be part of your agency budget and not this application.

17. Logistically, can we put in an "overtime" line (which would support various staff - as this will be impossible to accurately budget.

The purpose of this funding is to help programs adequately and meaningfully staff their current services. If there is an ongoing need, you could add FTEs to your program and not have folks working overtime.

18. Could these dollars be used for new technology that might make work easier? Ex- cell phones

No, these funds are for compensation & benefits only.

Building a Strong Case for Need/Application:

1. Important language, results or recommendations to make the application the strongest for additional FTEs?

You should make your best case for need.

2. Can we include attachments?

Not sure what the attachments would show – but you can include attachments. We are hoping that applications are concise and to the point.

3. Can you let us know if there is a page limitation for the proposal narrative?

No page limit, but we are hoping that applications are concise and to the point.

4. If the agency's compensation plan already exists (and is current), can we just attach it to the application and refer to it in the narrative?

Yes

5. We were able to increase compensation at our shelter in that contract. Can we include more shelter increases in this proposal?

If you can make a case for needing to increase compensation of shelter staff, yes.

6. Do you have input on how to phrase requesting VOCA funds for a compensation policy that has already been put into action. VOCA funds will support our current compensation plan in being more sustainable.

No suggestions, just make your best case for why these funds are needed.

7. Will there be character or word counts for the answer fields on the narrative section of the application?

No word count, but we are hoping that applications are concise and to the point.

8. Should we include our agency compensation philosophy/plan in the narrative section of the application?

If it strengthens your case for the funding, yes.

9. How do I "prove" that we really need the money to have better compensation?

You can site similar programs, other agencies, etc. as the basis for needing better compensation in order to compete for staff. You can request assistance from WSCADV/WCSAP for guidance and also review the webinar to get tips on developing a framework for increasing compensation/FTE.

10. The application is happily brief(!) - do you want more rationale than the space allows?

We are looking for a strong case to be made – it can be short and compelling (but please, not long and unfocused).

11. is this a yearly or bi year grant

This will be given in an amendment to your current grant.

12. When/how will we be able to access the application?

The application is out and posted on our website.

13. When we do the budget do we do it from November till June?

You can make it reflect a yearly cost and we will pro-rate it.

14. What is the period we should estimate?

You can make it reflect a yearly cost and we will pro-rate it.

15. When will the application be posted online?

The application is out and posted on our website.

16. Do we complete separate applications for our Commerce SA contract and our OCVA Voca Contracts?

You will be submitting only one application, there is space in the application to note the programs.

17. Are you allowed to apply for FTE enhancement and compensation increases, or just one or the other?

This is both – you can apply for compensation/benefit increases and FTE.

18. Yes, I have a question on the proposal process end. Can you tell us (1) how to submit this proposal to Christine Fenno - by email, hard mail or online? (2) Is there a page limitation for the whole proposal? (3) Is there character limitations for the responses to each of the questions?

You need to submit a hard copy to OCVA (Chris Fenno) at P.O. Box 4 2525, 1011 Plum Street SE, Olympia WA 98504. There are no page limits or character limitations – we just ask that you be concise and to the point.

19. When will the funds be available? Jan 1, 2016, mid-year 2017?

We plan to put it into amended grants/contracts for a November 1 start date.

Other:

1. Renewal next year if modifications to current contracts happen this year?

Yes, it would be annualized for next year's contract/grant. It will not be included in any funding formula.

2. Do you have any resources on the \$\$\$ impact of high turnover? That may be a helpful talking point when meeting with governing bodies hesitant to make these changes because of concerns about cost.

We do not. We suggest contacting WSCADV or WCSAP to request technical assistance.

3. Will the awards be retroactive to September?

No, they will begin November 1. We anticipate amending grants/contracts for a November 1 start date.

4. Is it 6.1 million per year?

That is the annual amount – it will be prorated for this year.

5. Need more information about FTE improvements.

If you have specific questions, please call or email Chris Fenno:
Christine.fenno@commerce.wa.gov; 360-725-2896

6. Are there important things NOT to do?

Don't make the mistake of thinking more is better – just make your case, tell us what you need and why.

7. If increasing compensation it will most affect newer lower paid employees. How do I equitably deal with longer term staff that earns at higher rate now?

That would be a question to ask your board and would be an internal discussion.

8. A clearer understanding of the differences between the enhancement RFP (an if there is a maximum on that particular one) and the funding for DV/SA/CAC funding.

The FTE enhancement is for to cover current workload. It should be requested when there is not at least 1.0 FTE providing crime victim services or in cases where the workload is too large for the existing FTE. There will also be an enhancement/expansion application going out this fall for new initiatives or programming. These FTE increases are for current work that your current staff cannot handle (large caseload, only part-time advocate for service, etc.).

9. Is there a way organizations will share what they're going to ask for?

There is no organized way to share, perhaps informally, but that would be up to the programs.

10. We would like to add staff both this fall (upon award) and this spring, however, we would like to submit the application this year is that acceptable?

The increase FTE is only for current work that you need assistance with – you cannot request the FTE increase for the spring. The FTE enhancement is to cover current workload. It should be requested when there is not at least 1.0 FTE providing crime victim services or in cases where the workload is too large for the existing FTE. There will also be an enhancement/expansion application going out this fall for new initiatives or programming. This FTE increase is for current work that your current staff cannot handle (large caseload, only part-time advocate for service, etc.).

11. Is the \$6.1 million only for Washington, or the total US?

Washington State.

12. I am looking to make sure we are already competitive on our compensation. Also, I want to understand how this particular application applies to adding staff in understaffed regions.

If current workload needs additional FTE, you can request it through this application. If you wish to expand your services into another county or part of the region or add staff for new

programming, you should apply for the enhancement/expansion application funding when it is released in the fall.

13. The allocations (\$6.1 million) is 2015 money? Or is it 2015+2016 money?

These funds will be coming from the 2015 VOCA Assistance Award.

14. What is the difference between enhancement of FTE and enhancement of programming?

This FTE enhancement is to cover existing service need, too few advocates for number seeking services. It is adding FTE to cover current services. Enhancement/expansion is the increase of FTE into new areas or new services. That application will be released in the fall.

15. Is the 6.1 million dollars spread over 3 years or is it 6.1 million each year for 3 years?

It is approximately 6.1 million per year.