

## VOCA Funds – Match Waiver Request Guidance

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VOCA regulations require sub-recipients to contribute to the total cost of their VOCA funded project by providing not less than 20% of the total project cost (25% match of the total subaward funds), either cash or in-kind, from non-federal sources.

With increasing VOCA funds, many agencies may receive a larger VOCA award, which means larger match requirements. Many VOCA funded agencies may have difficulty meeting the full 20% match requirements of a larger award and may want to request a match waiver from OVC.

The federal Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) allows the state to review all waiver requests and make a decision whether to grant the request on a case by case basis. Match requests are made with regard to a specific subaward. Requesting and receiving approval for a match waiver for one subaward does not extend the match waiver to any other subaward.

### Requesting a Match Waiver

**Your agency may request a match waiver either during a subaward application process or after a subaward has been approved** if you later find that you are not able to meet your budgeted match amount.

**If your agency is requesting a match waiver during the application process**, upload a letter on your agency's letterhead in the Upload section of the application. The letter should outline the reasons why your agency will have trouble meeting the full match requirement and should indicate the amount of match you are able to provide. Your CVSSD fund coordinator will review your waiver request to determine eligibility and will forward the request through the CVSSD process for final determination.

**If your agency is requesting a match waiver after subaward funding has begun**, you must initiate an amendment in E-Grants to begin the process. You must then upload a letter on your agency's letterhead in the Grant Amendment section of the application in E-Grants in the Form/Document Upload section. The letter should outline the reasons why your agency will have trouble meeting the full match requirement and should indicate the amount of match you are able to provide. **If your agency is requesting a match waiver for Federal subawards expiring in fewer than 9 months, you must detail why a match waiver is necessary for an award that will be closing shortly. CVSSD will not consider match waiver requests within 45 days of an award termination date.** Your CVSSD fund coordinator will review your waiver request to determine eligibility and will forward the request through the CVSSD process for final determination. If your request is approved you must submit an amended budget reflecting the change. Programs are encouraged to consider timing of this request because initiating an amendment in E-Grants effectively locks the subaward for purposes of submitting subaward reports during this time.

**Your letter requesting a match waiver should provide a brief description of your agency and your VOCA funded project and should fully respond to the following questions:**

1. How is the grant currently being matched?
2. What extenuating circumstances exist that impede the organization's ability to partially or fully match the VOCA grant funds requested?
  - a. Why is the full match amount a hardship for your organization?
  - b. How much match are you able to provide and what amount you are requesting to be waived?
3. Has the organization considered all possible options for meeting the match with in-kind and cash sources that are not being used as match on another federal grant?
4. What methods has the organization used to consider all possible options for meeting the match requirements?
5. What steps does the organization plan to take in order to be able to meet the match requirement in the future?
6. If a match waiver is approved, does the organization anticipate this is a one-time request or are there extenuating circumstances that will require a waiver request next year?
7. How would the denial of a match waiver impact the VOCA project? (i.e., fewer victims served, diminished quality of services)
8. Would the program have to decline all or part of the grant award if a match waiver is not granted?

**CVSSD will consider the following when deciding whether or not to approve a match waiver request:**

- practical and/or logistical obstacles to providing match (*e.g.*, public agencies that do not engage in private fundraising and may have limitations on soliciting contributing funds);
- local resource constraints (*e.g.*, rural community with limited local funding availability or volunteer capacity);
- increases to VOCA funding where local funding availability has not increased to the same degree;
- past ability to provide match – CVSSD and OVC generally expects subrecipients

to provide at least the same dollar amount of match it provided during the grant year immediately preceding the year of the waiver request unless a change in circumstances justifies a lower amount.

**Keep in mind** that **CVSSD** is not likely to approve a match waiver for the full amount. It is very important you consider the amount of match you are able to contribute to the project. CVSSD will generally require that you provide at least the same amount of match as provided in the previous grant cycle. If you are unsure about allowable match sources, speak with your CVSSD fund coordinator.

An example of a match waiver request letter is included on the next page. This should only be used as a guide for writing your own letter that is applicable to your agency's circumstances.

THIS IS ONLY AN EXAMPLE.

If a waiver will be requested, this letter should not be duplicated but revised to meet your specific circumstances that make providing match a great hardship.

**Agency Letterhead**

DATE

Crime Victim and Survivor Services Division  
Oregon Department of Justice  
1162 Court St., NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**RE: VOCA Waiver Request for 2017/2019 Campus-Based Funding Initiatives Subaward  
# \_\_\_\_\_**

Home of Hope, a Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault non-profit organization, is requesting a hardship waiver of our 2017-2019 VOCA Match requirement in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_, which constitutes a partial match waiver request. The full amount of our match requirement is \$\_\_\_\_\_ and our organization is able to provide \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Home of Hope has been in existence for 10 years and provides crisis intervention and advocacy services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Our request for a partial match waiver is supported by the following information:

1. Current Match:

We meet our match in our current VOCA funding through the use of volunteer hours and limited cash contribution.

2. Extenuating circumstances that impede our organization's ability to partially or fully match the VOCA grant funds requested (hardship in meeting match):

Home of Hope has utilized volunteers since its inception; however, over the past 3 years we have faced challenges to recruiting enough volunteers to meet our match requirement. We face the following challenges in meeting the additional required match with volunteer hours:

- The ability to find volunteers to commit to meeting our required 40 hours of training before they can start providing direct service to victims has become difficult. In addition, volunteers are required to participate in monthly ongoing

meetings. We currently have 3 core volunteers who are committed to the program, but it is not enough to provide the full amount of the required match for this subaward.

- Home of Hope is also a recipient of a 2015-2017 VOCA Non-Competitive award and the majority of our volunteer hours are committed to this award. The requested funds in this subaward are new and are in addition to the ongoing non-competitive funding this organization receives.
  - The geographical area is made up of two distinct populations; the rural communities with the majority being low income, Spanish speaking residents; and the more affluent communities. Many of the low income residents do not have the ability to volunteer because of the costs involved including child care, gas and car insurance and maintenance.
  - People in the more affluent communities, express interest in our programs, but they are not willing or able to commit to the amount of time necessary. In addition, because we respond to victims twenty-four hours per day, many families find this disruptive to their employment or lifestyle.
  - Individuals in the more rural areas are hesitant to volunteer because they may know the survivors living in the small communities and do not want to be seen as being involved.
  - There is a community college nearby whose students could do an internship with our program; however, these internships are generally 6 weeks long. Because they would be required to complete the 40 hour training before they could work directly with survivors they would not have much time to do actual work with clients, which is the reason they consider volunteering.
3. Consideration of all possible options for meeting the match with in-kind and cash sources that are not being used as match on another federal grant:

As described above, volunteer hours are in limited supply. As for cash sources, Home for Hope has experienced funding cuts over the past several years. Specifically, our Rural VAWA federal grant was not renewed, we lost two foundation grants, and suffered a reduction in the city funds we have been receiving. We are not able at this time to contribute an additional matching cash contribution for this grant. Other in-kind contributions have already been earmarked to meet the partial match amount we are able to offer, which includes postage, equipment use, janitorial services, utilities, office space, and phone and computer costs.

4. Methods used to consider all possible options for meeting the match requirements:

We've met with the Board and our accountant to examine funding streams and currently obligated assets and revenue.

5. Steps planned to be able to meet the match requirement in the future:

Home of Hope plans to add this conversation to the regular Board meetings in anticipation of needing to meet this need in the future. Additionally, we hope the position funded by this grant will contribute to more effective volunteer recruitment, which could lead to increased volunteer hours available for match.

6. If a match waiver is approved, does the organization anticipate this is a one-time request or are there extenuating circumstances that will require a waiver request next year?

Home of Hope anticipates we may require a partial waiver next year as we continue to work on funding much-needed growth and increase in services.

7. Impact to VOCA project if waiver request (i.e., fewer victims served, diminished quality of services):

Without our 1.00 VOCA-funded position(s), victims in the Home of Hope rural service area would not have access to critically needed services that assist them in healing and enables them to return to their previous state of well-being.

8. Would the program have to decline all or part of the grant award if a match waiver is not granted?

Home of Hope would be forced to decline the part of the grant award that we are unable to match.

VOCA match creates a huge burden that restricts our ability to provide critical victim services. If we were not to receive these funds simply because we cannot generate the appropriate match it would leave our program at a disadvantage. We respectfully request a partial waiver of the match requirements.

Thank you for your consideration,

Executive Director