



**DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**  
CRIME VICTIM & SURVIVOR SERVICES DIVISION

March 13, 2020

RE: Impact of COVID-19 Response and use of grant funding

Dear CVSSD Grantees,

We realize this is a trying time for programs as you try to navigate the ever-changing landscape with regard to COVID-19 response. We have received a number of questions from grantees regarding issues arising out of this response. At this point in time we can provide the following information in response to the questions we've seen:

**Q: What happens to our grant funds if we need to close our office and/or shelter or reduce the level of service/response available?**

A: Your grant funds will be unaffected by these changes in relation to your organization's COVID-19 response. We encourage you to make decisions based on the safety of your staff and the victims you serve. Organizations may want to consider what work can be done remotely even when physical office spaces are closed or in person responses are limited. We encourage you to communicate with your community partners to ensure clear understanding of service availability in your community. If possible, take advantage of multidisciplinary opportunities such as your SART or child abuse team relationships to work towards a collaborative response in these times when resources are becoming extra stretched.

**Q: What costs can our grants help cover in associate with our COVID-19 response?**

A: VOCA, ODSVS, CFA, and CAMI MDT funds can all be used to cover allowable expenses, to include the following costs:

- *Out of the ordinary staff leave costs associated with having to close facilities such as the office and/or shelter, or due to illness.* Any personnel leave costs paid for with grant funds should be consistent with personnel leave costs paid with other funds and should align with the policies of your organization. If you do not have policies that cover this scenario, you should develop them as soon as possible.
- *Cleaning supplies.*
- *Professional cleaning services to clean the office and/or shelter.* These costs should be reasonable; we encourage grantees to seek out at least 3 bids to help determine reasonableness, if possible. Contracts under \$10,000 do not need to be pre-approved by CVSSD.
- *Stocking up on food and other necessary supplies for shelters and/or clients staying in hotels as a form of emergency shelter.*

An amendment may be required to shift funds. Due to these unusual circumstances, we will allow these amendments to be done after the fact.

**Q: What happens if a training we've already paid for with grant funds is cancelled?**

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A: For any federal funds, if the organization conducting the training offers a ticket for a future event, please be sure that the future training date is within the grant period from which your payment came. Federal funds cannot be used to cover the cost of training that falls outside the award period. Given that, we encourage you to seek a refund if a grant-funded training is cancelled. If you do receive a refund please be sure to credit the grant on your books and on your next financial report for that grant. You can list it as a credit by either reducing the amount of the expenditures in the training line item by the amount refunded, or entering the costs as a negative dollar amount if there are no other training costs to include on the financial report. *Grantees are encouraged to consider holding off on booking any new training occurring within the next few months, or at least ensuring that any expenditures are fully refundable.* Given the high chance of cancellation at this time and our need to be good stewards of the funds, CVSSD may elect to not reimburse cancelled training costs booked from this point forward through the next few months. You incur these expenses at your own risk. If you incurred travel expenses in anticipation of a future training that has now been cancelled, those refunds should be treated in a similar way, by crediting the amount back to the grant.

**Q: What if, due to the virus, we have fewer volunteer hours to list as match for our grant?**

A: For VOCA funds, if volunteer hours are decreasing because of the corona virus and that affects your ability to meet your match, you can seek a match waiver from CVSSD. Please reach out to your Fund Coordinator to discuss this.

We recognize this is a very fluid situation and you're continually evaluating the needs of your staff and the people you're serving. Please contact your Fund Coordinator with any other questions or concerns you may have. We will continue to update you as we receive any additional information that may be helpful.

Thank you,  
CVSSD Grant Staff

**Kim Larson, J.D.**