

FY24 VOCA and State Victim Assistance Request for Grant Applications Questions and Answers – FINAL 2.8.23

Q: How often will the Q+A be updated and posted?

A: We will post responses and/or guidance in the Q&A/FAQ which will be on our website: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/voca-state-victim-assistance-funding>. It will first be posted on Friday, December 16th and will be updated weekly if there are new questions.

Q: Will the informational session on 12.12 be recorded?

A: Yes, it will be recorded and posted to the following website: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/voca-state-victim-assistance-funding>

Q: What is the topic of the 12.7 eGrants Practice to Perfect session?

A: The eGrants Practice to Perfect session on December 7th walked participants through the FY24 renewal application via eGrants. Each session we have held this year has had a different topic, and this upcoming one will be focused on the renewal application. The recording of this and all other Practice to Perfect sessions can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/egrants>

Q: Where can we find eGrants training videos?

A: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/egrants>

Q: Why can't I see the budget pages or any information in the Prioritization Form once I initiate the FY24 application?

A: In order to see the budget forms in the FY24 application, you must fill out the match waiver question at the top of Section II. This will determine whether you use forms with match columns or without match columns.

The Prioritization Form will auto-populate with the information that you put into the budget pages. MOVA *highly encourages* applicants *not* to click into the Prioritization Form until the budget is complete or near complete. Although the form will update after the fact and function as it should, the information may appear out of order.

Q: When selecting from the 'staff category' drop down menu in the personnel – salary funding request page, how do we list a staff person with multiple roles/responsibilities?

A: If a staff member fits into multiple categories, select the category that represents how the majority of the staff member's funded time is spent. However, if there is a 50/50 split of staff duties, please use two lines – one for direct and one for administrative and select from the drop down appropriately.

Q: For staff categories, if has a clinical master's degree that makes them license eligible—but they have not obtained their license—and they are working under a licensed clinician, what category would they fit under?

A: We recommend selecting Direct Staff: Clinician for this example, because it speaks more to the type of service the staff member provides.

Q: If we have three current VOCA funded contracts, does this mean they are to be combined into one application for FY24? Does that mean that they will have just one VOCA with one budget and file one expenditure report each month? Would we be completing the application based on FY23 funding?

A: All three programs will be combined into one budget/application for FY24. The amount you request is not to exceed the current total of the three FY23 awards. This does mean that you will receive one FY24 award amount and will have one approved budget and will submit one expenditure report each month.

Q: Can multiple people work on one application from the same agency?

A: Yes, multiple people from the same agency can work on one application given they have the appropriate role. Roles that can initiate, work on, and submit applications are the Agency Administrator, Authorized Representative, and Application Submitter.

Q: For agencies that have more than one currently funded program, how do we fill out the data questions in Section II? Is there a way to enter different percentages for different programs, such as homicide: "program A=90%, program B= 25%," etc.?

A: As there will only be one contract that combines all your programs, the application should be completed to reflect the entirety of the services you are provided under the one contract for FY24. To do this, combine the data from each program to input one percentage per crime type and/or specific underserved population.

Q: In looking at our eGrants application, there is a glitch that is not calculating the Crime Type Served or Specific Underserved Population. Additionally, there is a glitch where Program Narrative Question 1 does not have a box in which to type.

A: Thanks for letting us know. We are aware of this glitch and are actively working with the eGrants developer to resolve this issue. UPDATE: this has been resolved.

Q: In the Prioritization Form, with 3 separate programs, would all 3 program names be entered in the "Program Name" line? How should a pass-through agency fill this out?

A: Within the Organizational Questionnaire, for the Program Name line, you will create a program name which captures all programming specific to the applicant (not a pass-through's subcreipients). This program name will auto-populate in the Prioritization Form. If you have multiple programs, you will be outlining those in Q1 of the program narrative with 1-2 sentences each.

Q: How will the Prioritization Form work for organizations with multiple programs? Will each program be able to prioritize individually? How will the ranking work for the staff of different programs if each of the programs and their staff are doing different work (i.e. clinical, advocacy, etc.)?

A: You will have to prioritize as a whole from an agency perspective. You are only able to use each ranking once. You may use the explanation column to identify which cost belongs to which program. If there is additional information you would like MOVA to consider, please include details in the explanation column in the prioritization form. We are now looking at applications as a whole from the applicant agency. We are seeking to streamline the work on both sides (one contract/one expenditure report).

Q: Do the program narrative questions have word or character limits?

A: No, you may adjust the text box to fit your response.

Q: What is an example of an optional upload, and is this desirable?

A: The optional upload section is really for use by MOVA pass-through agencies as they will be uploading their subrecipient budgets. Any information provided, which is not requested via the RGA, will not be considered by MOVA.

Q: Is the FY23 application from last year still in the system that we could use as a guide for FY24?

A: Yes, your application is still in the system! Please contact your Program Coordinator for technical assistance if needed to find your FY23 application in eGrants.

Q: Is there a way to copy what was in our FY23 application directly into Section I of the FY24 application?

A: FY23 information will not carry forward into the FY24 application. However, you are able to copy and paste information from your FY23 application into your FY24 application.

The system will not allow two windows of eGrants to be open, *unless* you use one of the following strategies:

- 1) Open one window in incognito or
- 2) Open each eGrants window in different browsers (i.e. one in Chrome and one in Internet Explorer)

Another method could be downloading the FY23 application into a PDF file and copy & pasting from there. To download, click Print Document from the Tools in the lefthand panel of your contract.

Q: As a pass-through agency, where can we find the template for subrecipient budgets?

A: MOVA will reach out directly to you to provide these templates.

Q: How likely is it that we will be refunded at our current FY23 level?

A: Please see the RGA for more information on funding availability and the evaluation criteria.

Q: Is it the case that our application should not exceed our current award, AND individual line items should not exceed the ones in the current award? No shifting between line items?

A: Your application should not exceed your current award, but you are able to make changes to line items (including adding or removing items) within the scope of your currently funded services.

Q: It seems that having one contract and budget will allow for more flexibility if we need to reallocate funds during the fiscal year. For example, if we have a vacancy in a staff position, the funds can be reallocated to support some efforts in a different program if/as needed. Is this true?

A: MOVA will be looking at funding awarded as a whole, and yes you can make these adjustments as/if needed with approval of your Program Coordinator via budget amendments.

Q: Are we allowed to add in what was cut out in FY23 (food vouchers, parking vouchers, training etc) or should it only reflect services covered under the current grant cycle?

A: You may be able to adjust your request to include costs that may not currently be included in your FY23 budget, provided the changes don't significantly alter the scope of the program, but the funding request must be level to the FY23 award.

Q: Will MOVA consider increases to salaries this year to account for the current cost of living recession costs and the competitive job market? Are there any specific requirements around how much we can increase personnel lines?

A: You may be able to adjust your request to update existing budget line items, but the funding request must be level to the FY23 award (or awards if you received multiple contracts).

Q: If we could find ways to save FY23 funds for needs that are not being considered a priority for FY24, would we be able to roll those over into FY24?

A: Unspent funds will not roll over from FY23 to FY24.

Q: Since this is a renewal, should we be applying for the same priority areas as our current funding or can we shift around a bit?

A: Generally, it is fine to shift a bit as long as does not significantly change current scope of services under this grant.

Q: What may be reasons for opting out of the match waiver?

A: When required, VOCA regulations require subrecipients 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. Following the passage of the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021, signed by Congress on July 22, 2021, MOVA issued automatic match waivers for all VOCA subrecipient programs. By accepting the match waiver, programs will not need to meet the matching requirement or document these matching costs. By waiving the match waiver, programs will be required to meet the match requirements outlined in the VOCA Policies and Procedures Manual <https://www.mass.gov/doc/fy23-voca-policies-and-procedures/download>.

Q: Can we submit a Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing (CASL) form dated from 2021, if it's still up to date?

A: The CASL form must updated with 2022/2023 dates.

Q: Is it possible for you to send a spreadsheet that reflects what the eGrants budget and narrative sections look like to work on "offline" as we prepare to submit (then we can just copy and paste into eGrants when we are done)?

A: You can use an old version of the Excel budget. When we created eGrants, this was provided to our developer, and the eGrants budget was created based on that template. You can enter data and then copy and paste into eGrants if that is helpful. Additionally, you may download a blank PDF of the application—specific pages or the whole thing—by clicking Print Document from the Tools section in the lefthand panel of the application.

Q: Given that the \$20M of State Bridge funding has come through for the current and upcoming state fiscal year, can you share why reductions may still be considered for certain program components?

A: MOVA is anticipating an overall reduction to our available federal funding, however, that may not translate as a reduction to all victim services programming. In completing the application, we advise that you submit an application with a budget not exceeding your FY23 award total. You can also refer to the available funding and evaluative criteria section of the RGA for more information as well. MOVA will provide more information related to this question in a different forum in early 2023 to address our budget planning process and considerations. Please ensure key leadership, programmatic, and financial staff are signed up for MOVA's Constant Contact lists to receive further messaging about this opportunity.

Q: Under the eligibility section of the RGA, it says "Applicants must have an active registration and be in compliance with the Non-Profit Organizations/Public Charities Division of the Attorney General's Office at the time of the award." Does this apply to non-profit organizations?

A: State agencies are exempt from this requirement. In order to see if your org falls under this exemption, MOVA recommends reaching out to the [Attorney General's Office](#) to clarify.

Q: I am in the VOCA application and cannot see the budget template in the blue bar on the left, but I can see it in the SAFEPLAN application.

A: In the VOCA application section II, applicants are asked if they will be accepting the blanket match waiver or opting out of it – once this selection is made and you've clicked save, the appropriate budget template will appear in the blue bar on the left. SAFEPLAN does not have this question in section II, so that's why the budget is automatically visible.

Q: We began our application via eGrants and were unable to enter data into some fields due to errors that appear to be imbedded in the application. For example, in Section II, there were characters under Adult Sexual Abuse, Other Violent Crime, Other Non-Violent Crime, where "{pgf30061-1-1-1-1}" appears.

A: This issue has been brought to the attention of our developer and resolved as of December 28. Please contact movagrants@mass.gov if you are still encountering this issue.

Q: In terms of client numbers, is there a particular timeframe we should use?

A: Please use the most recent year's (FY22) data to inform your responses.

Q: When I log onto eGrants, there is nothing on my Dashboard: no My Tasks and no My Opportunities. How should I proceed?

A: If this occurs, please send a screenshot of your Dashboard to MOVAGrants@mass.gov, and we will update it for you.

Q: How should I calculate the percentages for Section II, Part 1. Crime Type Served? Can the percentages be estimates?

A: You should complete Part 1. Crime Types Served based on the percentage of your funded program's services that will be directed towards each listed crime type in FY24. As you are being asked to predict the services that you will provide in FY24, the percentages entered can be estimates but they should be based on the services provided by your program and the crime types experienced by the victims/survivors you work with. You should use past OMT data or service data collected by your program to help inform these decisions.

Q: How would the total for Section II, Part 2B. Specific Underserved Populations Served be greater than 100%?

If part or all of your program is designed and intended to serve any of the underserved populations listed, you will enter the percentage of your funded program's services that are designed and intended to serve that population into the appropriate line. In some cases, this can total to more than 100%. For example, if your entire program is designed and intended to serve people who are immigrants and are monolingual Spanish speakers, you would enter 100% into the 'Immigrants/refugees/asylum seekers' line and 100% into the 'People with limited English proficiency' line.

Q: When uploading subrecipient budgets as a pass-through agency in the Optional Upload section, should we combine all of the budgets into one spreadsheet or upload separate budgets for each program? Is there somewhere on the subrecipient budget forms where I should be specifying the name of the subrecipient agency?

A: Upload budgets for each program; do not combine them into one spreadsheet. Each budget should be titled with the name of the pass-through's respective subrecipient, as well as utilizing the first tab in the Excel spreadsheet to denote the pass-through subrecipients' Agency Names and Program Names.

Q: Can you review background check requirements for staff as there was some confusion regarding the requirement of fingerprinting?

A: The determination of suitability to interact with minors special condition, as released by Office of Justice Programs, does require a fingerprint search or, if not legally available, a name-based search. Full details, as outlined by OJP, can be found [here](#).

As fingerprint searches are not available without a statutory mandate in MA, we will not be monitoring the fingerprinting requirement of this special condition but do expect that name-based searches will be performed in accordance with the requirements of the special condition for all covered individuals. More guidance can be found on MOVA's website and in the FY23 Policies & Procedures Manual.

Q: Does a CORI count as a name-based search?

A: Yes, a CORI counts as a name-based search.

Q: What if we have a VOCA contract and a SAFEPLAN contract? Does this mean that these will be combined or will these remain separate?

A: VOCA and SAFEPLAN contracts will remain separate. You will only need to combine VOCA contracts into one in your FY24 application if you have multiple VOCA contracts in FY23.

Q: Does the VOCA funded CSEC grant program fit into this or are these still separate?

A: If your agency receives multiple VOCA contracts in FY23, you are being asked to combine those contracts into one application for FY24. This only applies to contracts that your agency receives directly from MOVA. In the case of the CSEC grant (i.e. MACA sub-award), MACA is the agency who directly receives the contract. Please connect directly with MACA regarding this grant program.

Q: Just to be sure - we should submit an amount no greater than the FY23 grant?

A: Correct. In your FY24 application, you should apply for no more than the total amount your agency was awarded in FY23.

Q: Should everyone working on the grant be able to see each other's documents in eGrants?

Yes, anyone who has an eGrants role in your organization that is able to access application documents should be able to see what is in progress.

Q: In prior grant applications there was a useful document that was a timeline/checklist for documents and other requirements that was very helpful... is this still available?

A: A submission checklist is not available for this procurement, but eGrants has error checks built into the application to ensure all necessary information is provided by the applicants.

Q: The need for VOCA services in our community is greater than what we can currently meet. Can we ask for a larger award in FY24 in order to expand services?

A: Unfortunately, due to a reduction to recent federal award amounts, MOVA has limited funding to support the FY24 renewal which will not allow for increases in awards. Please see page 4 of the FY2024 Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and State Victim Assistance Funding Request for more information on available funding for this renewal cycle.

Q: If there is a change in leadership during the procurement, who should be listed in the application?

A: If possible, please list the new leadership contact in the application. We will be pulling data from the applications for contracting, so having the most current data would be helpful.

Q: What is the bid number for the FY24 VOCA & State RGA?

A: The bid number on COMMBUYS is BD-23-1111-1111C-1111L-82092.

Q: For the FY24 VOCA + State application, is the only required form the Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing form? What about 501(c)3 verification or consultant forms? What about job descriptions and resumes for staff?

A: Yes, the only required upload for the FY24 VOCA + State application on eGrants is the Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing (CASL) form unless an applicant is a pass-through agency. Additional forms will be required during the contracting process, and MOVA will provide more instructions about those requirements in the spring.

Q: In reviewing this section 2A. and 2B, I am wondering about how to think about our qualifications. We definitely serve an immigrant/ELL/Culturally specific population. However, at this time we are not asking for VOCA funding for the staff person that works with this population since we currently have other funding sources for that purpose. However, I would like to use our VOCA funded services to be offered to survivors represented in these underserved populations for financial assistance, legal representation, parent workshops and our outreach efforts. Is this an appropriate request for us to make?

A: For parts 2a and 2b in Section II of the application, MOVA asks that agencies fill out this section only if the agency or program services are *designed* and *intended* to serve the populations in question. It is possible to serve these populations without having services that are designed and intended for them.

In terms of the funding request, agencies may include any items in their funding request as long as it is within the scope of the program and the total request does not exceed the FY23 award.

Q: How much funding is available for the FY24 VOCA + State procurement?

A: In the RGA, we state that we're anticipating on awarding between \$34,461,497M and \$49,149,950M. MOVA is still in the process of determining the exact number, so we encourage you to keep an eye out for MOVA's Constant Contact updates as more information is forthcoming.

Q: When trying to save changes, the screen timed out and gave me an error titled "Error Processing Request." What should I do?

A: Sometimes the technology can act a bit wonky. Log out and log back in to make and save your changes. If you continue to have the same issue, reach out to MOVA for further technical assistance.

Q: Our agency received one dollar amount initially, but then it was increased with the state/bridge funding. Which number should we use for the FY24 funding request?

A: Your agency's FY24 funding request should not exceed the FY23 VOCA award, which includes state/bridge funding.

Q: How should the indirect costs be prioritized? If awards are reduced, we cannot altogether cut indirect expenses; rather, it will be reduced accordingly if other line items are cut, but still stay at the same indirect rate.

A: We encourage you to put this explanation in the Prioritization Form for indirect so that this nuance is captured during our review. At this time, we do not have any new information regarding what may or may not be supported in the FY24 awards, but you can always refer back to the RGA for additional information.

Q: Can you please confirm that we are not submitting anything through COMMBUYS and only submitting through Intelligrants (eGrants)?

A: The FY24 VOCA + State application should be submitted only on eGrants, not on COMMBUYS.

Q: Do we need a new logic model or are we working off the current one?

A: Logic models will not be updated during the application phase, but rather during contracting. More information about this will be forthcoming in the spring.