



# NATIONAL DISTRICT ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION

## THE VOICE OF AMERICA'S PROSECUTORS

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## Victims of Crime Act: Program Overview

### History

The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant programs are the primary source of federal funding for thousands of victim service providers across the nation, including programs serving victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, trafficking, and drunk driving. VOCA grants also fund victim compensation, which helps survivors pay medical bills, makes up for missed wages, and, in the most severe cases, helps pay for funeral costs.

### How it Works

VOCA grants are not taxpayer-funded. Instead, they are paid for out of the Crime Victims Fund (“CVF” or “the Fund”), which comprises federal criminal monetary penalties. Every year, appropriators decide how much to release from the CVF. Most of the disbursement is distributed by the Office for Victims of Crime (“OVC”) via formula grant to victim service providers, with some of the disbursement also providing crucial additional funding to supplement state compensation programs

### Current Request

To preserve VOCA grant programs, Congress can redirect monetary penalties from federal deferred prosecution and non-prosecution agreements, increase the federal grant calculation for funding to victim compensation programs from the current 60% to 75% of state-funded payouts, and allow states to request a one-year no-cost extension for these grant programs.

### Funding Concerns

The past and expected future cuts to VOCA grants are the result of concerningly low deposits into the Fund (see chart). In Fiscal Year 2020, the VOCA disbursement - and thus the funding available for victim service providers - decreased by 25%, and victim service providers have been told to expect further cuts. Such cuts to programs means victims would be unable to access lifesaving services every year, programs would be forced to close, and tens of thousands of advocates could lose their jobs during a time of extremely high unemployment.

