

**Michigan Crime Victim Services Commission
VOCA Victim Assistance Grant Program
Technical Assistance Project**

***A Four Year Report
October 1999 – September 2002***

**Prepared by:
The Michigan Crime Victim Services Commission and
The Michigan Public Health Institute**



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PREFACE

Ever since passage of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (VOCA), victim assistance administrators have grappled with questions concerning the competency, appropriateness, inter-relationships and efficacy of direct services provided across the broad range of disciplines associated with crime victim assistance.

As state VOCA administrators, we have an obligation to ask these questions. We are obligated to seek answers that help us understand the dynamics that front-line advocates encounter in the day-to-day practice of victim services. We have an obligation to individual crime victims, the vast majority of whom we will never meet, to ascertain and facilitate the use of essential tools needed by service providers in their community. And, we are obligated to translate what we learn into cost effective policy and procedures that can empower local agencies.

The Grant Compliance Review and Needs Assessment project reported here has been a watershed in beginning to meet these obligations. By no means have we been able to incorporate every good recommendation suggested by VOCA funded agencies, but we have attempted to re-examine the big picture and to implement substantial, customer driven improvements in grant processing, project reporting, training and communications.

The result of four years of compliance testing summarized in this report speaks for itself. Indeed, the citizens of Michigan are well served by an increasingly sophisticated network of diligent, compassionate and well-trained victim advocates and caregivers. It is a great privilege for us to know them and work with them.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Michigan VOCA grantees, to the Council of Advocates, to Dr. Cris Sullivan for teaching us that program evaluation need not be intimidating, to CVSC Program Specialist Leslie O'Reilly, and to Tom Nelson and the many other

talented MPHI project staff who have served with distinction throughout the long hours of work represented by this four-year report. It is extremely gratifying to be part of this public/private, local/state partnership of dedicated professionals who have joined together to greatly improve our comprehension of crime victim services. We enthusiastically look forward to continuing these partnerships. Significantly, we believe that a genuine dialogue about what quality service really means, and how we might better measure it, has been set in motion by this effort. Together, we continue to pursue our common goal of enhanced health, safety and well being for victims of crime.

Mike Fullwood, Director
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MPHI - CRIME VICTIM SERVICES COMMISSION
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT
FOUR-YEAR REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the continuing goal to best serve tens of thousands of crime victims, the Michigan Crime Victim Services Commission (CVSC) has partnered with the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) to create a project unique in the United States—the Michigan Crime Victim Services Commission Technical Assistance Project (Project). From 1999 through 2002, this collaborative effort has supported nearly 90 community-based public and private agencies providing direct services to victims of violent crime in Michigan. This Four Year Report provides descriptive detail concerning this public-private partnership and may serve as a guide for creating similar projects elsewhere in the nation.

From 1999 through 2002, the Project staff endeavored to respond to the needs of community-based crime victim service agencies in Michigan supported through federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds. We strove to be fair and helpful to the agencies that provide victim assistance. In giving a voice to these agencies, the CVSC-MPHI partnership has enhanced and maintained open lines of communication for the purposes of improving services to crime victims and VOCA grant administration. In essence, statewide information-sharing lies at the heart of this Project. Moreover, the CVSC-MPHI collaboration has created a responsive process, whereby requests

from VOCA-supported agencies are welcomed and acted upon.

This Report provides specific information concerning the design of, and substantive findings from, four specific components of the CVSC-MPHI collaboration, namely:

- ❖ Statewide VOCA grant compliance and needs assessment processes
- ❖ Annual meetings of a small group of VOCA-grantee staff members—the Council of Advocates—in order to help guide the Project and provide feedback on other CVSC processes
- ❖ Training opportunities for victim service agencies in order to build capacity for self evaluation—otherwise known as program evaluation—of the services supported by VOCA funds
- ❖ A publication dedicated to sharing ideas and improving services to crime victims in a sensitive and effective manner—*The Michigan Advocate*

In the last four years, the ongoing CVSC-MPHI partnership has utilized these four programmatic elements as a means of honoring their commitment to listen and respond to VOCA-supported community agencies providing vital assistance to victims of crime.



I. INTRODUCTION

The Michigan Crime Victim Services Commission (CVSC) and the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) have been working together since 1998. The overarching purpose of this public-private relationship has been to enhance services to victims of crime by working closely with community-level partners throughout the state. These community-level partners—grant-funded agencies receiving federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds administered by the CVSC—provide direct services to those whose lives have been scarred by violence. It is no small task for the CVSC and MPHI to support and enhance the work of professionals who provide victim assistance. At the same time, these victim service professionals who work directly with crime victims engage in an enormous and ongoing undertaking. In order to provide the proper context for the state-level partnership between the CVSC and MPHI, it is important to understand the extent and seriousness of VOCA-funded crime victim services at the local level in Michigan.

Over the past four years, 88 community partners have received \$10-\$11 million in VOCA funding annually to

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serve the needs of crime victims in Michigan. Over 200 committed victim service professionals and 10,000 dedicated volunteers labor to provide comfort, safety and healing to over 120,000 crime victims annually. It is important to note that this latter figure represents only a portion of the population affected by criminal violence, due in part to underreporting by victims themselves. Nevertheless, it has long been an institutional goal for the CVSC and its community-level partners to continually improve the reach of VOCA-funded victim services to those in need.

Although the statistics are striking, neither sheer numbers nor text can fully describe the plight of those who have suffered the very real physical, emotional, social and economic impact of violence, nor the dedicated efforts of victim services professionals and volunteers stationed in Michigan's prosecutors' offices, community law enforcement agencies, hospitals, shelters, advocacy centers and elsewhere. Many of these professionals and volunteers—truly unsung heroes—work to assist victims on a 24/7/365 basis. They serve physically and sexually abused children, victims who suffer from family and intimate partner violence, adults who have been sexually assaulted, individuals who have been injured—or family members of those killed—by drunk drivers, elderly persons who have been abused or exploited, adults who continue to suffer the emotional effects from sexual molestation perpetrated upon them as children, victims of robbery, assault, economic exploitation and fraud, or hate crimes, and the surviving family members of homicide victims.

Critical services to these individuals and families include crisis counseling by telephone and in person, therapy, individual counseling and support groups, information and referral resources, advocacy in the criminal court system including both emergency and scheduled court proceedings, emergency financial assistance, advocacy in personal matters, assistance with filing crime victim compensation claims, and varied follow-up services.

This is the context for the creation of the initial working relationship between the CVSC and MPHI. In late 1998, key staff members from the CVSC and MPHI met to develop methods for a dual purpose: 1) to enhance the VOCA grant accountability process; and 2) to facilitate strong lines of communication so that VOCA grantees can voice their needs in serving crime victims.

A. A WORD ABOUT TERMINOLOGY AND
VOCA GRANTEES

As mentioned previously, the CVSC provided VOCA funding to 88 community-level grantees in Michigan from 1999 through 2002. Technically, the CVSC, as the state administrative agent, is the “grantee” of federal VOCA funds, while entities receiving monies at the local level are considered “subgrantees.” For the purposes of brevity and clarity, this Report will generally refer to the CVSC as the *funder*, and local recipients of VOCA funds as *grantees*. Further, we will most often use the more generic terms *grantee* or *agency*

Each agency has its own structure and approach to serving crime victims within each unique community.

when discussing community-based VOCA grantees in Michigan unless the subject is specific to a certain category of grantee as described below. Nevertheless, it is

important to understand that local grantee agencies differ widely. While performing similar functions, each agency has its own structure and approach to serving crime victims within each unique community. Further, because of this diversity of circumstances and approaches among agencies, it would be inappropriate to compare any specific agency to another. We refrain from doing so in this Report.

Frequently, grantees are described by 1) the victim populations they serve and 2) the kinds of services they provide. For instance, one agency may provide counseling and advocacy to sexual assault victims. Another may assist abused children and their non-offending family members. Often, a single agency may provide a number of services to several distinct victim populations. We will discuss these victim populations and services in more detail later in this Report. Further, keeping in mind the diversity of VOCA grantees in Michigan, VOCA grantees may be accurately divided into two distinct groups: *system-based* agencies and *nonsystem-based* agencies. System-based agencies typically involve services to crime victims provided by personnel within law enforce-

ment agencies or in the courts. For example, many police, sheriff and prosecutors’ offices have advocates working with victims of domestic, sexual and other kinds of violence. Another common system-based service involves assistance with personal protection orders through several clerks of court in the state.

Most often, nonsystem-based agencies are not-for-profit organizations. One notable exception is hospital-based programs, which typically involve services for sexual assault victims. Community-based nonprofit organizations are of widely varying sizes in terms of staff and programs providing services. Some are larger organizations having one or more victim service programs in addition to a number of social services for the benefit of the community. Others may be smaller nonprofits devoted exclusively to providing help to crime victims. Common types of nonsystem-based agencies are child advocacy centers, domestic violence shelters, and rape crisis centers.

Each grantee agency serves crime victims within a specific geographic area, or *jurisdiction*, such as an urban area or one or more rural counties, although virtually all are willing and able to serve victims whom reside outside their geographic service area. While most VOCA-funded agencies work at the community level, a few nonprofit organizations assist victims statewide, such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD).

With respect to working with agencies for the purposes of Grant Compliance Review and Needs Assessment, the following terms are used interchangeably throughout the remainder of this Report: *GCRNA process*, *GCRNA review*, *on-site review process*, *facilitated review*, *review*, *facilitated interview*, and *interview*. All of these terms refer to the process by which a reviewer/facilitator interacts with the staff members of a VOCA grantee agency to gather information about VOCA grant compliance and the agency’s needs in serving victims of crime.

Finally, a *fiscal year* for the GCRNA process begins October 1st of each calendar year and ends September 30th of the following year. For example, fiscal year 2000 began on October 1, 1999 and concluded September 30, 2000.

B. COMBINING GRANT COMPLIANCE AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

During the time of the design phase for the GCRNA, there was a unanimous consensus among CVSC and MPHI staff that any endeavor in this area should not merely be a grant compliance mechanism. The CVSC and MPHI recognized that solely gauging VOCA grant accountability would be an incomplete approach. To achieve excellence in victim services, grantee agencies must have ongoing opportunities to express their needs in reaching their goals for service delivery. We asked some fundamental questions. What can the CVSC and MPHI do to help make services more accessible to those in need? What can be done to help make the work of service providers

We asked some fundamental questions. What can the CVSC and MPHI do to help make services more accessible to those in need? What can be done to help make work of service providers more meaningful?

more meaningful? How can satisfying grant requirements become a more efficient process? Can the quality of victim services be measured and improved upon?

The result of the subsequent nine months of collaboration was the VOCA Grant Compliance and Needs Assessment process. Consistent with the dual accountability/needs assessment approach, the objective of this process was and continues to be to integrate fair and effective grant accountability methods with a grantee-centered needs assessment component. At the heart of the GCRNA process is the fundamental aim of enhancing the flow of communication and the sense of partnership between the CVSC and Michigan VOCA grantees.

In the spring of 1998, a proposed grant compliance and needs assessment methodology and protocol was presented to a working group of seasoned VOCA advocates and was pilot-tested with five randomly selected VOCA grantee agencies. The feedback from the working group and the findings from this pilot phase were very positive. As an outcome of this working group, VOCA grantee agencies were also surveyed statewide

concerning the proposed GCRNA process. The proposed methods were well-received by VOCA grantees overall. The agencies participating in the pilot test reported the process as being respectful to participating staff members, non-intrusive to the victims they serve, and informative.

After minor adjustments to the protocol design, the GCRNA process was implemented on October 1, 1999. Since then, very few adjustments have been necessary, and the process has been in continuous operation. It has been a focal point and impetus for positive change in VOCA-funded crime victim services in terms of grant administration and grantee-funder communications. Overall, the GCRNA process has continued to be an important tool in keeping the CVSC informed of VOCA grantee progress and grant accountability generally. With the assistance of MPHI, the CVSC has consistently responded to the needs of grantee agencies by utilizing the GCRNA process.

C. THIS FOUR YEAR REPORT

In pages that follow, Section II describes in greater detail the initial collaboration for planning and pilot testing the core GCRNA protocol. Section III speaks to the implementation and findings of the GCRNA process from 1999 through 2002. Section IV discusses the evolution of the CVSC-MPHI relationship and how it has grown over the last four years in order to continuously respond to the needs of community-based VOCA partners—most notably, annual meetings of VOCA grantee staff members, workshops to educate victim service providers on evaluating the quality and effectiveness of their services, and a semiannual newsletter reaching victim service professionals statewide. Each of these expanded functions, as well as the original core GCRNA process, has evolved as a result of the continuing interaction between the CVSC, Michigan VOCA grantees and MPHI. Section V presents some closing reflections upon this unique public-private collaboration that benefits all partners, state and local, in serving the needs of crime victims. The appendices include essential documents, instruments and tools utilized throughout the last four years.

This Report was designed to be informative and user-friendly. It was written for anyone who is interested in the workings of a statewide public-private partnership designed to enhance

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VOCA-supported crime victim services. On a larger scale, the driving idea behind this Report has been to provide a reader with enough descrip-

tive information that she or he could utilize it as a guide for creating a similar program elsewhere.

Either way, this Report contains abundant detail that, we hope, is easy to follow. Although there is a certain amount of unavoidable terminology related to crime victim services and the administration of VOCA grants, we have attempted to eliminate as much jargon as possible. We also hope that each section is interesting to read and provides a comprehensive explanation of the design and evolution of this successful public-private project.

In keeping with the spirit of the dynamic processes depicted here, this Report invites you, the reader, to cast a critical eye upon these pages and offer your own feedback. We would enjoy hearing your impressions about the CVSC-MPHI partnership and this publication. Please feel free to contact us. We strive to continually improve the way we work together, and your feedback will help us do so. We thank you for taking the time to review this Report.

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II. PLANNING: GRANT COMPLIANCE REVIEW & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

This section of this Report describes in greater detail the initial phase of the CVSC-MPHI collaboration for planning, piloting, presenting and implementing the Grant Compliance Review and Needs Assessment model.

In late 1997, the staff members of the CVSC and MPHI first met to form a team to create a planning process that would facilitate the design and implementation of an enhanced model for VOCA grant accountability and broaden the channels of communication among the CVSC and

The CVSC leadership was insistent that any method for these dual goals should be based upon an important concept: actual advocates from VOCA-funded community agencies should be significantly involved in the creative process.

VOCA grantees for the ultimate benefit of crime victims. The CVSC leadership was insistent that any method for these dual goals should be based upon an important concept: actual advocates from VOCA-funded community agencies should be significantly involved in the creative process. Their participation would ensure that the final methodology and protocols would be fair, comprehensive, and not unacceptably intrusive.

This meeting resulted in an hourly contractual relationship funded by the CVSC for the express purpose of planning, developing and testing a VOCA Grant Compliance Review & Needs Assessment (GCRNA) model process. More specifically, the tasks the CVSC and MPHI undertook involved conducting a preliminary literature review and report of the other states' models for examining victim assistance activities, reviewing the existing VOCA grant application and reporting documents, drafting protocol, creating instruments and methods for grant compliance review and needs assessment, pilot-testing these protocols, instruments, and methods among a sample of Michigan VOCA grantees. As an integral part of this creative process, the CVSC and MPHI also planned to present their findings to a working group of VOCA advocates for the purposes of soliciting commentary.

A. FIRST STEPS

After an initial literature review for possible grant compliance/needs assessment models did not result in the discovery of any adaptable framework for such a process, staff of the CVSC and MPHI met in a series of early meetings to develop a number of descriptive terms and themes to guide the process of building such a model. These themes generally fell into two categories: *process-oriented* and *relationship-oriented* as indicated in Table 2.1 below.

TABLE 2.1 THEMES TO BUILD UPON

PROCESS-ORIENTED	RELATIONSHIP-ORIENTED
Comprehensive Review	Not Unacceptably Intrusive
Effective, Efficient Methods	Facilitating Communication
Fair, No-Surprises Approach	Getting Grantee Support
Less Top-Down Command/Control	Enhancing Partnership and Collaboration
Continuous Quality Improvement	Creating Learning Opportunities
User-Friendly Grant Administration	Working With Grantees, Not Against Them

Once these overarching themes were established, they stood as general guides for the creation of the grant compliance and needs assessment methodology. When any major building block for the methodology was considered, the CVSC and MPHI referred to these terms and phrases. For example, it was important that the finalized process be as comprehensive as necessary with respect to each grantee agency's VOCA-funded activities, yet the process should not be overly burdensome to the staff members whose first responsibility is to address the needs of crime victims on-site or elsewhere in their community. Furthermore, the privacy and confidentiality of victims receiving services must not be compromised. Similarly, the methods and protocols ultimately implemented should be efficient enough to obtain the necessary information in the least amount of time possible. Still, enough time should be permitted for careful explanations of the meaning of the process to grantees, to allow for questions and responses, and to solicit constructive comments from the grantee participants.

The next step in the process was to consider and design the framework of the GCRNA model process. What tools should be developed? What should they look like? What sort of tone should they adopt? How will these tools work in concert with established VOCA processes such as grant applications and monthly, quarterly and year-end reporting?

What immediately made the most sense to the CVSC and MPHI was that any methodology should closely follow existing VOCA reporting processes. In order to develop a user-friendly process and for the sake of organization, the CVSC and, MPHI determined that the GCRNA model should mirror the VOCA grant application as much as possible. Common sense dictated that if the VOCA grant application was the vehicle by which grantees requested funding for proposed activities to address the needs of victims, a GCRNA model should similarly examine whether those services have been implemented effectively, and at the same time ask of the grantee agencies themselves what barriers and obstacles have been encountered in providing those services.

Before a GCRNA model could be fully crafted, it was important to take a hard look at the VOCA grant application itself. The CVSC and MPHI spent several weeks revising, reorganizing, and tailoring the VOCA grant application form to be a more comprehensive and user-friendly document. This proved to be a crucial step in the process. Subsequently, the creation of GCRNA tools based upon the revamped VOCA grant application became a much simpler process.

As mentioned above, the CVSC and MPHI were determined to create a process that was at once user-friendly, comprehensive, and fair. They quickly reached a consensus on several key components of the GCRNA model. First, the process should be administered on-site at each VOCA grantee agency through a facilitated interview process. The staff of the CVSC and MPHI felt that conducting in-person interviews with advocates and administrators at VOCA-funded agencies was a superior method, rather than merely inundating agencies with more forms, paperwork, and written instructions that could be either misinterpreted or confusing. Because this process was to be a programmatic review, conducting structured interviews on-site with reviewers familiar

The significance of a facilitated review cannot be overemphasized.

with crime victim services would be the best method for facilitating the process. The significance of a fa-

facilitated review cannot be overemphasized. One of the two overarching goals established at the commencement of the development process was to enhance lines of communication between the CVSC and community-level VOCA grantees. The concept of a facilitated review was not only consistent with this goal, but presented a tremendous opportunity to institutionalize the goal in a meaningful way by helping agencies understand the purpose of the review, leading them through it step-by-step, answering questions and clarifying any requirements, and inviting commentary on how the process could be improved.

Once the concept of a consistent, structured interview format for on-site review was agreed upon, it immediately became apparent that VOCA grantees at the community level would need written guidance to help them prepare for the review. It was clear to all involved that a fair, no-surprises approach would best serve the purposes of helping agencies prepare for the GCRNA process. This approach would likely foster confidence and goodwill within VOCA grantee agencies and support a comfortable, collegial, educational, and collaborative atmosphere during the on-site review. Preparatory materials were designed to be consistent with the structured interview instrument. It was also clear that the format of reports generated from the on-site reviews should also be consistent with the structured interview tool and preparatory materials.

B. TOOL DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

The design of the structured interview tool was the next major step in the process. Plainly, it was necessary for the CVSC and MPHI to decide upon the substantive information the GCRNA process was to obtain from VOCA grantee agencies. Logically, the review should be designed to be programmatic in nature as dictated by each grantee agency's approved VOCA grant application. In other words, the review should examine the VOCA-supported activities each agency had implemented to address the needs of crime victims in its jurisdiction. With a few exceptions, budgetary information would not be a part of this review process. Agency financial audits would continue to be conducted by other means unrelated to this process.

Following the revised VOCA grant application, the CVSC and MPHI developed a series of inquiries into six VOCA-related programmatic domains:

- ❖ Service Impact, Victim Populations, and Agency Profile
- ❖ Service Identification
- ❖ Staffing and Volunteers
- ❖ Jurisdiction
- ❖ Source of Funding and Project Budget
- ❖ Administration of VOCA Projects

The seventh and final section of the structured interview offered VOCA grantees an opportunity to comment on any other subject or issue not previously discussed during the facilitated review, especially feedback concerning the effectiveness of and possible improvements to the GCRNA process itself. The CVSC and MPHI viewed the function of this last

It seemed fitting that, in fostering a sense of progressive improvement in the quality of crime victim services, the CVSC and MPHI should invite constructive feedback for quality assurance concerning the GCRNA process itself.

component as yet another aspect of continuing quality improvement at the administrative level. It seemed fitting that, in fostering a sense of progressive improvement in

the quality of crime victim services, the CVSC and MPHI should invite constructive feedback for quality assurance concerning the GCRNA process.

Programmatic Domain Descriptions

The following paragraphs provide only a general sense of the depth and breadth of the on-site GCRNA protocol; the reader will find the structured interview instrument in its entirety in Appendix B-3 of this Report.

The first section of the interview, "Service Impact, Victim Populations, and Agency Profile," inquires of grantee agency staff the purpose or mission of their VOCA-funded victim service activities, any anticipated changes or improvements to those activities in the future, a brief history of its VOCA-funded project, the community need for the funded services, and a verification of the victim populations it serves, such as victims of child abuse, family violence or sexual assault, to name a few.

Section II, "Service Identification," asks the agency to identify and discuss the current VOCA-supported services being offered to crime victims. Some of these services might include crisis counseling, support groups, and criminal justice sup-

port and advocacy, among others. This section also asks agency staff to describe their approach (e.g., therapeutic, empowerment or other models) for addressing the needs of crime victims, and the community need for additional victim services.

Section III, “Staffing and Volunteers,” explores the professional backgrounds of the personnel actually providing VOCA-supported services and the supervision of the same. For example, the reviewer asks about the duties and qualifications of staff providing services, as well as the agency’s policies for hiring, terminating, evaluating, and providing opportunities for professional development of VOCA-funded staff. The reviewer also asks about the agency’s strengths and concerns related to its staff and volunteer base, as well as the agency’s needs, challenges or barriers to recruiting, training, and retaining volunteers.

Section IV of the structured interview process, “Jurisdiction,” examines the geographic area served by an agency’s VOCA-funded project, including whether the area is urban, rural, or a mix of both. In order to get a sense of an agency’s ability to make referrals when necessary and the gaps in services for crime victims in a given area, the agency is surveyed about services available to victim populations as provided by other agencies in the area, as well as crime victim populations not currently being served. Participation in collaborative efforts within the jurisdiction and state-wide to address the needs of crime victims is another area of inquiry.

Section V, “Source of Funding and Project Budget,” is the portion of the review instrument that delves into several basic, but significant fiscal matters. Agencies are asked about accounting methods in terms of differentiating between allocations of VOCA funds and funds from other grants, and priorities and concerns related to VOCA funding and budgets. Agencies are also given an opportunity to describe their internal costs of managing VOCA funding and budgets in terms of staff time and related costs.

In Section VI of the structured interview, “Administration of VOCA Projects,” agency staff members are led through a series of questions concerning the administrative aspects of their

VOCA grant. They are asked to describe their needs and/or challenges in grant administration, and any training or technical assistance they may require in meeting those needs or challenges. Agencies are also asked about any barriers or needs in providing direct services to victims. Participants are prompted to think big in describing changes in the law, public awareness, or other changes that would be helpful in overcoming barriers to providing direct services. Other Section VI questions involve methods of statistical data collection and the issues funding agencies need to be aware of when addressing statistical data collection and reporting. A particularly important series of needs assessment queries involves challenges in completing the VOCA grant application and reporting forms and possible improvements. Finally, this portion of the structured interview addresses matters related to an agency’s self-evaluation processes (otherwise known as “program evaluation”) concerning its VOCA-funded services, including methods used, challenges, needs, and barriers to conducting such evaluations.

Section VII, the last section of the structured review, invites grantee agencies to voice their needs in any other subject area not previously covered, including training needs, and to provide comments and questions about their participation in the GCRNA process. Consistent with the overarching theme of continuing quality assurance in providing services, the reviewer encourages grantees to be frank in their comments concerning improvements to the GCRNA process. The CVSC and MPHI recognized that grantees might be hesitant to provide constructive feedback about the process, fearing that perceived negative comments could result in a biased

In keeping with the concepts of comprehensiveness and nonintrusiveness, the structured interview process was designed to take no more than a single eight-hour day on-site.

report from the reviewer. It was hoped that the helpful facilitation of the structured review would build trust for the purposes of candid commentary. In keeping with the concepts of comprehensive-

ness and nonintrusiveness, the structured interview process was designed to take no more than a single eight-hour day on-site.

GCRNA Companion Documents

After a structured interview instrument was created, the CVSC and MPHI developed two companion documents—a “Self-Review Checklist” for VOCA grantee agencies and a “Site Summary Report” template for generating reports for each agency’s GCRNA review. Each of these tools mirrors the structured interview instrument. The GCRNA protocol was designed to have the Self-Review Checklist sent several weeks in advance of the actual on-site review. The checklist provides the specific subject matter about which the reviewer asks during the on-site review. This approach emphasizes the initial themes of fair-mindedness and avoids springing surprises upon unwary grantees. The Site Summary Report format was designed to provide agencies and the CVSC with accountability and needs assessment information in two ways—an “at-a-glance” method and also in greater textual detail, section by section, according to the programmatic domains of the GCRNA process. Complete versions of the Self-Review Checklist and Site Summary Report document templates can be found in the appendices of this Report.

C. BUILDING PROTOCOLS

Once the CVSC and MPHI determined *which* data to collect using the structured interview tool,

First and foremost, how should the on-site process be conducted to protect the confidentiality of crime victims as well ensure sensitivity toward their need for privacy?

the next step was to determine *how* best to obtain these data. Additional protocols were necessary for notifying grantees that they would be reviewed during a given fiscal year,

for conducting the on-site reviews themselves, and for reporting the results. In considering the design of these protocols, several important ques-

tions immediately arose. First and foremost, how should the on-site process be conducted to protect the confidentiality of crime victims, as well ensure sensitivity toward their need for privacy? How would grantees be chosen for the purposes of a GCRNA on-site review? What might be the fairest process for reporting the results of the on-site reviews?

There were two primary considerations concerning confidentiality and sensitivity to victims. The CVSC and MPHI were in firm agreement that these considerations receive the highest priority. The privacy of crime victims receiving services at grantee facilities should never be invaded, and the personal information victims disclose to advocates should always be fully protected. In short, any interference with a victim’s healing process should be avoided at all costs. Because victim privacy and confidentiality should never be compromised, the GCRNA model could not allow reviewers to observe victims receiving services, interview victims nor view documents with identifying information. However, the staff of the CVSC and MPHI believed that the comprehensive structured interview tool, in the hands of a knowledgeable reviewer, would be more than adequate in faci-

A reviewer confidentiality policy was developed and provided to each grantee agency prior to all on-site reviews.

lating the on-site data collection process. They were confident that this protocol would glean the appropriate information from direct service providers and program administrators and simultaneously honor victims’ healing processes. As further protection, a reviewer confidentiality policy was developed and provided to each grantee agency prior to all on-site reviews, in case the reviewer might inadvertently observe a victim at a facility or a victim’s identifying information. Finally, it was agreed that recording devices would not be utilized during on-site reviews in order to enhance victim confidentiality as well as the candor of the participants.

From the outset, it was apparent that, for fiscal reasons, reviewing all of the 88 grantee agen-

cies would have to be done over a multi-year schedule. It was also clear that a fair process for determining which VOCA grantee agencies would be reviewed in a given year must be a random process. It logically followed that budget constraints for travel throughout Michigan required the cost of travel should remain generally consistent through all fiscal years. To that end, the CVSC and MPHI divided the state into several geographic regions. Agencies were then chosen at random within each region.

Once a slate of agencies was selected for GCRNA review for a given fiscal year, each agency would receive a letter of notification and a Self-Review Checklist. The letter would indicate that they would receive a telephone call to schedule an on-site review at their agency on a mutually agreeable date, and that any initial questions about the review could be asked either during that call or at any time afterwards. Additionally, the pre-visit protocol included follow-up calls by the reviewer within two weeks of the on-site review. When conducting the actual on-site review, the protocol was designed to incorporate the participation of VOCA-supported victim service professionals and agency administrators in the structured interview process.

The reporting protocol that the CVSC and MPHI developed involved a four-step process. First, the reviewer would generate a Site Summary Report (SSR) based upon data collected from the on-site interview. Second, this SSR would then be transmitted to the agency for its perusal prior to being reviewed by the CVSC staff. Third, the agency would be given a 15-day period to respond in writing to the report, if so desired. However, a written response has never been required. The SSR would then be sent to the CVSC for its review after 15 days. (This response period was later extended to 30 days.) If the agency had responded within the allotted timeframe, its written response would be attached to the SSR. This way, the CVSC could view both the reviewer's report and the agency's response simultaneously, thereby ensuring a balanced reporting process. Finally, should there be any questions or comments from the

CVSC, the CVSC would contact the agency directly. The reviewer would be available to clarify any item in her or his report.

D. PILOT PHASE & WORKING GROUP

Upon completion of the GCRNA model's instruments—the structured interview tool, the grantee Self-Review Checklist and the Site Summary Report format—as well as the protocol for utilizing them, the overall methodology was pilot-tested with five randomly selected VOCA-funded agencies in Michigan. These agencies were divided by typology, such as system-based public agencies like county prosecutor's or court clerk's offices, as well as private non-profit victim service and advocacy agencies. Other factors were considered for this pilot phase, such as whether an agency served a large rural area or a more urban population, the size of the agency's staff, and the number of years that the agency had been receiving VOCA funding. MPHI staff associated with the Project conducted these on-site reviews.

The participants in this pilot process encountered no noteworthy difficulties. All participants, including the reviewers, reported that the process was comprehensive, fair, and not overly intrusive. Grantee staff members reported

Grantee staff members reported that the process was a positive learning experience for them

that the process was a positive learning experience for them, that they felt more familiar with VOCA processes and expectations afterward, and that they felt a greater confidence that their VOCA-funded activities were in fact in compliance with VOCA Guidelines. As important, each agency's staff expressed enthusiasm for the CVSC's strong interest in their needs and challenges in serving crime victims.

The last step in the planning process involved sharing the results of the pilot phase with a working group comprised of seasoned VOCA advocates and informing the wider audience of VOCA grantees in Michigan. The purpose of the working group was to provide a forum for extensive

Each agency's staff expressed enthusiasm for the CVSC's strong interest in their needs and challenges in serving crime victims.

feedback from VOCA grantees as key stakeholders concerning the proposed GCRNA process and to clarify a variety of issues related to it before full implementation in October 1998.

Consistent with the theme of fostering grantee support for the process, the staff of CVSC and MPHI spent a full day with the working group discussing the purpose of the process in satisfying VOCA and CVSC requirements, how the model might be improved, and how often an agency might be reviewed. Just as important, the discussion emphasized what the GCRNA model was not designed to do. It was not a process designed to remove or reduce funding for grantees, nor to assess the needs of crime victims rather than determining the needs of the agencies already serving them.

Just as important, the discussion emphasized what the GCRNA model was not designed to do.

The working group was charged with providing thoughtful commentary on the GCRNA

model, helping to develop a statewide VOCA grantee survey, providing feedback about statewide implementation, and discussing how SSRs and agency responses would be handled. Other significant discussions involved questions of how agencies might respond to SSRs, how the reviewer's findings would be disseminated to the CVSC and each agency reviewed, and how the CVSC might handle issues of noncompliance. The working group also suggested the formation of an annual meeting of VOCA service providers and administrators to review the progress of the GCRNA process and make recommendations for continuous improvements. This latter idea came to fruition in the form of annual Council of Advocates meetings and is discussed in Section IV of this Report.

From this working group, final adjustments were made to the GCRNA model and protocols. It was determined that each agency would be reviewed once every four years. The working group also helped develop a statewide grantee survey that solicited commentary from the widest possible audience of Michigan VOCA grantees. Many responses to the survey were later incorporated into the model.

At this stage, the planning process was complete, and the GCRNA model was designated for implementation statewide.



III. IMPLEMENTATION AND FINDINGS

This section speaks to the process of implementing the VOCA Grant Compliance Review and Needs Assessment (GCRNA) model from 1999 through 2002 and relevant findings.

A. THE GCRNA PROTOCOL

As mentioned in the previous section, the CVSC and MPHI crafted and piloted a process in 1999 designed to assess VOCA grantee accountability and the needs of grantee agencies in serving crime victims in their geographic area (the GCRNA). We will spend some time detailing the following protocols:

- ❖ How agencies are chosen for the GCRNA process
- ❖ How agencies are notified of a coming on-site review
- ❖ How agencies typically prepare for an on-site review of their VOCA-supported activities
- ❖ What happens during the on-site review, including the components of the review itself
- ❖ How reports from the on-site review are generated and submitted to the CVSC
- ❖ What happens after the CVSC reviews the report

1) Choosing Agencies for Review

Similar to the discussion of selecting agencies for review during the pilot phase (Section II of this Report), it was clear that it would be implausible in terms of funding and staff resources to formally review 88 VOCA-supported agencies in Michigan in a single year. Neither was it desirable from an administrative standpoint. Agencies rarely made wholesale programmatic changes from

Further, the CVSC was keenly aware that the vast majority of agencies received support from multiple funding sources, not just VOCA.

one year to the next, so it made little sense to review all of them annually. Further, the CVSC was keenly aware that the vast majority of agencies

received support from multiple funding sources, not just VOCA, and each funder has its own review process. In other words, each agency was likely to be reviewed by funding agencies on several occasions in a single year. Because of the intensity of these multiple reviews and the fact that they invariably pull staff members away from the critical work of serving crime victims, the CVSC and MPHI were determined to engage in a process that was thorough yet consume a minimum of any given grantee's time.

Each year, 18-25 agencies were reviewed over a four-year cycle. Michigan is a fairly large state in terms of square miles, so it was important from a budget perspective to select a geographical representation of agencies throughout the state in each year of the four-year cycle. One or more reviewers would have to travel to each agency and sometimes stay overnight nearby in order to allow for enough time to conduct the on-site review in a single eight-hour workday. In order to create a travel budget that was consistent from year to year, it was necessary to create an annual slate of agencies for review which represented each recognized portion of the state: southeastern, central, western, southern, northern (Lower Peninsula), northwestern, the Upper Peninsula and the "Thumb" regions.

As such, a true random selection process might not have allowed for a consistent travel budget. However, once categorized geographically, agencies were selected at random from each region. For the sake of efficiency, several of the agencies located furthest away in the Upper Peninsula were reviewed in small clusters on successive days in a single trip.

2) Notifying Agencies to Be Reviewed

Once chosen, agencies are notified by letter explaining that they will be called to schedule an on-site review of their VOCA-supported activities and operations at a time mutually convenient to their staff and the reviewer(s). Typically, on-site reviews are scheduled from six weeks to six months in advance of the review date.

At the start of the formal review period beginning in October, 1998, each agency received a notification letter, and a packet containing the VOCA Self-Review Checklist. (A document checklist was added in 2003 to help grantees collect internal documents for presentation at the on-site review.) As described in the discussion of the pilot phase, the Self-Review Checklist mirrors the reviewer's interview questions, which in turn were derived from the standard VOCA grant application. This Self-Review Checklist provides

From the outset, the Self-Review Checklist provides detail about the precise subject matter to be covered during the facilitated on-site review process.

detail about the precise subject matter to be covered during the facilitated on-site review process. It had been suggested by several grantees during the pilot phase

that the Self-Review Checklist be provided with the notification letter so that grantee agencies would have a clear idea about the coming review from the start.

Like the facilitated interview instrument and the VOCA grant application, the Self-Review Checklist lists the questions to be asked of the agencies' staff members during the review. These questions cover the six programmatic domains involving VOCA-supported victim services.

- ❖ Service Impact, Victim Populations and Agency Profile
- ❖ Service Identification
- ❖ Staffing and Volunteers
- ❖ Jurisdiction
- ❖ Source of Funding and Project Budget
- ❖ Administration of VOCA Projects

Please refer to Section II of this Report for more detail concerning these programmatic domains. Agencies are also advised that the seventh section of the facilitated on-site review would solicit their comments about the effectiveness of and possible improvements to the GCRNA model itself. A VOCA Self-Review Checklist template can be found in Appendix B-2 of this Report.

After the first few on-site reviews had been conducted, the reviewers noted that several questions were consistently raised by grantees. It became clear that additional clarification and instructions were necessary. Therefore, a supplemental memorandum (memo) providing more detailed information was created and sent to each remaining grantee to be reviewed in fiscal year 2000. This memo has been a part of the initial information packet sent to grantee agencies in each successive year.

The memo itself includes more detail about questions asked during the on-site review concerning agency mission statements, programmatic goals and objectives, statistical categories of victims, grant reporting requirements, and sample responses to questions about the intensity of services provided to crime victims. Because there appeared to be some confusion about the level of detail concerning the intensity of victim services portion of the on-site review, this subject area bears some additional explanation. It also provides some insight as to how the CVSC and MPHI have addressed questions and concerns of VOCA grantees throughout the four-year process.

The memo addresses the Service Identification portion of the on-site review, where agency staff members are asked a series of questions designed to facilitate a detailed conversation about the services they provide to crime victims and to give the reviewer a sense of their skill in providing such assistance. This inquiry was also created to help the reviewer collect certain data about the effort involved in providing these services as reported by the vic-

These data are helpful in providing depth in describing the vital work of grantee agencies to administrators, policymakers, and others interested in victim services.

tim service professionals themselves. These data are helpful in providing depth in describing the vital work of grantee agencies

to administrators, policymakers, and others interested in victim services. The memo's sample responses in the excerpt below also illustrate the reviewer's facilitation during the on-site interview.

VOCA Grantee Site Review Schedules by Year

FY 1999

1. Alliance Against Violence & Abuse
2. Baraga County Shelter Home, Inc.
3. Battle Creek Health System
4. Bay County Women's Center
5. Branch County Coalition
6. Dial Help, Inc.
7. Domestic Violence Safe House
8. EightCAP
9. Hannahville Indian Community
10. HAVEN
11. Human Development Commission
12. Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
13. LACASA
14. S.A.F.E. Place
15. Sparrow Hospital
16. Tuscola County Sheriff
17. Underground RR
18. Wayne County Prosecutor

FY 2000

19. CareHouse/Macomb County Child Advocacy Center
Mt. Clemens
20. Child & Family Services of Northwestern Michigan
Traverse City
21. City of Detroit Police Department Rape Counseling Center
Detroit
22. City of Lansing Police Department
Lansing
23. Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
Midland
24. Detroit Receiving Hospital & University Health Center
Detroit
25. Domestic Assault/Rape Elimination Services DARES
Port Huron
26. Domestic Violence Escape DOVE, Inc.
Ironwood
27. Family Resource Center
Kalamazoo
28. Hillsdale County Task Force on Family Violence
Hillsdale
29. Macomb Co. Pros. Attorney - Crime Victim Rights Unit
Mt. Clemens
30. Michigan State University Counseling Center
East Lansing
31. Muskegon Co. Pros. Attorney - Victim-Witness Unit
Muskegon
32. Region Four Community Services
Ludington
33. Safe Shelter, Inc.
Benton Harbor
34. Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Court/Judicial Services
Mt. Pleasant
35. Shelter, Inc.
Alpena
36. Sylvia's Place, Inc.
Allegan
37. The Children's Center of Wayne County
Detroit
38. Turning Point, Inc.
Mt. Clemens
39. Women's Center, Inc.
Marquette
40. Women's Resource Center
Traverse City
41. Women's Survival Center of Oakland County
Pontiac
42. YWCA of Grand Rapids
Grand Rapids
43. YWCA of Greater Flint
Flint

FY 2001

44. AWARE, Inc.
Jackson
45. Cadillac Area Oasis
Cadillac
46. Center for Women in Transition
Holland
47. Child & Family Services of Saginaw County
Saginaw
48. Child Abuse and Neglect Council of Oakland County
Pontiac
49. Child Abuse Council of Muskegon County
Muskegon
50. Children's Assessment Center
Grand Rapids
51. CHOICES of Manistee County, Inc.
Manistee
52. City of Flint Attorney's Office
Flint
53. Council Against Domestic Assault
Lansing
54. Domestic Assault Shelter Coalition
Three Rivers
55. Every Woman's Place
Muskegon
56. Family Counseling & Shelter Services of Monroe County
Monroe
57. First Step
Plymouth
58. Lapeer Area Citizens Against Domestic Assault
Lapeer
59. Mercy Hospital/River House Shelter
Gaylord
60. Oakland County Prosecuting Attorney
Pontiac
61. Relief After Violent Encounter, Inc.
St. Johns
62. Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians
Sault Ste. Marie
63. Save our Sons and Daughters (SOSAD)
Detroit
64. The Common Ground Sanctuary
Bloomfield Hills
65. Washtenaw County Community Mental Health Assault Crisis Center
Ypsilanti
66. Women's Aid Service
Mt. Pleasant
67. Women's Information Service, Inc.
Big Rapids
68. Women's Resource Center of N. Michigan, Inc.
Petoskey

FY 2002

69. 61st District Court
Grand Rapids
70. Allegan Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse
Allegan
71. Bay County Prosecutor
Bay City
72. CASA of Ingham County
Lansing
73. Cass County
Cassopolis
74. Catholic Social Services of Wayne County
Detroit
75. Children's Assessment Center
Holland
76. County of Kalamazoo
Kalamazoo
77. Diane Peppler Resource Center
Sault Ste. Marie
78. Domestic Violence Coalition
Paw Paw
79. Family Couns. & Children's Services of Lenawee County
Adrian
80. Gateway Community Services
East Lansing
81. Genesee County Clerk's Office
Flint
82. Ingham County Prosecutor's Office
Lansing
83. Mother's Against Drunk Driving (MADD)
Midland
84. United for Kids/Children's Assessment Center
Saginaw
85. Wayne County Clerk
Detroit
86. Wayne County Neighborhood Legal Services
Detroit
87. Women's Justice Center
Detroit
88. YWCA of Kalamazoo
Kalamazoo

This series of questions is not designed to force you to give scientific or factually exacting responses. Rather, they are to help us get a sense of what it takes for your agency to provide VOCA-funded victim services. We understand that there is no such thing as an “average victim.” As such, we will not require you to provide documentation to support your responses here. We encourage you to give your best estimate based upon your own experiences.

During this portion of the interview, we will ask you several questions about each possible VOCA-funded service.

- 1. First, we will ask if you provide a certain VOCA-supported service, like personal advocacy, for example.*
- 2. Then we’ll ask about the various locations you perform that service.*
- 3. The next three questions are about the intensity of the service. You’ll be asked:*
 - a. About how many clients out of every 10 commonly receive this service?*
 - b. What is the most common range of time you spend providing this service when you do provide it?*
 - c. About how many times, most commonly, do you provide this service to an individual client who requires it?*
- 4. Finally, we’ll ask which personnel—paid VOCA staff or volunteers—usually provide this service on a percentage basis.*

For example:

Q: “Do you provide personal advocacy as a VOCA-supported service to crime victims?”

A: “Yes”

Q: “Where do you commonly provide this service?”

A: “At the agency office (over the phone or by drafting letters), at utility company offices, apartment management offices, employer offices, and other locations as needed.”

Q: “What is the intensity level of this service (how many receive it; how long does it take; how many times per individual)?”

A: (below)

(How many...?) “About 2 or 3 out of every 10 clients we come into contact with commonly receive personal advocacy services.”

(How long...?) “It usually takes 15-30 minutes each time this service is provided.”

(How many times...?) “Personal advocacy is commonly provided about 2 times to each client who has requested it.”

Q: “On a percentage basis, which personnel most often provide personal advocacy assistance?”

A: “Paid staff members provide this service about 90% of the time, while volunteers provide it about 10%.”

The memo explains that these sample responses are merely examples and may not represent the experiences of staff members who provide direct services to crime victims. Agencies are encouraged to contact the reviewer prior to the date of the on-site review with any additional questions or concerns.

Agencies are encouraged to contact the reviewer prior to the date of the on-site review with any additional questions or concerns.

It is important to emphasize that these data concerning the labor-intensive nature of providing victim services have proved to be invaluable to the CVSC and MPHI in creating subsequent training curricula, grant reporting mechanisms, and understanding the overall picture of VOCA-supported victim services in Michigan from 1999 through 2002.

3) Preparing for the Facilitated On-Site Review

After a letter and the packet containing the Self-Review Checklist and supplemental memo are sent to the selected agencies, MPHI’s lead facilitator for each on-site review contacts the corresponding agency’s chief executive officer by telephone in order to schedule the on-site review. Depending on whether the agency is system-based or non-system-based, the agency’s contact person may be the county prosecutor, clerk of court, sheriff, or executive director. In larger agencies, the

chief executive officer will often delegate scheduling and other pertinent details to the staff person primarily responsible for directing the VOCA-supported victim services. In smaller agencies, this person may be the sole victim service professional.

Once contact is made and a mutually agreeable date is set, the reviewer explains the general process for conducting the review, emphasizes that she or he will take on the role as a facilitator to help the agency throughout the process, and provides answers to any questions the agency's contact person may have. The reviewer explains that the CVSC expects the agency's preparation for the review to take no more than one or two days, and the agency should attempt to complete these preparations between two and four weeks prior to the review. Agencies scheduled for their review several months in advance are advised to wait until two to four weeks prior to the review date so that the information is fresh in the minds of those participating or in case there are subsequent changes in staff or service provision. Again, at the close of this initial call the agency is encouraged to call or

Many agencies have reported that their staff members prepare for the on-site review by meeting as a group.

e-mail the lead facilitator with questions at any time prior to the date of the review. Many agencies have reported that their staff members prepare for the on-site review by meeting as a group. Together, they review and discuss the Self-Review Checklist and the supplemental memo. Often, portions of the Self-Review Checklist are photocopied and disseminated to the most appropriate personnel for more detailed preparation, including organizing the appropriate documentation. These staff members later participate in their assigned portions of the on-site review.

Approximately one week prior to the on-site review date, MPHI's lead facilitator will call the agency's contact person to confirm that the agency is ready for the review and answer any last pre-review questions. The facilitator also assures the contact person that staff will be encouraged to ask questions and request clarifications on any

matter during the review. At this time, the facilitator obtains driving directions to the agency and parking instructions, if any.

4) The On-Site Review

Frequently, the lead facilitator is the sole reviewer for an on-site review. Occasionally, more than one reviewer will be present, which is always helpful in light of the voluminous data taken through handwritten notation. (Recall that it was decided early in the design phase that the GCRNA protocol would forego the use of recording devices to enhance confidentiality and candor.) Multiple reviewers are sometimes employed for the following reasons: 1) the agency to be reviewed has a large staff of professionals providing VOCA-supported services and there are many voices participating in the interview; 2) the scheduled review requires long-distance automobile travel and overnight accommodations, and a second reviewer enhances the safety of the review team; 3) a second reviewer is available to help facilitate the review; and/or 4) the second reviewer is new to the Project and is shadowing the lead facilitator.

On the day of the scheduled review, the reviewer(s) typically arrive at the agency between 8:30 and 9:00 am. Personal introductions are made and the lead facilitator provides an in-depth explanation about the GCRNA process to the assembled participants. At this time, the lead facilitator explains that the Michigan Public Health Institute is a private, nonprofit organization that has been working with federal and state agencies, such as the CVSC, for over a decade to address matters of

The on-site review protocol requires the lead facilitator to provide additional information to all agency participants at the commencement of every review.

public health, including violence-related issues.

The on-site review protocol requires the lead facilitator to provide additional information to all agency participants at the commencement of every review. This standard introduction includes the following remarks.

A Brief History of the GCRNA Process

In 1998, the Michigan Crime Victim Services Commission asked MPHI to assist them in developing a process that would enable the Commission to meet the needs of the Michigan VOCA grantees and ensure that their activities are in substantial compliance with VOCA and CVSC guidelines. Like the CVSC, we understand and believe in the vital need for services to victims of crime. A common goal for both the CVSC and MPHI is to help victim service agencies help the crime victims they serve. During this four-year review cycle, VOCA grantees have been selected at random from the each of the various geographic regions around the state. Your agency has not been singled out for this review.

About the Site Review Process

This process is designed to be friendly and non-adversarial. Because this process concerns your perspectives about your VOCA-supported services, we will not be pulling files or requesting independent verification of your verbal responses. However, we will be happy to accept whatever hard copies of existing documents you would like to provide, such as annual reports, brochures, blank intake forms, surveys and the like.

Questions about Funding

*This process was not designed to affect your VOCA funding. It was designed to enhance the flow of information between the CVSC and VOCA grantees. While it's possible that a serious problem discovered during an on-site review could be a factor in a future funding decision, we are not aware of any case where a reduction or revocation of funding has occurred as a result of our reviews [a consistent fact throughout the four-year cycle]. Rather, many of the positive changes in VOCA grant administration in the last two years have been a result of feedback from VOCA grantees like yourselves—changes such as the establishment of online grant applications and reporting processes, implementing trainings on program evaluation and grant reporting, publication of a statewide VOCA newsletter, and others. [These newer features of the CVSC-MPHI partnership are discussed in detail in Section IV of this Report.] *The CVSC and MPHI**

take your feedback seriously and ask you to be candid in your responses.

Your Preparations for the On-Site Review

The Self-Review Checklist you received in the mail is part of the grant compliance review and needs assessment process. We assume that, having worked through the Self-Review and Document Checklists, you are generally familiar with the subject matter we will be discussing with you. The questions we ask of you today directly mirror the areas listed in your Self-Review Checklist.

Your Time Today

We generally expect to spend the next 5-8 hours with you. We realize that your time is at a premium and appreciate your spending this day with us, as well as the time you spent preparing for this review. Because we also understand that your first responsibility is serving victims of crime, we will do our best to be flexible concerning your time. If necessary, we can skip ahead to specific portions of the review to accommodate your schedule, then return to previous sections later in the day as necessary. If you prefer, please feel free to return to your work station until we come to the part of the review in which you wish to participate. However, each of you is welcome to remain at the table for the entire review.

Questions During the On-Site Review

Please feel free to ask questions during this interview. We'd also like to underscore that your feedback about this process is important to us. During the last part of the review, we will ask you for your comments, questions, suggestions, and feelings about the review itself. Again, we encourage you to be frank, for we will be relying on VOCA grantee feedback to further refine this process. We will also attempt to provide you with some preliminary feedback about this on-site review at the end of the day.

After Today's On-Site Review is Concluded

Within approximately 90 days, we will generate a report based upon our discussions today and any documents you will have provided. You will then have an opportunity to review this report and be afforded 30 days to send an optional written response. If you do elect to respond, both our report and your response will be submitted

together to CVSC. If there are any additional issues that the CVSC would like to discuss with you, they will contact you directly. MPHI staff will be available to clarify any matter concerning the report.

Client Confidentiality

Please be assured that we fully respect the need for confidentiality for those receiving victim services. In the unlikely event that we inadvertently observe clients and/or client information, we will keep this information strictly confidential.

At the close of these introductory remarks, the agency participants are encouraged to questions. Anyone wishing to excuse themselves until later in the day is permitted to do so.

Throughout the facilitated interview process covering the six programmatic domains (listed above and explained in Section II of this Report), it is common that most agency staff members do not remain present for the entire day. For instance, the chief executive officer or program director will respond to questions about an agency's mission, history, and the types of victim populations they serve (section I of the review), as well as the portions concerning the administration of the VOCA grant and its supported services (section VI). Personnel who provide direct assistance to victims usually respond to questions concerning the assistance provided and victim populations served (section II) and geographic region that services are provided (section IV). The director of the VOCA-supported program or executive director (if a smaller agency) will typically discuss matters involving staffing and volunteers (section III). Some agencies have a volunteer coordinator that will address questions about volunteer participation at the agency. The chief financial officer (usually a controller, accountant or bookkeeper) will handle queries concerning funding and budgets. Please see Appendix B-3 to peruse the facilitated interview tool, entitled the "VOCA On-Site Compliance Review Instrument."

All who participate in the on-site review are invited to return at the close of the interview to provide comments about any additional matter not previously discussed, as well as constructive feedback concerning the GCRNA process itself. This

facilitated discussion is found in section VII of the on-site review. The CVSC and MPHI view the function of this last component as yet another aspect of continuing quality improvement at the administrative level. The concern voiced during the pilot phase that the grantees might not be frank in their comments did not appear to occur throughout the four-year process, though we acknowledge that there has been no examination of

All reviewers have reported a significant level of candor based on both positive and constructive remarks by the participants over the four-year period.

this particular issue by an independent entity. Nevertheless, all reviewers have reported a significant level of candor based on both positive and constructive re-

marks by the participants over the four-year period. These comments are discussed later in this section of the Report.

At the conclusion of the facilitated interview, the reviewer provides some preliminary remarks concerning the matters discussed during the day. These comments are characterized as preliminary only because the reviewer must review her or his notes as well as examine a substantial amount of written documentation collected from the participants themselves.

Providing preliminary feedback to grantee staff was incorporated into the GCRNA protocol because the CVSC

and MPHI understood that these staff members put forth a great deal of time and effort for the review. They deserve to be given the reviewer's preliminary impressions of those efforts rather

Providing preliminary feedback to grantee staff was incorporated into the GCRNA protocol because the CVSC and MPHI understood that these staff members put forth a great deal of time and effort for the review.

than being made to wait up to 90 days to receive a written report. Reviewers have found that staff anxiety associated with the review lessens if they are provided this preliminary information.

Last, the reviewer reiterates the information discussed at the beginning of the day concerning the 90-day target for providing the agency with a formal Site Summary Report (SSR) generated from the on-site review. The reviewer also repeats the earlier explanation that the agency's staff will be provided with an opportunity to review the report prior to the reviewer submitting the SSR to the CVSC, as well as a 30-day window to respond in writing. They are further informed that if they choose to provide a written response, that document will be attached to the SSR when submitted to the CVSC for its review. The agency's staff members are then informed that the CVSC will contact them directly should there be any additional questions concerning the review process.

5) Reporting the GCRNA On-Site Review Data

Subsequent to the facilitated on-site interview, the reviewer or reviewers analyze those data (notations and collected documents) obtained during the review to determine whether the agency is in substantial compliance with accepted VOCA/CVSC administrative and programmatic guidelines. The documents most frequently provided to reviewers during the on-site review are:

- ❖ Mission or Purpose Statements
- ❖ Annual Reports
- ❖ Program or Agency Brochures
- ❖ Staff Position Descriptions with Certifications
- ❖ VOCA Timesheets or Other Time Recording Documents
- ❖ Agency Personnel Handbooks or Other Written Policies Governing Hiring, Terminating, Evaluating, and Professional Development for Staff
- ❖ Volunteer Recruiting, Interview, and Selection Criteria Documents
- ❖ Volunteer Training Handbooks and/or Other Volunteer Training Tools
- ❖ Volunteer Timesheets and Logs
- ❖ Lists of Referral Sources
- ❖ Lists of Community Collaborative Bodies in which Agencies Participate

- ❖ VOCA Grant Accounting Spreadsheets
- ❖ Receipts or Invoices for Equipment Purchased with VOCA Funds
- ❖ Recently Completed VOCA Reporting Forms such as Budget Reimbursements; Quarterly Statistics, Services and Narratives; Final Year-End Program and Financial Reports; Contract Adjustments (for Staff and Other Changes); Public Notification Letters (Concerning VOCA Grant Awards)
- ❖ Statistical, Quantitative, and/or Qualitative Data Collection Forms, such as Master Data Collection Forms; Assessment Forms; Client Intake Forms; Confidentiality Forms; Client Evaluation Forms; Crisis Contact Record Forms or Logs; Staff Activity Logs; Client Safety Plan Forms; Statistical Database Spreadsheets
- ❖ Program Evaluation Tools such as Case File Reviews; Shelter Assessment Questionnaires; Support Group Satisfaction Surveys; Outreach Satisfaction Surveys; Exit Comment Forms; Staff-Reporting Forms or Logs; Client Satisfaction Questionnaires; Client Self-Esteem and Depression Inventory Forms; Volunteer Surveys; Surveys of Families, Judges, Prosecutors, Attorneys, Court Personnel, and Other Local Human Service Agencies

These documents and notations are closely compared to each agency's approved VOCA grant application and contractual agreement. The Site Summary Report (SSR) generated from the on-site review data indicates whether an agency appears to be in compliance, as well as noting any inconsistencies between the collected data and the grant application or contractual agreement. The SSR reports this information, section by section and question by question. An affirmative response to a question posed by the review merits a mark of "Y" (yes). More precisely, a "Y" mark means the agency was capable of responding to the query satisfactorily. A mark of "N" (no) signifies the agency was unable to respond or did not respond in a satisfactory way. The SSR also indicates by bracketed text whether appropriate supporting

documentation was provided to the reviewer. Table 3.2 provides an example of reported quantitative data.

Further, the SSR provides specific detail for each response or non-response corresponding to each section of the SSR. These details are listed,

by question number, the under the following headings, “Strengths,” “Areas of Possible Improvement,” and “Additional Comments.” With respect to inquiries into an agency’s needs, these data are reported in the SSR under a “Needs” heading. Table 3.3 provides an example of reported quali-

TABLE 3.2 SITE SUMMARY REPORT EXCERPT – QUANTITATIVE DATA

I. Service Impact, Victim Population(s), Agency Profile.	YES	NO
1. The agency can describe/substantiate the purpose of its VOCA-funded project. [Copy of mission statement provided? Y]	Y	
1. a) The agency can specify whether its goals and purpose for its VOCA funded project have changed and if YES, how.	Y	
1. b) The agency can specify whether it anticipates any changes to the goals or purpose of its VOCA-funded project in the near future.	Y	
2. The agency can describe whether it is considering any improvements to its VOCA-funded services.	Y	

TABLE 3.3 SITE SUMMARY REPORT EXCERPT – QUALITATIVE DATA

Section I Notes
<p>Strengths:</p> <p>[1. a-b]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The agency states that the purpose of its VOCA-funded project is to provide services to individuals affected by domestic and sexual violence. The agency provides a violence-free atmosphere in which survivors can recognize their options, live free from violence, and regain their sense of self-worth. The agency’s mission statement notes that the agency attempts to educate the community about domestic and sexual violence and highlight that this violence perpetrated primarily against women and children is the result of an imbalance of power and control. The agency strives to address the needs of victims in the outlying regions of its service area and continues to perform outreach services to that end. The agency’s purpose or goals are essentially unchanged, and no changes are anticipated in the near future. <p>[2.]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The agency is considering incorporating long-term improvements in its VOCA-funded services. The agency indicates it is seeking funding for a half-time therapist to work primarily with child incest victims under 12 years of age. The agency asserts that addressing incest remains a serious community need.

Please see Appendix B-4 to view the entire Site Summary Report template.

tative data from the “Strengths” portion of the SSR, which directly corresponds to the data described in Table 3.2 on page 21.

6) Concluding the On-Site Review Process

As indicated above, each agency is provided an opportunity to review its SSR and respond in

As indicated above, each agency is provided an opportunity to review its SSR and respond in writing with any comments or concerns prior to being reviewed by the funder. If an agency opts to submit a written response, that response is provided to the CVSC simulta-

writing with any comments or concerns prior to being reviewed by the funder. If an agency opts to submit a written response, that response is provided to the CVSC simulta-

neously with SSR itself. This simultaneous reporting mechanism is in accordance with the GCRNA model’s fair and balanced approach. Should the CVSC have further questions about an agency’s review, a CVSC staff member will contact the agency. The MPHI reviewer remains available for questions and clarifications.

B. FINDINGS FROM THE GCRNA PROCESS

Overall, the 88 VOCA-supported agencies in Michigan during fiscal years 1999 through 2002 put forth an extensive number of programs and services for crime victims in all victim populations as defined by VOCA. Because nearly all agencies provide assistance to two or more victim populations, the numbers of victim populations and assistance programs represented in Figure 3.4 and Figure 3.5 are much greater than the number of agencies receiving funding.

FIGURE 3.4

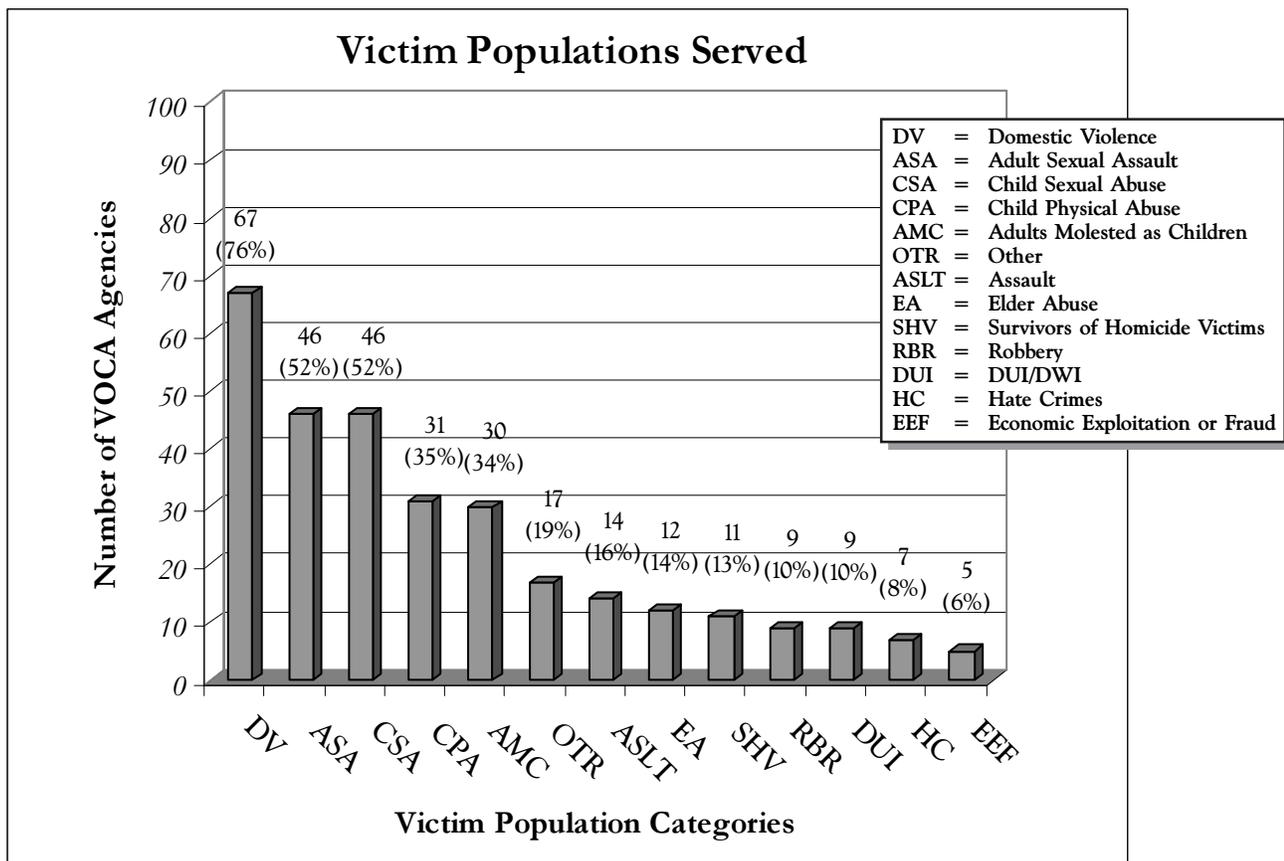
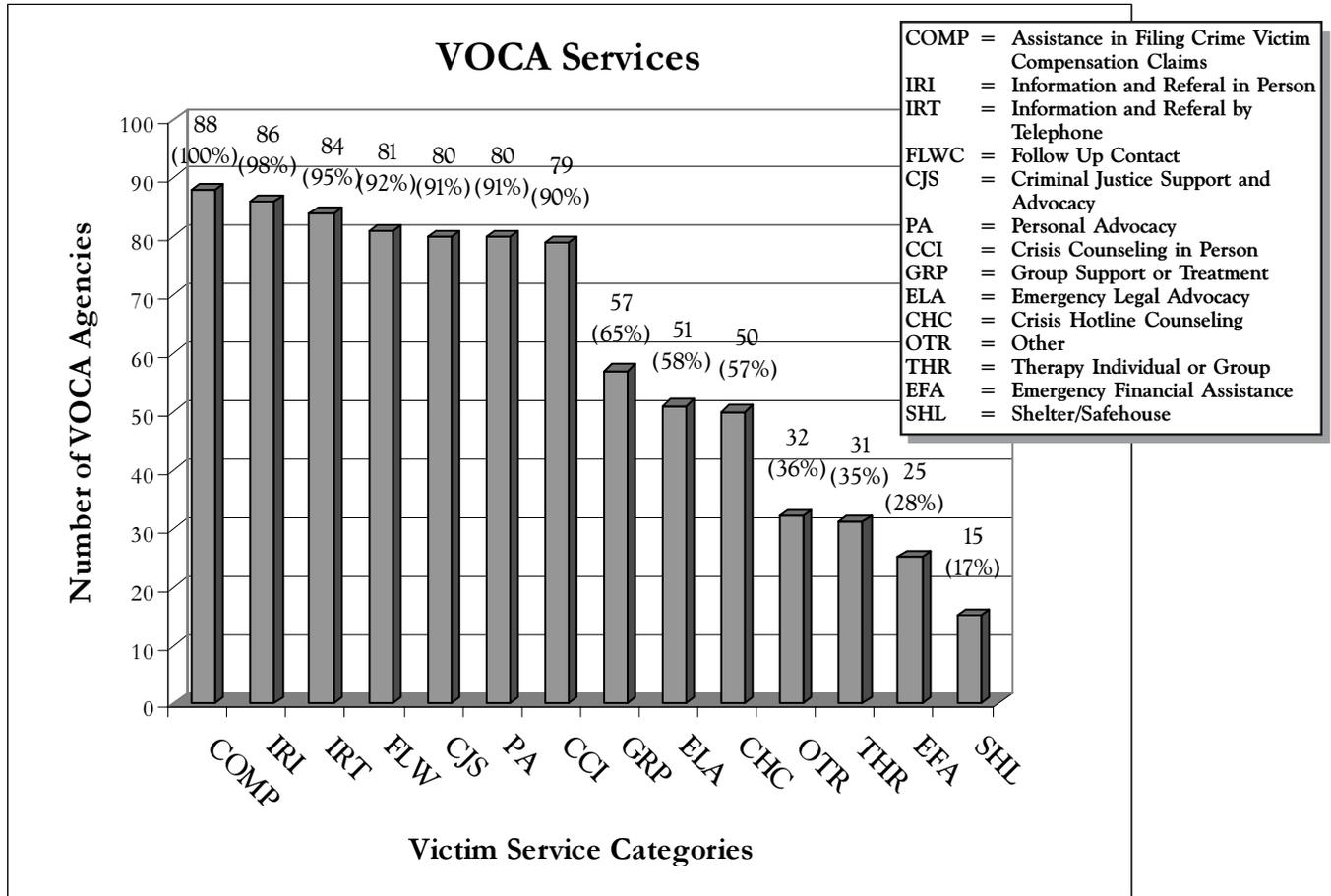


FIGURE 3.5



Figures 3.6 through 3.9 illustrate the numbers of VOCA-supported agencies from 1999 through 2002 by category (e.g., nonprofit, system-based, etc.), number of full-time equivalent VOCA-supported staff, size of volunteer corps, and by geographic service area typology (e.g., rural, urban, mixed).



FIGURE 3.6

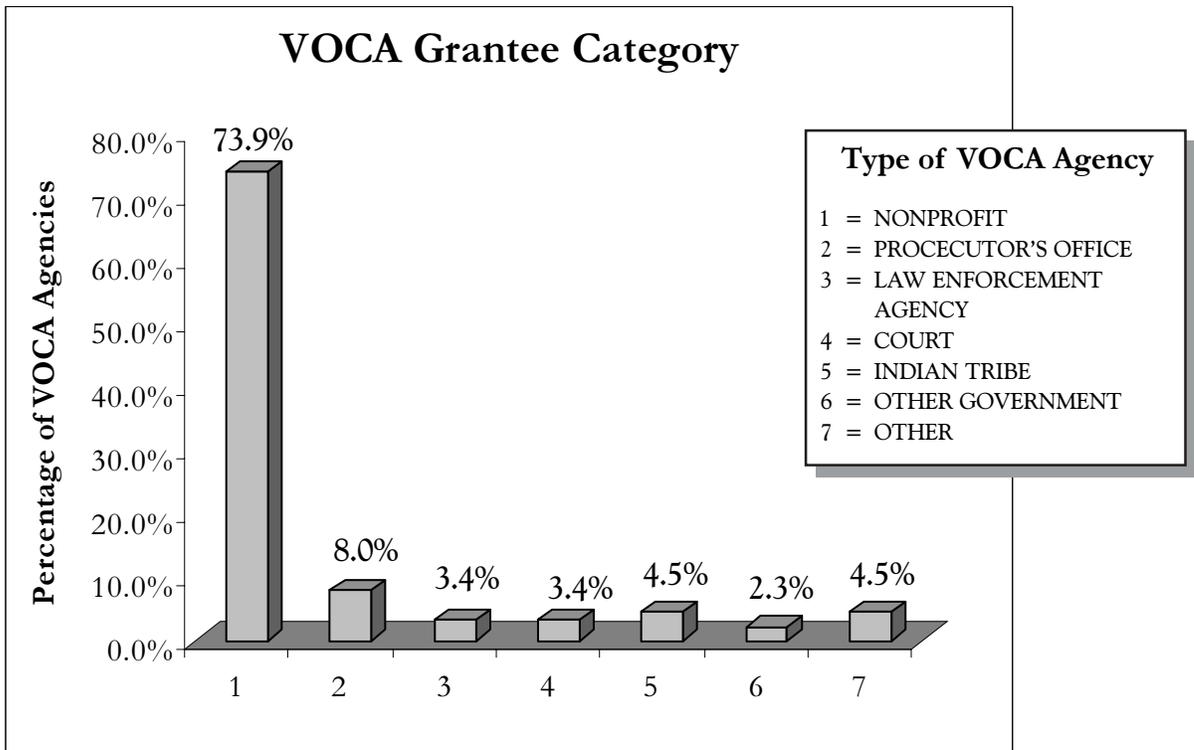


FIGURE 3.7

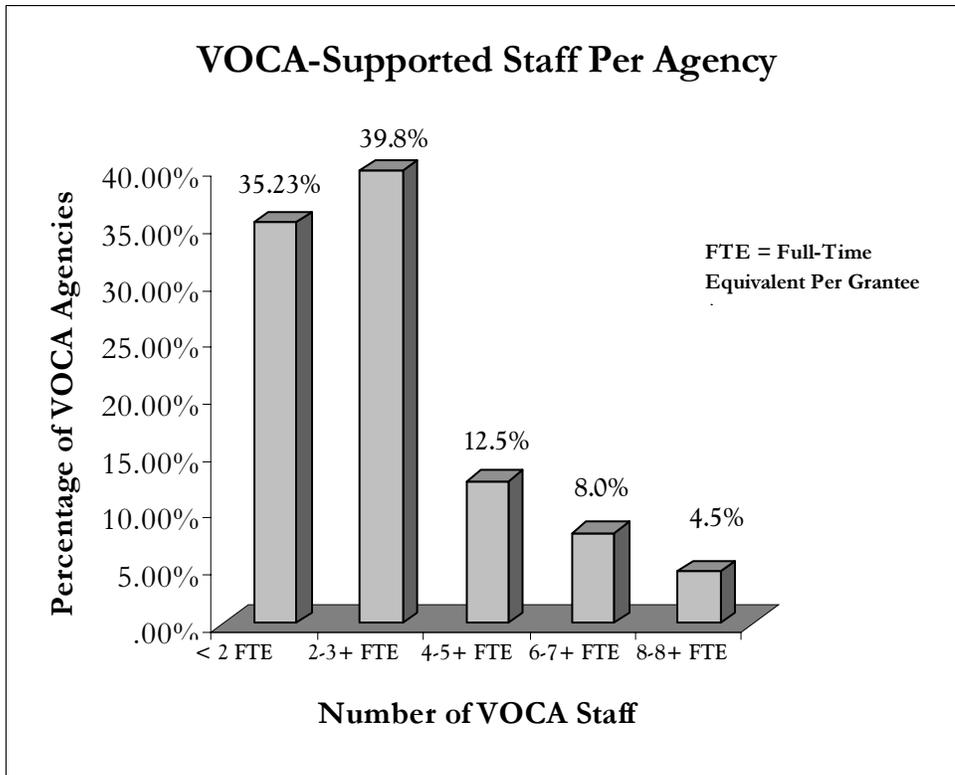


FIGURE 3.8

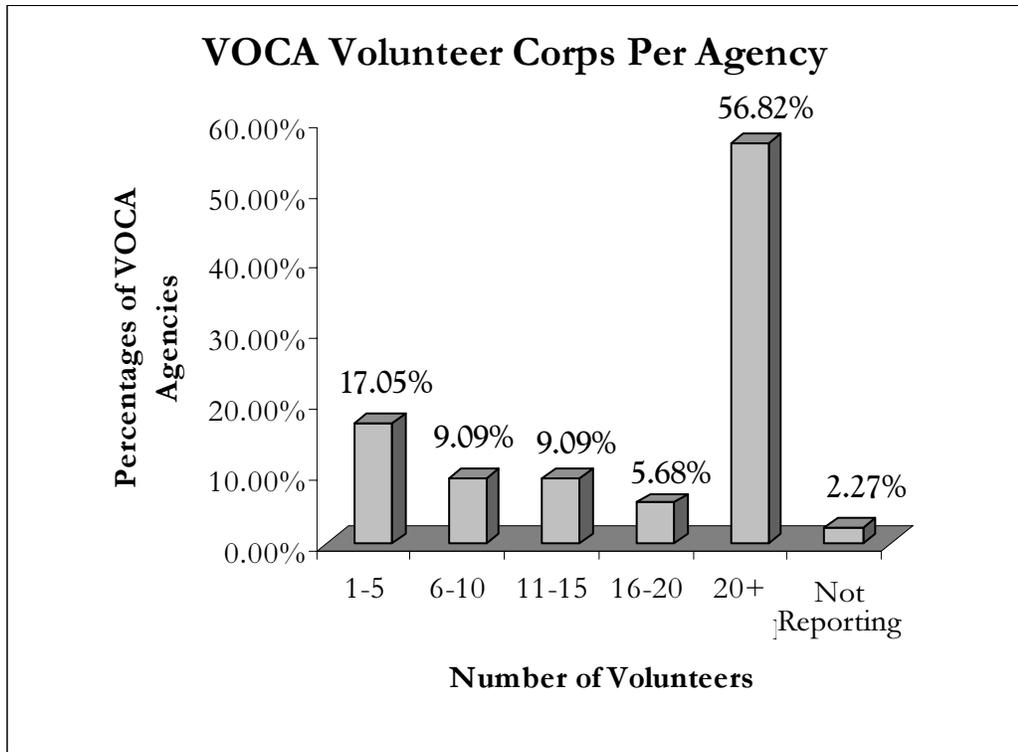
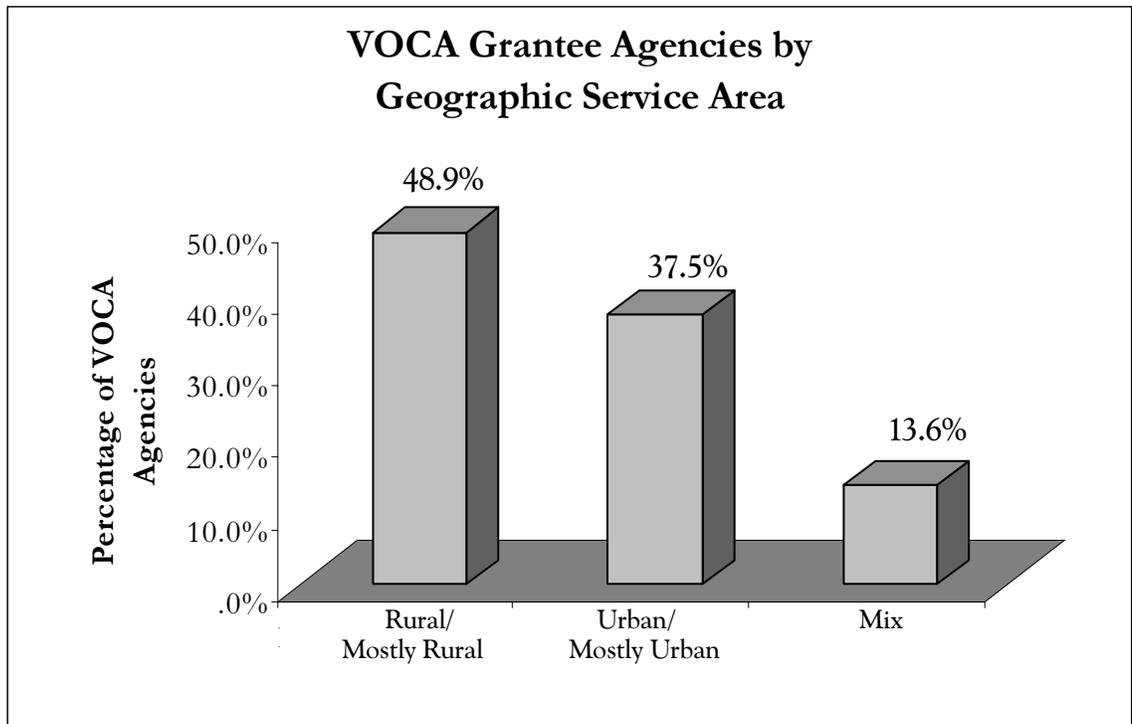


FIGURE 3.9



Grant Compliance Findings

The results over the four-year grant compliance review and needs assessment cycle show that all Michigan VOCA grantee agencies were found to be in substantial compliance with their approved VOCA grant application and contractual obligations. Table 3.10 below illustrates a measure for the percentage of affirmative (Y) and negative (N) responses for each programmatic domain queried for all VOCA-supported agencies in Michigan. Again, affirmative responses indicate an agency’s ability to respond satisfactorily to a query. The range of total inquiries/responses per domain reflects the addition or deletion of a few questions over time. These additions and deletions generally reflect the necessity of gathering more specific information from grantees or to eliminate a few inquiries that were determined to be redundant or unnecessary. For example, agencies were already required by the CVSC to report year-end statistics by other means. Therefore, it was redundant to request the identical informa-

tion during the on-site review. Also, questions regarding the annual numbers of clients served with non-VOCA funding, though interesting, were unnecessary and created an undue burden upon grantees in attempting to ascertain such figures. This was particularly true for agencies serving large numbers of clients through multiple programs supported by many funding sources. Moreover, tracking non-VOCA client statistics is not required by VOCA guidelines. Specific amendments to the on-site review interview instrument are noted after Table 3.11 below.

For the purposes of consistency, the responses from early on-site reviews to questions that were later dropped from the structured interview have been discounted from the statistics below. Also note that inquiries that were “not applicable” to an agency’s services or operations are represented as a positive response rather than a negative one. The total number of these “not applicable” responses constituted significantly less than 1% of the total responses provided.

TABLE 3.10 GCRNA FINDINGS – PROGRAMMATIC DOMAINS & RESPONSES

Programmatic Domain	GRANTEE RESPONSES % Y	GRANTEE RESPONSES % N
I. Service Impact, Victim Populations and Agency Profile (9 total inquiries/responses per agency)	100%	0.0%
II. Service Identification (8-9 total inquiries/responses per agency)	99.7%	0.3%
III. Staffing and Volunteers (27-30 total inquiries/responses per agency)	99.6%	0.4%
IV. Jurisdiction (5 total inquiries/responses per agency)	100%	0.0%
V. Source of Funding and Project Budget (5-7 total inquiries/responses per agency)	99.8%	0.2%
VI. Administration of VOCA Projects (19-23 total inquiries/responses per agency)	99.8%	0.2%
VII. Agency Response to VOCA Grant Compliance Project (3-4 total inquiries/responses per agency)	100%	0.0%

Overall, areas of noncompliance were very few and generally minor. Virtually all noncompliance matters were a result of misunderstandings of applicable VOCA guidelines or inadvertence. Table 3.11 provides more detailed information concerning the number of agencies that demonstrated full compliance out of a total of 88 VOCA grantees for each domain. Specific issues of non-

compliance are noted textually below each domain, with the number of agencies presenting a negative response in parentheses. It is notable that no single agency presented more than 2 issues of noncompliance out of a possible 86 specific areas of inquiry. In fact, it was rare for an agency to present more than one area of noncompliance.

TABLE 3.11 GCRNA FINDINGS – SPECIFIC AREAS OF NONCOMPLIANCE

Areas of Noncompliance(by overall domain)	# AGENCIES FULLY COMPLIANT
I. Service Impact, Victim Populations and Agency Profile	88/88
<i>No issues of noncompliance presented</i>	
II. Service Identification	86/88
<i>Did not verify all current victim services funded by VOCA (2)</i>	
III. Staffing and Volunteers	80/88
<i>No VOCA timesheet or equivalent for staff partially funded by VOCA funds (5) No policy on professional development or training for VOCA-funded staff (2) Did not verify qualifications or certifications of VOCA staff (1)</i>	
IV. Jurisdiction	88/88
<i>No issues of noncompliance presented</i>	
V. Source of Funding and Project Budget	87/88
<i>Did not describe priorities/concerns related to VOCA funding or budget (1)</i>	
VI. Administration of VOCA Projects	85/88
<i>Did not describe or provide forms required by their non-VOCA funders (2) Was not currently using program evaluation to assess the impact of services (1)</i>	
VII. Agency Response to VOCA Grant Compliance Project	88/88
<i>No issues of noncompliance presented</i>	

Very few changes have been made to the on-site interview or the reporting functions of the GCRNA process since the completion of the pilot phase. Alterations that have been made were primarily the result of feedback from VOCA grantees during section VII of the on-site review process and through annual Council of Advocates meetings (described in Section IV of this Report). These changes, as listed below, have been relatively minor.

- ❖ On-site reviews are no longer scheduled in the months of February and March, which are traditionally periods of heavy grantwriting for agencies.
- ❖ A few interview questions that were redundant were eliminated from the on-site interview.
- ❖ Grantees were asked about any recent or prospective changes in their victim assistance programs.
- ❖ Reviewers inquired whether there are issues funding agencies need to be aware of in addressing data collection and reporting processes.
- ❖ Certain questions designed to elicit comments about improvements to the CVSC's online grant application and reporting processes were added.
- ❖ A query was added concerning a need or desire for training on MCVNN (VINE—an electronic system for providing criminal justice information to victims about criminal perpetrators).
- ❖ The 15-day period for grantees to submit written responses to the reports generated from the on-site review was expanded to 30 days.
- ❖ Grantees were asked to comment on whether there should be a change at the federal level to allow a small percentage of VOCA grants to be utilized to cover the cost of grant administration, such as satisfying VOCA reporting requirements.

Otherwise, the baseline inquiries of each of the seven domains of the on-site review have changed little over the four-year period.

Needs Assessment Findings

Throughout the GCRNA process, fostering strong lines of communication among VOCA grantees, the CVSC and MPHI has been at the center of the GCRNA project. Solid communications are important for VOCA grantees in understanding their programmatic obligations in

Throughout the GCRNA process, fostering strong lines of communication among VOCA grantees, the CVSC and MPHI has been at the center of the GCRNA project.

...serving crime victims and the administrative requirements in accordance with their funding arrangement. Good communications are just as important for the CVSC and

MPHI in understanding the needs and obstacles grantees face in providing victim assistance and complying with grant administration procedures.

Through the needs assessment component of the GCRNA process, agencies consistently voiced several needs and obstacles to providing services and administering their VOCA grants. While a desire for additional funding to expand services and to expend VOCA monies for administrative or clerical purposes was often cited, other common needs assessment responses centered on the following:

- ❖ A need for a vehicle allowing grantees, the CVSC and MPHI to share information among one another
- ❖ A need for structured learning concerning program evaluation as it relates to VOCA-supported victim services
- ❖ A need for streamlined, user-friendly administrative processes
- ❖ A need for structured learning about VOCA grant administration

Over the last four years, the CVSC and MPHI have expanded their partnership in response to the need for information-sharing and instruction on program evaluation. Further, although not a product of the CVSC-MPHI partnership (and therefore not included in this Report), the CVSC has engaged in extensive efforts to implement

user-friendly internet-based grant application and reporting processes and has provided annual workshops on grant application and reporting procedures. The CVSC has diligently incorporated grantee feedback from the GCRNA process and other forums in creating these streamlined grant administration processes and ongoing training opportunities.

Responding to Grantee Needs

The grant compliance and needs assessment process has been the foundation and springboard

The grant compliance and needs assessment process has been the foundation and springboard for developing new Project elements designed to meet the needs of VOCA grantees. Specifically, three additional components of the

for developing new Project elements designed to meet the needs of VOCA grantees. Specifically, three additional components of the CVSC – MPHI

partnership were created and maintained during fiscal years 2000 – 2002 (and beyond) as a direct response to the needs voiced by VOCA-supported agencies through the GCRNA process.

- ❖ The Council of Advocates, an annual forum for representatives of VOCA grantees
- ❖ A series of program evaluation training workshops for VOCA-supported victim advocates.
- ❖ *The Michigan Advocate*, a semi-annual statewide periodical for VOCA grantees and others interested in crime victim assistance

These more recent elements of the Michigan Crime Victim Services Technical Assistance Project are discussed below in Section IV of this Report.



IV. EVOLVING

This section provides details concerning the evolution of the CVSC-MPHI relationship and the Michigan Crime Victim Services Technical Assistance Project (Project). In response to the findings of the GCRNA process, the CVSC has initiated a number of actions during the last four years to accommodate the self-expressed needs of VOCA grantees. As mentioned in the closing paragraphs of Section III of this Report, the CVSC constructed the online VOCA grant application and reporting processes, and three components were added to the CVSC - MPHI Project after fiscal year 1999—annual Council of Advocates meetings, a training series on program evaluation for VOCA grantees, and publication of *The Michigan Advocate* newsletter.

A. THE COUNCIL OF ADVOCATES

It has been noted several times in this Report that ongoing efforts to maintain and improve the quality of communications among the CVSC, VOCA grantees, and MPHI has been a consistent goal of the Project since its inception. In Section II of this Report, we described how a working group of seasoned VOCA advocates had assembled to provide commentary on the pilot phase of the GCRNA model. This working group provided invaluable feedback for establishing and

Ongoing meetings of this body of professionals would provide the CVSC and MPHI with guidance on many VOCA grant-related processes and victim services generally, as well as excellent feedback in developing new aspects of the Project.

implementing the formal GCRNA process.

Because the original working group was such a resounding success, the CVSC resolved that the group should continue to convene periodically to foster the part-

nership objectives between the CVSC and VOCA grantees. It was felt that ongoing meetings of this

body of professionals would provide the CVSC and MPHI with guidance on many VOCA grant-related processes and victim services generally, as well as excellent feedback in developing new aspects of the Project. Such a forum would also allow participants to share information with each other. The Council of Advocates meetings are a direct outgrowth of that original working group.

Council of Advocates meetings were established as an annual event in fiscal year 1999. Since then, the group has met four more times—on March 6, 2000; December 6, 2000 (fiscal year 2001); November 1, 2001 (fiscal year 2002); and November 20, 2002 (fiscal year 2003). Approximately 10-12 individuals from VOCA-supported agencies are invited each year to participate in the meeting. The CVSC makes a concerted effort to ensure that some participants have previously attended one or more annual meetings for the sake of continuity while also inviting advocates who have not previously participated in order to encourage fresh perspectives.

Members of each Council of Advocates come from a cross-section of VOCA grantees. Each represents an agency specializing in services for one or more diverse victim populations, such as child abuse, domestic violence, drunk driving crashes, sexual assault, crime victims in American Indian communities, those accessing hospital-based services, and victims working with prosecuting attorneys, law enforcement agencies or court personnel.

Discussions during these meetings are invariably wide-ranging and probing.

Discussions during these meetings are invariably wide-ranging and probing. Agendas are always flexible in order to allow the participants to spend as much time as necessary discussing matters that are important to them. After each meeting, an extensive written report is created and provided to the participants and made available to all VOCA grantees in Michigan. The following excerpts provide merely a taste of the issues discussed at each annual meeting. It will be evident to the reader that the discussions among the par-

ticipants have become more complex with each annual meeting. It is interesting to note the recurring themes as well as those subjects that have developed from the idea stage to implementation over the four-year period.

Fiscal Year 1999 Annual Meeting

Grant Compliance Review and Needs Assessment:

- ❖ The GCRNA process is a very beneficial one in that it educates both VOCA grantees and the CVSC.
- ❖ On-site reviews should include questions on the extent of financial management issues and the cost of administering grants, so that the CVSC can report the information back to federal VOCA authorities.
- ❖ Grantees should be provided with information about the entire process and what happens after an on-site review.
- ❖ Grantees throughout Michigan should be surveyed about the GCRNA process.

Grant Administration:

- ❖ A workshop on completing the grant application and on financial management would be useful.
- ❖ Administrative processes could be made to be more user-friendly.

Program Evaluation:

- ❖ Evaluation is a positive and welcome tool for measuring the effectiveness of victim services, but training and technical assistance are needed.

Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Meeting

Grant Compliance Review and Needs Assessment:

- ❖ The team effort/approach to preparing for the on-site review has been a good exercise for agency staff members and seems to bring them closer together.
- ❖ The process has created a better awareness of staff and management needs.
- ❖ On-site reviews should not be scheduled in February and March during “grant-writing season.”

- ❖ The problem-solving, nonadversarial demeanor of the MPHI reviewers is appreciated.

Grant Administration:

- ❖ The CVSC is creating an automated, user-friendly, web-based grant application and reporting process. The system will be pilot-tested and grantee feedback from this testing phase will be considered prior to full-scale implementation.
- ❖ Many of the concerns raised by VOCA grantees, as indicated in the reports from the grant compliance review and needs assessment process and elsewhere, are being forwarded to federal VOCA administrators.
- ❖ There will be three regional VOCA Grant Application workshops in fiscal year 2000. The CVSC will also meet with existing VOCA grantees to discuss simplifying the reporting processes.

Program Evaluation:

- ❖ The move toward program evaluation is not intended to create problems for grantees. The CVSC’s intention is to provide resources and tools to VOCA-funded agencies. There is currently no specific directive about how to evaluate service delivery programs, and every effort will be made to provide helpful information.
- ❖ A statewide training workshop on VOCA program evaluation is in the planning stages.
- ❖ The CVSC and MPHI also recognize that there are obstacles and barriers to implementing and integrating ongoing program evaluation. Many grantees have been heard from on the subject of program evaluation.
- ❖ Program evaluation should be realistic, specific, useful and feasible. This is a particularly challenging when serving multiple victim populations.

Information-Sharing:

- ❖ A statewide VOCA periodical will be produced by the CVSC through MPHI, and is slated for publication in the spring. This

publication will emphasize information-sharing and be a forum for advocates, describe promising approaches, and include newsworthy and thought-provoking content.

- ❖ The publication should include agency specific news, upcoming events, promising approaches, and items of general interest in the field of service provision for victims and survivors of violence.

Fiscal Year 2001 Annual Meeting

Grant Compliance Review and Needs Assessment:

- ❖ To date, 43 GCRNA reviews have been conducted by MPHI staff on behalf of the CVSC. All on-site reviews have gone smoothly. Twenty-five more VOCA-funded agencies will be reviewed during Fiscal Year 2001. VOCA advocates are encouraged to contact MPHI with any questions and comments about the on-site review process.

Grant Administration:

- ❖ Online grant applications will be available for the first time this spring. This new process will help grantees to make sure their proposal is complete and should allow for faster responses. Training for applicants is planned for early 2001.
- ❖ The CVSC has consistently recommended to the federal government a reasonable percentage of funding be allotted to grantees for administrative costs.
- ❖ The CVSC does not set policy for staff salaries and believes advocates should be paid what they are worth. VOCA-funded agencies should submit reasonable salary line item(s) in the grant application's budget detail.

Program Evaluation:

- ❖ Each agency's program evaluation plan should be useful to the funder as well as the agency's staff and victims they serve.
- ❖ Training is important to help those who are new to VOCA and program evaluation to better understand and not be intimidated by it.

Information-Sharing:

- ❖ The winter edition of *The Michigan Advocate* will be published shortly. Included will be news and information from the CVSC, an article from State Senator William Van Regenmorter, and other articles of interest authored by VOCA grantees. The CVSC invites all VOCA grantees who are interested in authoring articles or suggesting topics to contact MPHI.

Fiscal Year 2002 Annual Meeting

Grant Compliance Review and Needs Assessment:

- ❖ During the last three years, the GCRNA process has been very effective.
- ❖ As requested, the time period for agencies to send an optional written response to the reports generated from these reviews will be extended from 15 to 30 days.

Grant Administration:

- ❖ The format of quarterly reports required by the CVSC are being revised. Based on grantee input, many statistical categories have been eliminated and much effort has been taken to clarify screen instructions for the reports.
- ❖ Agency staff members interested in attending a more clinically-based training not offered in Michigan but still in the midwest region should submit a copy of the conference brochure and a request for consideration. Each training conference authorization is considered on its merits. If the CVSC approves the training, the costs of travel are usually approved as well.

Program Evaluation:

- ❖ MPHI continues to work with community-based organizations to fulfill evaluation requirements. Evaluation also drives improvements in services. To that end, MPHI has hosted five trainings since 2000 for VOCA-funded agency staff—three Level One trainings and two Level Two trainings. Feedback from participants has been very positive.

- ❖ Agencies with different funders may find it difficult to juggle differing program evaluation demands. It is important for agencies to have strong program-driven evaluation which meets the needs of most if not all funders.

Information-Sharing:

- ❖ Article topics from *The Michigan Advocate* from the previous year were reviewed and suggestions were offered for upcoming issues. The CVSC and MPHI extended an invitation to meeting participants to

submit topic ideas, nominate authors, and/or author articles.

Through annual Council of Advocates meetings as well as the GCRNA process, the CVSC and MPHI have received a great deal of valuable feedback from VOCA grantees concerning their needs in providing victim services and managing their VOCA grants. Table 4.1 provides a brief summary of the major areas of need indicated by VOCA grantees and the manner in which the CVSC has responded.

TABLE 4.1 THE CVSC RESPONDING TO GRANTEE NEEDS

VOCA Grantees Requested	VOCA Grantees Received
Opportunities for input concerning the grant compliance and needs assessment process	A 1999 GCRNA survey provided to all VOCA-supported agencies statewide A standard grantee comment section for each GCRNA on-site review conducted over the four-year period Annual Council of Advocates Meetings
Additional time for agencies to respond to Site Summary Reports (SSRs) generated from GCRNA reviews	A doubling of the time period for agency responses to SSRs from 15 to 30 days
No GCRNA on-site reviews be conducted during “grant-writing season”	MPHI no longer schedules GCRNA reviews in February & March of each fiscal year
User-friendly grant application and administrative processes	An online grant application and reporting system implemented by the CVSC
Information-sharing among VOCA grantees and the CVSC	Annual Council of Advocates Meetings <i>The Michigan Advocate</i> semi-annual newsletter An e-mail directory of all grantees contained within online grant system
Instruction on program evaluation for VOCA-supported services	Annual VOCA program evaluation training series
Instruction on Grant Administration	Grant application and reporting workshops implemented and sponsored by the CVSC

B. PROGRAM EVALUATION TRAINING FOR VOCA GRANTEES

Like most other major funders, the CVSC determined that it was necessary to implement a program evaluation process for VOCA-funded victim assistance in Michigan as a means to ensure quality and continual improvement in service delivery. In 1999, as a result of one of the first CVSC-MPHI collaborative efforts, grantees were asked for the first time to describe in their grant applications outcomes and measures for their victim services. Grantees initially expressed concerns about integrating program evaluation practices due to the perceived costs and a lack of expertise and/or time. Moreover, grantees voiced a strong need for instruction in self-evaluating their services.

The CVSC and MPHI also understood that that few agencies had staff members who were

The CVSC and MPHI also understood that that few agencies had staff members who were skilled in the intricacies of program evaluation.

skilled in the intricacies of program evaluation. It was evident that a training curriculum would be needed. Such a curriculum was created under the direction of the Project's Principal Investigator, Professor Cris Sullivan, Ph.D., of Michigan State University's Ecological and Community Psychology Department. Dr. Sullivan is also the Director of Evaluation for the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. She has been an advocate and researcher in the movement to end violence against women since 1982. Her areas of expertise include developing and evaluating community interventions for battered women and their children, and evaluating victim services. Dr. Sullivan has received numerous federal grants to support her work and has published extensively in this area. She has also served as a consultant for numerous local, state, and federal organizations and initiatives including the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the De-

partment of Justice's Violence Against Women Office, the Institute for Law and Justice, the Urban Institute, and the Battered Women's Justice Project. In short, as author and primary instructor, Dr. Sullivan has been the key to developing a successful training series for VOCA grantees.

The VOCA program evaluation training series was designed to satisfy two important goals. First, VOCA grantees would be trained to be competent in program evaluation for the purposes of

The curriculum was created with a mindfulness toward each grantee's unique challenges in integrating program evaluation into their everyday service delivery activities.

grant compliance. As important, grantees would learn to use program evaluation as a management tool to continually improve services for the benefit of crime victims.

The curriculum was created with a mindfulness toward each grantee's unique challenges in integrating program evaluation into their everyday service delivery activities. As such, workshops emphasized practical and useful evaluation processes for a wide range of victim service activities.

In fiscal year 2000, a basic "Level One" training workshop was held in two regions of the state. An advanced "Level Two" training curriculum was created and presented to grantees in 2001 and 2002 in addition to ongoing Level One training workshops for new grantees, their newer staff members, or those who desired a refresher course. Workshop instruction has been provided by Dr. Sullivan, with MPHI staff working in a supporting role in order to provide participants with an interactive learning experience. Some of the topics covered at these workshops include:

- ❖ Why Evaluating Our Work Is Important
- ❖ Important Considerations Before Designing an Evaluation
- ❖ Process Evaluation: How Are We Doing?
- ❖ Outcome Evaluation: What Impact Are We Having?
- ❖ Collecting the Information (Data)
- ❖ Analyzing and Interpreting Your Findings

- ❖ Making Your Findings Work for You
- ❖ Reporting Your Evaluation Findings

These curricula teach participants to ensure the confidentiality and safety of crime victims, and to respect them throughout their evaluation processes. Grantees are instructed on how to develop realistic and measurable goals and outcomes for their VOCA-supported services, how to gather adequate data samples, the use of proper methods for analyzing those data, and reporting their findings. Additionally, each participant receives a training manual which includes further detail on each subject covered during the training, sample evaluation tools such as surveys and forms, additional resources, helpful web sites, an evaluation-related glossary, and activity worksheets.

In practicing what they preach, MPHI has always asked workshop participants to evaluate the trainings themselves. The grantee response to these trainings has been consistently high.

In practicing what they preach, MPHI has always asked workshop participants to evaluate the trainings themselves. The grantee response to these trainings

has been consistently high. Table 4.2 illustrates the overall satisfaction level of participants and their sense of the usefulness of the training. The satisfaction scale used was: 1=Not At All Satisfied; 2=Somewhat Satisfied; 3= Satisfied; 4=Very Satisfied. The usefulness scale used was:

TABLE 4.2 TRAINING PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION SURVEY – OVERALL RESULTS

VOCA PROGRAM EVALUATION TRAINING SERIES							
Training Level & Date	Level One Series				Level Two Series		
	Jul 18 2000	Jul 28 2000	Oct 23 2000	Jun 26 2002	May 16 2001	May 26 2001	Sep 18 2002
1. How satisfied were you with the following (out of 4):							
a. Pace of the workshop?	3.50	3.50	3.73	3.21	3.67	3.76	3.37
b. Amount of information presented?	3.35	3.56	3.68	3.43	3.81	3.59	3.62
c. Skill/expertise of resenter(s)?	3.83	3.94	3.93	3.78	4.00	4.00	3.95
d. Skill/expertise of breakout facilitators?	2.71	3.56	3.50	3.26	3.81	3.41	3.58
2. How satisfied were you with the following:							
a. Meeting space for the workshop?	3.73	3.17	3.75	3.59	3.67	3.53	3.37
b. Location of the workshop?	2.65	2.72	3.43	3.52	3.76	3.35	3.16
c. Food/refreshments served?	3.89	3.44	3.56	3.80	3.67	3.94	3.41
3. How useful do you think this workshop will be to you in conducting your evaluation?	3.52	3.28	3.75	3.59	3.81	3.71	3.66
4. How useful do you think the resource materials will be to you in conducting your evaluation?	3.67	3.50	3.81	3.69	3.86	3.82	3.66

1=Not At All Useful; 2=Somewhat Useful; 3=Useful; 4=Very Useful. With very few exceptions, the average responses show overwhelmingly that participants have been satisfied to very satisfied with this training series and that they felt it useful to very useful.

C. THE MICHIGAN ADVOCATE

The fourth and last component of the CVSC-MPHI partnership has been *The Michigan Advocate*, a vehicle for sharing VOCA-related victim services information statewide. From the outset, grantees have strongly recommended that there should be some ongoing method of discussing any number of issues of concern to victim service providers, such as promising approaches to service delivery methods, volunteer recruiting and training, cultural sensitivity, program evaluation, grantwriting, grant reporting requirements, and other related topics. *The Michigan Advocate* was the response to this recommendation.

This newsletter was first published in 2000 and has been issued twice each fiscal year since 2001. Each edition is distributed to all Michigan VOCA Grantees as well as to over 100 county, state, and national agencies concerned with crime victim issues. Articles are written and submitted by staff members from VOCA-supported agencies, CVSC staff, MPHI staff, and other experts related to the field of crime victim assistance.

During fiscal years 2002-2003, *The Michigan Advocate* evolved into a publication with even greater depth and readability. In addition to articles on diverse topics of interest, internet resources, a grant funding schedule, and upcoming events, a new ongoing feature was added. This feature involves articles from grantee authors writing about how their agencies are making a difference. The following is a list of articles by issue.

Volume 1, Issue 1—*Spring 2000*

- ❖ Civil Legal Recourse for Domestic Violence Survivors
- ❖ The Victim Rights Forum
- ❖ The Michigan Sheriff's Association's Victim Advocate Program
- ❖ Community Collaboration

- ❖ Internet Resources
- ❖ Upcoming Workshops and Conferences

Volume 2, Issue 1—*Winter 2000*

- ❖ The Evolution of Crime Victim Rights in Michigan
- ❖ Creative Funding Benefits Two Women's Centers
- ❖ Indian Healing Techniques in Victim Services, Part 1
- ❖ Third Annual Michigan VOCA Council of Advocates Meeting
- ❖ System Changes Benefit Child Victims
- ❖ Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act
- ❖ Internet Resources
- ❖ Upcoming Workshops and Conferences

Volume 2, Issue 2—*Spring 2001*

- ❖ Advantages of Colposcopy in Sexual Assault Examinations
- ❖ Technology Helps Track Crisis Calls
- ❖ Indian Healing Practices in Victim Services, Part 2
- ❖ Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence
- ❖ Coordinating Victim Services in Large Rural Areas
- ❖ Domestic Violence Response Conference Report
- ❖ Criminal Background Checks: The ICHAT System
- ❖ Internet Resources
- ❖ Upcoming Workshops and Conferences

Volume 3, Issue 1—*Winter 2001*

- ❖ The Aftermath of Terrorism
- ❖ Internet Crime Prevention
- ❖ VOCA Grantees Making a Difference
 - Utilizing a Mobile Team
 - Treatment and Prevention
 - Collaborating for Quality Sexual Assault Care

- Sensitive and Efficient Services for Sexually Abused Children
- ❖ Evaluation Made Easy
- ❖ The Michigan Victim Assistance Academy
- ❖ Department of Community Health Develops Bioterror Readiness

Volume 3, Issue 2—*Spring 2002*

- ❖ At the Heart of Grant Compliance and Needs Assessment
- ❖ Program Evaluation Training for VOCA Grantees
- ❖ The Art of Volunteerism
- ❖ VOCA Grantees Making a Difference
 - Reaching Victims in Rural Areas
 - Taking Counseling to Children
 - Valuing Diversity in Our Organizations
 - Experiential Play Therapy with Traumatized Children

In fiscal year 2004, *The Michigan Advocate* publication will be issued solely in electronic format and made available on the internet in order to provide greater access to readers. This electronic format will also eliminate the physical space and budgetary constraints of publishing hard copies and will enable more victim assistance-related material to be disseminated to an even wider audience. In short, *The Michigan Advocate* continues to be a significant method of sharing information about victim services and VOCA-related issues throughout Michigan and beyond.

It is expected that each of these expanded functions of the CVSC-MPHI partnership—the annual Council of Advocates meetings, the VOCA program evaluation training series, and *The Michigan Advocate* newsletter—as well as the original core grant compliance review and needs assessment processes will continue to evolve as a result of the enduring synergy among the CVSC, VOCA grantees, and MPHI.



V. CLOSING REFLECTIONS

Working to best serve tens of thousands of crime victims in Michigan, the CVSC has partnered with MPHI to create a project like no other in the nation—the Michigan Crime Victim Services Commission Technical Assistance Project. This unique collaboration has supported and continues to support nearly 90 community-based public and private agencies that provide direct service to victims of violent crime in Michigan.

This Project works to benefit all partners, state and local. From 1999 through 2002 and beyond, it has continued to be a positive force for VOCA grantees in Michigan and the crime victims they serve. The CVSC and MPHI have created processes designed to be fair and helpful. As a bedrock principle, the Project has fostered open lines of communication by giving a voice to VOCA grantees. It is a dynamic system for improving victim services, grant administration, evaluation education, and information-sharing.

Far beyond facilitating grant accountability, the CVSC and MPHI remain attentive to the emerging challenges victim service agencies face each year. Fundamentally, this collaboration has created a responsive process, whereby grantee requests are welcomed and acted upon. Annual meetings of VOCA grantee staff—the Council of Advocates—and an ongoing call for recommendations through the grant compliance and needs assessment process are two significant mechanisms that ensure the needs of service agencies continue to be met as fully as possible.

The information contained in this Report underscores the precept that VOCA-supported community-based agencies are partners in meeting the needs of crime victims. This larger partnership ideal is the driving force behind *The Michigan Advocate*, a publication dedicated to sharing the struggles and triumphs in assisting crime victims in Michigan.

Recognizing that self-evaluating victim service programs can be technically and organizationally challenging, the CVSC and MPHI have imple-

mented ongoing training opportunities for victim advocates. The program evaluation training series has greatly enhanced capacity for self-assessment of and quality assurance for services supported by VOCA grants. Grantees are instructed in techniques for melding evaluation with existing agency activities without compromising the privacy and needs of often-traumatized crime victims. In this way, evaluation truly becomes a tool to advance program effectiveness rather than a burden.

In all of these efforts throughout the last four years, the CVSC-MPHI partnership has honored the commitment to listen and respond to VOCA-supported agencies who provide vital assistance to crime victims in need.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: VOCA GRANTEE SITE REVIEW SCHEDULES BY YEAR

FY 1999

Alliance Against Violence & Abuse	Escanaba
Baraga County Shelter Home, Inc.	L'Anse
Battle Creek Health System	Battle Creek
Bay County Women's Center	Bay City
Branch County Coalition	Coldwater
Dial Help, Inc.	Houghton
Domestic Violence Safe House	Ann Arbor
EightCAP	Ionia
Hannahville Indian Community	Wilson
HAVEN	Pontiac
Human Development Commission	Caro
Keweenaw Bay Indian Community	Baraga
LACASA	Howell
S.A.F.E. Place	Battle Creek
Sparrow Hospital	Lansing
Tuscola County Sheriff	Caro
Underground RR	Saginaw
Wayne County Prosecutor	Detroit

FY 2000

CareHouse/Macomb County Child Advocacy Center	Mt. Clemens
Child & Family Services of Northwestern Michigan	Traverse City
City of Detroit Police Department Rape Counseling Center	Detroit
City of Lansing Police Department	Lansing
Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault	Midland
Detroit Receiving Hospital & University Health Center	Detroit
Domestic Assault/Rape Elimination Services DARES	Port Huron
Domestic Violence Escape DOVE, Inc.	Ironwood
Family Resource Center	Kalamazoo
Hillsdale County Task Force on Family Violence	Hillsdale
Macomb Co. Pros. Attorney - Crime Victim Rights Unit	Mt. Clemens
Michigan State University Counseling Center	East Lansing
Muskegon Co. Pros. Attorney - Victim-Witness Unit	Muskegon
Region Four Community Services	Ludington
Safe Shelter, Inc.	Benton Harbor
Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Court/Judicial Services Shelter, Inc.	Mt. Pleasant
Sylvia's Place, Inc.	Alpena
The Children's Center of Wayne County	Allegan
Turning Point, Inc.	Detroit
Women's Center, Inc.	Mt. Clemens
Women's Resource Center	Marquette
Women's Survival Center of Oakland County	Traverse City
YWCA of Grand Rapids	Pontiac
YWCA of Greater Flint	Grand Rapids
	Flint

FY 2001

AWARE, Inc.	Jackson
Cadillac Area Oasis	Cadillac
Center for Women in Transition	Holland
Child & Family Services of Saginaw County	Saginaw
Child Abuse and Neglect Council of Oakland County	Pontiac
Child Abuse Council of Muskegon County	Muskegon
Children's Assessment Center	Grand Rapids
CHOICES of Manistee County, Inc.	Manistee
City of Flint Attorney's Office	Flint
Council Against Domestic Assault	Lansing
Domestic Assault Shelter Coalition	Three Rivers
Every Woman's Place	Muskegon
Family Counseling & Shelter Services of Monroe County	Monroe
First Step	Plymouth
Lapeer Area Citizens Against Domestic Assault	Lapeer
Mercy Hospital/River House Shelter	Gaylord
Oakland County Prosecuting Attorney	Pontiac
Relief After Violent Encounter, Inc.	St. Johns
Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians	Sault Ste. Marie
Save our Sons and Daughters (SOSAD)	Detroit
The Common Ground Sanctuary	Bloomfield Hills
Washtenaw County Community Mental Health Assault Crisis Center	Ypsilanti
Women's Aid Service	Mt. Pleasant
Women's Information Service, Inc.	Big Rapids
Women's Resource Center of N. Michigan, Inc.	Petoskey

FY 2002

61st District Court	Grand Rapids
Allegan Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse	Allegan
Bay County Prosecutor	Bay City
CASA of Ingham County	Lansing
Cass County	Cassopolis
Catholic Social Services of Wayne County	Detroit
Children's Assessment Center	Holland
County of Kalamazoo	Kalamazoo
Diane Pepler Resource Center	Sault Ste. Marie
Domestic Violence Coalition	Paw Paw
Family Couns. & Children's Services of Lenawee County	Adrian
Gateway Community Services	East Lansing
Genesee County Clerk's Office	Flint
Ingham County Prosecutor's Office	Lansing
Mother's Against Drunk Driving (MADD)	Midland
United for Kids/Children's Assessment Center	Saginaw
Wayne County Clerk	Detroit
Wayne County Neighborhood Legal Services	Detroit
Women's Justice Center	Detroit
YWCA of Kalamazoo	Kalamazoo

**APPENDIX B-1: NOTIFICATION LETTER OF FORTHCOMING ON-SITE
REVIEW (TEMPLATE)**

October 11, 2001

Jane Doe
Agency
Street
City, State Zip Code

Re: VOCA Grant Compliance & Needs Assessment Site Review

Dear Ms. Doe:

Greetings! As you may already know, the Michigan Crime Victim Services Commission (CVSC) has engaged the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) to assist in enhancing flow of information between it and Michigan VOCA Grantees. MPHI is a private nonprofit organization.

Since 1999, MPHI has conducted 68 site reviews of grantee-agencies for the CVSC. These site reviews focus on two primary areas—VOCA Grant compliance, and a Needs Assessment—specifically, the needs of each organization serving victim-clients.

As part of a four-year site review cycle, MPHI staff will be conducting 20 more site reviews in Fiscal Year 2002. Your agency has been randomly selected for a site review for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2001. A representative of MPHI will be contacting your office in October 2001 to schedule your agency's site review. We will do our best to be flexible in scheduling a mutually agreeable date. We have also enclosed some materials to help explain the breadth of the process and prepare for your review when the time comes.

We look forward to talking with you soon. In the meantime, should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at your leisure.

Sincerely,

D. Thomas Nelson, J.D.
Program Coordinator

Encl.



Center for Collaborative Research in Health Outcomes & Policy

VOCA Grant Compliance and Needs Assessment

Self-Review Checklist

This Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Grant Compliance & Needs Assessment Self-Review Checklist (VOCA Checklist) was created by the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) in cooperation with the Michigan Crime Victim Services Commission (CVSC). It is a tool designed to assist VOCA-funded agencies to perform a self-assessment of their VOCA-funded services. Specifically, it will help you determine whether your agency's VOCA-funded activities comply with state and federal guidelines for VOCA grants, whether your activities conform to your latest approved VOCA Grant Application, and Grant Award Contract and Budget Detail, and prompt you to consider your needs as an agency in providing services to crime victims.

Prior to the site visit to your agency, MPHI staff will review your contract concerning the subject matter covered by this VOCA Checklist. It will assist you in assembling documents and materials and prepare you for the site visit interview. However, most of the requested information should be of general knowledge to you and should not require an extensive document review on your part. The questions asked of you during the site visit interview directly correspond to the items in this Self-Review Checklist.

PLEASE NOTE: It is strongly recommended that your agency complete its preparations at least one week prior to the scheduled site visit by MPHI staff. This will facilitate the answering of questions by MPHI prior to the site visit. Further, it is very important that appropriate personnel, including VOCA-funded staff, participate in some or all of the site visit interview. These may include all persons responsible for administrating and coordinating VOCA-funded staff, volunteer activities and financial matters.

The instructions for using the VOCA Checklist are on page 2 of this document. We expect that you may have questions about the Self-Review Checklist and the tasks you are being asked to do in preparation for the site visit to your agency. We encourage you to contact Shari Murgittroyd at (517) 324-7349 or smurgitt@mphi.org with any questions.

Self-Review Checklist Instructions – Preparing for the MPHI Site Visit

- ◆ Pertinent staff, which may include the Executive Director, project director, appropriate VOCA-supported staff, volunteer coordinator(s) and financial personnel, should use this checklist at least three days prior to the MPHI site visit to inventory your agency's VOCA-funded project in each of the following areas:

- Service Impact, Victim Population(s) and Agency Profile
- Jurisdiction
- Service Identification
- Source of Funding and Project Budget
- Staffing and Volunteers

We will also ask for your comments about the site review process itself at the close of the interview.

- ◆ Pertinent staff should discuss all Self-Review Checklist items and make any additional notes necessary to provide thorough answers during the site visit interview. In responding to questions, you may refer to your VOCA Grant Application. However, more detailed responses are generally desired. Your agency's documents, as referenced in the Self-Review Checklist, should be reviewed and copies should be provided to the reviewer(s) as indicated in the Self-Review Checklist.
- ◆ **It is very important that the pertinent staff indicated above be available during site visit interview.** MPHI staff will be happy to make reasonable efforts to accommodate staff schedules during the day of the site visit.
- ◆ The suggested time you should allow for the self-review is 6 – 8 hours, more or less, depending on the circumstances of your particular agency. The site visit by MPHI staff should take 4 – 6 hours, more or less. Please note that the site visit could take up to 8 hours depending upon a number of factors, including the agency's preparation and organization for the this review. Items marked on the checklist by an asterisk (*) are areas of inquiry derived specifically from your application and contract.
- ◆ Again, please contact Shari Murgittroyd at (517) 324-7349 or at smurgitt@mphi.org with any questions. MPHI staff will also contact your agency prior to the visit to answer questions, provide any clarification, and obtain directions to your agency.

Confidentiality Policy

The CVSC and MPHI respect the privacy of those receiving crime victim services. Any victim/client information viewed during the grant compliance review and needs assessment process shall be protected and kept strictly confidential by MPHI and the CVSC. MPHI staff will not view client files at random nor interview clients.

VOCA Grant Compliance Review and Needs Assessment Self-Compliance Review Checklist

I. Service Impact , Victim Population(s), Agency Profile.	YES	NO
1. The agency can describe/substantiate the purpose of its VOCA-funded project. [Please provide copy of agency mission statement]		
1. a) The agency can specify whether its goals and purpose for its VOCA funded project have changed and if YES, how.*		
1. b) The agency can specify whether it anticipates any changes to the purpose or goals of its VOCA-funded project in the near future.		
2. The agency can describe whether it is considering any improvements to its VOCA-funded services.		
3. The agency can describe the history of its VOCA-funded project, including the items below. [Please provide copies of brochures, pamphlets, annual report, other]		
3. a) When and why the project was formed.		
3. b) The community need, both perceived and real (if different).		
3. c) Any major changes or shifts in the kinds of services or how they have been provided in the last few years.		
4. The agency can verify the client population(s) served via its VOCA-funded project.*		
Section I Notes		
Strengths:		
Areas of Possible Improvement:		
Additional Comments:		

II. Service Identification	YES	NO
1. The agency can verify its current crime victim services wholly or partially funded by VOCA.* [Please see attached memorandum for additional explanation of 1.a – c]		
1. a) Where the services are provided.		
1. b) The intensity of services (avg. frequency, avg. length of time spent in avg. day with a client, and avg. span of time of services).		
1. c) The number of staff members (paid and/or volunteer) responsible for providing services.		
2. The agency can describe its approach to, or model for, addressing the needs of crime victims.		
3. The agency can describe the non-VOCA-funded services provided to VOCA clients and the funding source(s) for each non-VOCA service.		
4. The agency can provide information about services <u>not</u> currently being offered by the agency, but requested by crime victims, the community or agency staff.		
5. The agency can describe its plans to provide these requested services, if any.		
Section II Notes		
Strengths:		
Areas of Possible Improvement:		
Additional Comments:		

III. Staffing and Volunteers	YES	NO
1. The agency can provide the position titles for its VOCA-funded project, and designate the positions as paid, volunteer, match, full-time and part-time.		
1. a) The agency can describe whether any VOCA position descriptions have changed, including tasks and/pr qualifications in the last year. [If YES, Please provide copies of updated position descriptions]		
1. b) The agency can specify whether position descriptions indicate qualifications or certifications required for each VOCA position. [If NO, please provide the qualifications and certifications required for each position]		
2. The agency can indicate all positions which are funded by both VOCA and another grant(s).		
2. a) The agency can verify the hours worked by staff that are partially supported by VOCA funds via the Employee Distribution Time Report (EFDTR). [If YES, please provide the most recently completed EFDTR for each staff person]		
3. The agency can indicate at what point staff members receive position descriptions.		
4. The agency can describe its policies for: hiring, terminating, evaluation, and professional development of VOCA-funded staff? [If YES, please provide a copy of personnel policies, if any]		
5. The agency can describe how the agency/staff/services has/have benefited from receiving VOCA funds.		
6. The agency can describe its primary strengths and concerns related to staffing the VOCA-funded project(s).		
7. The agency can describe/substantiate its VOCA-funded project's volunteer base (see the following items).		
7. a) Number of current volunteers.		
7. b) Number that are active each month (average).		
7. c) Number working on VOCA project(s) only.		
7. d) Average weekly/monthly commitment of volunteers related to the VOCA-funded project.		
7. e) How their hours are documented.		

III. Staffing and Volunteers (Continued)	YES	NO
7. f) How their activities are documented.		
7. g) Usual source(s) from which volunteers are recruited.		
7. h) Manner of recruitment.		
7. I) The selection criteria.		
7. j) The interview process.		
7. k) The training process.		
7. l) The person(s) responsible for training volunteers.		
7. m) Assessing the training needs of volunteers.		
7. n) Person(s) responsible for supervising volunteers.		
7. o) The average tenure of the volunteers.		
7. p) The type of work volunteers do on the VOCA project.		
8. The agency can describe its primary needs, challenges or barriers to recruiting, training, and retaining volunteers, if any.		
Section III Notes		
Strengths:		
Areas of Possible Improvement:		
Additional Comments:		



Crime Victim Services Commission

**VOCA Grant Compliance & Needs Assessment
ON-SITE VOCA GRANT COMPLIANCE REVIEW
SURVEY INSTRUMENT - FY2002**

AGENCY : _____

DATE: _____

Persons Attending:

(List all persons present or who will appear throughout the day; include full names and titles):

Name	Title

MPHI: _____

Contact: _____

Address : _____

Total Elapsed Time: _____

VOCA Grant CVA #: _____

Federal Dollars Received: \$ _____

Remarks: _____

Confidentiality Policy

The CVSC and MPHI respect the privacy of those receiving crime victim services. Any victim/client information viewed during the grant compliance review and needs assessment procedures shall be protected and kept strictly confidential by MPHI and CVSC.

I. Service Impact, Victim Population(s), Agency Profile

1. What is the purpose of your agency's VOCA-funded project?

1a. Have the purpose or goals of your VOCA-funded project changed? If yes, how?

1b. Do you anticipate change in the near future?

2. Are you considering changes to your VOCA-funded services?

2a. Are there changes you plan on making in the near future?

2b. Are there changes you plan to make long-term?

3. What is the history of your agency and its VOCA-funded project? [Obtain copies of brochures, pamphlets, annual report, other]

3a. When was the agency formed?
Was there a precipitating event (e.g., a major local crime, other)?

3b. Was the program already running before VOCA funding was applied for and received? When did you first receive VOCA funding?

3c. What is the community need for VOCA-supported services?

3d. Have there been any major changes or shifts in the kinds of services or how they are provided in the last few years?

4. We have previously reviewed your VOCA application. Can you verify the client population(s) you serve via the VOCA-funded project?

	Yes	No	Occasionally
Child Physical Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child Sexual Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DUI/DWI Crashes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domestic Violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adult Sexual Assault	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elder Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults Molested as Children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Survivors of Homicide Victims	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Robbery or Bank Robbery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assault	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Violent Crime (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic Exploitation & Fraud	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hate Crimes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Stalking or specify other)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Yes - The agency provides VOCA-funded services to this client population.

No - The agency does not provide services to this client population.

Occasionally - The agency occasionally comes into contact with this client population (usually to provide referrals) in the context of providing services to those specifically named in their VOCA Grant Application.

II. Service Identification

1. We would like to verify current crime victim services that are funded by VOCA.

Crisis Counseling (in-person) Y N

Where is this service commonly provided?

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

Shelter/Safe House Y N

Where is this service commonly provided?

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

Assistance in Filing Compensation Claims Y N

Where is this service commonly provided?

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

Follow Up Contact Y N

Where is this service commonly provided?

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

Information Referral (In-Person) Y N

Where is this service commonly provided?

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

Personal Advocacy Y N

Where is this service commonly provided?

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

Therapy: Individual/Group Y N

Where is this service commonly provided?

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

Criminal Justice Support/Advocacy Y N

Where is this service commonly provided?

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

Telephone Information/Referral Y N

Where is this service commonly provided?

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

Crisis Hotline Counseling Y N

Where is this service commonly provided?

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

Emergency Financial Assistance Y N

Where is this service commonly provided?

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

Group Support/Treatment Y N

Where is this service commonly provided?

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

Emergency Legal Advocacy Y N

Where is this service commonly provided? _____

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

Other Y N

Where is this service commonly provided? _____

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

Other Y N

Where is this service commonly provided? _____

How many in every 10 clients receive this service? _____

On average, how much time is spent in a single occasion providing this service? _____
(Report in 15-minute increments.)

On average, how many times over the span of working with a victim do you provide this service?

% of service handled by Paid Staff? _____% Volunteers? _____%

2. What is your agency's approach to or model for addressing the needs of crime victims?

3. What non-VOCA services do you provide to VOCA clients? Please indicate the funding source(s) for each non-VOCA services.

Non-VOCA Service	Funding Source
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

4. Are there services not currently being offered by your agency that have been requested by crime victims, the community or your agency's staff?

5. If there are requested services you do not currently offer, do you have plans to provide this service(s)? How?

III. Staffing and Volunteers

1. What are the position titles for staff working in your VOCA-funded project? Which are paid, volunteer, match, full-time and part-time?
 - a. Have any position descriptions changed, including tasks and/or qualifications, in the last year? If yes, please provide updated position descriptions.
 - b. Do the position descriptions indicate the qualifications or certifications required for each position? If NO, what are the qualifications or certifications required for each position?

The Agency's VOCA staff includes:

Name	Title	Pd.	Vol.	Match	PT	FT	Copy PD
		<input type="checkbox"/>					
		<input type="checkbox"/>					
		<input type="checkbox"/>					
		<input type="checkbox"/>					
		<input type="checkbox"/>					
		<input type="checkbox"/>					
		<input type="checkbox"/>					
		<input type="checkbox"/>					
		<input type="checkbox"/>					
		<input type="checkbox"/>					

2. Are there positions that are funded by VOCA and another grant (part-time staff)? If so, which positions and which other grants?

Name/Staff Position

Other Grant

2a. The agency **does** or **does not** use the Employee Funding Distribution Time Report forms for VOCA-supported staff? (circle one)

Copies provided? Y N

[Note!! If the agency does **not** use the EFDTR, its time sheet **MUST** contain at least the same information required by the EFDTR.]

3. At what point do you provide staff members with their specific position descriptions?

Position descriptions are provided: Prior to hiring Upon hiring Other

How often are these reviewed and/or amended: Annually Periodically

As necessary when duties change Other _____



4. Briefly describe your agency's policies for: hiring, terminating, evaluation, and professional development of VOCA-funded staff? [Obtain written employee policies, if any]

Hiring:

Terminating:

Evaluations:

Professional Development:



5. How has your agency/staff/services benefited from receiving VOCA funds?

6a. What are your primary concerns related to staffing your VOCA-funded project?

6. What are your primary strengths related to staffing your VOCA-funded project?

7. Please describe your agency's VOCA-funded project's volunteer base.

- a. How many current volunteers?
- b. How many are active each month?
- c. Do they work on VOCA project(s) only? All projects?
- d. What is their weekly/monthly commitment on average?
- e. How are their hours documented?
- f. How are their activities documented?

- g. From where are they recruited?
- h. How are they recruited?
- i. What are the selection criteria?
- j. Do they go through an interview process? Please describe.
- k. What is the training process?
- l. Who trains them?
- m. How are their training needs assessed?
- n. Who is responsible for supervising volunteers?
- o. How long is the average tenure of the volunteers?
- p. What type of work do volunteers do on the VOCA project?

8. What are your primary challenges to recruiting, training, and retaining volunteers:

- 1) Recruiting
- 2) Training
- 3) Retaining

IV. Jurisdiction

1. What geographic area(s) does your agency's VOCA-funded project serve?

The agency's geographic service area is (usually a city, county, multiple counties): _____

2. Is the geographic area mostly urban? mostly rural? urban and rural?

The agency's geographic service area is about ____% rural ____% urban

3. What other types of services for victim populations are provided by other agencies in your agency's geographic service area? Where do you refer clients for additional services?

Child Physical Abuse _____

Child Sexual Abuse _____

DUI/DWI Crashes _____

Domestic Violence _____

Adult Sexual Assault _____

Elder Abuse _____

Adults Molested as Children _____

Survivors of Homicide Victims _____

Robbery or Bank Robbery _____

Assault _____

Violent Crime (specify) _____

Economic Exploitation & Fraud _____

Hate Crimes _____

Other (specify) _____

4. What populations are NOT currently being served or reached in your agency's geographic service area, if any?

5. What efforts are being made to coordinate community collaboration to provide crime victim services?

V. Source of Funding and Project Budget

[Usually a financial officer responds to this section's questions.]

1. We understand that there are challenges in budgeting and allocating funds. How do you differentiate allocations of VOCA funds and funds from other grants, if any?

1a. What accounting software do you use and do you like it?

2. What are your primary priorities related to your agency's VOCA funding or budget?

1)

2)

3)

2a. What are your primary concerns related to your agency's VOCA funding or budget?

1)

2)

3)

3. What equipment, if any, have you purchased with VOCA funds during this and the last fiscal year?

Equipment/furniture purchased:

Copies of invoices or receipts? Yes No

4. What would you estimate your internal cost of managing funding and budget matters in terms of staff time and related costs?

The agency estimates its internal cost of managing funding and budget, in terms of staff time and related costs, at ___% of its VOCA budget.

4a. Would your agency support congressional action to allow VOCA to provide coverage for administrative costs?

Yes No

VI. Administration of VOCA Projects

1. What are the needs your agency has in the administration of your VOCA-funded grant?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

1a. What are the challenges your agency has faced in administering your VOCA-funded grant?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

1b. What kinds of training or technical assistance would assist you in meeting your needs or challenges?

2. What have been the primary barriers in providing direct services to victims?

2a. Have you been able to overcome these barriers? If so, how? If not, why not?

2b. What types of changes would help in overcoming barriers to providing direct services?

4. What data collection forms (statistical, quantitative, qualitative, other) do you use, if any? [Obtain copies of data collection forms, if any]

Copies of data collection forms (if any)? Yes No

5. What are the basic challenges that funding agencies, including CVSC, need to be aware of in addressing data collection and reporting?

3. What are the VOCA/CVSC reporting requirements, including specific reporting forms?

Verify that the agency is aware of the following reporting requirements:

- The monthly financial budget reimbursement Yes No
- Quarterly statistics, services and narrative Yes No
- Final year-end program reports and financial reports Yes No
- Agreement Amendments (Contract Adjustments) Yes No
- Public notification once the grant is approved and a contract is awarded Yes No
- Employee Funding Distribution Time Report Yes No

6. What are the primary challenges in successfully completing the VOCA Applications and Reporting forms? **PLEASE BE SPECIFIC.**

6a. Based upon your experience with the new online grant application system, can you suggest improvements?

What would you like done differently?

Were additional instruction or explanation needed?

Additional operational qualities/functions not already in place?

7. Now that all VOCA projects have had an opportunity for evaluation training, does your agency currently evaluate your VOCA-funded services? Yes No

- a) What methods/instruments/tools do you use, if any?
- b) If you evaluate your services, what do you use evaluation for?
- c) What are the barriers to doing evaluation, if any?
- d) Are there plans to do evaluation/plans to do more extensive evaluation than you are currently doing?
- e) If you could evaluate the impact and effectiveness of your agency's services, how might it help you?

8. What are your agency's main priorities relating to evaluation of VOCA-funded services?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

VII. Agency Response to VOCA Grant Compliance Project

1. Does your agency have needs in any other area that we have not already discussed?

1a. Is there anything else that you would like the CVSC to be aware of?

2. Are there any areas of training or technical assistance that the Michigan Crime Victim

3. Are you aware of the Michigan Crime Victim Notification Network (VINE) and how to access it and or use it for your clients? Yes No

3a. Would you like to receive training on the VINE system? Yes No

4. Please give your comments, questions and feelings about the grant compliance review and needs assessment process, including the preparation for the site visit and the interview itself.

Additional Notes:

Multiple horizontal lines for writing additional notes.

Revised November 2002

[2.]

■

[3.a]

■

[3.b]

■

[3.c]

■

[4.]

■

Areas of Possible Improvement:

Additional Comments:

II. Service Identification	YES	NO
1. The agency can verify its current crime victim services wholly or partially funded by VOCA.		
1. a) Where the services are provided.		
1. b) The intensity of services (avg. frequency, avg. length of time spent in avg. day with a client, and avg. span of time of services).		
1. c) The number of staff members (paid and/or volunteer) responsible for providing services.		
2. The agency can describe its approach to, or model for, addressing the needs of crime victims.		
3. The agency can describe the non-VOCA-funded services provided to VOCA clients and the funding source(s) for each non-VOCA service.		
4. The agency can provide information about services <u>not</u> currently being offered by the agency, but requested by crime victims, the community or agency staff.		
5. The agency can describe its plans to provide these requested services, if any.		
Section II Notes		

Strengths:

[1.]

■

[2.]

■

[3.]

■

[4.]

■

[5.]

■

III. Staffing and Volunteers	YES	NO
1. The agency can provide the position titles for its VOCA-funded project, and designate the positions as paid, volunteer, match, full-time and part-time.		
1. a) The agency can describe whether any VOCA position descriptions have changed, including tasks and/or qualifications in the last year. [If YES, copies of updated position descriptions provided?]		
1. b) The agency can specify whether position descriptions indicate qualifications or certifications required for each VOCA position. [If NO, copies of the qualifications and certifications required for each position provided?]		
2. The agency can indicate all positions that are funded by both VOCA and another grant(s).		
2. a) The agency can verify the hours worked by staff that are partially supported by VOCA funds via the Employee Funding Distribution Time Report (EFDTR). [Copies of the most recently completed EFDTR for each staff person provided?]		
3. The agency can indicate at what point staff members receive position descriptions.		
4. The agency can describe its policies for: hiring, terminating, evaluation, and professional development of VOCA-funded staff? [Copies of personnel policies provided, if any?]		
5. The agency can describe how the agency/staff/services has/have benefited from receiving VOCA funds.		
6. The agency can describe its primary strengths and concerns related to staffing the VOCA-funded project(s).		
7. The agency can describe/substantiate its VOCA-funded project's volunteer base (see the following items).		
7. a) Number of current volunteers.		
7. b) Number that are active each month (average).		
7. c) Number working on VOCA project(s) only.		
7. d) Average weekly/monthly commitment of volunteers related to the VOCA-funded project.		
7. e) How their hours are documented.		
7. f) How their activities are documented.		
7. g) Usual source(s) from which volunteers are recruited.		

III. Staffing and Volunteers (continued)	YES	NO
7. h) Manner of recruitment.		
7. I) The selection criteria.		
7. j) The interview process.		
7. k) The training process.		
7. l) The person(s) responsible for training volunteers.		
7. m) Assessing the training needs of volunteers.		
7. n) Person(s) responsible for supervising volunteers.		
7. o) The average tenure of the volunteers.		
7. p) The type of work volunteers do on the VOCA project.		
8. The agency can describe its primary needs, challenges or barriers to recruiting, training, and retaining volunteers, if any.		
Section III Notes		

Strengths:

[1.a-b]

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[2., 2.a]

■

[3.]

■

[4.]

■

5.]

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6.]

-

7. a-p]

- The agency described its VOCA-funded project's volunteer base.
 - [7.a]
 - [7.b]
 - [7.c]
 - [7.d]
 - [7.e]
 - [7.f]
 - [7.g]
 - [7.h]
 - [7.i]
 - [7.j]
 - [7.k]
 - [7.l]
 - [7.m]
 - [7.n]
 - [7.o]
 - [7.p]

8.]

-

Areas of Possible Improvement:

Additional Comments:

IV. Jurisdiction	YES	NO
1. The agency can verify the principal geographic area(s) served by its VOCA-funded project.		
2. The agency can describe whether the service area is mostly urban, mostly rural, or both urban and rural.		
3. The agency can list and generally describe/substantiate the types of services for victim populations provided by other agencies in the agency's geographic service area.		
4. The agency can indicate crime victim population(s) not currently being served or reached in the agency's geographic service area		
5. The agency can describe efforts currently being made to coordinate community collaboration to provide crime victim services.		

Section IV Notes

Strengths:

[1.]

-

[2.]

-

[3.]

- Agency staff are capable of naming additional services available to victims in the geographic service area including:
 - Child physical abuse –
 - Child sexual abuse –
 - DUI/DWI crashes –
 - Domestic violence –
 - Adult sexual assault –
 - Elder abuse –
 - Adults molested as children –
 - Survivors of homicide victims –
 - Robbery –
 - Assault –

- Other Violent Crimes –
- Economic exploitation and fraud –
- Hate crimes –
- Other crimes –

[4.]

■

[5.]

■

Areas of Possible Improvement:

Additional Comments:

V. Source of Funding and Project Budget		YES	NO
1.	The agency can describe how its accounting system can differentiate between of allocations of VOCA funds and funds from other grants, if any.		
2.	The agency can describe its primary priorities and concerns related to your VOCA funding or budget.		
3.	The agency can verify equipment purchased with VOCA funds. [Visual confirmation of equipment and receipts or certificates provided?]		
4.	The agency can describe its internal cost of managing its funding and budget in terms of staff time and related costs.		
	4. a) The agency can describe whether it would support Congressional action to allow VOCA to provide coverage for administrative costs.		
Section V Notes			

Strengths:

[1.]

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[2.]

■

[3.]

■

[4.]

■

[4.a]

■

Needs:

Additional Comments:

VI Administration of VOCA Project(s)	YES	NO
1. The agency can describe its needs and/or challenges in the administration of its VOCA Grant.		
1. a) The agency can describe the kinds of training or technical assistance it requires in meeting its needs or challenges in administering its VOCA Grant.		
2. The agency can describe the primary barriers in providing direct services to victims.		
2. a) The agency can describe whether the barriers have been overcome; how or why not.		
2. b) The agency can describe its needs related to providing direct services.		
2. c) The agency can describe the kinds of training, changes in the law, public awareness, or other changes that would help in overcoming its barriers to providing direct services.		
3. The agency can describe the VOCA reporting requirements, including specific forms. [Most recent copies provided?]		
4. The agency can describe/substantiate and provide the forms it uses to collect data (statistical, qualitative, other), if any, for its VOCA-funded project. [Copies provided?]		
5. The agency can describe the issues that funding agencies need to be aware of in addressing data collection, data reporting, etc.		
6. The agency can describe in successfully completing the VOCA Grant Application and reporting forms including possible improvements, what you would like to see done differently, areas where additional instruction or explanation is needed, and additional operational qualities/functions not already in place.		
7. The agency can describe whether it is currently engaging in the evaluation of its VOCA-funded services.		
7. a) The agency can describe what methods/instruments/tools that it is uses, if any. [Copies provided?]		
7. b) The agency can describe the purposes for which evaluation is used with respect to its VOCA-funded services.		
7. c) The agency can describe the barriers to doing evaluation, if any.		
7. d) The agency can describe its plans to do evaluation if not currently doing so, or more extensive evaluation than the agency is currently doing.		

VI. Administration of VOCA Project(s) (Continued)	YES	NO
7. e) The agency can describe how evaluating the impact and effectiveness of service delivery could be helpful.		
7. f) The agency can describe its assessment of prior evaluation trainings sponsored by the CVSC as well as other organizations and how these trainings differ.		
7. g) The agency can describe its evaluation needs and challenges and how they pertain to the requirements of funding agencies.		
8. The agency can describe its primary priorities relating to the evaluation of its VOCA-funded services.		
Section VI Notes		

Strengths:

[1.]

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[2.]

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[3.]

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[4.]

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[5.]

■

[6.]

■

[7.a-g]

-
- [7.a]
- [7.b]
- [7.c]
- [7.d]
- [7.e]
- [7.f]
- [7.g]

[8.]

■

Needs:**Additional Comments:**

VII. Agency Response to VOCA Grant Compliance Project	YES	NO
1. The agency can describe its needs in any other area not previously covered in this checklist.		
2. The agency can describe areas of technical assistance desired from the Michigan Crime Victim Services Commission, including assistance on crime victim compensation and crime victims' rights.		
3. The agency can describe its level of awareness of the Michigan Crime Victim Notification Network (VINE), including its use and accessibility and whether the agency would like to receive training on VINE.		
At the conclusion of the site review, the agency was asked to provide feedback (comments, questions, feelings) about their participation in this Grant Compliance Project review phase, including the preparation for the site visit and the interview process.		
Section VII Notes		

Additional Needs and/or Technical Assistance:

[1.]

■

[2.]

■

[3.]

■

Remarks/Suggestions about the Grant Compliance Review & Needs Assessment Process:

■

APPENDIX C: VOCA COUNCIL OF ADVOCATE PARTICIPANTS (BY YEAR)

PAST COUNCIL OF ADVOCATE ATTENDEES

FY 1999

Althea Grant, Detroit Police Department
Doreen Howson, Eastern U.P. Domestic Violence Program
Barbara Mills, Kalamazoo YWCA
Sharon Roepke, Kalamazoo Child Guidance Center
Margo Rinehart, Kalamazoo County Prosecutor's Office
Sharlene Kruger, MADD
Diane Santhany, Tuscola County Sheriff's Department
Kathryn Tucker, Detroit Receiving Hospital

FY 2000

Carla Blinkhorn, Grand Rapids YWCA
Judy Hoeffler, Child Abuse and Neglect Council of Oakland County
Valerie Hoffman, Underground Railroad, Saginaw
Doreen Howson, E.U.P. Dom. Violence Program, S. Ste. Marie
Lori Jump, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians
Sharlene Kruger, MADD, Midland
Barbara Mills, Kalamazoo YWCA
Ruth Oja, Hannahville Indian Community
Nancy Skula, Care House, Mt. Clemens
Katherine Tucker, Detroit Receiving Hospital

FY 2001

Suzanne Coats, Turning Point, Inc., Mt. Clemens
Kimberly Greenfelder, Macomb County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Mt. Clemens
Judy Hoeffler, Child Abuse & Neglect Council of Oakland County
Valerie Hoffman, Underground Railroad, Saginaw
Ruth Oja, Hannahville Indian Community, Wilson
Katherine Tucker, Detroit Receiving Hospital, Detroit
Donna Wilson, MADD, Lansing

FY 2002

Kimberly Greenfelder, Macomb County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Mt. Clemens
Judy Hoeffler, Child Abuse & Neglect Council of Oakland County
Valerie Hoffman, Underground Railroad, Saginaw
Lori Jump, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, Sault Ste. Marie
Ruth Oja, Hannahville Indian Community, Wilson
Katherine Tucker, Detroit Receiving Hospital, Detroit
Donna Wilson, MADD, Lansing

**APPENDIX D: VOCA PROGRAM EVALUATION WORKSHOP LEVEL ONE &
LEVEL TWO MANUALS (TABLE OF CONTENTS ONLY)**

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The Michigan ADVOCATE

At the Heart of Grant Compliance & Needs Assessment

■ by Leslie O'Reilly and D. Thomas Nelson

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VOCA Grantees Making
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Children

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Children 6

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*A Michigan
Crime Victim Services
Commission Publication*

Volume 3 Issue 2

A few questions for our VOCA Grantee readers: Do you remember your last VOCA site visit? Do you recall spending hours with your colleagues poring

over the self-review checklist sent in advance? Did you feel you had an opportunity to provide honest feedback to your funder? Did the non-adversarial format make you feel more at ease? Was it a learning experience for those involved?

If your answer to some of these questions is “yes,” then you are part of the vast majority of VOCA Grantees who, after having participated in the mandatory process called *Grant Compliance Review & Needs Assessment*, said “Hey, not bad!”

Over the last four years, the Crime Victim Services Commission (CVSC) and the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) have worked together to involve VOCA Grantees in a fair-minded process that fulfills the accountability requirement of the federal Victims of Crime Act and solicits feedback on your agency’s needs in serving victims of crime. At the heart of this process is the concept “You speak; we listen.” Further, the process was designed to gather the essential information in as little time as possible so that victim advocates can get back to the job at hand—helping victims heal.

If you’ve been around long enough, you’ve seen many positive changes in the way VOCA Grants are administered and reported upon: improved application and

reporting forms, an online process for both, eased schedules for reporting, multi-year grant commitments, grant administration and program evaluation training work-shops, and the annual VOCA Council of Advocates meeting as yet another Grantee forum. In fact, this very publication is a result of the grant compliance and needs assessment process. We heard from vast numbers of VOCA Grantees who wanted a vehicle in which to share information about victim services in Michigan and beyond. Your responses to the grant compliance and needs assessment process are truly at the heart of positive change for VOCA Grantees throughout Michigan.

Still, there are always things to improve upon. Rest assured that the CVSC, with the assistance of MPHI, is continually working to help you so that you may best help victims. Now all VOCA-supported agencies in Michigan have participated in the Grant Compliance & Needs Assessment process. We look forward to continuing to work with you through the next round of site visits.

Leslie O'Reilly is the Program Specialist with the Crime Victim Services Commission. D. Thomas Nelson, JD, is the former Program Coordinator of the CVSC-Technical Assistance Project.

Michigan Department
of Community Health



Questions regarding CVSC
Programs may be directed to
the Program Specialist:

Crime Victim Assistance and
VOCA Grants:
Leslie O'Reilly (517) 334-9180

Crime Victim Compensation
Claims and Restitution
Coordination:
Marian Smith (517) 334-9181 or
Janine Washburn (517) 334-9182

Crime Victim Rights:
Beth Adcock (517) 334-9943



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Victims of Crime Act of 1984.

Program Evaluation Training for VOCA Grantees

by Shari Murgittroyd

On June 26th VOCA grantees attended the *Program Evaluation for VOCA Grantees – Level 1* workshop sponsored by the Crime Victim Services Commission (CVSC). Representatives from VOCA-funded agencies gathered in East Lansing at the Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center for a day-long exploration of the methodology and challenges of program evaluation.

This year marks the third year victim service agencies have had the opportunity to attend training in program evaluation. The Grant Compliance Review & Needs Assessment process has been a clear indicator that VOCA grantees desire technical assistance and training in the area of evaluating victim services. The CVSC, with assistance from the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI), has responded to this need by planning and presenting annual training events.

Dr. Cris Sullivan has been an integral component of the workshops for VOCA grantees. She is the highlight of the workshops, lending her expertise and dynamic presentation style to ensure successful learning events. Dr. Sullivan is an Associate Professor of Ecological/Community Psychology at Michigan State University, and Director of Evaluation for the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. She has published extensively in the areas of evaluating victim services and community interventions for battered women and their children and is the author of the *Program Evaluation for VOCA Grantees Training Manuals*.

The June 26th evaluation training included a lecture by Dr. Sullivan and interactive breakout groups that focused on three types of victim services: 1) crisis intervention, 2) counseling and support, and 3) legal advocacy. Each group practiced developing short-term outcomes, outcome measures, and language for actual outcomes.

A workshop on evaluation would not be complete without administering a satisfaction survey to evaluate the quality and usefulness of the training itself. Forty-two out of 48 participants completed evaluation surveys at the end of the day. Out of those 42 workshop participants, 72% indicated the resource materials would be *very useful* when conducting their own agency evaluations and 83% said they were *very satisfied* with the skill and expertise of Dr. Cris Sullivan. One participant wrote: "I think the evaluation workshop was very, very helpful. The information was clear, understandable, and applicable in a practical way." The CVSC and MPHI utilize feedback obtained from the satisfaction surveys to make continual improvements in the evaluation workshops.

Grantees interested in attending future program evaluation trainings can look forward to spring 2003 when another Level 1 workshop will be held—maybe we'll see you there!

Shari Murgittroyd, MSW, is the Project Coordinator of the CVSC Technical Assistance Project at the Michigan Public Health Institute.

The Art of Volunteerism

■ by Tanya Sevier

As a Volunteer Coordinator for the Women’s Justice Center, I have worked with volunteers at every stage, from recruitment to exit. Along the way I have faced many challenges in creating an effective system of volunteer recruitment and retention. These are my recommendations for other crime victim service agencies working with volunteers—I hope they spark ideas for you.

Determine core groups of volunteers

When recruiting, the first question I consider is “Which groups would be ideal as volunteers?” Identify different populations of volunteers. For example, our three primary volunteer sectors are college students, retirees, and stay at home caregivers.

Consider the benefits of different volunteer groups

Recruiting is only one step in a long process. Weigh the potential benefits and disadvantages of different groups before you begin recruiting.

- *Students* seeking internships for college credit may be plentiful if you are located near a university. On the other hand, students are often able to commit for only one semester and working around class schedules may be challenging.
- *Retirees* may be able to commit more time to an organization and offer more flexible schedules. More than other groups, retirees may want explicitly stated expectations.
- *Stay at home caregivers* provide a stable volunteer base if you can work around commitments to children. This group may find it difficult to offer hours during holidays or after school, but offer excellent networking opportunities.

Rewarding volunteers

Rewards acknowledge volunteers’ selfless efforts while reinforcing that volunteers are an essential part of an agency’s work. Consider the following methods of rewarding volunteers.

- Celebrate special occasions such as birthdays and volunteer milestones (we mark the first month and third month anniversaries).
 - Include a gift certificate in birthday cards if you are able (we give movie coupons).
 - Acknowledge volunteer efforts on a monthly basis with cards or certificates listing the amount of hours they have contributed.
 - Purchase inexpensive and creative gifts such as appreciative balloons or mugs filled with candy. Delivering such gifts to a volunteer’s home or place of work adds a special touch.
- Reward volunteers *even* if you have no budget to do so—you simply *can’t* afford to lose this precious agency resource!

Create leadership opportunities

Like employees, volunteers enjoy advancing within an organization. Consider allowing volunteers to take on leadership roles.

- Encourage volunteers’ creativity. Motivated volunteers in our shelter have initiated local ribbon fundraising campaigns during domestic violence awareness month, ‘beauty days’ (salon services), and ‘smoothie nights’ (fruit drinks).
- Allow volunteers to network. Offer volunteers the option of working as a community liaison to network for more volunteers or funding.
- Suggest volunteers apply for permanent positions. Speak to volunteers about opportunities to become staff members or board members within your agency.

Maintain constant vigilance

My greatest challenge as a volunteer coordinator is *keeping the interest of the volunteer*. To avoid having volunteers grow tired of routine tasks, I meet with them frequently to assess the following:

- *Is their interest waning? Are they motivated?*
- *Are they still excited about the philosophy of the agency?*
- *Has their time commitment changed?*

A significant decline in hours volunteered may be an indication of dissatisfaction. I offer to switch dissatisfied volunteers into different positions—for example, from kitchen work to office work.

Think like a volunteer

Where would *you* most like to volunteer? Chances are you’d prefer working in an agency that 1) respects your skills, 2) appreciates your work, and 3) benefits *you*, the volunteer. Yes, people volunteer for largely altruistic purposes; yet volunteers will be more satisfied with their work if they also see how it benefits them. Promote intensive trainings as skills that benefit volunteers long after they leave your agency. Acknowledge volunteers’ training in a letter and suggest volunteers include this training in their resumes.

Tanya Sevier, BA, is the Volunteer Coordinator at the Women’s Justice Center located in Detroit, Michigan.

Reaching Victims in Rural Areas

■ by Jan Mancinelli

It's a daunting task to reach and carry out comprehensive services to victims in the best of circumstances. More daunting is to broaden that task to reach victims over a geographical area of 2,600 square miles. It's a challenge the Women's Resource Center of Northern Michigan, based in Petoskey, has been faced with throughout its 25-year history. The Women's Resource Center provides victim services for domestic abuse, sexual assault, child abuse, and other victims of violent crime in five counties in the Northwest Lower Peninsula of Michigan.

In the late 1980s, VOCA funds supported our efforts for victims in outlying counties. Since then, the expansion of VOCA funding and the addition of new funding has enabled the agency to operate regular business hours, five days per week, in four offices serving five counties: Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, and Otsego. Our agency utilizes three satellite offices in addition to our main office to serve victims where they live. The importance of the satellite offices cannot be underestimated. Having staff on location in each of the county seats allows us to participate in local activities, attend local meetings, and most importantly, interact with the key individuals who work in the criminal justice and human service systems. We have found that advocating for a survivor when you know the systems and the players involved can be far more successful when done in person rather than calling from three counties away.

Rural areas, unlike many urban areas, lack public transportation. Survivors in urban areas have a much shorter distance to navigate to receive services. In an area that has no public transportation, as well as unemployment and poverty rates that are above state averages, reliable transportation can be a challenge as well. We go to the people because they can not come to us. Whether you are driving across an urban area in wall-to-wall traffic or traveling long stretches of country roads, the end task of serving victims of violent crimes remains the same.

Jan Mancinelli, MSA, is the Executive Director of the Women's Resource Center of Northern Michigan in Petoskey, Michigan.

Taking Counseling to Children

■ by Debra Mielke

The Women's Aid Service of Mt. Pleasant has been serving child victims of domestic and sexual assault for almost four years. With limited staff, reaching children who need services in our three county service area has been challenging. More challenging still, many children are not able to come to us to utilize our service, so we must go to them.

Transportation can be a barrier for children relying upon working parents who sometimes do not have vehicles or are unable to leave work to transport children. We try to eliminate transportation as a barrier by going to meet the children. As a children's counselor, I am extremely flexible about when and where I meet victims, and almost half of my sessions with children take place out of the office.

My preferred location for counseling sessions is my office, where there is more access to therapeutic toys, privacy, and space to be loud. When that just isn't possible, counseling sessions are held in many locations, including a client's house, public parks, libraries, and schools. The location must be convenient, safe, and offer some privacy.

There are times when these "sessions on the move" are not ideal. When a child is working through extremely emotional issues it is unlikely that meeting in school would be appropriate. Children may not feel comfortable revisiting powerful emotions that might elicit tears if they need to return to class in twenty minutes. Distractions are also far more likely "in the field" than in a counselor's office: siblings running around or a class bell ringing. If distractions become an issue, I may cut the session short and select another location to meet in the future.

The counseling that occurs in a public place is not substantially different than the counseling that occurs in my office. No matter where counseling sessions occur, they are always opportunities to work through emotional issues, facilitate safety planning, foster healthy relationships, and convey to children that they are not responsible for abuse.

Debra Mielke, MA, LLPC, is a Children's Counselor at the Women's Aid Service in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan.

Valuing Diversity in Our Organizations

■ by Kiran Dhingra

As service providers to victims of crime, we work with diverse groups of people and should be mindful of the diversity within our community. Our organization is not separate from the community we serve; the challenges we face as an organization reflect the challenges that we face as a community. To work effectively with our communities and provide competent and sensitive services, we need to be aware of the experiences and perspectives of those outside our own frame of reference. Bringing together staff members with varying experiences and perspectives helps us better represent our community.

Awareness of diversity

We can talk about being committed to diversity, but demonstrating our commitment is not easy work. It requires that we examine and understand ourselves in relation to other people. It means being open and committed to learning about others' experiences. It can be uncomfortable to think outside of our own cultural frame of reference, but the benefits of what we learn from each other will help us better reach out to those who have been victims of crime.

Constantly striving

I work at Turning Point, Inc., a non-profit agency that provides services to domestic and sexual assault survivors, including shelter, counseling, and advocacy. Our agency is located in Macomb County, a predominantly Caucasian community, with less than ten percent of county residents claiming Native American, Hispanic, African American, Middle Eastern, or Asian American descent. We are working to strengthen our commitment to diversity. Our plan is to diversify staff to be more representative of the age groups, sexual orientation, languages, and racial and ethnic backgrounds that exist in Macomb County.

Working toward diversity

Despite our goal, we are experiencing challenges in assembling a diverse and culturally competent staff for our organization. We are doing a number of things to address this challenge: 1) we require all staff and volunteers to

attend training on oppression; 2) we are examining our hiring practices and organizational policies; 3) we are recognizing a need to hire a diverse management staff to attract and retain diverse frontline staff; and 4) we are conducting focus groups with women of color to assess our policies and create a dialogue with underserved communities. These efforts have already led to one positive change in our hiring practices. In the past we advertised vacancies in mainstream newspapers and publications; now we advertise on the web and place ads in ethnic newspapers to reach a more varied audience.

...being committed to diversity means thinking outside of our own cultural frame of reference...

Achieving cultural competency

Training in cultural competency for staff members is an essential aspect of a commitment to honoring a community's diversity. It is important to note that *diversity* and *cultural competency* are different concepts and that a diverse staff is not always a culturally competent staff. Diversity can be achieved simply by maintaining variety among staff. Cultural competency, on the other hand, is a far more

difficult—and ultimately more important—goal. Cultural competency involves staff being sensitive to cultural norms, values, and beliefs of different individuals and groups. It involves understanding how different cultures access our services and being conscious of how acceptable our services are to different cultures.

The process of achieving cultural competency involves ongoing training and commitment. Our staff recently received training that provided experiential exercises and made us more aware of the language that we use when providing services and the power it has to hurt and silence those we are so interested in helping.

The challenge for us at Turning Point is to continue our commitment to diversity and cultural competency. We are learning that valuing diversity in our organization is an ongoing process—one that involves long-term commitment that is never finished.

Kiran Dhingra, MSW, was formerly a Sexual Assault Therapist at Turning Point, Inc., in Mt. Clemens, Michigan.



Experiential Play Therapy with Traumatized Children

■ by Shawn A. Rubin

For the past three years I have worked as a therapist for the Catholic Social Services of Wayne County (CSSWC). Under innovative leadership, this organization has supported the creation and implementation of a play therapy treatment program for traumatized children, a program I have found highly effective.

What is play therapy?

Using “play” in therapy with children is not a new practice. Writings from England in the early 1900s reveal that therapists used toys with children in expressive ways. Experiential play therapy goes beyond simply playing games with children. This approach acknowledges that for children play is a natural process of exploration and discovery of their environment and their relationships. It is a truly client-centered therapy, allowing children to create and develop the expressions that are most meaningful to them in a safe environment.

The philosophy of the VOCA treatment program at CSSWC is rooted in the humanistic and experiential psychological theories of Erikson (1977), Moustakas (1959, 1997), and Norton & Norton (1997). These psychologists suggest that children should be allowed to move toward the events that caused them pain. They believe that a child’s play can be a vehicle for confronting and integrating painful experiences.

Who benefits from play therapy?

Many children referred to our VOCA program manifest acute symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) including frequent dissociation, nightmares, enuresis (bed-wetting), and depending upon the nature of their trauma, extreme aggressive and sexualized behaviors. These young children often demonstrate repetitive trauma-specific behaviors during their play. One of the first psychologists to explore PTSD reactions in children differentiated between normal play and the “forbidden games” of traumatized children:

The everyday play of childhood is free and easy. It is bubbly and light-spirited, whereas the play that follows from trauma is grim and monotonous. Play does not stop easily when it is traumatically inspired and is obsessively repeated. Post-traumatic play is so literal that if you spot it, you may be able to guess the trauma with few other clues (Terr, 1990, 31).

I have found that using experiential play therapy is most effective with younger children, especially those between the ages of three and nine. Once children reach a certain age and maturity level, play is no longer the primary means of expression.

How does play therapy work?

Phase 1: Building Trust

This approach begins with an emphasis on establishing a therapeutic alliance with a child, in other words, building a relationship that communicates respect, trust, and patience for the psychological processes of the child. Therapists create a safe environment, letting the child know they can act and play freely, and establish comfortable limitations of time and space (telling children when the sessions will begin and end and letting them know that experiential play can only take place in the office). For the initial sessions, parents are included, allowing children to see that therapists are adults who can be trusted.

Phase 2: Role-playing

Once comfortable with the surroundings and therapist, a child will initiate play. The therapist follows the child’s lead in the direction of activities and the creation of role-playing scenarios. Therapists provide an environment of increased permissiveness of expression while maintaining constant boundaries of safety. This feature of the relationship promotes a sense of the therapist’s acceptance of the child despite his or her expression of intense aggression and trauma-specific reenactments of abuse. I have found in this work that even those children who are apprehensive at first become engaged by and drawn to the permissive-structured relationship—so much so that often children resist ending sessions.

Play generally begins in a light-hearted fashion, with solitary activities such as playing with sand or blocks. Children then

grow curious about the therapist and move to playing cooperative games; the children always set the rules and pace of the games. As time passes, children move to more traumatic play where they begin to express their hopes and fears, and the “games” become more emotional. Children begin to reenact traumatic events and express the suffering, torture, or pain that they felt. In these “games” children often assume the role of the perpetrator, placing the therapist into the position of victim and allowing the therapist to experientially reflect the depths of suffering and hurt experienced by the child.

Phase 3: Resolution

It is in this phase that the therapist maintains the limitations of time and safety, and assists the child in managing overwhelming emotions. As the child internalizes a sense of consistency and structure in the therapy over several sessions, the working stage of treatment commences. The child’s experience of the trauma, fear, and pain is disclosed through the content of the play scenarios and role-playing games. As the child begins to resolve these events, the emotional intensity lessens, and the frequency of the play-acting of these traumatic events lessens. Progress is gradual, as the child develops mastery over the intense emotions and physiological flooding of fear.

Effectiveness of play therapy

The practice of this child therapy has yielded excellent results in many cases at CSSWC. Parents report decreases of acute symptoms and the children themselves display a growing sense of empowerment, impulse control, and increased hopefulness and confidence.

It has been a humbling endeavor to assist children on the journey into the depths of their fears. It has been an honor to bear witness to the resilience and defiant power of the human spirit as demonstrated by the progress in these children.

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Shawn A. Rubin, PsyD, LLP, is a Psychologist at Catholic Social Services of Wayne County and serves as a Faculty Assistant at the Center for Humanistic Studies Graduate School located in Detroit, Michigan.

Web Resources

The National Center for Victims of Crime Multicultural Services

<http://www.ncvc.org/>

<http://www.ncvc.org/infolink/Info31.htm>

This site contains a virtual library, stalking resource center, public policy and civil litigation. The second link offers an article on multicultural victim services considerations.

Court Appointed Special Advocate Association Volunteer Management

<http://www.casanet.org/program-management/volunteer-manage/>

This site provides a wealth of information for any agency responsible for recruiting, supervising, and evaluating volunteers.

National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information

<http://www.calib.com/nccanch/>

This comprehensive site offers information on child welfare, including statistics, publications, and funding sources.

Violence Against Women Office

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawol/>

This official US Department of Justice website for the Violence Against Women Office presents information on interventions to stop violence against women.

The Michigan Advocate welcomes article contributions and suggestions for articles from those in crime victim services and related fields.

Please send submissions, letters, and inquiries to:

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FY 2003-2004 VOCA Victim Assistance Grant Funding Schedule	
October 29-30, 2002	CVSC Grant Award Workshops at the Michigan Library and Historical Center (9 am to 5 pm) Participants attend either the October 29th or October 30th session
February 14, 2003	Announcement of VOCA grant funding Application and Guideline Package becomes available
February 24, 2003	VOCA Grant Application website activated http://sigmaweb.mdch.state.mi.us/sigma2/
March 6, 2003	VOCA Grant Application Workshop (8:30 am to 12 pm) VOCA Grant Reporting Workshop (current contractors only) (12 pm to 4 pm) Both events to be held at the Michigan Library and Historical Center
March 11, 2003	VOCA Grant Application Workshop (8:30 am to 12 pm) VOCA Grant Reporting Workshop (current contractors only) (12 pm to 4 pm) Both events to be held at the Michigan Library and Historical Center
April 4, 2003	Final Application submission deadline
April 6-12, 2003	National Crime Victims' Rights Week: Fulfill the Promise
August 29, 2003	VOCA agreements mailed
October 1, 2003 - September 30, 2004	VOCA agreement fiscal year



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