



FY2020 KEY BUDGET ISSUES

CCVS revenues into the Compensation special fund, Restitution Special Fund and the Domestic and Sexual Violence Special Fund are relatively stable. CCVS administration is supported with special funds and federal grants. CCVS General Funds have been virtually level-funded since 2015, nearly all the General Fund appropriation is pass-through to state sub-grantees.

Although SFY2020 federal funds have seen an increase, variability from year-to-year and the timeliness of the federal budget process remains a challenge. The CCVS budget, as well as many of our statewide grant recipients, rely on federal funding. The current federal uncertainty and the lack of final, approval of the federal FY19 budget could impact the Center's special fund expenditures dramatically.

LARGEST IDENTIFIED BUDGET ISSUE

FEDERAL GRANTS

Victims of Crime Act: (VOCA) The State of Vermont's federal VOCA grant formula allocation increased from \$3.9 million to \$6.7 million. In keeping with the national best-practice, CCVS continues to award these funds annually roughly based on a three-year average of the total formula award. The goal is to ensure long-range program stability for the local organization and agencies that rely on these funds in the event that the state formula award decreases. Current deposits into the Victim of Crime Fund decreased from \$6.5 Billion in 2017 to \$444 Million in 2018. This could have a significant impact on the allocation that Vermont receives in SFY2021.

Currently, nearly all of Vermont's federal VOCA formula grant allocation is committed in the form of sub-grants to direct service providers around the state. The Center's VOCA grant-making process is guided by a comprehensive plan prepared by independent consultants who engaged stakeholders to identify gaps in services. CCVS continues to increase services and in SFY 2019 introduced a new grant initiative to include five Community/Restorative Justice programs statewide and a new Human Trafficking caseworker in Rutland. CCVS also increased funding to support the Legal Services Partnership hosted by Vermont Law Line and Vermont Legal Aid and the Director of Victim Services for the Vermont State Police Major Crimes Unit. The cost of needed services statewide far exceeds the funds available.

Department of State’s Attorneys and Sheriffs (SAS): The state’s long-term funding strategy for the Victim Assistance Program (VAP), which provides victim advocate services mandated by Title 13, Ch. 165, remains challenging. As the cost of funding existing victim advocate positions continues to increase each year, revenues into the Victims Compensation Special Fund, which is the intended source of state funding for the VAP, are on a long-term declining trend. In SFY15, VCCVS received a one-time General Fund allocation of \$567,250 to support this program due to special fund shortfalls, and in SFY16, \$567,500 was offset with an increase from the Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) federal grant. The state’s reliance on federal funding has continued into SFY17, SFY18 and SFY 19 a less-than-desirable trend for a 30-year-old, statutorily-mandated state program, especially in the current federal climate. Furthermore, despite increasing demand for services—particularly with the opiate crisis and more aggressive domestic violence prosecution efforts—staffing levels have not increased in over a decade

VERMONT SPECIAL FUND SUPPORTED GRANTS

Victims Compensation Special Fund

The Compensation Special Fund reflect a decrease of \$273.00, based on a 3-year average of deposits into the fund. The Victims Compensation Fund had decrease revenues of \$177K from the prior fiscal year. As a cautionary note, two of the three years comprising the average showed declining revenues with an increase only in SFY17. In SFY18, the number of Victim Compensation claims increased by 2% and the number of Sexual Assault claims increased by 9%. Payments to victims did show a decrease of \$15K over the previous fiscal year. The SFY 18 VOCA Victim Compensation federal award (a reimbursement grant) increased \$35K from the FY17 award. Overall, with declining revenues and uncertainty as to the total number of claims and dollar amounts to be paid each year, maintaining the health of the Victims Compensation Special Fund continues to be a challenge.

Restitution Special Fund

CCVS SFY 2020 budget reflects a decrease of \$3,504.00, also based on a 3-year average of deposits into the fund. The Restitution Fund had a decrease in revenues of \$30K from the prior fiscal year. As a cautionary note, two of the three years comprising the average showed declining revenues with an increase only in SFY17. In SFY18 restitution payments to victims were \$932K. The revenues into the fund in SFY2018 were \$2.2 million.

Domestic and Sexual Violence Special Fund

Domestic and Sexual Violence Special Fund appears to have stabilized after several years of not meeting its level-funded appropriation of \$867,758. The marriage license fee increase of \$15.00 (approved for July 1, 2016) appears to have increased revenues

to meet this appropriation.

CCVS proposes a slight increase of \$5,330.00 for the Domestic and Sexual Violence Trainer at the Vermont Police Academy who facilitates mandatory training for both new recruits and certified officers.

Administrative

In SFY20, CCVS personal services increased \$342,678.00 to include a 3 new grant-paid positions. Two new positions are part of a federal award in response to Human Trafficking, and one new position is to develop online trainings to support victim services providers throughout the State of Vermont. A 2.5% COLA and 2% step increase for CCVS employees is included in the budget.

The SFY20 operating cost increased \$345,834.00, of which \$332,320 is for the federal VOCA Technology grant to develop and implement a new grants management system. CCVS Financial Manager and Grants Manager will be gathering information from other Vermont State agencies currently using grants management software, to develop a solicitation. Other increases include: annual increases and surcharges in rental space, travel expenses to federally-required meetings, conferences, and trainings.