

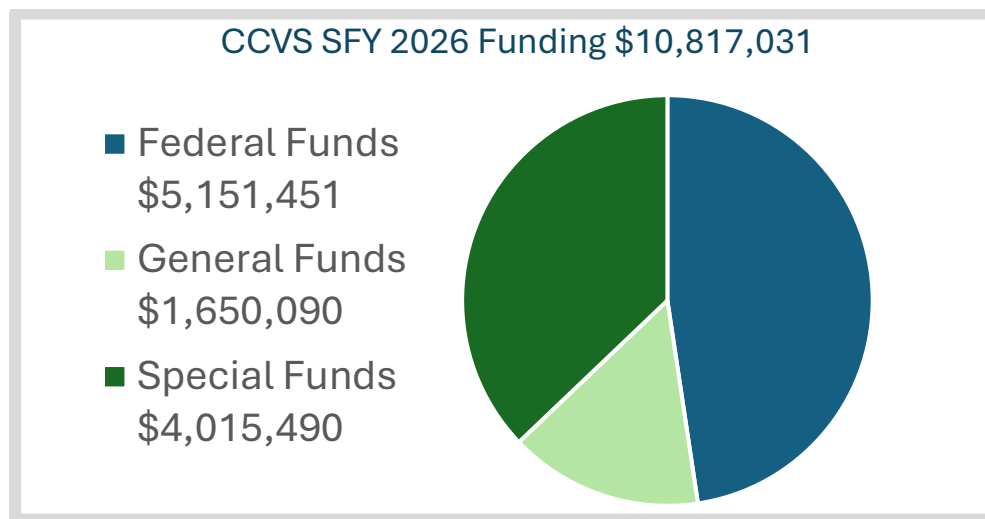
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**To:** Honorable Members of the House Appropriations Committee  
**From:** The Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services (CCVS)  
Jennifer Poehlmann, J.D., Executive Director  
Carol Brochu, Director of Finance and Administration  
**RE:** Federal Funding for CCVS and Victim Services in Vermont  
**Date:** April 17, 2025

The Center for Crime Victim Services respectfully submits the following in response to the questions posed in the memo from Representative Robin Scheu dated April 8, 2025.

### How much federal funding do you receive?



On January 29, 2025, the Vermont Treasurer's Office and the JFO submitted a report entitled: **"Overview of Federal Funds in the Vermont Budget"**. During a presentation to legislators, CCVS was identified as **"high risk"**, receiving **55% of its funding from federal grants**.



## Which programs/services/activities are supported with federal funds?

The Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services provides state and federal funding to support Vermonters in crisis, in the aftermath of extremely traumatic circumstances.

### Federal funds support the following:

#### **Core Victim Services**

- Child Advocacy Centers- Support children, adults and families that have been impacted by sexual assault or child abuse. These programs are intertwined with the Special Investigative Units.
- The Vermont Network Programs (Domestic and Sexual Violence Programming)
- Programs that assist traditionally Underserved Populations
  - The Association of Africans Living in Vermont
  - The Community of Vermont Elders
  - Disability Rights Vermont
  - Prevent Child Abuse Vermont
  - Deaf Victim Advocacy Services
  - Disability Rights Vermont
  - SafeSpace at the Pride Center (LGBTQ)
- The Community Justice Center in Burlington Vermont Parallel Justice Center

#### **Vermont's Legal Partnership for Crime Victims**

- The South Royalton Legal Clinic
- The Vermont Bar Association
- Vermont Legal Aid and Legal Services Vermont (hotline)
- The Vermont Network Legal Services Clinic
- Disability Rights Vermont

#### **The Voice and Choice Initiative (Innovative Restorative Justice Programming)**

- BROCC Community Action
- Franklin Grand Isle Restorative Justice Center
- Lamoille Restorative Justice Center

- Orange County Court Diversion
- South Burlington Community Justice Center
- The Voices of the Children of St. Joseph's Orphanage
- The Safety Team (an innovative Martial arts program for victims of sexual violence)
- Two Human Trafficking Case Managers housed in municipal police departments in Southern and Northern Vermont
- Specialized domestic and sexual violence prosecutors under the Department of State's Attorney's and Sheriffs; a specialized DV investigator and a position with the AGO's office focused on domestic violence.

## Services and Activities Supported with Federal Funds

The Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services Grants programs support all or part of the salaries of **214 victim service professionals**; advocates, program directors, attorneys, SANE Nurses, case coordinators, hotline workers, administrators, investigators, therapists, shelter coordinators who provide essential, life saving services to Vermonters in their greatest hours of need. The total amount of FTEs supported by Vermont Crime Victim Services *state and federal* funding equals 76.72 FTE of which, 58 FTEs are supported with Federal Funding and 19 FTEs are supported with State Funds.

In addition to these professionals there are 5 FTEs at the Center for Crime Victim Services supported with Federal Funds. These numbers calculated the FTE position as 40 hours a week, even though an FTE may only work 32 hours a week, thus the numbers presented are likely understated.

## How CCVS Grant Funds Care for Crime Victims

### Crisis Intervention

- Finding emergency shelter and ensuring safety
- Assisting with relocation
- Being with a victim during emergency medical care
- Performing medical exams to obtain evidence
- Hotline counseling
- Attending law enforcement interviews with victims

- Securing emergency financial assistance

#### Criminal Justice Advocacy

- Making sure crime victims know their rights
- Updating victims on the status of their court case
- Helping victims with crime impact statements
- Helping victims prepare testimony for court
- Prosecuting offenders and seeking accountability for their crimes
- Informing crime victims and survivors about Victims Compensation and Restitution

#### Education and Training

- Outreach to community organizations, schools and universities to educate the public about the victim service programs available in the state.

#### Other Assistance

- Applying for public benefits
- Finding transportation
- Connecting victims with interpreter services
- Working with employers, creditors, landlords or academic institutions
- Finding child or dependent care
- Counseling and support groups
- Providing civil legal help that relates to their crime, such as protection orders
- Coordinating “wrap-around” solutions that connect many resources to help crime victims rebuild their lives

### Which programs/services/activities that are currently supported with federal funds are also supported with State Funds?

The Center for Crime Victim Services supports 57 separate organizations, all of which depend on federal funds. Additionally, the Vermont Victims’ Compensation Program is supported with \$268K in federal funds. This program helps crime victims pay for uninsured losses, like funerals, counseling, medical expenses, dental expenses, and relocation.

## Are there programs/services/activities that would continue in a reduced capacity if federal funds were eliminated or reduced?

The loss of current federal funding of \$5.1M would be catastrophic to victim services in the state of Vermont. Domestic Violence Shelters would close, advocates would not be available 24/7 to respond to crisis, families whose children have been sexually assaulted would not have a place to go for support during investigations. The State of Vermont Victims Compensation Program would be unable to function.

This magnitude of loss would be devastating given the fact that we have already endured a tremendous loss in the Victim of Crime Act (our largest grant program) which has declined from \$6.7M in SFY 2018 to \$1.9M in SFY 2026. Thus, the FFY 24 VOCA grant to Vermont is 72% less than the FFY 2018 VOCA grant. We also must realize that the inflation rate since 2018 has gone up an average of 3.6% a year. This means if everything was truly level since 2018, that is keeping up with inflation, Vermont's FFY 2024 grant would be \$8,570,984; not the \$1,938,654 that we received.

Without federal funding, the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, established in 13 VSA §5361, would have to close its doors.