

Missouri Department of Public Safety Office for Victims of Crime



Program Standards & Guidelines for Subrecipients

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The Missouri Office for Victims of Crime

The Office for Victims of Crime "OVC" administers grant programs and services to serve and protect Missouri crime victims, at-risk youth and their families. Through collaborative partnerships with other state agencies, statewide organizations and local service providers the OVC promotes access to information, resources and services to protect at-risk youth, victims of crime and their families. The OVC administers a variety of state and federal funding opportunities, initiatives, and programs.

The OVC Crime Victim Services section provides funding and resources to not-for-profit agencies and local and state government agencies that work with crime victims and their families. Visit the [MO OVC](#) website for more information on funding opportunities, training, and technical assistance for crime victim services.

About the Program Standards and Guidelines

These Program Standards and Guidelines were developed as a guide to assist Missouri crime victim service agencies and providers with the development and sustainability of crime victim service programs throughout the state. This guide is meant to serve as a tool in effort to implement and employ the provision of best practices. Furthermore, the purpose of this document is to provide agencies that serve victims, such as, prosecuting attorney offices, law enforcement agencies, child advocacy centers, courts, as well as agencies that serve a specific or general population of victims, with principles that are attainable and crucial for providing services to victims of crime.

Please Note: For grant related purposes, if your agency's mission is to primarily serve victims of domestic and/or sexual violence, or is a Batterer Intervention Program, your agency is required to comply with the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (MOCADSV Service Standards and Guidelines, but not the OVC Program Standards and Guidelines. However, **ALL** subrecipients are required to adhere to the *Missouri Department of Public Safety, Office for Victims of Crime Code of Professional Ethics* as outlined in the applicable grant Certified Assurances.

Organizational Structure

1. The applicant agency must have a statement of purpose or mission statement that directly relates to crime victim services.
2. The applicant agency's program procedures must comply with all applicable statutes, rules, guidance, and regulations related to crime victim services.
3. The applicant agency must have written organizational administration policies and procedures for the agency, including the program for which funds are allocated.
4. The applicant must have written guidelines specifically describing the policy on nondiscrimination, and the procedures for assessing and maintaining equal access to service for victims of crime.
 - a) Applicants must comply with applicable federal civil rights laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Department of Justice (DOJ) regulation for the Equal Treatment of Faith-Based Organizations. Applicants must also comply with the nondiscrimination provisions within the applicable program statutes, which may include the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 ("the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act"). Collectively, these federal laws prohibit a recipient of OVW funding from discriminating either in employment (subject to the exemption for certain faith-based organizations) or in the delivery of services or benefits on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or disability. In addition, recipients of OVW funding may not discriminate on the basis of age in the delivery of services or benefits
 - b) If any federal or state court or federal or state administrative agency makes a finding of discrimination after a due process hearing on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability or sex against a recipient of federal funds, the recipient will forward a copy of the finding to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) of the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.
5. The agency must review and update agency and program policies and procedures as needed, but not less than annually.
6. Agencies and/or programs governed by a board of directors or guided by an advisory board, must have written bylaws and maintain compliance with local, state and federal laws/regulations. Programs must have written procedures for the review/revision of bylaws, a current roster of members and contact information, meeting agendas and meeting minutes.
7. The agency must comply with the [Federal Fair Labor Standards Act](#).

8. The agency must have written policies and procedures for data collection in compliance with all applicable grant/contract requirements, federal and state laws.
9. As applicable, the agency must have standard operating procedures that are in compliance with fiscal and audit requirements, maintenance of appropriate insurance policies, and maintenance of adequate accounting systems and financial records to accurately account for funds awarded. Agencies must have written program evaluation guidelines that, at a minimum, include:
 - a) The methods used to collect aggregate data on victims served and services rendered;
 - b) Annual performance evaluations of staff performing direct service;
 - c) Victim satisfaction survey data specifically related to the services provided by the agency and/or program. Care should be given to offer victims the option to respond anonymously;
 - d) Periodic assessment of community service needs; and/or
 - e) Outcome-based assessment of victim services provided.
10. Applicant agencies and/or programs should communicate and collaborate with other key stakeholders and service providers. This may be in the form of:
 - a) Policies;
 - b) Memorandums of Understanding and/or interagency contracts/agreements;
 - c) Protocols; and
 - d) Cross-training.

Personnel Administration

1. Written personnel policies and procedures must be developed, adopted, and maintained by the program in accordance with state and federal requirements. The personnel policies should include but are not limited to:
 - a) Unbecoming conduct
 - b) Law violations;
 - c) Use of alcohol and/or drugs;
 - d) Acceptance of gratuities, bribes or rewards;
 - e) Abuse of authority;
 - f) Proper care and maintenance of equipment;
 - g) Ethical behavior staff;
 - h) Orientation and staff development;
 - i) Problem solving procedures;
 - j) Evaluation for performance and conduct;
 - k) Sexual harassment;
 - l) Confidentiality related to crime victim's records;
 - m) Response to impact of vicarious trauma; and
 - n) Response to employees or volunteers who are crime victim
2. The applicant agency must have written personnel policies relating specifically to and describing nondiscrimination in the workplace. Policies must comply with employment law and prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, ethnicity, national origin, age, economic status, social status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or physical/mental ability.
3. Programs must have written job descriptions for all staff (paid and volunteer); job descriptions must include preferred experience and training requirements.
4. Programs must have a detailed organizational chart.
5. Programs must have written policies regarding employee benefits, considerations for advancement, and salary increases.
6. Programs must have written policies for performance evaluations for all staff (paid and volunteer).
7. Programs must have written policies and procedures regarding disciplinary action and/or termination for all staff (paid and volunteer).
8. Programs must have written policies and procedures for grievances filed by staff and volunteers (if applicable).
9. Programs must have written policies for supervision of staff, including chain of command.

10. Programs must have written policies for hours required to be worked.
11. Programs must have written policy that prohibits sexual and/or other forms of unlawful harassment in the workplace. The policy must provide a means by which harassment can be reported, including how to report if the perpetrator of the harassment is a supervisor.
12. Agency's personnel policies must be provided and written acknowledgment of receipt obtained from each employee.
13. Programs must adhere to the Missouri Department of Public Safety Code of Professional Ethics for Victim Service Providers.
14. A program shall maintain a confidential file for each staff and volunteer that will include, but not be limited to, application for employment, resume, background check with the Department of Social Services - Family Care Safety Registry, Missouri State Highway Patrol criminal background check, licensures and certifications if applicable, personal/professional reference checks, a signed confidentiality statement, personnel disciplinary actions (if applicable), and a record of all trainings completed by the individual.

Staff Development

1. Programs must have training requirements for program staff providing direct services (paid and volunteer), including but not limited to:
 - a) A minimum of 20 hours of training for new staff, documented within the first calendar year of service in the program;
 - b) A minimum of 6 hours of ongoing professional development/continuing education each calendar year of service; and
 - c) Criteria for documenting completion of training requirements;
 - d) Training and ongoing professional development/continuing education topics may include, but are not limited to:
 - History of the agency;
 - Interagency roles and referral;
 - History of victims' rights movement;
 - Crime victims' rights/notification
 - Crisis intervention;
 - Victim trauma, grief and loss;
 - Crime and the criminal justice system;
 - Compensation and restitution;
 - Advocacy;
 - Coordinated community response;
 - Ethics, confidentiality, diversity and values;
 - Documentation;
 - Communication and conflict management;
 - Working with special victims (children, disabled, elderly);
 - Burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, secondary victimization, self-care;
 - Case management;

Service Provision

1. Programs must have a general list of individual victim services provided by the program. General program services may include but are not limited to:
 - a) General information on victimization and victims' rights;
 - b) Safety planning;
 - c) Crisis Intervention;
 - d) Case management;
 - e) Support groups;
 - f) Counseling/Therapy;
 - g) Advocacy/support for crime victims;
 - h) Assistance with victim compensation and/or restitution;
 - i) Intervention/advocacy with creditors, landlords, and employers;
 - j) Intervention with medical and mental health providers;
 - k) Assistance with transportation;
 - l) Assistance with protective relocation;
 - m) Information on case proceedings;
 - n) Referrals to mental health services, substance abuse services, social services, and legal services;
 - o) Assistance with document replacement;
 - p) Assistance with arrangement for property repair
2. Programs must have written procedures for:
 - a) Providing information on criminal and civil proceedings;
 - b) Addressing victim crisis situations;
 - c) Addressing imminent danger, stalking and intimidation of victims/witnesses; and
 - d) Providing informed consent.
3. Programs must have written information to be provided to the victim on initial contact and throughout the service process. Information should include, but is not limited to:
 - a) Victim rights;
 - b) Crime Victims' Compensation;
 - c) Confidentiality policies and procedures;
 - d) Services;
 - e) Subsequent steps of case processing and handling;
 - f) The case number and contact person;
 - g) Contacts for future crisis or emergency;
 - h) What to do if threatened or intimidated; and
 - i) Safety planning.
4. Programs must have written procedures for documenting service provision, including:
 - a) Dates and time of service provision;
 - b) Staff member providing service;
 - c) Individuals to whom services were provided;
 - d) Types of services or referral provided;
 - e) Content of interaction;
 - f) Provisions for future or ongoing service; and
 - g) Policies and procedures to ensure that all services provided are documented in written form and that those records are maintained in a manner that protects the confidentiality and privacy rights of individuals, groups and/or families receiving services.

Program Accessibility

1. Programs shall not deny service on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, residency, language, sex, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, social class, economic status, education, marital status, religious beliefs, or HIV status.
2. Programs are to have sufficient training, supervision, materials, and outreach to provide competent service delivery based on characteristics of the victims. This includes—as appropriate to program goals—services for males and female victims as well as for children, the elderly, ethnic minorities, gay/lesbian/bisexual and transgender persons, people with disabilities, and others with special needs (e.g., non-English speaking, homeless, etc.).
3. If program service is not applicable for an individual, referrals are to be provided to that person.
4. Programs must have written procedures on how advocates will respond to non-English speaking persons.
 - a) In accordance with Department of Justice Guidance pertaining to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000(d), recipients of Federal financial assistance must take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to their programs and activities for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). “Meaningful access” will generally involve some combination of oral interpretation services and written translation of vital documents.
5. Programs shall provide auxiliary aids and services for persons with vision, hearing or speaking impairments (e.g. sign language interpreters, brailled texts, TDD, augmented phones or written information) at no cost to the victim to ensure that communications with persons with disabilities are as effective as communications with others.
 - a) Programs must require signed confidentiality agreements with all who provide interpretation, signing, Braille or taped materials.
6. Programs must have written documentation of procedures for assessing safety, security, and maintenance of service premises. Components to be addressed include, as applicable:
 - a) Maintenance of physical premises;
 - b) Safety and security of grounds and interior for those served and staff;
 - c) Safety of transportation (if any) provided by staff to those served; and
 - d) Safety and security of phone, mail and electronic communications with those served.

Records and Confidentiality of Victim Information

1. Programs must have written procedures for storing and maintaining records, including:
 - a) Types of records to be maintained;
 - b) Time limits for storage of records;
 - c) Destroying records; and
 - d) Written and electronic records of services must be maintained in a secure, locked storage area that is accessible only by paid staff members employed to provide direct services, authorized volunteers, administrative personnel directly responsible for billing for services provided, and administrative or executive staff members responsible for supervision and/or internal review of service records for quality-assurance purposes.
2. Programs must have a written procedure for maintaining confidentiality of records, including:
 - a) Clearly defined terms/limits of confidentiality;
 - b) Disclosure of these terms/limits to those served and to paid staff and volunteers;
 - c) Release of information policies and procedures; and
3. Programs must have written policies and procedures for service recipients to file complaints and/or grievances.
4. Programs must have a written policy on providing service recipients access to their records.

Missouri Department of Public Safety

Code of Professional Ethics for

Victim Service Provider Sub-Recipients

Victims of crime and the Missouri Department of Public Safety expect every Victim Service Provider, paid or volunteer, to act with integrity, to treat all victims and survivors of crime - their clients - with dignity and compassion in an inclusive, equitable, anti-racist, and accessible manner, and to uphold principles of justice for accused and accuser alike.

For these purposes, a victim service provider is defined as any individual, paid or volunteer, who works directly or indirectly with victims and survivors of crime.

To these ends, this Code will govern the conduct of Missouri Victim Service Providers:

I. With every victim, the victim service provider shall:

1. Recognize the interests of the victim and victim empowerment as a primary responsibility.
2. Respect the victim's rights to privacy and confidentiality, subject only to laws or regulations requiring disclosure of information to appropriate other sources.
3. Foster maximum self-determination and empowerment on behalf of the victim through victim-centered advocacy.
4. Respond compassionately to each victim with personalized inclusive, equitable, anti-racist, anti-oppressive and accessible services, recognizing the power and privilege differentials present within the helping relationship.
5. Not deny services to any victim based on the victim's race, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, sex, gender, age, sexual orientation, social class, ability, economic status, education, marital status, religion, health status or HIV status.
6. Respect and take steps to protect all applicable civil and legal rights of the victim including, but not limited to, Article I, Section 32 of the Missouri State Constitution and the Missouri Revised Statutes section, 595.209.
7. Protect victim privacy and safety when communicating with victims and other service providers using technology (i.e. phone, e-mail, text messaging, online chats, video calls, etc.), working within agency guidelines to explain relevant risks to victims and mutually agree upon safe ways to communicate.
8. Accept the victim's statement of events as it is told, withholding opinion or judgment, whether or not a suspected offender has been identified, arrested, convicted, or acquitted.
9. Provide services to every victim without attributing blame, regardless of the victim's conduct at the time of the victimization at another stage of the victim's life.
10. Serve as a victim advocate when requested, and in that capacity, act on behalf of the victim's stated needs without regard to personal convictions and within the rules of the victim service provider's host agency.
11. In the event a victim's needs conflict with another victim's needs, act with regard to one victim only after promptly referring the other to another qualified Victim Service Provider.

12. Adhere to legal, ethical, and behavioral standards of conduct. Establish and maintain professional boundaries with victims at all times, including actively avoiding dual relationships (such as personal friendships or romantic relationships) and observe the ethical imperative to have no sexual relations with a victim, in recognition that to do so risks exploitation of the knowledge and trust derived from the professional relationship.
13. When interacting with former clients, refrain from personal and romantic relationships and observe the ethical imperative to have no sexual relations for at least five (5) or more years after the termination of the professional relationship, recognizing that to do otherwise risks exploitation of the knowledge and trust derived from the professional relationship.
14. Recognize the signs and impact of compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma and make victim referrals as appropriate to other resources or services only in the victim's best interest, avoiding any conflict of interest in the process.
15. Provide opportunities for colleague Victim Service Providers to seek appropriate services when traumatized by a criminal event or a victim.

II. In relationships with colleagues, other professionals, and the public, the victim service provider shall:

1. Act in a way that promotes mutual respect, public respect, and improvement of service.
2. Provide constructive and informed critical feedback to colleagues when determined necessary for the betterment of services.
3. Conduct relationships with allied professionals such that they are given equal respect and dignity as professionals in the victim service field.
4. Share knowledge and encourage proficiency and excellence in victim service among colleagues and allied professionals, paid and volunteer.
5. Provide professional support, guidance, and assistance to Victim Service Providers who are new to the field in order to promote consistent quality and professionalism in victim service.
6. Seek to ensure that volunteers in victim services have access to the training, supervision, resources, and support required in their efforts to assist victims.

III. In their professional conduct, Victim Service Providers shall:

1. Maintain high personal and professional standards in the capacity of a service provider and advocate for victims.
2. Remain committed to their own professional education to ensure proficiency in services and adhere to best practices and evidence-based research.
3. Not discriminate against any victim, employee, colleague, allied professional, or member of the public on the basis of age, ability, ethnicity and ancestry, race, national origin, religious belief, sexual orientation or gender identity.
4. Not use personal social media platforms to interact with victims or to share information which may jeopardize victim boundaries, privacy, and safety.
5. Not reveal the name or other identifying information about a victim to the public through any means without clear permission or legal requirements to do so.
6. Clearly distinguish in public statements representing one's personal views from positions adopted by organizations for which the professional works or is a member.

7. Not use their official position to secure gifts, monetary rewards, or special privileges or advantages.
8. Report to competent authorities the conduct of any colleague or allied professional that constitutes mistreatment of a victim or that brings the profession into disrepute.
9. Report to competent authorities any conflict of interest that prevents oneself or a colleague from being able to provide competent services to a victim, to work cooperatively with colleagues or allied professionals, or to be impartial in the treatment of any victim.

IV. In their responsibility to any other profession, Victim Service Providers will be bound by the ethical standards of the allied profession of which they are a member.