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The Crime Victims Fund: Federal Support for Victims of Crime

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Summary

In 1984, the Crime Victims Fund (CVF, or the Fund) was established by the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA, P.L. 98-473) to provide funding for state victim compensation and assistance programs. Since 1984, VOCA has been amended several times to support additional victim-related activities. These amendments established within the CVF (1) discretionary grants for private organizations, (2) the Federal Victim Notification System, (3) funding for victim assistance staff within the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Executive Office of U.S. Attorneys, (4) funding for the Children's Justice Act Program, and (5) assistance and compensation for victims of terrorism.

In 1988, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) was formally established within the Department of Justice (DOJ) to administer the CVF. As authorized by VOCA, the OVC awards CVF money through grants to states, local units of government, individuals, and other entities. The OVC also distributes CVF money to specially designated programs, such as the Children's Justice Act Program and the Federal Victim Notification System.

Deposits to the CVF come from criminal fines, forfeited appearance bonds, penalties and special assessments collected by the U.S. Attorneys' Offices, federal courts, and Federal Bureau of Prisons. Since 2002, Congress has allowed gifts, bequests, and donations from private entities to be deposited into the CVF. Of note, the largest source of deposits into the CVF is criminal fines. At the end of FY2016, the CVF had a balance of more than $9 billion.

When the CVF was created in 1984, Congress placed a cap on how much money could be deposited into the CVF each year. Congress eliminated the cap for deposits in 1993. From FY1985 to FY1998, deposits collected in each fiscal year were distributed in the following fiscal year to support crime victim services. In FY2000, Congress established an annual obligation cap on CVF funds available for distribution to reduce the impact of fluctuating deposits and to ensure the stability of funds for crime victims programs and activities. Since 2000, Congress has established the annual obligation cap in appropriations law.

In FY2015, Congress set the CVF obligation cap at $2.361 billion, a 216.9% increase over the FY2014 cap. In FY2016, Congress set the cap at $3.042 billion, a further increase to previous caps; however, $379 million was transferred to the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW; for purposes outside of VOCA) and $10 million was designated for the DOJ Office of the Inspector General for oversight and auditing purposes. In FY2017, however, Congress set the cap at $2.573 billion, a 15.4% decrease compared to the FY2016 cap. From this amount, $326 million was transferred to OVW (again for purposes outside of VOCA) and $10 million was designated for the DOJ Office of the Inspector General for oversight and auditing purposes.

Over the past few years, Congress has taken a number of unprecedented actions involving the CVF. In the 114th Congress, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 (P.L. 114-74) included a provision (§702) that required the rescission and permanent cancellation of $1.5 billion from the balance of the Crime Victims Fund. In addition, in FY2017 Congress calculated the obligation cap based on a three-year average of collections into the CVF.

In considering the CVF allocation and future caps, there are several issues on which policymakers may deliberate. Congress may consider whether to adjust the manner in which the CVF is allocated, amend VOCA to accommodate additional victim activities or groups, further adjust the cap and allow use of the CVF for grant programs other than those explicitly authorized by VOCA (as they did for FY2016 and FY2017), or make other adjustments to the CVF cap—such as eliminate the cap altogether.

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Introduction

In 1984, the Crime Victims Fund (CVF, or the Fund) was established by the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA, P.L. 98-473) to provide funding for state victim compensation and assistance programs.[1] Since 1984, VOCA has been amended several times to support additional victim-related activities. These amendments established within the CVF

- discretionary grants for private organizations;[2]
- the Federal Victim Notification System;[3]
- funding for victim assistance staff in the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Executive Office of U.S. Attorneys (EOUSA);[4]
- funding for the Children's Justice Act Program;[5] and
- assistance and compensation for victims of terrorism.[6]

In 1988, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) was formally established within the Department of Justice (DOJ) to administer the CVF.[7] As authorized by VOCA, the OVC awards CVF money through formula and discretionary grants to states, local units of government, individuals, and other entities. The OVC also distributes CVF money to specially designated programs, such as the Children's Justice Act Program and the Federal Victim Notification System (see **Figure 1**).[8]

The OVC's mission is to enhance the nation's capacity to assist crime victims and to improve attitudes, policies, and practices that promote justice and help victims. According to the OVC, this mission is accomplished by (1) administering the CVF, (2) supporting direct services for victims, (3) providing training programs for service providers, (4) sponsoring the development of best practices for service providers, and (5) producing reports on best practices.[9] The OVC funds victim-support programs in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the territories.[10]

Notably, Congress has amended VOCA several times to provide support for victims of terrorism.[11] These amendments established CVF-funded programs for (1) assistance to victims of terrorism[12] who are injured or killed as a result of a terrorist act outside the United States, (2)

[1] P.L. 98-473, Title II, Chapter XIV, Victims of Crime Act of 1984, October 12, 1984, 98 Stat. 2170. VOCA is codified at 42 U.S.C. §10601 et seq.

[2] P.L. 109-162, Title XI, Subtitle B, §1132, January 5, 2006, 119 Stat. 3107.

[3] P.L. 107-77, Title I, §111, November 28, 2001, 115 Stat. 765.

[4] P.L. 106-553, §1(a)(2), Title I, §113, December 21, 2000, 114 Stat. 2762, 2762A-68; P.L. 106-554, §1(a)(4), Division A, §213(a)(2), December 21, 2000, 114 Stat. 2763, 2763A-179; and P.L. 106-113, Division B, §1000(a)(1) [H.R. 3421, Title I, §119], November 29, 1999, 113 Stat. 1535, 1501A-22.

[5] P.L. 106-177, Title I, §104(a), Child Abuse Prevention and Enforcement Act, March 10, 2000, 114 Stat. 36.

[6] P.L. 104-132, Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996, Title II, Subtitle C; P.L. 107-56, USA PATRIOT Act, Title VI, §621(a) to (d).

[7] P.L. 100-690, Title VII, Subtitle D.

[8] Grants are distributed according to a formula established by VOCA.

[9] For more information on OVC and its mission, see http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/.

[10] For information on OVC grant allocations, see http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/grants/index.html.

[11] P.L. 104-132, Justice for Victims of Terrorism Act of 1996, April 24, 1996, 110 Stat. 1243; P.L. 106-386, Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, October 28, 2000, 114 Stat. 1543; and P.L. 107-56, USA PATRIOT Act, Title VI, §621(a) to (d), October 26, 2001, 115 Stat. 370.

[12] Victims who are eligible for assistance include nationals of the United States and employees of the U.S. government.

compensation and assistance to victims of terrorism within the United States, and (3) an antiterrorism emergency reserve fund to support victims of terrorism.

This report provides background and funding information for VOCA programs and the CVF. It describes the process through which CVF funds are allocated and explains how the CVF impacts the annual budget for DOJ. It then provides an analysis of selected issues that Congress may consider regarding the CVF and the federal budget.

Financing of the Crime Victims Fund

Deposits to the CVF

The CVF does not receive appropriated funding.[13] Rather, deposits to the CVF come from a number of sources including criminal fines, forfeited bail bonds, penalties, and special assessments collected by the U.S. Attorneys' Offices, federal courts, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons from offenders convicted of federal crimes.[14] In 2001, the USA PATRIOT Act (P.L. 107-56) established that gifts, bequests, or donations from private entities could also be deposited to the CVF.

The largest source of deposits into the CVF is criminal fines.[15] Large criminal fines, if collected, can have a significant effect on deposits into receipts for the CVF. For example, from FY1996 through FY2004, fines collected from 12 defendants in federal courts accounted for 45% of all deposits to the CVF during this time period.[16] **Table 1** provides the amounts deposited into the CVF in each fiscal year from 1985 through 2016.

Fluctuation in Deposits and Growth of the Fund

As **Table 1** illustrates, since 2000 there has been considerable fluctuation in the amounts deposited each fiscal year. For example, from FY2013 to FY2014 the monetary amount collected rose by over 140% and then decreased by approximately 26.0% in FY2015. This was followed by a 43.7% decrease in FY2016. **Table 1** provides the annual amounts collected from FY1985 through FY2016.

During the last decade, over $20 billion has been deposited into the CVF. Large criminal fines levied in cases of financial fraud and other white collar crimes likely contributed to the sizeable growth of the Fund.[17] Although OVC had expected deposits to remain high due to major fines levied against federal offenders (in particular, against corporate violators of federal law),[18]

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[13] In January 2002, Congress enacted a one-time appropriation of $68.1 million for the Crime Victims Fund to assist in providing relief to 9/11 victims (P.L. 107-117, 115 Stat. 2294).

[14] See 42 U.S.C. §10601.

[15] U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime, *2011 OVC Report to the Nation*, p. 2, http://www.ovc.gov/pubs/reporttonation2011/ReporttoNation2011.pdf (hereinafter, *2011 OVC Report to the Nation*).

[16] Steve Derene, *Crime Victims Fund Report: Past, Present, and Future*, National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators, March 2005, p. 3, http://www.navaa.org/budget/CVFReport/CrimeVictimsReport.pdf (hereinafter *Crime Victims Fund Report*).

[17] See **Table 1** for receipts, and see U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Public Affairs, *Attorney General Holder Announces Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force Executive Director*, December 7, 2011, https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/attorney-general-holder-announces-financial-fraud-enforcement-task-force-executive-director.

[18] U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime, *2015 OVC Report to the*

deposits into the Fund fluctuate from year to year and sometimes decrease, as they did from FY2015 to FY2016. Further, DOJ has identified the prosecution of violent offenders as a priority.[19] While this does not mean that prosecutions against corporate offenders that pay substantial criminal fines will decline, *if* these prosecutions were to decline it *may* effect a further decline in the deposit amounts to the CVF.

Caps on the CVF

In the history of the CVF, two caps have affected the balance and distribution of the Fund: a cap on deposits and an obligation cap.

Cap on Deposits

In 1984, Congress placed a cap on how much could be deposited into the CVF for the first eight years. As shown in **Table 1**, from FY1985 through FY1992, the annual cap on deposits ranged from $100 million to $150 million. In 1993, Congress lifted the cap on deposits, establishing that all criminal fines, special assessments, and forfeited bail bonds could be deposited into the CVF.

Obligation Cap

From FY1985 to FY1998, deposits collected in each fiscal year were distributed in the following fiscal year to support crime victims services. In 2000, Congress established an annual obligation cap on the amount of CVF funds available for distribution to reduce the impact of fluctuating deposits and ensure the stability of funds for programs and activities. Congress establishes the CVF cap each year as a part of the appropriations for DOJ.

Changes to the CVF Obligation Cap

In FY2015, Congress set the CVF obligation cap at $2.361 billion, a 216.9% increase over the FY2014 cap. Congress did not specify directions for the increase in CVF funds, which were distributed to crime victims programs according to the formula established by VOCA. In FY2016, Congress set the cap at $3.042 billion, a further increase to the cap; however, $379 million was transferred to the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) for purposes outside of VOCA and $10 million was designated for the DOJ Office of the Inspector General (OIG) for oversight and auditing purposes. After deducting these amounts specified in P.L. 114-113, the obligation cap was equal to $2.653 billion, a 12.4% increase over the FY2015 cap. In FY2017, however, Congress set the cap at $2.573 billion, a 15.4% decrease compared to the FY2016 cap. From this amount, $326 million was transferred to OVW (again for purposes outside of VOCA) and $10 million was again designated for the DOJ OIG for oversight and auditing purposes. Of note, the Administration's FY2018 budget request specifies that $610 million be transferred from the CVF to OVW and agencies within the Office of Justice Programs for non-VOCA grant programs.[20]

Nation: Fiscal Years 2013-2014, http://www.ovc.gov/pubs/reporttonation2015/ (hereinafter, *2015 Report to the Nation*); and *2013 OVC Report to the Nation: Fiscal Years 2011-2012*, The Crime Victims Fund, http://www.ovc.gov/pubs/reporttonation2013/.

[19] Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, *Memorandum for all Federal Prosecutors: Commitment to Targeting Violent Crime*, March 8, 2017, https://www.justice.gov/opa/press-release/file/946771/download.

[20] U.S. Department of Justice, *FY2018 Performance Budget Office of Justice Programs*, May 2017, p. 63, https://www.justice.gov/file/969001/download.

In the accompanying explanatory statement for the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017 (Division B, P.L. 115-31), Congress explains that collections into the CVF have slowed, and to ensure solvency of the Fund the FY2017 obligation cap was calculated based on the three-year average of collections into the CVF.[21]

Appropriations Riders and the CVF Cap

Language restricting the use of certain funds, particularly as they relate to abortions,[22] is commonly included in appropriations language. Appropriations riders may or may not apply to the programs authorized by the CVF, depending on how those riders are framed. Amounts in the CVF are not appropriated; rather, the CVF is funded through fines and penalties as specified in VOCA.

Carryover Balance of the CVF

Funding for a current year's grants is provided by the previous year's deposits to the CVF, and the OVC is authorized to use the capped amount for grant awards in a given year. After the yearly allocations are distributed, the remaining balance in the CVF is retained for future expenditures. The difference between the fund's balance and the capped amount due to the obligation limitation is scored as a reduction or offset (i.e., as a Change in Mandatory Program or CHIMP) in the DOJ total discretionary spending in a given fiscal year.[23] Moreover, that offset also affects the discretionary spending total in measures reported in the Commerce, Justice, and Science appropriations bill.[24]

VOCA law requires that all sums deposited in a fiscal year that are not obligated must remain in the CVF for obligation in future fiscal years.[25] If collections in a previous year exceed the obligation cap, amounts over the cap are credited to the CVF, also referred to as the "rainy day" fund, for future program benefits. For example, in FY2000 funding for the year was capped at $500 million despite the fact that collections were over $985 million in FY1999. In FY2000, approximately $485 million remained in the CVF and was credited for future use.[26] **Table 1** provides the balances that remain credited to the CVF at the end of each fiscal year from FY2000 through FY2016.

[21] In the 115th Congress, the Fairness for Crime Victims Act of 2017 (H.R. 275), which, among other things, would ensure that the CVF annual obligation cap amount is never less than the average amount of deposits into the CVF of the previous three fiscal years was introduced and referred to the House Committee on Rules and the House Committee on the Budget.

[22] For more information, see CRS Report RL33467, *Abortion: Judicial History and Legislative Response*, by Jon O. Shimabukuro.

[23] For the DOJ *Summary of Budget Authority by Appropriation*, see http://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/jmd/pages/attachments/2015/01/30/1_summary_of_budget_authority_by_appr.pdf.

[24] While some may assume that the program that has its funding reduced would be a DOJ program, this report does not assume this and recognizes that the program could also be from another agency or department aside from DOJ. Of note, the Fairness for Crime Victims Act of 2017 (H.R. 275), if enacted, would adjust the way changes in mandatory spending affect the CVF and how it is used as an offset of discretionary spending.

[25] 42 U.S.C. §10601(c); U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime, *2009 OVC Report to the Nation*, p. 11, https://www.ncjrs.gov/ovc_archives/reporttonation2009/ReporttoNation09Part1.pdf.

[26] *Crime Victims Fund Report*, p.16.

Table 1. Crime Victims Fund: FY1985-FY2017

(dollars in millions)

Fiscal Year	Amount Collected to CVF	Enacted Cap on CVF Deposits	Obligation Cap on CVF	Funds Made Available for Distribution[a]	Carryover CVF Balance
1985	$68.3	$100	—	$68.3	—
1986	62.5	$110	—	62.5	—
1987	77.5	$110	—	77.5	—
1988	93.6	$110	—	93.6	—
1989	133.5	$125	—	124.2	—
1990	146.2	$125	—	127.2	—
1991	128.0	$150	—	128.0	—
1992	221.6	$150	—	152.2	—
1993	144.7	—	—	144.7	—
1994	185.1	—	—	185.1	—
1995	233.9	—	—	233.9	—
1996	528.9	—	—	528.9	—
1997	362.9	—	—	362.9	—
1998	324.0	—	—	324.0	—
1999	985.2	—	—	500.0	—
2000	777.0	—	500.0	537.5	485.2
2001	544.4	—	537.5	550.0	785.2
2002	519.5	—	550.0	600.0	792.0
2003	361.3	—	600.0	617.6[b]	718.9
2004	833.7	—	621.3[c]	671.3[d]	422.1
2005	668.3	—	620.0	620.0	1,307.4
2006	641.8	—	625.0	625.0	1,333.5
2007	1,018.0	—	625.0	625.0	1,784.0
2008	896.3	—	590.0	590.0	2,084.0
2009	1,745.7	—	635.0	635.0	3,146.5
2010	2,362.3	—	705.0	705.0	4,801.5
2011	1,998.0	—	705.0	705.0	6,099.7
2012	2,795.5	—	705.0	705.0[e]	8,186.1
2013	1,489.6	—	730.0	730.0[e]	8,953.5
2014	3,591.0	—	745.0	745.0[e]	11,792.0
2015	2,640.0	—	2,361.0	2,361.0[e]	12,123.6
2016	1,486.4	—	3,042.0[f]	2,653.0[e,g]	9,093.0
2017	—	—	2,573.0[h]	—	—

Source: FY1985-FY2016 data were provided by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Communications. Obligation cap amounts are taken from appropriations law. The FY2017 obligation cap amount was taken from the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 115-31).

a. From FY1985 to FY1998, deposits collected in each fiscal year were distributed in the following fiscal year to support crime victims services. From FY1985 to FY2002, the funds made available for distribution reflect the amounts distributed in the following fiscal year.

b. FY2003 funds include $17.6 million for the Antiterrorism Emergency Reserve.

c. The original cap of $625.0 million was reduced due to congressional rescission.

d. FY2004 funds include $50.0 million for the Antiterrorism Emergency Reserve.

e. Beginning in FY2012. The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) assessed management and administrative (M&A) costs for some programs funded by the CVF, but these amounts are not reflected here. See each individual program's respective table in this report. In FY2016, the total M&A cost assessment for VOCA programs (with the exception of the Children's Justice Act and victim compensation grant programs, which are not assessed this cost) was $78.1 million.

f. P.L. 114-113 transfers $379.0 million from the Crime Victims Fund to the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). It also provides $10.0 million to the DOJ Office of the Inspector General (OIG). Both amounts are reduced from the obligation capped amount before running the VOCA formula.

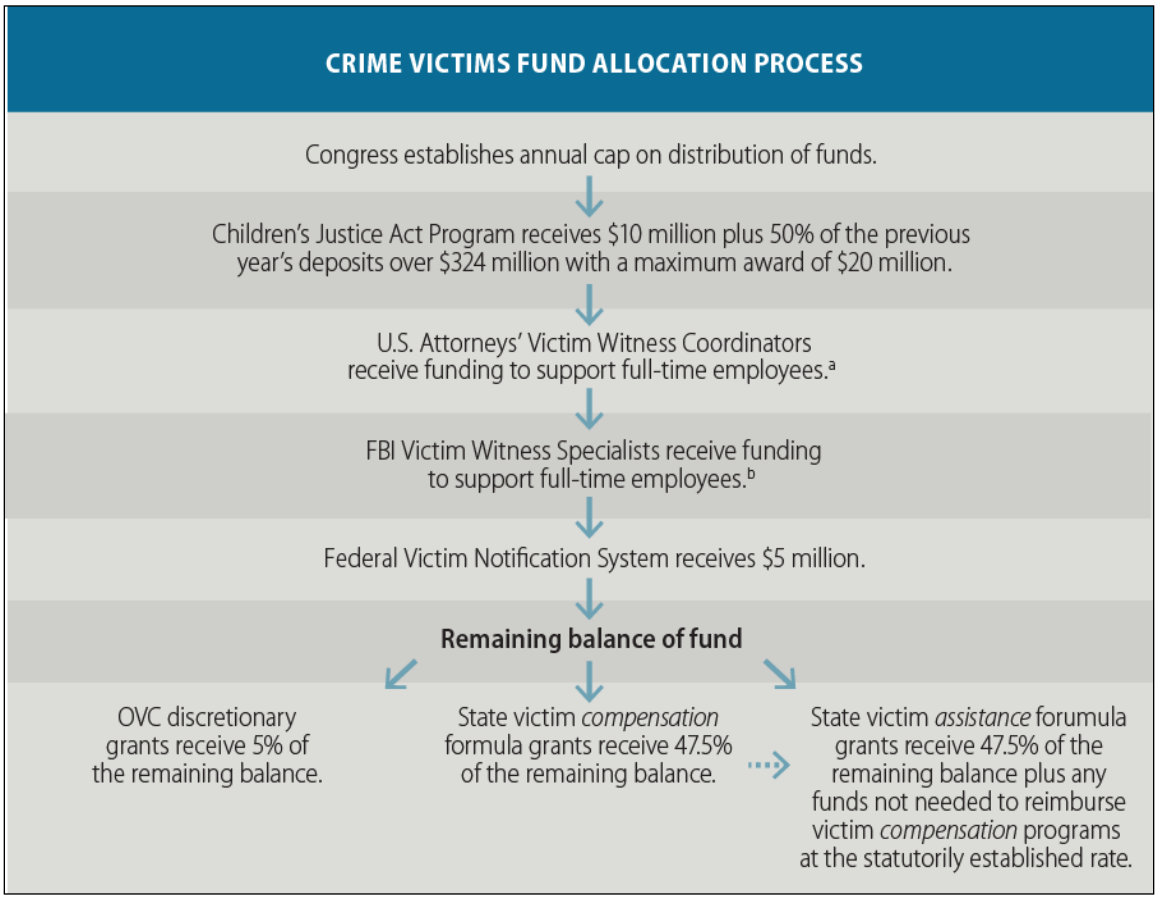
g. The FY2016 distribution amount reflects the deductions of the transfers to OVW and OIG highlighted in note f above.

h. P.L. 115-31 transfers $326.0 million from the Crime Victims Fund to OVW. It also provides $10.0 million to the DOJ OIG. Both amounts are reduced from the obligation capped amount before running the VOCA formula.

Distribution of the Crime Victims Fund

As previously stated, the OVC awards CVF money through formula and discretionary grants to states, local units of government, individuals, and other entities. The OVC also awards CVF money to specially designated programs. Grants are allocated according to statute (see **Figure 1**) established by the VOCA.

Figure 1. Annual Distribution of the Crime Victims Fund



Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime, *Crime Victims Fund*, Figure 2, http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/pubs/crimevictimsfundfs/intro.html; and U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Communications.

Notes: Beginning in FY2012, OJP assessed management and administrative (M&A) costs for programs funded by the CVF. OJP does not assess M&A costs for the Children's Justice Act Program and state victim compensation grants. In FY2012, state victim assistance grants were assessed 11.6% in M&A costs and all other CVF-funded grants were assessed 8.1% in M&A costs. In FY2013, state victim assistance grants were assessed 9.9% in M&A costs and all other CVF-funded grants were assessed 7.4% in M&A costs. In FY2014, CVF grants were assessed a 7.9% M&A costs. In FY2015, CVF grants were assessed 2.7% ($59.96 million) in M&A costs. OJP reduced the percentage for FY2015 due to the substantial increase in the obligation cap for that year. In FY2016, CVF grants were assessed 3.1% ($78.06 million) in M&A costs.

a. As of FY2016, there were 213 Victim Witness Coordinators supported by the CVF.

b. As of FY2016, there were 192 Victim Witness Specialists supported by the CVF.

Children's Justice Act Program

The OVC and the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) manage the Children's Justice Act Program, a grant program designed to improve the investigation, handling, and prosecution of child abuse cases. Up to $20 million must be distributed annually to the Children's Justice Act Program.[27] Of the designated funds, ACF receives up to $17 million to manage this program for the states, while the OVC distributes up to $3 million for tribal populations.[28] In FY2016, the ACF received $17.36 million from the CVF to fund the Children's Justice Act Program. **Table 2** provides funding data from FY2012 through FY2016.

Table 2. Annual Allocation for Children's Justice Act Grants

(dollars in millions)

(Administrative Agency in Parentheses)	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016
State Allocation (ACF)	$17.00	$17.00	$16.99	$16.99	$10.36[a]
Tribal Allocation (OVC)	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Communications.

Notes:

a. HHS had carryover funding from FY2015 and did not need the full allocation for FY2016.

Executive Office of U.S. Attorneys (EOUSA)

The OVC provides annual funding to support victim-witness coordinators within each of the 93 U.S. Attorney's Offices.[29] In accordance with the *Attorney General Guidelines for Victim and Witness Assistance*,[30] these personnel provide direct support for victims of federal crime by assisting victims in criminal proceedings and advising victims of their rights, such as their right to make oral and written victim impact statements at an offender's sentencing hearing. **Table 3** provides the number of full-time employees supported with CVF funding and the amount of CVF funding that the EOUSA victim-witness coordinator program has received from the OVC from FY2012 through FY2016.

Table 3. Annual Allocation and Full-Time Employees for EOUSA Victim Witness Coordinators

(dollars in millions)

	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016
Allocation to EOUSA	$21.54	$21.64	$21.90	$24.96	$29.38

[27] 42 U.S.C. §10601(d)(2).

[28] For more information regarding the Children's Justice Act Program, see CRS Report R40899, *The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA): Background, Programs, and Funding*, by Emilie Stoltzfus.

[29] 42 U.S.C. §10601(d)(3).

[30] U.S. Department of Justice, *Attorney General Guidelines for Victim and Witness Assistance*, http://www.justice.gov/olp/pdf/ag_guidelines2012.pdf.

	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016
Number of FTEs	170	170	170	182	213

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Communications. Allocation figures reflect final enacted levels including reductions for management and administrative (M&A) costs. For more information on the M&A cost assessment for CVF programs, see the notes of **Figure 1**.

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

The OVC provides annual funding to support victim witness specialists within the 56 FBI field offices.[31] These specialists, or coordinators, personally assist victims of federal crime and provide information on criminal cases throughout case development and court proceedings.[32] **Table 4** provides the amount of CVF funding that the FBI's Victim Witness Program has received from the OVC in FY2012-FY2016.

Table 4. Annual Allocation and Full-Time Employees for FBI Victim Witness Specialists

(dollars in millions)

	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016
Allocation to FBI	$16.21	$16.34	$16.50	$24.58	$17.29
Number of FTEs	134	134	134	181	192

Source: Allocations were provided by U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Office of Communications. For FY2012-FY2014, the number of FTEs were taken from congressional budget submissions for the FBI, and for FY2015 and FY2016, the number of FTEs was provided by OJP, Office of Communications. Allocation figures reflect final enacted levels including reductions for M&A costs. For more information on the M&A cost assessment for CVF programs, see the notes of **Figure 1**.

The Victim Notification System

The OVC provides annual funding to support the Victim Notification System (VNS), a program administered by the EOUSA and jointly operated by the FBI, EOUSA, OVC, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons.[33] VNS is the vehicle through which victims are notified of major case events relating to the offender, such as the release or detention status of the offender.[34] **Table 5** provides the amount of CVF funding that the VNS has received from the OVC in FY2012-FY2016.

Table 5. Annual Allocation for Victim Notification System

(dollars in millions)

	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016
Allocation to EOUSA	$4.49	$4.77	$4.50	$10.78[a]	$4.03

[31] 42 U.S.C. §10601(d)(3).

[32] For more information on the FBI Victim Assistance Program, see http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/victim_assistance/overview/field-office-victim-assistance-program.

[33] 42 U.S.C. §10601(d)(3).

[34] For more information on VNS, see https://www.notify.usdoj.gov/.

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Communications. Allocation figures reflect final enacted levels including reductions for M&A costs. For more information on the M&A cost assessment for CVF programs, see the notes of **Figure 1**.

Notes:

a. The FY2015 amount for the VNS included $6.50 million allocated specifically for architectural, design, and technology upgrades to the VNS.

Victim Compensation and Assistance

After the Children's Justice Act, victim witness, and VNS programs are funded, remaining CVF money is distributed as follows: Victim Compensation Formula Grants (47.5%); Victim Assistance Formula Grants (47.5%); and OVC Discretionary Grants (5%).[35] Amounts not used for state compensation grants are made available for state victim assistance formula grants. As shown in **Figure 1**, while both compensation and assistance grants are allotted the same percentage of the remaining balance, the state victim assistance grant program receives 47.5% of the remaining balance *plus* any funds not needed to reimburse victim compensation programs at the statutorily established rate.

Victim Compensation Formula Grant Program

As mentioned, 47.5% of the remaining annual CVF money is for grant awards to state crime victim compensation programs.[36] All 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico have victim compensation programs.[37] The OVC awards each state 60% of the total amount the state paid (from state funding sources) to victims in the prior fiscal year.[38]

According to VOCA, a state is eligible to receive a victim compensation formula grant if the state program meets the following requirements: (1) promotes victim cooperation with requests of law enforcement authorities, (2) certifies that grants received will not be used to supplant state funds, (3) ensures that non-resident victims receive compensation awards on the same basis as victims residing within the state, (4) ensures that compensation provided to victims of federal crimes is given on the same basis as the compensation given to victims of state crime, and (5) provides compensation to residents of the state who are victims of crimes occurring outside the state.[39]

The formula grants may be used to reimburse crime victims for out-of-pocket expenses such as medical and mental health counseling expenses, lost wages, funeral and burial costs, and other costs (except property loss)[40] authorized in a state's compensation statute. Victims are reimbursed for crime-related expenses that are not covered by other resources, such as private insurance. Since FY1999, medical and dental services have accounted for close to half of the total payout in

[35] 42 U.S.C. §10601(d)(4).

[36] Ibid.

[37] Territories and the District of Columbia are treated as states for grant eligibility and distribution purposes. See 42 U.S.C. §10602(d)(4).

[38] 42 U.S.C. §10602(a).

[39] 42 U.S.C. §10602(b).

[40] The Final Guidelines for the VOCA Victim Compensation Grant Program clarify that states may not include property replacement or repair cost as compensable expenses, *except for* replacement or repair of locks and windows, and replacement of bedding and clothing held as evidence, in their annual certification of payments. See Section IV. B.2 (b) (ii) 4 & 5.

annual compensation expenses.[41] In FY2015, 45.2% of the total payments were for medical and dental expenses.[42]

According to OVC data, assault victims represent the highest percentage of victims receiving compensation each year.[43] Victims of assault represented 39.3% all claims filed during FY2015. Nearly half of assault claims for FY2015 were "domestic and family violence-related."[44]

Table 6 provides the amount of CVF funding that was allotted to OVC's Victim Compensation Program from FY2012 through FY2016.

Table 6. Annual Allocation for Victim Compensation Grant Program

(dollars in millions)

	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016
Allocation for Compensation Grants	$180.73	$159.07	$137.42	$141.29	$164.42

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Communications.

Victim Assistance Formula Grant Program

The other 47.5% of the remaining annual CVF money (see **Figure 1**) is for the Victim Assistance Formula Grants Program. Amounts not used for state compensation grants are made available for the Victim Assistance Formula Grants Program. This program provides grants to state crime victim assistance programs to administer funds for state and community-based victim service program operations.[45] The grants support direct services to crime victims including information and referral services, crisis counseling, temporary housing, criminal justice advocacy support, and other assistance needs.

Assistance grants are distributed by states according to guidelines established by VOCA. States are required to prioritize the following groups: (1) underserved populations of victims of violent crime,[46] (2) victims of child abuse, (3) victims of sexual assault, and (4) victims of spousal abuse.[47] States may not use federal funds to supplant state and local funds otherwise available for

[41] Medical and dental services do not include mental health services. OVC records these mental health costs in a separate category. For additional compensation data, as well as the number of victims served, by victim types and service categories, see U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime, *VOCA Nationwide Performance Reports*, http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/grants/vocareps.html.

[42] Office for Victims of Crime, *Victims of Crime Act Victim Compensation Formula Grant Program, Fiscal Year 2015 Data Analysis Report*, March 2017, https://ojp.gov/ovc/grants/vocanpr_vc15.pdf (hereinafter, *VOCA Victim Compensation Program*, FY2015).

[43] U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime, *VOCA Nationwide Performance Reports*, http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/grants/vocareps.html.

[44] *VOCA Victim Compensation Program*, FY2015, pp. 22-26. OVC states the following regarding family and domestic violence: "[b]y terming this victimization type 'domestic and family violence,' the revised State Performance Report questionnaire clarifies that this category includes all types of domestic abuse, not just intimate partner violence" (see p. 26).

[45] 42 U.S.C. §10603(c).

[46] States have flexibility in determining the populations of victims of violent crimes that may be underserved in their respective states.

[47] 42 U.S.C. §10603(a).

crime victim assistance. The time period in which states must use their annual award includes the year it was given to the state plus three years.[48]

VOCA establishes the amount of funds allocated to each state and territory. Each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico receive a base amount of $500,000 each year.[49] The territories of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and American Samoa receive a base amount of $200,000 each year.[50] The remaining funds are distributed based on U.S. census population data. **Table 7** provides the amount of CVF funding that the OVC allotted for the Victim Assistance Grant Program from FY2012 through FY2016.

Table 7. Annual Allocation for Victim Assistance Grant Program

(dollars in millions)

	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016
Allocation for Assistance Grants	$377.09	$425.20	$455.79	$1,958.83	$2,219.90

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Communications.

Notes: Allocation figures reflect final enacted levels including reductions for M&A costs. For more information on the M&A cost assessment for CVF programs, see the notes of **Figure 1**.

According to the OVC, victims of domestic violence make up the largest number of victims receiving services under the Victim Assistance Formula Grants Program. In FY2015, 47.8% of the 3,716,668 victims served by these grants were victims of domestic violence.[51] This percentage has remained relatively stable since 2000, when 50.1% of all victims served by the victim assistance grants were victims of domestic violence.[52]

Discretionary Grants

Five percent of the CVF money available after the specially designated program allocations have been made (see **Figure 1**) is for discretionary grants.[53] According to VOCA, discretionary grants must be distributed for (1) demonstration projects, program evaluation, compliance efforts, and training and technical assistance services to crime victim assistance programs; (2) financial support of services to victims of federal crime; and (3) nonprofit victim service organizations and coalitions to improve outreach and services to victims of crime.[54] The OVC awards discretionary grants each year through a competitive application process.[55]

[48] For additional guidance, see U.S. Department of Justice, *2015 DOJ Grants Financial Guide*, p. 33.

[49] 42 U.S.C. §10603(a)(5)(A).

[50] 42 U.S.C. §10603(a)(5)(B).

[51] U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime, *2015 Victims of Crime Act Performance Report, State Assistance Program*, https://ojp.gov/ovc/grants/vocanpr_va15.pdf.

[52] U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime, *2000 Victims of Crime Act Performance Report, State Assistance Program*, http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/grants/vocanpr_va00.html. For additional annual reports on the Victim Assistance Formula Grants Program, see http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/grants/vocareps.html.

[53] 42 U.S.C. §10601(d)(4).

[54] 42 U.S.C. §10603(c).

[55] For more information on discretionary programs, see http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/grants/types.html#discretionarygrants.

Table 8 provides the amount of CVF funding that the OVC allotted for discretionary grants from FY2012 through FY2016.

Table 8. Annual Allocation for Discretionary Grants

(dollars in millions)

	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016
Allocation for Discretionary Grants	$32.05	$29.36	$30.75	$110.60	$126.56[a]

Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Communications. Allocation figures reflect final enacted levels including reductions for M&A costs. For more information on the M&A cost assessment for CVF programs, see the notes of **Figure 1**.

Notes:

a. In FY2016, $125.27 million was committed for discretionary grants ($1.29 million less than the annual allocation).

Antiterrorism Emergency Reserve

The Antiterrorism Emergency Reserve was established in P.L. 104-132 to meet the immediate and long-term needs of victims of terrorism and mass violence.[56] The OVC accomplishes this mission by providing supplemental grants to states for victim compensation and assistance and also by providing direct compensation to victims (U.S. nationals or officers or employees of the U.S. government, including Foreign Service Nationals working for the U.S. government) of terrorist acts that occur abroad.

The Director of the OVC is authorized to set aside $50 million of CVF money in the Antiterrorism Emergency Reserve to respond to the needs of victims of the September 11 terrorist attacks, and subsequently, to replenish any amounts expended so that not more than $50 million is reserved in any fiscal year for any future victims of terrorism.[57] After funding all other program areas, as listed above, the funds retained in the CVF may be used to replenish the Antiterrorism Emergency Reserve.[58] This reserve fund supports the following programs:

- Antiterrorism and Emergency Assistance Program (AEAP),
- International Terrorism Victim Expense Reimbursement Program,
- Crime Victim Emergency Assistance Fund at the FBI, and
- Victim Reunification Program.

Assistance for Victims of Terrorism and Mass Violence

Over the past two years, the OVC has responded to several incidents of terrorism and/or mass violence in the United States with grants from the AEAP. Following incidents of terrorism or mass violence, jurisdictions[59] may apply for AEAP funds to be used for crisis response, criminal

[56] P.L. 104-132, Title II, Subtitle C.

[57] 42 U.S.C. §10601(d)(5). The OVC also received a one-time $68.1 million appropriation in the FY2002 Department of Defense Appropriations Act (P.L. 107-117, 115 Stat. 2294) to assist in its work of providing relief to 9/11 victims (USA PATRIOT Act, P.L. 107-56, 115 Stat. 371).

[58] These funds do not fall under the annual cap of the CVF.

[59] Eligible applicants include state victim assistance and victim compensation programs, U.S. Attorneys' offices, victim service and nongovernmental organizations, and federal, state, and local governments.

justice support, crime victim compensation, and training and technical assistance expenses. In January 2014, OVC announced the award of $8.4 million to assist victims, witnesses, and first responders of the Boston Marathon bombings, an incident that resulted in the deaths of three spectators and a police officer, and the injuries of hundreds more. The grant award was received by the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance to assist organizations with "costs, both incurred and anticipated, for organizations providing crisis intervention services and trauma-informed care, continuum of care, socioeconomic support, wrap-around legal services and other victim assistance."[60] In 2013, AEAP funds were also used to support victims of mass shootings in Newtown, CT;[61] Oak Creek, WI;[62] and Aurora, CO.[63]

Assistance for Victims of 9/11

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the OVC used money available in the Antiterrorism Emergency Reserve account to immediately respond to the needs of victims. The OVC awarded $3.1 million in victim assistance funding and $13.5 million in victim compensation funding[64] to the states of New York, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.[65] The funds were used by these states to coordinate and provide emergency assistance to victims in the form of crisis counseling and other direct services, and to offset out-of-pocket expenses for medical and mental health services, funeral costs, and lost wages.

In addition to providing funds to states, the OVC provided other assistance and services to victims, including the following:

- OVC staff worked to identify the short- and long-term needs of victims and related costs, as well as to coordinate its efforts with other federal agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
- Immediately following the attacks, the OVC set up a call center that offered a 24-hour, toll-free telephone line for collecting victim information and providing referrals for financial, housing, and counseling assistance. Approximately 37,000

[60] U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Public Affairs, *Attorney General Announces $8.3 Million to Support Victims of Boston Marathon Bombings*, Justice News, January 13, 2014, http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2014/January/14-ag-039.html.

[61] In December 2013, OVC announced a $1.5 million AEAP grant to support victims of the mass shooting that took place at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT, on December 14, 2012. For more information, see U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, *Attorney General Holder Announces $1.5 Million to Reimburse Support Efforts to Victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School Shooting*, press release, December 17, 2013, http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/newsroom/pressreleases/2013/ojppr121713.pdf.

[62] In August 2013, OVC announced a $512,730 AEAP grant award to support victims of the August 2012 mass shooting at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, WI. For more information, see U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, *Office for Victims of Crime Announces $512,730 Grant to Support Victims of the Sikh Temple Attack in Oak Creek, Wis.*, press release, August 2, 2013.

[63] In February 2013, OVC announced a $2.9 million AEAP grant award to support victims of the July 2012 movie theater shooting in Aurora, CO. For more information, see U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, *Office for Victims of Crime Announces $2.9 Million Grant to Support Victims in Aurora, Colo.*, press release, February 13, 2013, http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/newsroom/pressreleases/2013/ojppr021313.pdf.

[64] Emergency funds were disbursed under the authority of the 2001 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Recovery from and Response to Terrorist Attacks on the United States (P.L. 107-38). The Antiterrorism Emergency Reserve was later reimbursed under the Department of Defense Appropriations Act (P.L. 107-117).

[65] U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, *Meeting the Needs of the Victims of the September 11th Terrorist Attacks: Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 2002, Report to Congress*, April 2003, p. 4, https://www.ncjrs.gov/ovc_archives/reports/911victimsreptocongress03/meetingneedssept11.pdf.

victims and family members received assistance and referrals through the call center.[66]

- The OVC also established a Victim and Family Travel Assistance Center, which handled all logistical arrangements and paid travel and lodging costs for 1,800 family members traveling to funerals and memorial services.[67]
- The OVC designed and operated a special "Hope and Remembrance" website to provide victims with answers to frequently asked questions, official messages from U.S. government sources, news releases, etc.[68]

Selected Issues

Congress may confront several issues when considering the balance of the CVF, the annual obligation cap on the CVF, and possible amendments to VOCA. These issues include using the CVF for purposes other than those explicitly authorized by VOCA, making adjustments to the CVF cap such as eliminating the cap, and amending VOCA to accommodate new programs or to adjust the allocation formula. Congress may also consider the purposes for which certain pools of victim services monies can be used.

Issues in Considering the Balance of the Fund

Because the CVF balance remains significantly larger than the amount distributed to victims each year, there are several issues Congress may consider, and in some cases already has considered, regarding the balance of the Fund. One is whether to use receipts from the CVF to fund grant programs that are not authorized by VOCA. In the past, Congress has passed legislation that made CVF money available to support programs authorized outside of VOCA.[69] For example, the National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 110-181) included a provision mandating that the Attorney General transfer from the emergency reserve of the CVF "such funds as may be required" to cover the costs of special masters appointed by U.S. district courts in civil cases brought against state sponsors of terrorism. Until FY2016, CVF money had not been used to fund *grant programs* outside of those authorized by VOCA; however, in the FY2016 and FY2017 appropriations acts,[70] CVF funds were transferred to the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) to be used for specified grant programs authorized under the Violence Against Women Act.[71] The Administration's FY2018 budget request proposes to use the CVF to fund *multiple* DOJ accounts not authorized by VOCA, including those that address domestic violence, sex offenders, trafficking victims, and child abuse.[72]

While it could be argued that funds for non-VOCA grant programs go to support crime victims, it raises a question about whether these actions might pave the way for the CVF to be used to support grant programs that might not be victim-focused. On the other hand, the CVF has a

[66] Ibid, p. 5.

[67] Ibid, p. 5.

[68] Ibid, p. 5.

[69] For expenditure guidelines, see 42 U.S.C. §10601(d).

[70] See the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114-113) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 115-31).

[71] For more information on grant programs authorized under the Violence Against Women Act, see CRS Report R42499, *The Violence Against Women Act: Overview, Legislation, and Federal Funding*, by Lisa N. Sacco.

[72] U.S. Department of Justice, *FY2018 Performance Budget Office of Justice Programs*, May 2017, p. 63, https://www.justice.gov/file/969001/download.

balance of more than $9 billion, which indicates that receipts to the fund, for certain years, exceeded the congressionally specified cap; however, as mentioned, Congress substantially increased the cap in FY2015 and increased it further in FY2016 (see **Table 1**). In addition, deposits into the Fund decreased by approximately 44% from FY2015 to FY2016. In a time of fiscal constraint, the CVF might provide an avenue to fund some DOJ grant programs while reducing DOJ's discretionary appropriation; however, as shown by the drop in CVF deposits in FY2016, there is no guarantee that receipts going into the CVF will be consistent from one year to the next. Therefore, if Congress were to further increase the cap and continue to use funding from the CVF for non-VOCA programs, it may not be possible to ensure that there will be a consistent level of funding to support these programs in future budget cycles.

Congress may also decide to rescind funds from the balance of the CVF, as it did in November 2015 through the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 (P.L. 114-74). This law required the rescission and permanent cancellation of $1.5 billion from the balance of the CVF.[73] This unprecedented rescission and cancellation did not carry any specification as to any redirection for the funds, but rather was treated as a general offset. This action did not impact, at least not directly, the annual obligation cap on the CVF.

Congress could decide to eliminate the cap on the Crime Victims Fund altogether. If Congress should decide to eliminate the cap and allow all collected funds to be distributed in a given fiscal year, it could possibly have significant consequences for the DOJ budget. As mentioned, the capped amount and remaining balance in the CVF are considered part of the DOJ budget total. These amounts impact the DOJ appropriation, are used to offset spending limits for DOJ programs, and are included in the overall budget score for DOJ. If Congress were to eliminate the cap, it would have to make up the amount of the CVF through offsets. Moreover, Congress may consider whether VOCA programs would be able to use all money in the fund if the obligation cap were eliminated.

Issues in Considering Amendments to VOCA

While VOCA may be amended in many possible ways, this report presents two options that Congress may choose to consider. Congress may decide to reassess the allocation formula of the CVF (see **Figure 1**) or consider the addition of new programs to be supported through the CVF.

VOCA Assistance Administrators have voiced concern that fluctuations in annual obligations can directly impact fund availability for victim assistance formula grants and, to a lesser extent, discretionary grants. The addition of new programs, increases in funding to other programs funded by the CVF, and new management and administration costs cause a reduction in funding available for victim assistance formula grants and discretionary grants.[74] Congress may choose to review the allocation formula to determine if changes should be made to reduce the impact of fluctuations in obligated funds on these grants.

Since 1984, VOCA has been amended several times to support additional victim-related activities and accommodate the needs of specific groups of victims, such as child abuse victims and victims of terrorist acts. Congress may choose to continue amending VOCA to further accommodate the needs of additional special populations, such as victims of elder abuse and rural victims. While

[73] For guidance on rescission and cancellation of funds, see Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, *Circular No. A-11: Preparation, Submission, and Execution of the Budget*, July 2016, Section 20.

[74] Ibid; National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators, *Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Crime Victims Fund: Briefing Background*, p. 4, http://www.navaa.org/budget/13/docs/VOCA_Backgrounder%202013.pdf.

support for victims of elder abuse is an allowable use of the Fund, as the "baby boom" generation ages, it is possible that elder abuse will grow as a social concern.[75] Similarly, victims in rural areas are supported through VOCA programs, but they face unique barriers to assistance such as lack of qualified service professionals and higher costs and availability of transportation to obtain services.[76] Other populations with unique risks and needs may present themselves, and Congress may choose to use VOCA as one potential vehicle to address those risks and needs.

VOCA Support and American Indian Tribes

Currently, the VOCA formula does not incorporate American Indian tribal governments for its two largest programs; the victim assistance and victim compensation formula grant programs. While tribal governments are eligible to receive assistance and compensation funds from their respective state victim programs (e.g., in the form of sub-grants), some have argued that there should be a dedicated amount from the Crime Victims Fund directed to American Indian tribes each year.[77] In the 114th Congress, the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs marked up the Securing Urgent Resources Vital to Indian Victim Empowerment Act (SURVIVE Act; S. 1704), which would have amended VOCA to create a special allotment (5% of the annual obligation capped amount) for tribes. These funds would have been used to create a new grant program[78] for tribal crime victims services and compensation to be administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

The Administration's FY2018 budget request proposes to set aside 5% of the FY2018 obligation cap for grants and assistance to American Indian tribes "to improve services and justice for victims of crime."[79]

Fairness for Crime Victims Act of 2017

Federal spending can be divided into the budget categories of discretionary spending, mandatory spending, and net interest. In certain circumstances, reductions in mandatory spending can generate offsets that allow higher levels of discretionary spending than would otherwise be permitted under congressional budget rules or under statutory caps on discretionary spending. Changes in mandatory spending (CHIMPs) are provisions in appropriations acts that reduce or constrain mandatory spending, and they can provide offsets to discretionary spending. The obligation limitation on the CVF has been the CHIMP item that has generated the largest offset of discretionary spending in recent years.[80]

In the 115th Congress, the Fairness for Crime Victims Act of 2017 (H.R. 275) has been introduced, and if enacted would adjust the way CHIMPs affect the CVF and how it is used as an offset of discretionary spending. Also, the bill is intended to ensure that the CVF annual obligation cap is never less than the average amount of deposits into the CVF of the previous

[75] Martin J. Gorbien and Amy R. Eisenstein, "Elder Abuse and Neglect: An Overview," *Clinics in Geriatric Medicine*, vol. 2 (May 21, 2005).

[76] U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime, *Vision 21, Transforming Victim Services: Final Report*, May 2013, p. 27, https://ovc.ncjrs.gov/vision21/pdfs/Vision21_Report.pdf.

[77] S.Rept. 114-172.

[78] S. 1704 would have amended the Indian Tribal Justice Act to create this new grant program.

[79] U.S. Department of Justice, *FY2018 Performance Budget Office of Justice Programs*, May 2017, p. 63, https://www.justice.gov/file/969001/download.

[80] D. Andrew Austin, Analyst in Economic Policy, contributed to this section.

three fiscal years. As mentioned, the FY2017 obligation cap was calculated based on a three-year average of collections into the CVF.

Author Information

Lisa N. Sacco
Analyst in Illicit Drugs and Crime Policy

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