



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

July 7, 2015

Dear VOCA Applicants and Grantees:

As you may know, the allocation to Texas from the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) fund for this coming year is rising from approximately \$35 million to over \$160 million. All signs point to this higher level of funding being the norm for the foreseeable future. The decision to provide greater access to needed funding for victims of crime in Texas is very welcome and it offers us exciting options to help more victims in Texas and to provide some greater stability for the people and organizations already committed to this critical work.

While we are patiently awaiting receipt of the VOCA funds and are still considering the many options to support crime victims in Texas, we do have good news for the grantees selected for funding this upcoming 2016 cycle.

First, we know that it is important that you have the ability to plan for the future as this affects not only your agency's staffing decisions but also the quality of service provided to victims as well. As a result, we have made the decision to move to a two-year funding period for VOCA projects, beginning this year.

Second, we know that the months of August and September are filled with concern and nervous anticipation as CJD waits for its federal awards and you wait for your new grant to make sure that you can support your staff's salaries and victims' needs. And so, to help alleviate some of these concerns, we will also be moving all of our VOCA grants to the federal fiscal year, which runs October 1 through September 30. This adjustment will both give us more time at the end of the grant period to make smoother transitions between closing and awarding grants and should make your quarterly reporting a little easier as well.

While these changes make good sense and support the ability to better serve Texas crime victims, there are some logistical issues that you should be aware of:

- All VOCA grants awarded this year will move to the federal fiscal year. As a result, you will notice that awards are either for 13 months or 25 months to accommodate this shift.

- Approximately half of all grants will move to a two-year performance period this year, with the remainder to make the move next year. The decision to take this staged approach is critical to our ability to have a smooth transition and to even out the grant cycles. In determining how to decide which projects to move this year and which to move next, we considered many options. In our best effort to take an equitable and reasonable approach, we decided to split the regional councils of governments' rankings into halves. Approximately 50% of each COG's list of ranked projects will move to the two-year cycle this year.
- If funded this year, you will not need to do anything prior to accepting an award to receive the extra funding. CJD will add a line item to your budget that reflects an amount that multiplies your current request to cover the 13- or 25-month period. After an award is received and accepted, grantees will need to clear any special conditions on the grant by requesting a budget adjustment through [eGrants](#) to reallocate those funds to other categories and submit any updated resolution that might be needed from your governing body.

Thank you for your service to crime victims and to the State of Texas. I look forward to working with each of you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Camille Cain'.

Camille Cain  
Director  
Criminal Justice Division  
Office of the Governor