

REQUEST: \$135 MILLION TO FUND VICTIM SERVICES

2020 has been one of the hardest years in recent history. The pandemic has highlighted the challenges domestic and sexual abuse victims, including children, face each day. In the midst of so much uncertainty, one thing was clear - there is a direct correlation between the pandemic and an increase in domestic violence and sexual violence.

Survivors of violence and their children are experiencing significantly higher amounts of distress and have more complex needs as a result of the pandemic. Just as COVID-19 has disproportionately affected Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC), the pandemic has inequitably impacted BIPOC survivors of sexual and domestic violence. Tribal DV/SA programs are chronically underfunded, leaving Native women and girls more vulnerable to violence.

Programs that support survivors of violence across Wisconsin recently learned that the federal VOCA allocation to our state will be cut by 30% over two years. This cut follows a pattern of a steady decline in funds that Wisconsin has experienced since FY 2018. This reduction is due to shrinking deposits in the Crime Victims Fund (CVF). Congress is attempting to stabilize VOCA funding but even if a fix passes, programs will still experience these cuts.

Wisconsin needs to step up and fund victim services that have been underfunded not only throughout the ongoing pandemic, but for years - even when VOCA was at its peak in FY2018. Any reduction in funding, particularly following this pandemic and its ongoing and unknown economic and health repercussions would be devastating.



In 2019 alone, providers across the state requested a total of \$100 million to provide critical services. The need for these services and the flexible funding required to support them has only increased since the pandemic began

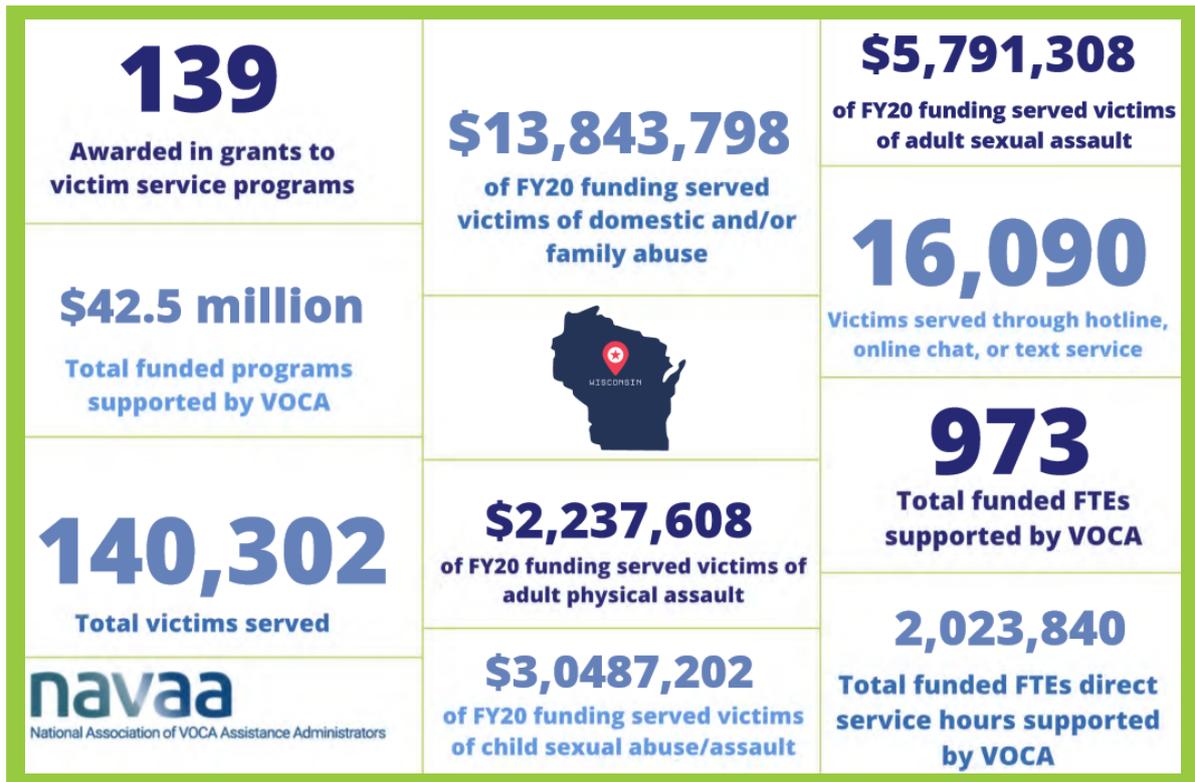
Immediate Reductions Will Impact Vital Statewide Services

- Sexual Assault Services
- Domestic Violence Services
- Child Advocacy Center Services
- Crime Victim Witness Assistance Services

**67%
DECREASE
SINCE FY18**

FFY18	FFY19	FFY20	FFY21
\$58,568,542	\$39,619,715	\$29,294,541	\$19,172,856

IMPACT OF VOCA FUNDING IN FY20



In the last VOCA competitive round, Office of Crime Victim Services (OCVS) emphasized the need to increase funding for both sexual assault and culturally specific services. With the impending cuts in VOCA, we are concerned that these services will be among the first to experience cuts in funding.

The eviction moratorium is slated to end June 30, we need housing for victims. On a single day in 2020 88% of unmet service requests were for housing. Reports of landlords propositioning and sexually harassing their tenants have surfaced, as housing insecurity increases vulnerability, which predatory landlords exploit. Sheryl Ring, the legal director at Open Communities of Chicago, reported a 300% increase in reported cases of sexual harassment complaints in housing during just the first month of the pandemic. Low-income women, transgender women, and women of color are at the greatest risk of facing sexual harassment in housing.

According to the CDC, COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact on Indigenous people. Moreover, Of the 84% of Native women who have experienced domestic or sexual violence in their lifetimes, 97% report non-Native perpetrators. Homicide is the third leading cause of death among American Indian and Alaska Native women between 10 and 24 years of age and the fifth leading cause of death for American Indian and Alaska Native women between 25 and 34 years of age. We must allocate funds to combat the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIW)

40% of rape crisis centers have reported an increased demand for services since the start of the pandemic, including requests for new services and more complicated requests from current clients



There continues to be a significant disparity in funding for DV services compared to SA services (\$13.8 million compared to \$5.7 million) despite data indicating similar prevalence levels.

A December 2020 study focusing on employment opportunities showed that, although men gained 16,000 jobs, all collective job losses were positions held by women — overwhelmingly women of color. BIPOC women are already in the highest risk category for domestic and sexual violence.

The passage of Marsy's Law in May 2020 significantly increased the duties of victim-witness professionals in an unprecedented and challenging year with no accompanying allocation of funds

USE OF FUNDING IN LINE WITH TREASURY GUIDANCE

Our **\$135 million dollar request meets the guidelines set by the treasury**, designed to take into consideration the disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency on those hardest hit by the pandemic.

Funds are dedicated to respond to the public health emergency which includes the negative economic impacts it has had on nonprofits. Victim service organizations are on the front lines of addressing violence. During the pandemic, our organizations have gone above and beyond their normal work to respond to this aspect of the pandemic's public health emergency. Staff have risked their own health and safety to serve as front-line workers, preventing and responding to violence. We need to ensure they receive premium pay for this risk. We require capital investments in public facilities to meet pandemic operational needs: organizations need support for prevention, mitigation, or other services.

Our services address behavioral healthcare needs exacerbated by the pandemic, including:

- Mental health treatment
- Substance misuse treatment
- Other behavioral health services
- Hotlines or warmlines
- Crisis intervention Services or outreach to promote access to health and social services

And will address health disparities and the social determinants of health by promoting healthy childhood environments, and investments in housing and neighborhoods.

**Total Federal Funds requested in 2019:
\$95,031,298**



CACs Requested: \$4,676,037
CASAs Requested: \$3,649,068
Victim Witness Requested: \$4,489,128
County Health and Human Services Requested: \$362,702
Underserved & Culturally Specific Organizations requested: \$11,425,603
Tribal Governments Requested: \$4,783,948
Anti-Human Trafficking Organizations Requested: \$4,438,225
Dual DV/SA Organizations Requested: \$20,780,895
DV Organizations Requested: \$7,702,332
SA Organizations Requested: \$5,028,362
Multi-Services Organizations or Umbrella Orgs: \$4,831,465
Legal Services Organizations Requested: \$10,597,794
Youth Serving Organizations Requested: \$7,760,832
Mental Health Focused Organizations Requested: \$1,451,581
Housing Focused Organizations Requested: \$347,113
Statewide Referral and Resource Organizations Requested: \$1,410,740
State agencies requested: \$1,085,087

These numbers reflect pre-pandemic need, the devastation of 2020 means that the need in our communities is significantly higher



Local programs, diversifying to meet emergent need, spent considerable funds for hotel stays. One rural program reported spending \$54,000 on hotel stays since the pandemic began despite only needing an average of \$1000 annually pre-COVID19.

"It's not just the federal funding cut that keeps me up at night - we rely upon in-person fundraising events to bring in critical unrestricted funds to keep our shelter open. 2020 was devastating for us. I worry that we won't be able to keep doors open much longer"