

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/publications/expanding-the-reach-of-victim-services>

Policy Issue Resources

Publication

In 2015, the federal budget for Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds increased by \$1.6 million from \$745 million to \$2.361 billion. These funds represent the single largest source of funding for victim services in the United States. In this report, we outline a way forward to make the best possible use of these new funds, with the particular goal of fostering greater equity in distribution.

Whether because of limited resources, lack of information, implicit bias, or an emphasis on partnership with law enforcement, the victim services field has struggled to reach many survivors including immigrants; young people of color; people with disabilities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people; and other historically marginalized communities.

It is our hope that this report supports VOCA administrators and their partners in victim services in making the greatest impact with the resources now available to them.

Too often, victims of crime who are from underserved backgrounds are left out of victim services. With this new infusion of funds, the field can grow to better provide for marginalized people.

Too many people who tend to the pain of crime victims are not seen as service providers, and thus do not receive the support they need to provide valuable resources.

Narrow societal conceptions of who victims are rarely include some of the people who are most likely to be harmed including young men of color.

The failure of the current system to adequately engage the full range of victims means these victims are more likely to live with unaddressed symptoms of trauma, are less likely to get the help they deserve, and are less likely to recover.

Transformative change, sent to your inbox.

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