

# Victims of Crime Act Victim Assistance Formula Grant Program

## FISCAL YEAR 2020 DATA ANALYSIS REPORT

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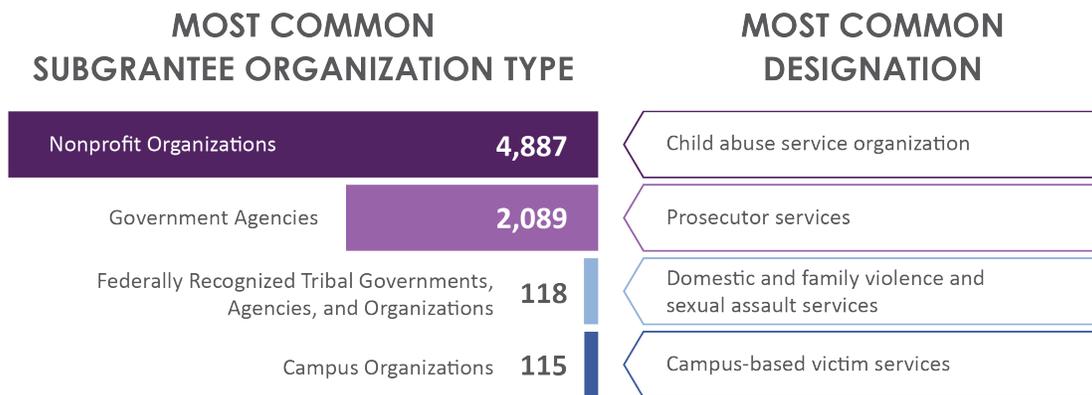
# INTRODUCTION

Throughout Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, 56 Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Victim Assistance (VA) Formula Grant Program State Administrating Agencies (SAAs) provided funding to 7,209 VOCA VA subgrantee organizations across 11,750 active subawards. Active subawards (awarded between FY 2016–FY 2020) account for over \$3.8 billion of funding, representing an increase of 14 percent from FY 2019. These organizations provided assistance to 9,450,970 individuals,<sup>1</sup> which includes both new and returning clients.<sup>2</sup> Of the total number of victims served, 5,469,889 individuals were served for the first time. VOCA-funded services also assisted an average of 1,499,125 anonymous contacts per quarter<sup>3</sup> through digital chats, hotlines, internet forums, and victim notification systems.

# VOCA-FUNDED VICTIM SERVICE PROVIDERS

In FY 2020, nonprofit organizations were the most common VOCA VA subgrantee organization type, followed by government agencies. Among the subgrantee organization types, campus organizations increased by 14 percent, representing the largest increase from FY 2019.

*Figure 1. Most Common Types and Designations of VOCA-Funded Victim Service Providers*



# TRAINING AND COORDINATION ACTIVITIES

At the conclusion of each fiscal year, VOCA VA SAAs provide qualitative information about grant-funded activities that occurred in their state during the past 12 months. Of the 49 VOCA VA program SAAs that submitted responses, 27 planned or executed training events with grant funds during FY 2020. Training event topics were wide-ranging and included compassion fatigue, crisis response, cultural and racial responsiveness, trauma-informed care, vicarious trauma, and victim advocacy. Planning events included meetings to plan trainings and annual conferences, surveys to identify training needs, and transitioning from in-person trainings and conferences to virtual platforms.

<sup>1</sup> VOCA VA subgrantee organizations do not share personally identifiable information with other providers to ensure the privacy of victims. As such, this number may include duplicates in cases where victims received services from multiple VOCA VA subgrantee organizations.

<sup>2</sup> A single client can be counted up to four times within a year, if they return for services each quarter.

<sup>3</sup> A quarter is a single 3-month period during FY 2020: October–December, January–March, April–June, and July–September.

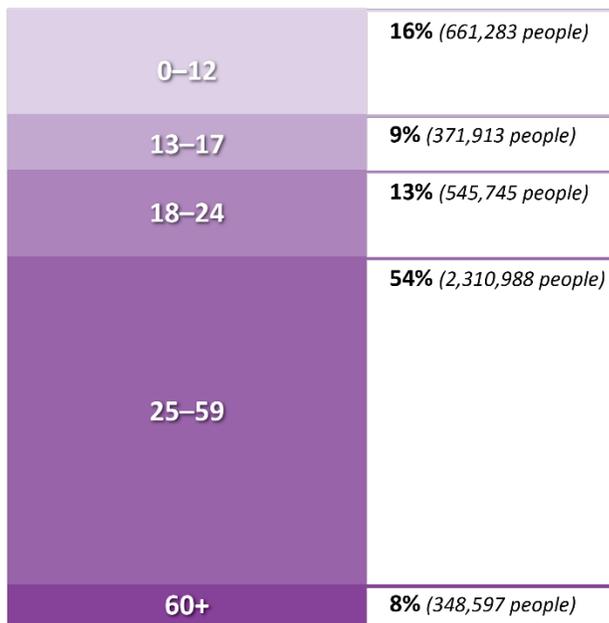
# VICTIM DEMOGRAPHICS

There were 5,469,889 new individuals served for the first time during FY 2020, a 22 percent decrease from FY 2019. New individuals who received assistance had the option to self-report demographic information, including age, gender identity, and race/ethnicity. Although many victims chose to self-report all or some of their data, some victims declined to provide this information, and some subgrantee organizations were unable to track demographic data.<sup>4</sup>

## Ages of New Individuals Served

Age was self-reported by 74 percent of victims served.

Figure 1. Percentages of Victims Served by Age Range

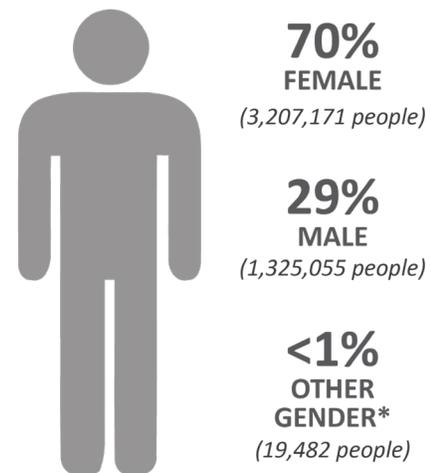


Each age category reported a decrease from FY 2019 in the number of individuals served who self-reported their age at the time of victimization. The age category with the largest decrease in the number of victims served was individuals who self-reported their age as 0–12.

## Genders of New Individuals Served

Gender identity was self-reported by 83 percent of victims served.

Figure 2. Percentages of Victims Served by Gender



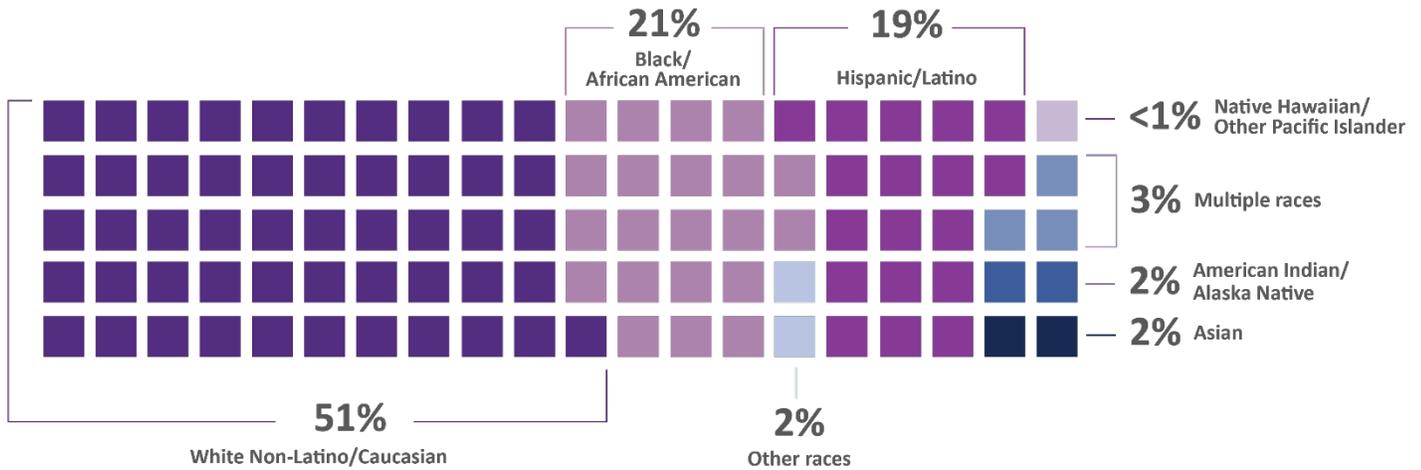
Individuals who reported their gender as “other” had the option to further describe their gender identity. Transgender was the most common response. Some additional responses included non-binary, non-conforming, gender fluid, and intersex.

<sup>4</sup> In FY 2020, 1,073 organizations did not track age, 895 organizations did not track gender identity, and 1,303 organizations did not track race/ethnicity.

## Race/Ethnicities of New Individuals Served

Race/Ethnicity was self-reported by 74 percent of victims served.

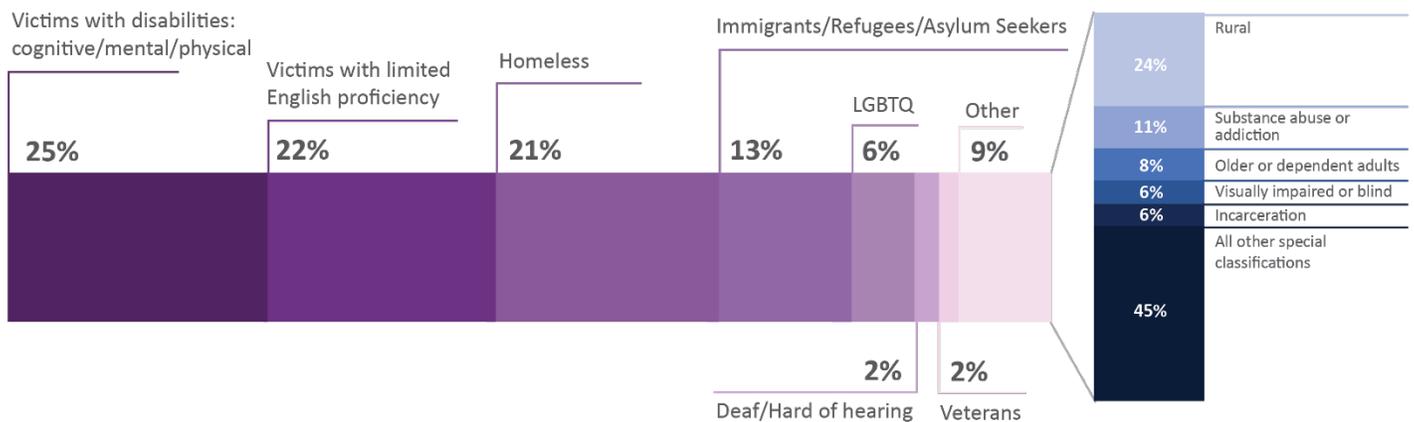
Figure 4. Percentages of Victims Served by Race/Ethnicity



## Special Classifications

Some victims self-report a special classification to service organizations, as defined by the Performance Measurement Tool (PMT).<sup>5</sup> This information helps providers better understand the various conditions and needs facing victims; how these experiences, identities, and unique needs may alter or affect the healing process; and the best ways to address them when providing services. As these classifications are self-reported, the percentage of all victims served with these qualities is unknown. In FY 2020, the number of individuals that self-reported per category ranged from 27,563 to 429,997.<sup>6</sup>

Figure 5. Percentages of Victims Served by Special Classifications



<sup>5</sup> There are eight special classifications in the PMT: Deaf or hard of hearing; homeless; immigrants/refugees/asylum seekers; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ); veterans; victims with disabilities (cognitive, physical, mental); victims with limited English proficiency; and other.

<sup>6</sup> Individuals can self-report in one or more special classification.

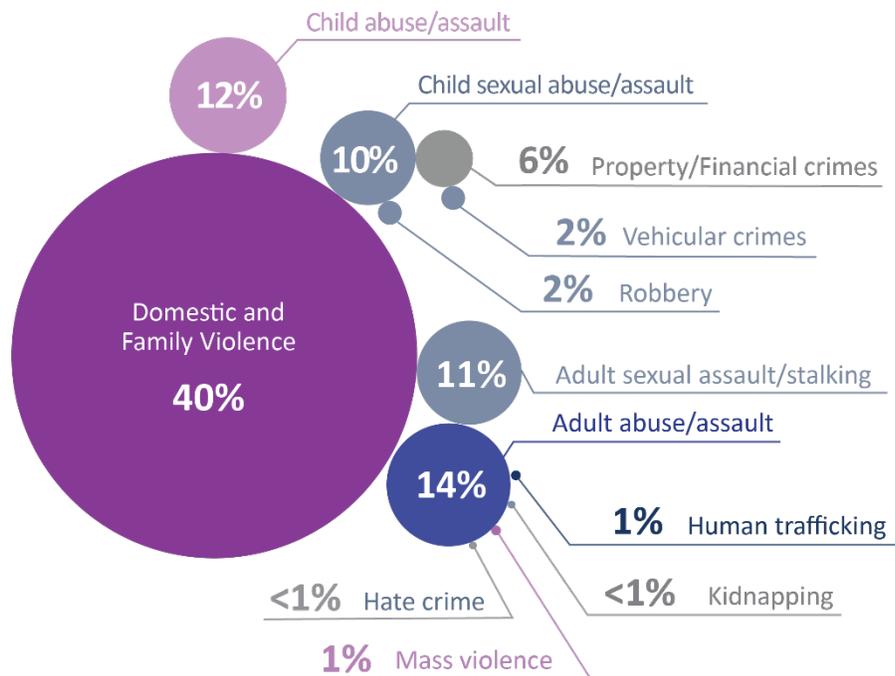
Of the 1,706,247 individuals that reported at least one special classification, the most common classifications—victims with cognitive, mental, or physical disabilities; victims with limited English proficiency; and victims who are homeless—were similar to previous years. Individuals who identified as immigrants/refugees/asylum seekers and those who self-reported as having limited English proficiency represented the greatest increases from FY 2019, at 11 percent and 9 percent, respectively. Some VOCA VA SAAs reported that VOCA VA subgrantee organizations enhanced their efforts to provide victim services to non-English or limited English-speaking individuals, which may partially explain these increases.

Of the individuals who disclosed a special classification, 9 percent self-reported as “other” and provided another classification. Within the “other” category, the most common designations included rural (24 percent), substance abuse or addiction (11 percent), and older or dependent adults (8 percent). The number of individuals who self-reported as residing in a rural area increased 30 percent from FY 2019.

## TYPES OF VICTIMIZATION

VOCA VA subgrantee organizations reported the types of victimization<sup>7</sup> experienced by the individuals served, including both primary and secondary victims<sup>8</sup> of crime. In FY 2020, 1,288,030 individuals reported experiencing multiple victimization types, representing a 9 percent decrease from FY 2019.

Figure 6. Percentages of Victimization Types Experienced by Victims Served



<sup>7</sup> See appendix A for the categorizations of victimization types.

<sup>8</sup> A primary victim is an individual who suffered direct harm because of a crime. A secondary victim is an individual who experienced indirect harm because of a crime. For example, an individual who directly experienced robbery is a primary victim while a family member of the individual, who was not present during the robbery, is a secondary victim.

The most common victimization types reported were domestic and family violence, adult abuse or assault, and child abuse or assault, which is consistent with prior data. VOCA VA subgrantee organizations indicated that victims experienced “other” victimization types too. Some of the most common victimizations reported as “other” included violation of a court protective order, criminal mischief, disorderly conduct, and false imprisonment. States also reported individuals who receive victim notification services under “other” victimization. Victim notification services provide individuals with information pertaining to an offender or court case.<sup>9</sup> As these services are typically automated, VOCA VA subgrantee organizations administering notification services with VOCA funds may not know the victimization type for the individuals receiving notifications.

In FY 2020, there were several victimization types that increased from FY 2019 (see table below).<sup>10</sup> Mass violence increased by 145 percent, followed by human trafficking (15 percent), kidnapping (6 percent), and hate crimes (3 percent). Similarly, violent crime victimizations<sup>11</sup> reported by VOCA VA subgrantee organizations increased 3 percent from FY 2019.

*Table 1. Largest Increases in Victimization Type from FY 2019 to 2020*

Victimization Type	Victims Served in FY 2019	Victims Served in FY 2020	Increase in Victims Served	Percentage Increase
Mass violence	32,400	79,492	47,092	145%
Human trafficking	66,661	76,542	9,881	15%
Kidnapping	31,835	33,786	1,951	6%
Hate crimes	18,191	18,817	626	3%
Property/Financial crimes	561,005	578,518	17,513	3%

Mass violence represented the greatest increase in FY 2020 over FY 2019 (145 percent).<sup>12</sup> This victimization type also had the greatest increase in FY 2019 over FY 2018. Narrative responses from VOCA VA SAAs indicated that the increase in mass violence victimizations also represented VOCA VA subgrantee organizations’ enhanced efforts to reach victims of crime.

The increase in hate crimes is consistent with national trends, according to data released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Uniform Crime Reporting program.<sup>13</sup> Race was the most commonly reported motivation for hate crimes. Sexual orientation, gender-based violence, and religiously motivated violence were other common motivations for hate crime.

<sup>9</sup> A single individual may receive multiple notifications and would be counted under the “other victimization” category for each of those instances.

<sup>10</sup> A single client can be counted up to four times within a year, if they return for services each quarter.

<sup>11</sup> An average of 1,666,429 violent crime victimizations were served each quarter in FY 2020. Violent crime victimizations include adult physical assault, adult sexual assault, adults sexually assaulted as children, child sexual abuse or assault, domestic and family violence, mass violence, robbery, survivors of homicide, and terrorism.

<sup>12</sup> In FY 2020, 58 percent of the mass violence victimizations were reported by one VOCA VA subgrantee organization. As such, this increase is largely driven by one mass violence incident reported by a single subgrantee organization.

<sup>13</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation. (n.d.). Uniform Crime Report. Retrieved on October 5, 2021, from <https://crime-data-explorer.fr.cloud.gov/pages/explorer/crime/hate-crime>.

## DIRECT SERVICES

VOCA-funded services are reported in five main categories, through a detailed list of sub-categorized service types. Individuals may receive multiple services, and/or the same service multiple times, as they work with a service provider.

### *Individuals Served Per Service Category*

The criminal or civil justice system assistance category includes assistance with victim impact statements, notification services, orders of protection, restitution, immigration assistance, interview advocacy/accompaniment, and other legal counsel or advocacy services. In FY 2020, VOCA VA subgrantee organizations provided these services to 9,302,359 individuals, making it the largest category of services.

VOCA VA subgrantee organizations offering information and referrals assist victims by providing information about the criminal justice system and an individual’s rights as a victim. Individuals may also be referred to other victim assistance programs for additional resources and support. In FY 2020, VOCA VA subgrantee organizations provided information and referrals to 6,089,317 individuals, making it the second largest category under direct services.

Emotional support or safety services largely involve crisis intervention, individual and group counseling, and various forms of therapy. Emergency financial assistance is also included in this category, which includes emergency funding for clothing, food, medical equipment and medications, safety services (e.g., changing locks), and transportation. VOCA VA subgrantee organizations served 3,704,403 individuals with emotional support or safety services, making this the third largest category.

Personal advocacy and accompaniment encompass a range of services covering coordination of assistance services (e.g., childcare or transportation), interventions with employers or landlords, interpreter services, and general support or accompaniment. In FY 2020, VOCA VA subgrantee organizations provided these services to 2,302,196 individuals.

Shelter and housing services offer victims of crime emergency shelter (including placement in safe houses), relocation assistance, and transitional housing. In FY 2020, VOCA VA subgrantee organizations served 379,616 individuals under this category.

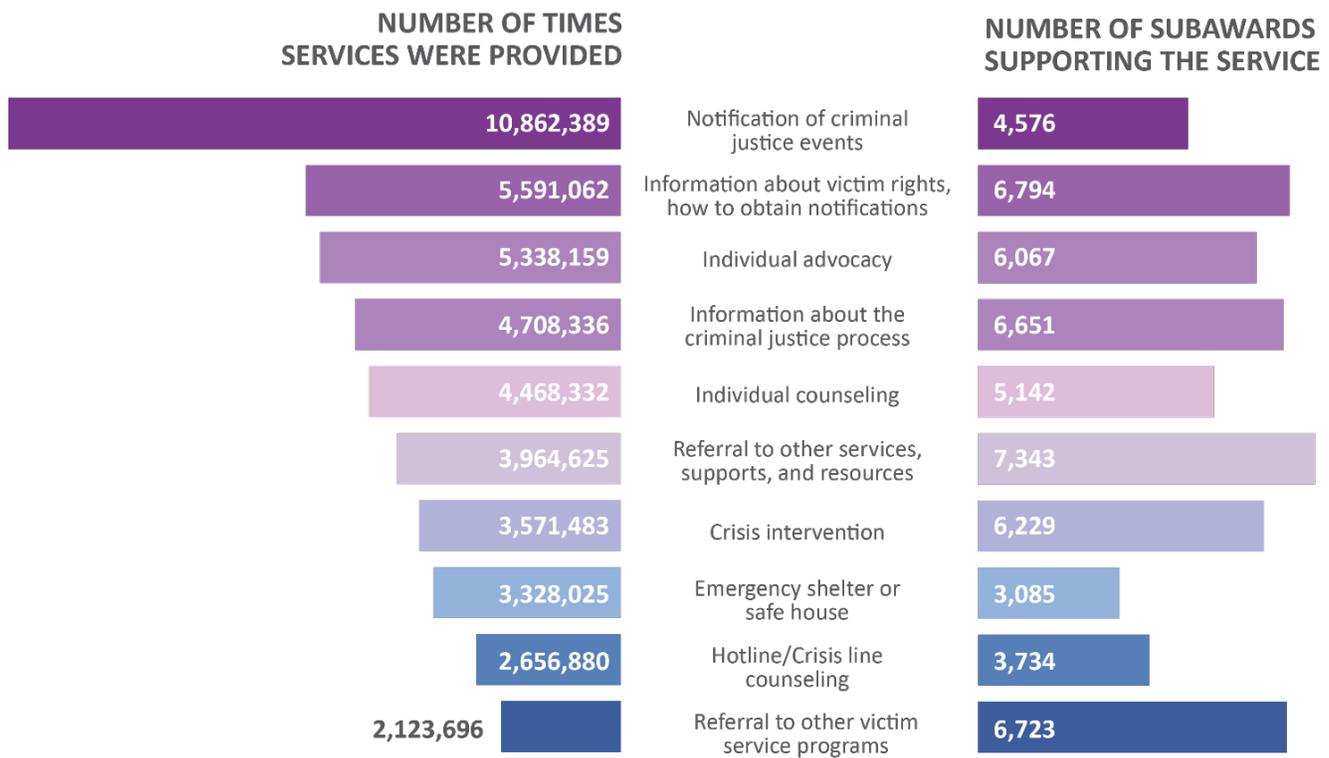
Figure 7. Number of Individuals Served in Each Direct Service



## Services Provided to Individuals

In FY 2020, notification of criminal justice events was provided 10,862,389 times, making it the most common service provided across subgrantee organizations, followed by information about victim rights (5,591,062) and individual advocacy (5,338,159). Referral to other services, supports, and resources were the services supported by the largest number of subawards.

Figure 8. Numbers of Services Provided and Supporting Subawards by Service Type







# SPOTLIGHT

## IMPACT OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON VICTIM SERVICES

### Increases in Services Provided

Service Type	Services Provided in FY 2019	Services Provided in FY 2020	Percent Change
Interpreter services	282,507	324,539	+ 15% ↑
Individual advocacy	4,858,649	5,338,159	+ 10% ↑
Individual counseling	4,190,282	4,466,332	+ 7% ↑
Hotline/Crisis line counseling	2,545,617	2,656,880	+ 4% ↑

It is evident that COVID-19 had an impact on the field of victim services. Although these challenges continue to affect subgrantee organizations, the resiliency of these agencies is seen based on the data reported. Despite ongoing concerns and changes due to COVID-19, many victim services organizations adapted quickly and continued to respond to the needs of victims.

### Decreases in Services Provided

Service Type	Services Provided in FY 2019	Services Provided in FY 2020	Percent Change
Referral to other services, supports, and resources	5,511,796	3,964,625	-28% ↓
Child or dependent care assistance	533,714	384,205	-28% ↓
Information about the criminal justice process	6,493,292	4,708,336	-27% ↓
Transportation assistance	1,062,117	785,028	-26% ↓

## NOTABLE TRENDS AND EMERGING ISSUES

VOCA VA SAAs noted several trends and emerging issues during FY 2020.<sup>14</sup> Due to the wide spectrum of services VOCA VA subgrantee organizations offer, VOCA VA SAAs provided information on many ongoing trends and emerging issues that their states are experiencing.

- The COVID-19 pandemic was a top issue noted by almost all VOCA VA SAAs. Due to stay-at-home orders and social distancing protocols that were enacted, organizations were often unable to continue providing in-person services to victims. However, VOCA VA SAAs noted that most service providers were able to quickly transition to internet-based platforms or telephone systems to continue providing services virtually. In many states, the virtual delivery of services allowed providers to reach additional victims who may not have been able to previously access services.
- Shelter and housing options were limited or unavailable. Similar to previous years, many VOCA VA SAAs reported that there were limited housing and shelter options available, often due to high costs and lack of space.
- A lack of language interpreters is often a barrier to victims receiving services. Additionally, a lack of culturally appropriate services makes some individuals reluctant to access services because they are concerned that their situation and unique needs will not be understood. In FY 2020, several VOCA VA SAAs reported that they were taking steps to increase their abilities to be able to provide services to limited or non-English speaking individuals. Some VOCA VA SAAs also reported an increase in culturally appropriate services for various populations in their respective states.

## CONCLUSION

An individual's reaction following a victimization is unique and may include various forms of short- or long-term emotional, physical, or psychological trauma. The data provided by VOCA VA subgrantee organizations demonstrates the range of situations and needs presented by nearly 9.5 million individuals who received services from providers, of whom nearly 5.5 million received services for the first-time during FY 2020. This information can be used by VOCA VA SAAs, service organizations, and other key stakeholders to further understand population demographics and victim needs to identify gaps in victim services and decide how best to allocate future resources.

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<sup>14</sup> SAAs reported on emerging trends and notable issues within their annual narrative responses. The information presented represents some of the most commonly reported trends or issues as stated by SAAs, but they may not be reflective of trends or issues occurring in every state and territory.

## APPENDIX A: TYPES OF VICTIMIZATIONS

Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Victims Assistance (VA) subgrantee organizations reported data on individuals who received services based on 26 presenting victimization types. These types, as reported by VOCA VA subgrantee organizations, were compiled into 13 main victimization types. The following list outlines the types of victimizations that make up each category.

1. Adult abuse or assault
  - Adult physical assault (*includes aggravated and simple assault*)
  - Elder abuse or neglect
  - Survivors of homicide victims
2. Adult sexual assault or stalking
  - Adult sexual assault
  - Adults sexually abused as children
  - Stalking or harassment
3. Child abuse or assault
  - Bullying (e.g., cyber, physical, or verbal)
  - Child physical abuse
  - Teen dating victimization
4. Child sexual abuse or assault
  - Child pornography
  - Child sexual abuse or assault
5. Domestic and/or family violence
6. Hate crime
  - Hate crime: Racial, religious, gender, sexual orientation, other
7. Human trafficking
  - Human trafficking: labor
  - Human trafficking: sex
8. Kidnapping
  - Kidnapping: custodial
  - Kidnapping: noncustodial
9. Mass violence
  - Mass violence (domestic or international)
  - Terrorism (domestic or international)
10. Other
11. Property or financial crime
  - Arson
  - Burglary
  - Identity theft, fraud, financial crime
12. Robbery
13. Vehicular crime
  - Driving under the influence or driving while intoxicated incidents
  - Other vehicular victimization (e.g., hit and run)