



T-VSTTA

OVC TRIBAL VICTIM SERVICES TRAINING
AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Guide for Developing Policies and Procedures

What are Policies and Procedures?

Policy and procedure documents guide decision-making, reduce ambiguity, and ensure compliance with laws and organizational practices. Written policies help to communicate program goals, values, priorities, and expectations for behavior. Written procedures explain how the policy is delivered. Implementing clear policies and procedures better equip staff to respond to crises, provide time-sensitive services, and build trust with program clients while offering consistent high-quality care.

Guidance for Drafting Policies and Procedures

Tailor each policy and procedure to its program. Policies and procedures reflect an organization's culture, values, and services along with client and community needs. Written policies and procedures also ensure compliance with Tribal, federal, and states laws. When drafting policies and procedures, consider these three areas: (1) planning, (2) drafting and reviewing, and (3) implementation.

Planning

- Consider the mission of your victim services program and determine what policies and procedures are needed to guide program activities.
- Identify relevant Tribal codes and federal and state laws.
- Review grant funding requirements.
- Identify who will be responsible for—
 - Developing, reviewing, and approving the policies and procedures,
 - Implementing the policies and procedures, and
 - Evaluating and refining the policies and procedures.

Drafting and Reviewing

- Incorporate trauma-informed and victim-centered approaches to serving victims of crime.
- Use plain language that is clear and easy to understand.
- Include policies and procedures appropriate for the local community and culture.
- Seek input from staff, past clients, and key community members and incorporate feedback.
- Confirm each policy is compliant with applicable Tribal codes as well as federal and state laws.
- Update all information in the policies and procedures on an ongoing basis.
- Ensure new policies and procedures do not conflict with existing policies and procedures.

Policies and procedures provide a roadmap for day-to-day operations.

Implementation

- Obtain approval on the policies and procedures from program leadership, Tribal leadership, and funding partners (i.e., grant managers).
- Train staff and volunteers often on the policies and procedures, including when onboarding new staff.
- Seek feedback to evaluate the policies and procedures.
- Implement the policies and procedures and refine based on feedback.

OVC Model Standards for Serving Victims and Survivors of Crime

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) Model Standards promote victim-centered, trauma-informed, and healing-focused services to crime victims.

The OVC Model Standards are not requirements or mandates, but rather considerations for organizations when developing policies and procedures. Organizations can use these standards as a foundation—or starting point—for developing policies and procedures aligned to organizations, programs, and communities.

For more information, visit [OVC Model Standards](#).

**Office for Victims
of Crime (OVC)
Model Standards are
designed to enhance
the competency
and ethical integrity
of victim service
providers and
their capacity to
provide high quality,
consistent services.**

Tribal Victim Services Training and Technical Assistance (T-VSTTA) is a capacity-building program providing tailored, hands-on training and technical assistance to victim service providers in American Indian and Alaska Native communities. With over 100 years of combined experience in victim services, the T-VSTTA team meets you where you are, working together to build on the resilience within your community.

The U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) funds the T-VSTTA program, which is available at no cost for grantees and potential grantees.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Email or call to request training and technical assistance. A member of the T-VSTTA team will respond promptly.

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