

# VOCA FUNDING COMMITTEE TRAINING

**December 2014**



# TRAINING OVERVIEW

- PCCD/OVS
- Origin of Local Decision Making Process/Local Policy Boards (LPB)
- Change from LPB to NEW VOCA Funding Committee (VFC)
- VFC Roles
- VFC Composition and Chair
- VFC Application Process/Funding Decisions
- PCCD Changed Triggered Review/Reconsiderations

# What is PCCD?

PCCD is the lead criminal justice system planning agency for Pennsylvania.

- Criminal Justice
- Juvenile Justice
- Research & Statistics
- Victim Services

# Office of Victims' Services

OVS's mission is to help crime victims transcend their trauma by providing funding to victim service agencies that work directly with victims, provide financial help to victims through the Victims' Compensation Assistance Program and collaborate with criminal justice and allied professionals that advocate and respond to the needs of victims.

# Types of Funding Administered by PCCD

## Formula

This is funding to which each county in Pennsylvania is entitled. The allocation to each county is based on population, crime rate and penalty collections.

## Discretionary

This is funding for which counties or programs must compete. In other words, *it is not guaranteed.*

# Discretionary funds for Victims' Services

## **Federal Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG)**

JAG Funding supports a broad variety of innovative and evidence-based projects designed to prevent and deter crime.

PCCD releases a competitive solicitation once every two years.

Projects must align with objectives in PCCD's Strategic Plan.

Significant competition for limited funds.

## **Federal STOP Violence Against Women Grant Program (STOP)**

STOP funding enhances a state's capacity to respond to incidents of violence against women through the implementation of victim services, law enforcement and prosecutorial response that are sensitive to victims' needs, preserve victims' safety and hold offenders accountable for their crimes.

Awarded to counties on a competitive basis

# Formula Funds for Victims' Services

## Federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)

VOCA supports the provision of **direct services** to victims of crime.

Examples include:

- 24 hour hotline
- Domestic violence shelter
- Legal advocacy
- Counseling
- Support groups
- Crisis intervention

## State Rights and Services Act (RASA)

## State Victims of Juvenile Offenders (VOJO) Program

RASA and VOJO support **procedural services** to victims as outlined in Pennsylvania's Crime Victims' Act.

Examples include:

- Notification of court events
- Assistance with compensation
- Assistance with victim impact statements
- Criminal justice support and advocacy

# Origin of Local Decision Making Process

PCCD had to find a way to distribute funding that balanced the need to uphold federal/state requirements for the administration of grant funds and the preference for local stakeholders to recommend how those funds should be used in their communities.

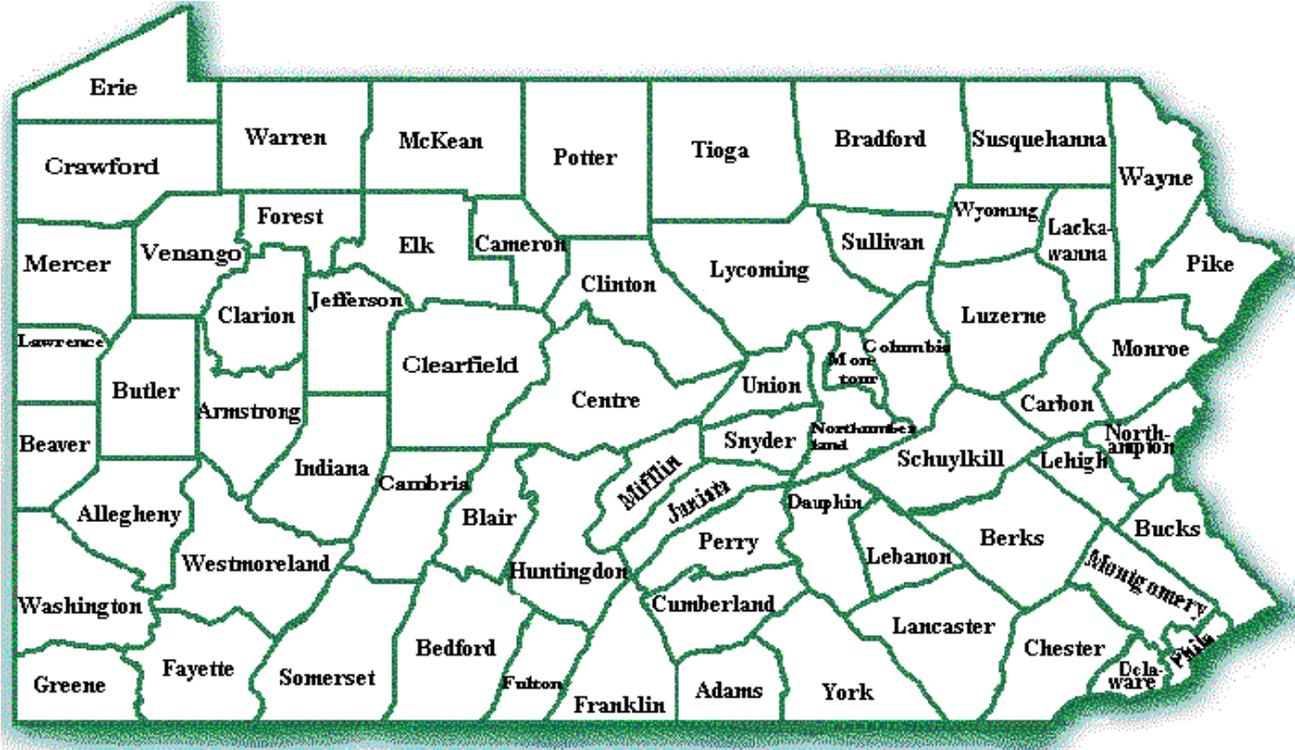
**THIS IS HOW LOCAL POLICY BOARDS ORIGINATED.**

# What did a Local Policy Board Do?

The Local Policy boards, comprised of stakeholders in the criminal and juvenile justice systems as well as victim services, convened to make recommendations on the distribution of VOCA, RASA and VOJO funding in their communities.

- Goal was to collaborate to analyze the needs of victims at the local level and make a recommendation to PCCD on how to distribute the grant monies.

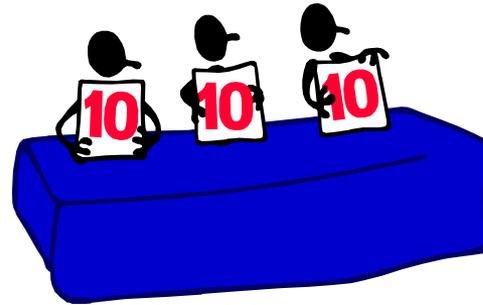
# Making Services Available to Victims



Over the last 30 years, Pennsylvania has chosen to build and maintain a strong network of community and justice system-based agencies to provide direct and procedural services to victims of crime. The Local Policy Boards helped us build this foundation by recommending that PCCD invest the resources in particular agencies.

# It was not a perfect system...

Things were fine, as long as the decisions made by the local policy board were to everyone's liking.



Increased competition for limited funding over the last five years has created disagreements at the local level and exposed some shortcomings of the local policy board system.



# 2013 Local Policy Board Workgroup

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Convened by VSAC as part of a larger effort to understand and stabilize the funding of victim services in Pennsylvania.

Conducted a wide ranging assessment which included looking at the purpose of each funding stream, the services provided, how many programs were funded per county and the net effect of funding cuts at the local level.

# TWO DECISIONS

## RASA & VOJO

Because there are specific roles and responsibilities tied to implementation of procedural services outlined in Pennsylvania's Victims' Bill of Rights, the District Attorney and Chief Juvenile Probation Officer in each county has the authority to make recommendations on the allocation of RASA and VOJO funds.

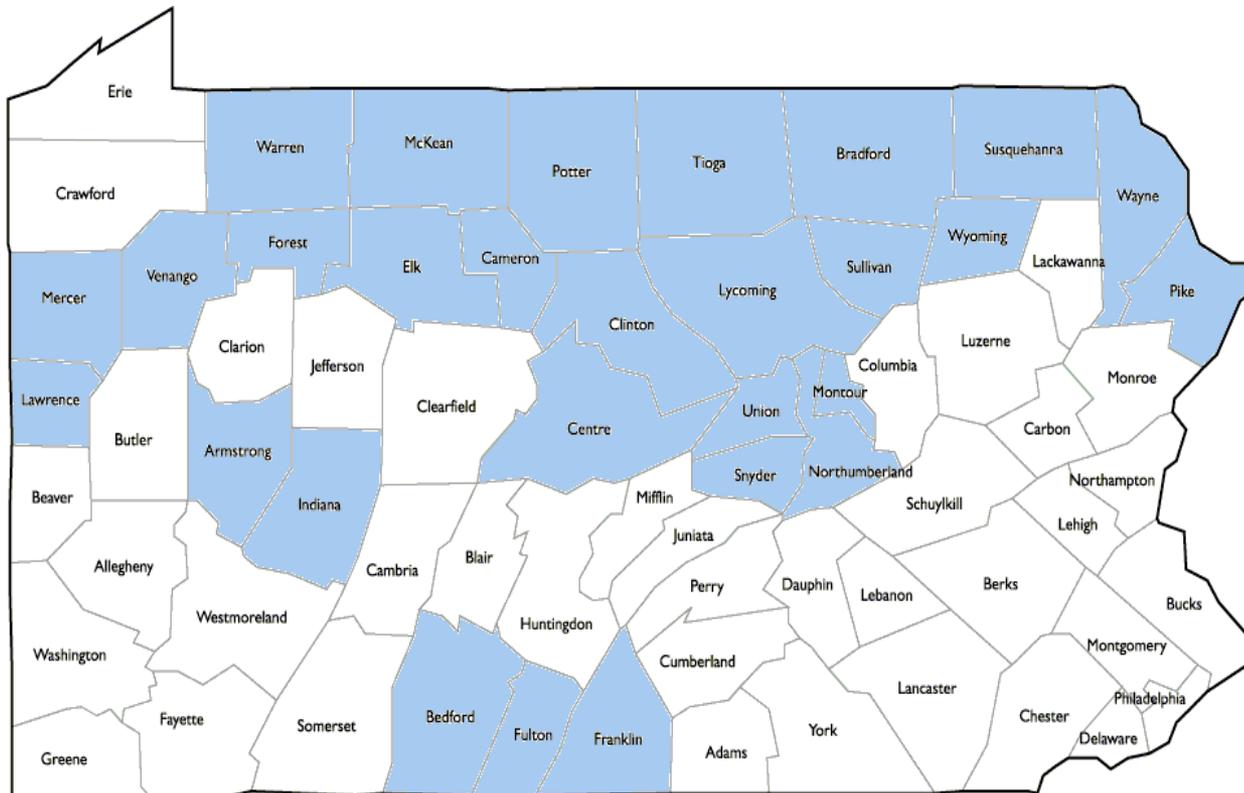
**NO NEED FOR A LOCAL POLICY BOARD DECISION.**

## VOCA

- In 42% of PA counties, VOCA funding goes to a single program;
- In the remaining 58% of PA counties, VOCA funding goes to multiple programs.
- **Local funding mechanism still needed.**
- **Rename Local Policy Boards as "VOCA Funding Committees" VFCs.**
- **Frequency of meeting depends on level of competition for VOCA funds.**

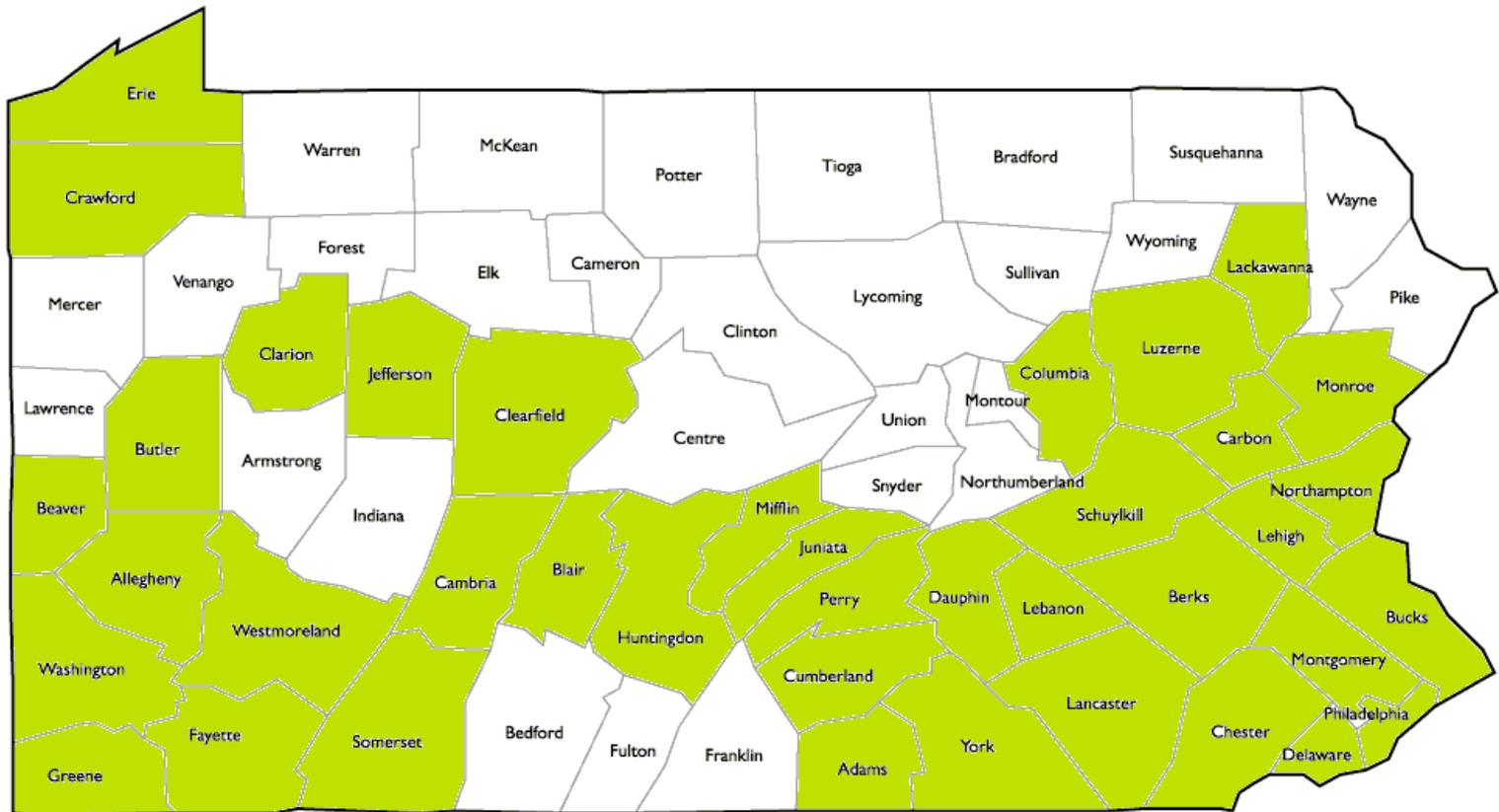
# LOOK AT BIG PICTURE

28, or 42% of Pennsylvania's Counties fund a single program with VOCA



# Look at the Big Picture

39 or 58% of Pennsylvania's counties fund more than one program with VOCA.



# New VOCA Funding Committee (VFC)

- Required to meet as a new VFC (in early 2015) to elect new VFC chair or reaffirm the prior LPB chair, if eligible under the new VFC guidelines. The VFC may consider the entire membership at this time as it relates to PCCD's VFC composition requirements.
- PCCD requires at least 50% of the committee, including the chair, complete the PCCD VFC training prior to making any funding decisions; (This requirement is fulfilled by either attending this webinar or viewing the webinar recording at a later date.)
- VFC should discuss policies and procedures of the former LPB to determine if the existing policies and procedures meet PCCD requirements and the direction of the new VFC prior to funding decision.
- VFC may decide to adopt all new policies and procedures, but can also reaffirm those from the former LPB.
- Policies and procedures must be adopted in advance of the any funding decisions and communicated to all eligible VOCA applicants prior to reviewing and deciding on funding allocations.

# Roles of the VFC

- Meeting to discuss new VOCA funding allocations (for VOCA 2015).
- Responsible for recommending the distribution of county's VOCA funds.
- Required to meet at the beginning of each subsequent VOCA funding cycle; unless...
  - ▣ there is only one VOCA applicant, then the VFC does not need to meet after the first VOCA recommendation is made by the VFC in 2015.

# Roles of the VFC (Cont.)

- Although it is not required the VFC is encouraged to meet for any of following:
  - Strategic Planning
  - Collaboration Efforts
  - Sharing of Best Practices
  - Needs Assessments

# Composition of VFC

- Membership
  - At least 5 members
  - One vote per agency
  - Required Members
    - District Attorney or designee
    - Min. of one victim service agency
  - Required Invitations for Membership
    - All agencies receiving VOCA funding
- Optional Membership may include, but is not limited to:
  - County Administrators
  - The Court
  - Child Protective Services Agency
  - Adult and Juvenile Probation
  - Law Enforcement
  - County or Private Agencies Serving Persons with Developmental Disabilities
  - Victims of Crime
  - Community Organizations
- When determining the composition of the VFC examine and resolve any possible conflicts of interest with existing and new members.
- It is acceptable to keep the same member composition as in the former LPB as long as all VFC requirements have been followed.

# Selection of VFC Chair

- Selection of Chair by Membership
- Chair must complete on-line training offered by PCCD
- Cannot be employed by or represent the interest of a VOCA funded agency
- Election and term length are determined by membership

# Responsibilities of VFC Chair

- Primary contact with PCCD; if change in chair occurs must contact PCCD
- Certifying PCCD VFC Training has been completed by at least 50% of membership, including the chair, prior to VOCA recommendations
- Each Chair is responsible for providing and reviewing with all VFC members PCCD's VFC Requirements
- Each Chair is responsible for facilitating the adoption of VFC Policies and Procedures (i.e. attendance, proxy voting, conflict of interest, overview of VOCA funding, application process, etc.)

# Responsibilities of VFC Chair (Cont.)

- Distributing Proposals to members for review in advance of the meeting at which funding is determined
- Notify membership of any new eligible applicants
- Chair the meeting at which VOCA applications are presented, discussed and voted upon
- Submitting required documentation to PCCD

**Note:** PCCD will contact each VFC chair on an annual basis to verify he/she is still the Chair.

# VFC Process for Applications

- Establish a consistent process for all VOCA applicants.
- Other reasonable requirements can be established by VFC (i.e. county/client needs)
- VFCs are strongly encouraged to allow eligible applicants the opportunity to make an in-person presentation on their project and how it relates to the needs of community.

# Proxy Voting

- VFC has the discretion to allow proxy voting.
  - ▣ Must have a written proxy policy prior to meeting to determine funding
  - ▣ Must provide PCCD a copy of the proxy voting procedure
  - ▣ If proxies are allowed must be done in-person

# VFC Funding Decision

- At a minimum the following should be considered by the VFC:
  - ▣ Total project budget
  - ▣ Project Narrative
  - ▣ Compliance with PCCD or other relevant oversight organization (i.e. PCADV, PCAR or National Children's Alliance)
  - ▣ Meets all VOCA eligibility requirements
  - ▣ Identify and resolve any possible conflicts of interest prior to voting on each application.

# VFC Funding Decision (Cont.)

- Analysis of need and potential impact
- Cost effectiveness considerations
- Compliance with program funding guidelines
- Coordination with existing service delivery system

\*There is no requirement to provide support to each organization that submits a proposal for VOCA or to fund only agencies currently receiving VOCA support.

# Analysis of Need/Potential Impact

Examples of potential questions to consider:

- What are the applicants telling you are the needs of victims in the community?
- What do the members of the VFC believe are the needs of victims in the community?
- Can VOCA be used to meet these needs?
- What will be the effect on both the agencies and the community of increasing, decreasing or keeping all of the VOCA funding the same for each agency?

# Cost Effectiveness Considerations and Compliance with Program Funding Guidelines

- Some services cost more to provide than others. (Ex: DV shelter)
- Do each of the proposals before the VFC meet the requirements of the PCCD VOCA Guidelines?
- If the organization is a member of a statewide coalition, does the VFC have a copy of their most recent compliance letter?
- Does the VFC have a copy of their most recent compliance letter from PCCD?

# Coordination with the Existing Service Delivery System

- How well do the organizations before you collaborate to meet the multi-faceted needs of victims?
- Are services being unnecessarily duplicated?
- Are there service gaps?
- How do you know this?

# VFC Funding Decision (Cont.)

- Notify all applicants in writing of the funding recommendations within 7 calendar days of the VFC meeting.

**Please Note:** Recommendations are only valid if a quorum exists.

# Conflict of Interest

- A conflict of interest exists where a VFC committee member uses the authority of her position as a VFC member, or any confidential information received through the holding of that position:
  - ▣ for the benefit of herself, a member of her immediate family, an organization of which she is a member, or a member of her immediate family is associated with.
  - ▣ for the preferential treatment of any person or organization.
  - ▣ to allow an official decision to be made outside the official decision making process.

# PCCD's Review of VFC Recommendations

- PCCD staff will review and verify the following items:
  - Compliance with VOCA guidelines
  - Eligible and Ineligible Activities
  - Completeness of Application
  - All required materials have been submitted by the Chair
  - Quorum
  - Any information that prompts a Changed Triggered Review

# Required Documentation

- The VFC chair is required to submit the following items to PCCD:
  - A copy of VFC member orientation packets
    - Includes all polices and procedures
  - Signed Training Certification Form
    - Certifying at least 50% of the VFC including the VFC chair has taken the required PCCD VFC training
  - Meeting minutes detailing the discussion, attendance, vote and funding recommendations for VOCA.
    - Only required in cases involving multiple applicants.
  - VOCA Funding Certification Form (electronically submitted by each applicant)
  - A certification that no new eligible applicant applied for funding will be required.

# Change Triggered Review



During PCCD's review, certain circumstances may prompt a Change Triggered Review.

What is a Change Triggered Review (CTR)?

# Change Triggered Review

A CTR will occur in cases involving one or more of the following:

- Increase or decrease of 5% or more to any currently funded VOCA recipient;
- Allocation to a new recipient;
- Defunding of a current recipient; or
- Significant concerns as a result of monitoring or fiscal/programmatic report reviews.

# Change Triggered Review

- **IMPORTANT:** A CTR is NOT a substitute for a VOCA applicant's request for reconsideration of the VFC's recommendation.
- A CTR will not occur if the increase or decrease is solely the result of a change in the county's allocation.

# Change Triggered Review Process

- PCCD OVS Staff will review the following:
  - Meeting Minutes for a detailed description and justification of all funding decisions.
  - Justification for Change
  - Additional Information Requested by PCCD

# Request for Reconsideration

- An agency may seek reconsideration through the PCCD Request for Reconsideration Procedures Policy.
- Applicant's request must be submitted in writing to PCCD within 14 calendar days of official notification of the outcome of the VFC deliberations.
- An reconsideration should be based one or more of the following:
  - Violation of VFC Guidelines
  - Violation of PCCD Standards
- VFC Chair must submit a written response to PCCD within 14 days of PCCD making the VFC aware that an reconsideration has been received.

# CTR vs. Reconsideration

## CTR

- ❑ PCCD Staff Initiated
- ❑ Does NOT replace a reconsideration
- ❑ Only occurs under certain circumstances
- ❑ OVS CTR decision is not appealable

## Reconsideration

- ❑ Agency Initiated
- ❑ Strict timeline
- ❑ OVS decision is appealable to VSAC

**Note:** PCCD's review for a CTR or reconsideration will both include the review of VFC guidelines, policies and procedures and their compliance with PCCD standards.

# Why the new VFC Process?



- Local decisions are best made at the local level
- Streamline the decision making process

# VFC Forms and Documents

- All VFC related forms will be emailed to all VFC Chairs and VOCA recipients at the conclusion of the two trainings and will be available on PCCD's website for future access.

<http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Pages/Victim-Services--Rights,-Services,-Technology-and-Training.aspx>

<http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Pages/VOCA-Funding-Committee.aspx>

# QUESTIONS ?

If you have any additional questions after the conclusion of this WebEx please email them to:

[RA-OVS-FUNDINGINFO@pa.gov](mailto:RA-OVS-FUNDINGINFO@pa.gov)