

# **Iowa Attorney General's Office Crime Victim Assistance Division (CVAD) Victim Services Support Program (VSS)**

## **Travel Reimbursements:**

**Questions:** Why are there variances in mileage reimbursement rates for each organization? Why does each organization have different travel forms?

**Answer:** Each non-profit organization has a Board that provides oversight on the organization's programming, policies and financials. In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2013 and 2014, each organization's Board determined the travel reimbursement rates, guidelines and forms for their organization. The CVAD Victim Services Support Program would reimburse mileage at the rate established in the Program's set policies, not to exceed the federal mileage reimbursement rate. If an organization did not have an established travel policy then they are required to utilize the state rate.

**In SFY2015:** Starting in SFY2015 (7/1/14) a Victim Services Orientation Manual was created to provide guidance to Programs regarding policies and procedures around claims reimbursement, travel/mileage procedures, allowable expenses, funding stream guidelines and other programmatic necessities. As outlined in the Orientation Manual, all organizations are **required** to utilize the new uniform travel forms and the state mileage rate for travel reimbursement. Organizations are allowed to reimburse at a higher rate, but will have to make up the difference in costs out of their other funds, as the VSS program will only allow reimbursement at the State rate.

New forms were redesigned for all aspects of programming: travel, mileage, pre-approval of out of state travel, budget revision requests, payroll summary and expense forms, internal tracking forms, direct client assistance tracking forms, appeal form, etc. The forms are professional, mirror other State tracking forms as closely as possible, have been standardized and all Programs are expected to utilize these forms going forward. Varying Program documents are no longer acceptable.

## **Chronological Order of Claims Documentation:**

**Question:** In some cases the documentation seems to be out of order and difficult to determine what documentation is related to which expense?

**Answer:** In SFY2013 and SFY2014, programs were required to provide expense summaries for type of expenses when there are more than three different costs listed for that expense type. The claim documentation is organized by expense type listed on the reimbursement claim form.

**In SFY2015:** In SFY2015, the orientation manual addresses chronological submission of reimbursement claim expenses. The new Claim reimbursement forms now require programs to number all supporting documentation and indicate the number of the supporting documentation corresponding to each expense on the claim reimbursement cover sheet. This allows for greater ease of reading and easy reconciliation of expense to supporting documentation.

### **Overtime:**

**Question:** What standards are utilized for determining overtime and is prior approval required?

**Answer:** As stated above each non-profit organization has a Board that provides oversight on the organization's programming, policies and financials. Each organization has set policies around determining overtime and all of their policies include approval by a supervisor or the director of the organization. All organizations provided a 24-7 crisis response. Overtime is primarily utilized to cover emergency 24-7 shelter and emergency response to victims after hours. Organizations follow all federal and state regulations regarding overtime. Organizations cannot ever exceed their total award/contract amount even if overtime was incurred in the contract period. In other words, if a Program incurs more overtime than they budgeted for, they would have to make up the difference with other funds. As part of on-site monitoring conducted by the VSS program, overtime is evaluated on how often it is utilized and whether the reason for overtime is justified. Prior approval from VSS program is not required for overtime, but an organization cannot exceed their award amount/contract and VSS program always has the right to deny an expense if it is unreasonable.

### **Bonuses:**

**Question:** Are bonuses being reimbursed by the VSS program? How does each program determine the bonus and the source of the bonuses?

**Answer:** Bonuses are not allowable for reimbursement with any of the VSS program funds. Each non-profit organization has a Board that determines when bonuses are allowed, amount of bonuses and source of payment for the bonuses. The VSS program does not have the authority to restrict what an agency does with their other funding sources. Bonuses are typically paid out of donation funds. However, the VSS program can bring concerns regarding these practices to the attention of the organization's Board.

### **Payroll/Time/Attendance Records:**

**Question:** Why are payroll, time and attendance records different with each organization?

**Answer:** Each organization is a stand-alone organization (vendor) and uses their own internal software or an outside payroll processing service which varies by organization.

In SFY2013, organizations utilized their own time/attendance records that are checked at on-site monitoring visits and reconciled to their VSS program reimbursement claims.

In SFY2014, VSS program required all organizations to use a standard, detailed time allotment sheet that shows date, hours spent by funding source and description of duties provided. Each organization tracks services being provided to victims by staff. Time allotment/attendance records are reviewed by VSS program at on-site monitoring visits.