

2025-2028 VSAC STRATEGIC GOALS + OBJECTIVES



Pillar 1: Sustainable Funding & Strategic Investments

GOAL 1: Secure long-term funding to bolster Pennsylvania’s victims’ services infrastructure to ensure resources are available and accessible to help individuals and communities heal.

Sustained, reliable funding is essential for Pennsylvania’s ability to meet the needs of victims and survivors across all communities. Given the ongoing uncertainty at the federal level and significant reductions in federal VOCA allocations to states, including Pennsylvania, it is vital to identify and pursue ways to maintain core services and increase flexibility for local programs to meet evolving needs.

- **Objective 1.1: Pursue actions necessary to preserve, adapt, increase, and sustain financial resources for Pennsylvania’s victim services providers and their partners.**

Strategy / Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<u>Strategy 1.1.A.</u> Identify initiatives that may need to be adjusted or rightsized in the face of funding cuts to prioritize continued financial support for local victim services programs.	<i>PCCD staff</i>	Immediate <i>(0-6 months)</i>
<u>Strategy 1.1.B.</u> Create briefing materials, impact reports, and other communications for policymakers and stakeholders, emphasizing the impact of victim services and the risks of disinvestment.	<i>Communications, Policy & Legislative Affairs + OVS staff</i>	Immediate <i>(0-6 months)</i>
<u>Strategy 1.1.C.</u> Advocate for federal legislation to reform funding mechanisms for VOCA Grants and Compensation programs, which provide critical financial support for states and local victims’ services agencies.	<i>Commission & VSAC; Policy & Legislative Affairs + OVS staff</i>	Short-term <i>(7-12 months)</i>
<u>Strategy 1.1.D.</u> Explore and pursue alternate funding sources for victims’ services programs and compensation at the federal, state, and local levels to diminish reliance on fines and fees.	<i>Commission & VSAC; Policy & Legislative Affairs + OVS staff</i>	Short-term <i>(7-12 months)</i>

- **Objective 1.2: Strengthen data-informed decision-making around funding and service needs.**

Strategy / Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<u>Strategy 1.2.A.</u> Review findings and recommendations from ICF’s Resources for Victims of Gun Violence Initiative statewide and regional needs assessment project.	<i>VSAC (Access to Services); PCCD staff (OVS, Office of Gun Violence Prevention)</i>	Immediate <i>(0-6 months)</i>
<u>Strategy 1.2.B.</u> Review and refine the VS3 Outcome Tool, Victim Needs Survey and Victims Compensation Assistance Survey to better capture service outcomes and unmet needs/gaps.	<i>VSAC (Access to Services)</i>	Mid-Term <i>(13-24 months)</i>

<p><u>Strategy 1.2.C.</u> Use findings to shape future funding decisions and policies (including professional standards, as needed).</p>	<p>VSAC (<i>Access to Services / Services & Standards</i>); <i>Commission</i></p>	<p>Long-Term (25-36 months)</p>
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GOAL 2: Maintain and support core multidisciplinary partnerships.

Pennsylvania has earned a reputation nationally for advancing innovative and high-quality services for victims and survivors. Much of this groundbreaking work has centered on multidisciplinary collaboration and partnerships that are trauma-informed and responsive to victims’ and communities’ needs. VSAC has historically invested in cross-sector approaches like Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTs) as well as county S*T*O*P Implementation Teams through multiple funding streams – from VOCA to VAWA and more. As the policy and funding landscape continues to shift, it is critical to continue support for these collaborative models by prioritizing available resources for maintaining these local-level programs.

- **Objective 2.1: Maintain support for Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTs), S*T*O*P Teams, and similar collaborative models, with an emphasis on resource-sharing and coordination.**

Strategy / Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<p><u>Strategy 2.1.A.</u> Emphasize responsivity to all victims’ needs as part of coordinated programming.</p>	<p>VSAC (<i>Services & Standards / Access to Services</i>)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><u>Strategy 2.1.B.</u> Work with local VSPs, other community-based organizations serving survivors/victims, and participants in PCCD-funded SARTs, STOP Teams, and other entities to gauge areas of need, especially in domains where PCCD can lend support (e.g., training, technical assistance, data and research, etc.).</p>	<p>VSAC; <i>Commission</i>; <i>PCCD staff</i></p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><u>Strategy 2.1.C.</u> Prioritize funding for local services and encourage the use of collaborative models as part of funding conditions/criteria for relevant grant programs administered by PCCD.</p>	<p>VSAC; <i>Commission</i>; <i>PCCD staff</i></p>	<p>Short-term (7-12 months)</p>
<p><u>Strategy 2.1.D.</u> Provide technical assistance focused on strengthening collaboration and coordination in instances where additional funding is not available.</p>	<p>VSAC; <i>relevant TTA partners</i>; <i>PCCD staff (OVS)</i></p>	<p>Mid-Term (13-24 months)</p>

GOAL 3: Increase accountability and transparency through collaborative design, launch, and implementation of a new statewide sexual assault kit tracking system.

Until the enactment of state legislation in 2024, Pennsylvania was one of just 13 states in the country that lacked a statewide automated sexual assault kit tracking system. SB 920 (Act 122 of 2024) mandates the development and launch of a statewide automated sexual assault kit tracking system. This legislation builds on recent efforts by the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) and Department of Health (DOH) to significantly reduce the number of untested and backlogged rape kits awaiting testing – from 3,044 in 2016 to 177 in 2022 (an 85% decrease). This new legislation, coupled with resources secured through a \$2.5

million federal FY 2024 National Sexual assault Kit Initiative (NSAKI) grant secured by PCCD, will help Pennsylvania implement these new requirements in a multi-phased, comprehensive approach.

- **Objective 3.1: Use available resources and partnerships to launch and maintain Pennsylvania’s first statewide automated sexual assault kit tracking system, pursuant to Act 122 of 2024.**

Strategy / Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<u>Strategy 3.1.A.</u> Secure National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (NSAKI) federal funding to implement SB 920 requirements.	<i>PCCD, in partnership with PSP, DOH, and PCAR</i>	Complete
<u>Strategy 3.1.B.</u> Establish a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) to support and oversee the multi-phased project.	<i>PCCD; project partners (PCAR, PSP, DOH)</i>	Complete
<u>Strategy 3.1.C.</u> Procure system and related supports necessary to implement requirements of SB 920.	<i>PCCD; OA/IT; project partners (PCAR, DOH, PSP)</i>	Immediate <i>(0-6 months)</i>
<u>Strategy 3.1.D.</u> Initial system development, configuration, and pilot testing.	<i>PCCD; selected system vendor; project partners (PCAR, DOH, PSP)</i>	Mid-Term <i>(13-24 months)</i>
<u>Strategy 3.1.E.</u> Stakeholder engagement, training, and technical assistance to inform pilot launch phase in region designated by MDT.	<i>PCCD; project partners (PCAR, PSP, DOH); MDT members; VSAC providing additional support as needed</i>	Mid-Term <i>(13-24 months)</i>
<u>Strategy 3.1.F.</u> Further configuration based on pilot phase and stakeholder input leading to statewide roll-out of system and related protocols/policies.	<i>PCCD, PCAR, PSP, DOH; NSAKI MDT members; VSAC providing additional support and guidance as needed</i>	Long-Term <i>(25-36 months)</i>

 **Pillar 2: Capacity Building & Workforce Strengthening**

GOAL 4: Preserve and enhance the capacity of Pennsylvania’s victims’ services workforce through strategic investments and partnerships.

The strength of the Commonwealth’s victim services field begins with the people delivering those services. As staffing shortages, burnout, and compensation challenges threaten the sustainability and operational integrity of programs, it is crucial to pursue investments, partnerships, and other practical approaches that can bolster Pennsylvania’s victims’ services workforce in both the short- and long-term.

- **Objective 4.1: Identify and address key training needs using shared and existing resources.**

Strategy / Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
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<u>Strategy 4.1.A.</u> Create inventory of existing trainings offered for victim service programs to identify potential gaps and priority areas.	<i>PCCD (OVS) in partnership with PDAI, PCAR and PCADV</i>	Mid-Term <i>(13-24 months)</i>
<u>Strategy 4.1.B.</u> Explore opportunities for cross-sector/cross-system collaboration and virtual learning to address current and emerging training needs.	<i>VSAC (Services and Standards)</i>	Long-Term <i>(25-36 months)</i>
<u>Strategy 4.1.C.</u> Prioritize available resources to fill critical training gaps.	<i>VSAC (Services and Standards)</i>	Long-Term <i>(25-36 months)</i>

- **Objective 4.2: Prioritize available resources to promote sustainability of victims’ services staff and other key personnel.**

Strategy / Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<u>Strategy 4.2.A.</u> Survey victim services programs on staffing and related capacity issues to gauge current landscape and areas of need.	<i>PCCD staff (OVS)</i>	Immediate <i>(0-6 months)</i>
<u>Strategy 4.2.B.</u> Explore development of a compensation snapshot or survey to identify current trends and identify potential retention risks.	<i>PCCD staff (Communications, Policy & Legislative Affairs + OVS)</i>	Short-term <i>(7-12 months)</i>
<u>Strategy 4.2.C.</u> Consider mechanisms to enhance flexibility of existing PCCD funding streams to prioritize staff retention	<i>PCCD staff</i>	Mid-Term <i>(13-24 months)</i>
<u>Strategy 4.2.D.</u> Explore mechanisms to provide livable and equitable wages and benefits for victims’ services staff.	<i>VSAC (Services and Standards)</i>	Long-Term <i>(25-36 months)</i>



Pillar 3: Raising Awareness & Strengthening Connections

GOAL 5: Prioritize available resources, outreach, and access for un- and underserved populations and communities.

Victims/survivors from un - and underserved communities often face significant barriers to accessing support and services – from limited transportation options, lack of nearby services, language access challenges, and other difficulties. It is important for Pennsylvania to consider ways to address these barriers so survivors are not left behind.

- **Objective 5.1: Define ‘unserved’ and ‘underserved’ victim/survivor populations and identify current gaps in services and accessibility.**

Strategy / Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<u>Strategy 5.1.A.</u> Examine data from Victims’ Needs Survey and other relevant sources to identify specific un- and underserved areas and populations (e.g., gaps).	<i>VSAC (Access to Services); PCCD ORESPD and IUP researchers</i>	Short-term <i>(7-12 months)</i>

<u>Strategy 5.1.B.</u> Map where un- and underserved populations are present compared to available resources and services.	VSAC (Access to Services); PCCD ORESPD and IUP researchers; other relevant stakeholders (e.g., VSPs, etc.)	Mid-Term (13-24 months)
<u>Strategy 5.1.C.</u> Leverage existing networks and providers to identify and pursue strategies to effectively reach and serve these areas/populations, with a focus on low- or no-cost options.	VSAC (Access to Services); PCCD ORESPD and IUP researchers	Long-Term (25-36 months)

- **Objective 5.2: Make Victim’s Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP) more streamlined and accessible, especially for un- and underserved crime victims.**

Strategy / Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<u>Strategy 5.2.A.</u> Refresh/update existing materials to promote VCAP to the public.	VSAC (Services and Standards); PCCD staff (Communications)	Immediate (0-6 months)
<u>Strategy 5.2.B.</u> Examine current VCAP protocols to identify points at which individuals may get ‘stuck’, or areas where there may be limited awareness of VCAP as a resource.	VSAC (Services and Standards); PCCD staff; CODE PA	Short-term (7-12 months)
<u>Strategy 5.2.C.</u> Based on findings from Action 5.2.B., explore opportunities to develop digital tools that can help ‘translate’ VCAP processes and requirements for victims and professionals serving them, such as a ‘pre-check’ option.	PCCD staff; CODE PA	Mid-Term (13-24 months)
<u>Strategy 5.2.D.</u> Develop and distribute adaptable, ready-to-use resources (e.g., outreach toolkits, etc.) to local partners for community-based distribution.	VSAC (Services and Standards); PCCD staff (Communications)	Long-Term (25-36 months)

GOAL 6: Increase public awareness of the value and importance of victims’ services and compensation programs in Pennsylvania through collaborative, strategic communications and stakeholder engagement strategies.

It is essential that victim services and related resources (such as VCAP) are visible and coordinated so survivors can access help when they need it. In its planning efforts, VSAC heard from members of the field that strengthening communication, outreach, and engagement efforts will help elevate the field and reinforce the need for continued investments in this life-saving work among federal, state, and local leaders.

- **Objective 6.1: Increase awareness of victims’ services and compensation among members of the public, as well as key decision-makers, in Pennsylvania.**

Strategy / Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
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<u>Strategy 6.1.A.</u> Pursue strategies to increase visibility of victims' services and compensation programs in Pennsylvania.	<i>PCCD staff (Communications, Policy & Legislative Affairs + OVS)</i>	Ongoing
<u>Strategy 6.1.B.</u> Establish an ad hoc working group focused on outreach and communications to support VSAC's implementation of this objective.	VSAC	Immediate (0-6 months)
<u>Strategy 6.1.C.</u> Update and reuse key messages and materials developed by PCCD and partners.	<i>PCCD staff (Communications, Policy & Legislative Affairs + OVS)</i>	Short-term (7-12 months)
<u>Strategy 6.1.D.</u> Develop and launch a multi-phased statewide communications plan, with a focus on digital, no-cost, and partnership-driven platforms.	<i>VSAC (ad hoc workgroup); PCCD (Communications, Policy & Legislative Affairs + OVS)</i>	Mid-Term (13-24 months)
<u>Strategy 6.1.E.</u> Identify mechanisms to track baseline awareness levels and determine if outreach and messaging are having intended effects.	<i>VSAC (ad hoc workgroup); PCCD staff (OVS, ORESPD + IUP researchers)</i>	Long-Term (25-36 months)

- **Objective 6.2: Reinforce collaboration through existing local and state-level structures and partnerships.**

Strategy / Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<u>Strategy 6.2.A.</u> Update PCCD's Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB) membership standards to include victim services.	<i>PCCD (Office of Justice Programs, OVS)</i>	Short-term (7-12 months)
<u>Strategy 6.2.B.</u> Identify and highlight current successful collaborative partnerships and other best practices to replicate across more programs.	<i>PCCD (OVS)</i>	Mid-Term (13-24 months)

- **Objective 6.3: Promote meaningful, scalable, and flexible stakeholder engagement strategies.**

Strategy / Action	Lead(s)	Timeframe
<u>Strategy 6.3.A.</u> Continue to provide information to the field through OVS newsletters and other digital communications.	<i>PCCD (OVS, Communications)</i>	Ongoing
<u>Strategy 6.3.B.</u> Host virtual or hybrid stakeholder sessions and learning forums on a quarterly or biannual basis.	<i>PCCD (OVS, Communications)</i>	Short-term (7-12 months)
<u>Strategy 6.3.C.</u> Build on existing groups and networks to get ongoing feedback from providers, victims, and other key stakeholders.	<i>VSAC; PCCD (OVS)</i>	Mid-Term (13-24 months)