



Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts Performance Audit Division

Greg S. Griffin, State Auditor
Leslie McGuire, Director

Why we did this review

The House Appropriations Committee requested this special examination of the funding models for domestic violence (DV) shelters and sexual assault (SA) centers. Based on the request, we determined:

- the composition of individual DV shelter and SA center funding;
- trends in funding for certified DV shelters and SA centers, by source;
- conditions associated with shelter and center federal funding that result in funding gaps
- services provided by DV shelters and SA centers; and
- availability of information to assess the performance of shelters and centers

About shelters and centers

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) manages the state's family violence appropriation and federal grants for crime victims. DV shelters and SA centers statewide are recipients of these funds.

In fiscal year 2018, 46 shelters and 22 centers received state funds. Shelters and centers must meet established standards in order to be eligible to receive funding. However, historically, funding has been limited to these entities with few exceptions. Currently there are 10 centers and 1 shelter that meet standards; however, there is no process by which they can apply for and receive state funds.

Requested Information on the Funding of Domestic Violence Shelters and Sexual Assault Centers

What we found

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) is responsible for allocating and managing the grants for the 46 domestic violence (DV) shelters and 22 sexual assault (SA) centers that currently receive state family violence funds. In state fiscal year 2019, grants to DV shelters ranged from \$159,612 to \$443,094 with a median award of \$241,099. SA centers each received a grant of \$39,632.

In addition to the state funds, these entities receive federal funds, local funds, and may generate their own revenues. We found these entities rely heavily on state and federal funding. DV shelters reported 43% of their fiscal year 2016 budgets came from federal sources while 29% came from state sources. SA centers reported 57% of their budgets came from federal sources, and 12% came from state sources, for the same period.

Since 2015, shelters and centers have seen an increase in federal funding, largely supported by the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds. For example, VOCA expenditures by shelters and centers increased from \$4.5 million in federal fiscal year 2015 to \$23.9 million in federal fiscal year 2018. Additionally, state funding has increased slightly from \$11.8 million to \$12.7 million during this period. However, when adjusted for inflation, state funding has effectively decreased by approximately \$2 million since 2009.

Center and shelter directors indicated that state funds are used to fill the gaps left by federal funding. For example, in state fiscal year 2017, shelters and centers used 74% of state funds for personal services (including executive director salaries). Other expenses included utilities, client assistance, and mortgage payments; these types of indirect expenses are often not covered by federal funding sources.

Some directors of these entities also indicated that the reimbursement nature of the grants makes it difficult to expend all funds because they may not have the cash flow to pay expenses up front. These problems can be exacerbated by a match requirement associated with some of the more prominent federal funding sources. CJCC has taken steps to address these challenges. In October 2018, CJCC sped reimbursement processing by accepting electronic signatures on expenditure reports. This was an interim measure; in March 2019, its new grants management system should be live. According to staff, during a later implementation phase, CJCC will integrate the new system with the financial system so that reimbursement information flows electronically. Finally, CJCC began offering quarterly advance payments for state family violence funding in July 2018. This allowed shelters and centers to receive a quarter of their funding up-front. Approximately, two-thirds of both DV shelters and SA centers took advantage of this opportunity (29 of 46 shelter, 15 of 22 centers). Finally, the federal agency that oversees VOCA funds recently allowed entities to apply for a waiver to the match requirement. For their 2018 VOCA grants, 34 of 61 entities requested and received partial waivers for their VOCA grants with waivers ranging from 11% to 79% of the total match requirement.

In addition to reviewing the funding sources and trends, we also reviewed the services provided by these entities. DV shelters and SA centers provide free and confidential victim assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Per state standards, shelters and centers must operate a crisis line and have staff available to provide support 24 hours per day. DV shelters must also provide 24-hour access to emergency shelter. Shelters also provide a vast array of services and referrals including resources for financial assistance, counseling, legal assistance, medical services, victim compensation, children's services, transportation, employment services, and parenting/educational services. SA centers must provide immediate crisis intervention via the 24-hour crisis line and/or in-person assistance when necessary. Similar to DV shelters, SA centers help victims navigate medical and legal systems to obtain needed services. They may also provide specialized services, such as forensic medical exams, therapy, and support group services.

In attempting to analyze services provided, we obtained information from CJCC's data systems, but ultimately determined that, due to the way information is retained and the quality of the information, we could not use it. It should be noted that CJCC is aware of the limitations and reported actions to improve the data collection and validation. As a result, there could be an opportunity to use this information to assess performance of shelters and centers in the future.

We also identified the process for awarding state family violence funding as an area for consideration. Generally, the state awards grant funds based on an established formula, or with the goal of achieving a certain outcome, or a desired number of outputs. However, the family violence funding grant award process is currently based on historical precedent; not on these types of factors. CJCC has continued to fund the same grantees at the levels established by the former administrator. Since then CJCC has added funding to each center and shelter, either proportionally or as flat amount across the board, based on the state appropriation. Revisiting the process for awarding family violence funds would allow CJCC to ensure that these funds are having the desired impact in terms of service coverage, access for victims, accountability of the funded entities, transparency of processes, or other identified goals for this funding.

What we recommend

This report is intended to answer question posed by the House Appropriations Committee and to help inform policy decisions.

Summary of Response: In its response to the report, CJCC indicated that they agree with the information provided in the report. They provided additional information related to their information system, which is included on page 23. CJCC indicated that it views the relationship with the shelters and centers as a partnership and believes that the state has made strides towards improving the services provided. It noted that it will continue to provide more technical assistance and training to new and existing staff at shelters and centers to ensure individuals are adequately trained.

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Purpose of the Special Examination

The Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts conducted this review of domestic violence shelter and sexual assault center funding models at the request of the House Appropriations Committee. The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) is responsible for awarding and monitoring the majority of the federal and state funding shelters and centers receive. Based on the Committee's request, this review addresses the following questions:

1. What is the composition of individual domestic violence (DV) shelter and sexual assault (SA) center funding (e.g., what percentage is federal funds versus state funds versus local funds)?
2. What are the trends in funding for certified DV shelters and SA centers by source?
3. Are there conditions (restrictions and requirements) associated with shelter and center federal funding that result in funding gaps? If so, what are the gaps and can state funding be used to address them?
4. What services do individual DV shelters and SA centers provide?
5. Is there information available that could be used to assess the performance of DV shelters and SA centers? If so, how is this information used?

A description of the objectives, scope, and methodology used in this review is included in [Appendix A](#). A draft of the report was provided to CJCC for its review, and pertinent responses were incorporated into the report.

Background

State Family Violence Program

The Georgia General Assembly codified funding for family violence shelters in 1981 to provide for the temporary care of family violence victims. Through O.C.G.A. 19-13-20, the state provides funding for certified domestic violence (DV) shelters and sexual assault (SA) centers that serve victims of family violence and their dependent children.¹ By state law, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) administers the state's family violence funding.² CJCC is responsible for establishing minimum certification standards for shelters, reviewing applications for new family violence shelters, and evaluating compliance with certification standards annually. In 2016, it also adopted standards for SA centers. According to state law, to be certified, entities must meet state standards, have a facility to receive or house family violence victims, obtain periodic written endorsements from local law enforcement, and receive at least 25% of their funding from other sources. Entities must be certified to receive state funding.

¹ State law defines a family violence shelter as council-approved facilities that temporarily "receive or house" family violence victims. According to current and former administrators of the funds, the term "family violence shelter" has been interpreted to include both shelters and centers.

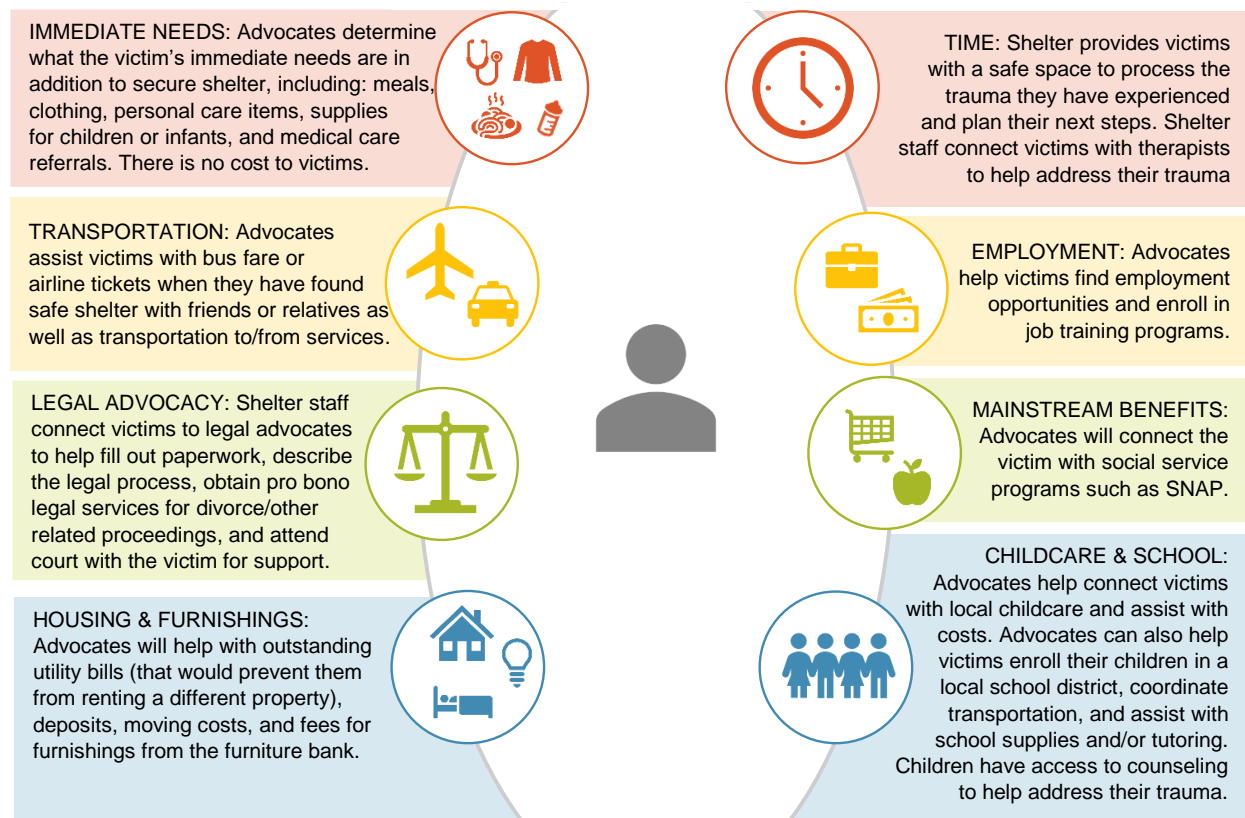
² Originally, the law vested the Department of Human Resources (now DHS) with these responsibilities. Administration moved from DHS to the Governor's Office for Children and Families (GOCF) then to CJCC in fiscal year 2015.

State Funded Shelters and Centers

The DV shelters and SA centers receiving family violence funding provide free and confidential victim assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Per state standards, shelters and centers must operate a crisis line and have staff available to provide support 24 hours per day. DV shelters must also provide 24-hour access to emergency shelter. As shown in **Exhibit 1**, shelters provide a vast array of services and referrals including resources for financial assistance, counseling, legal assistance, medical services, victim compensation, children's services, transportation, employment services, and parenting/educational services.

Exhibit 1

Domestic Violence Shelters Provide More than Shelter



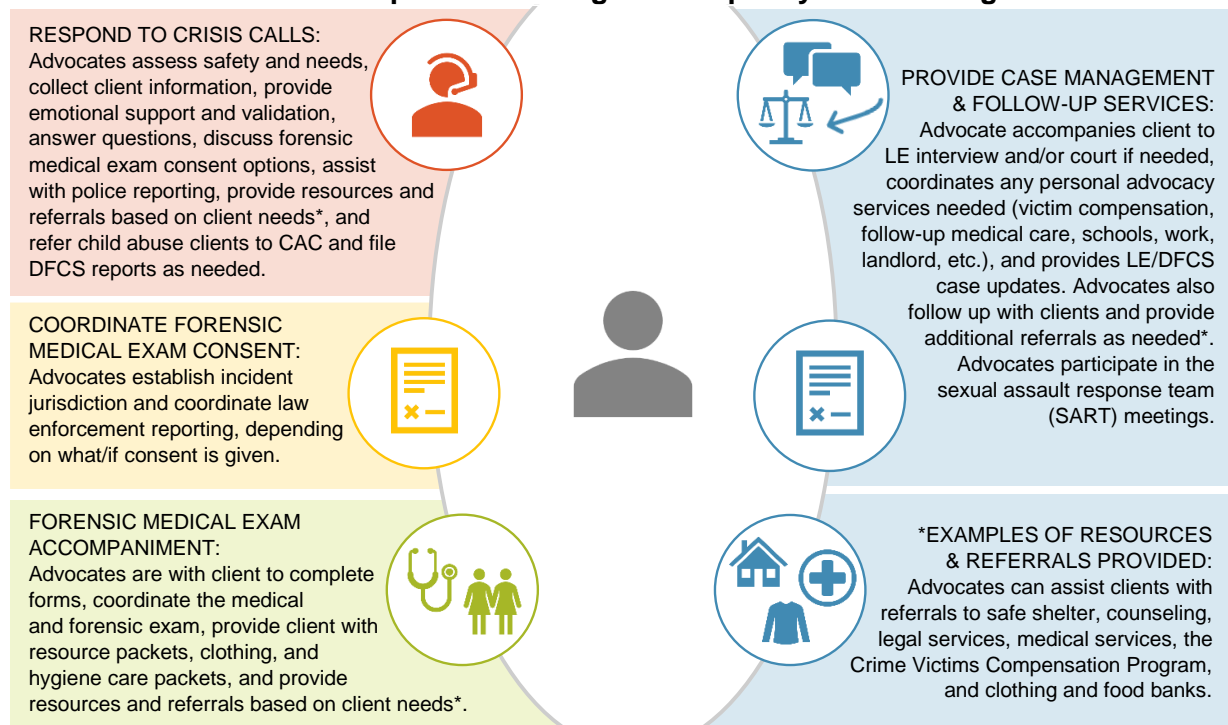
Source: Interviews with shelter directors

SA centers must provide immediate crisis intervention via the 24-hour crisis line and/or in-person assistance when necessary. As shown in Exhibit 2, similar to DV shelters, SA centers help victims navigate medical and legal systems to obtain needed services. SA centers may provide specialized services (e.g., forensic medical exams, therapy, and support groups) in which case additional state standards apply.

Some shelters and centers operate as dual or tri-centers, meaning they offer more than one type of program. According to CJCC staff, seven entities operate as dual DV shelters and SA centers, providing both services.³ Additionally, five SA centers operate a child advocacy center (CAC) as well, making them dual centers.⁴ There are three tri-centers; each operates as a domestic violence shelter, a sexual assault center, and a child advocacy center.

Exhibit 2

Sexual Assault Centers Help Victims Navigate Multiple Systems during Crisis



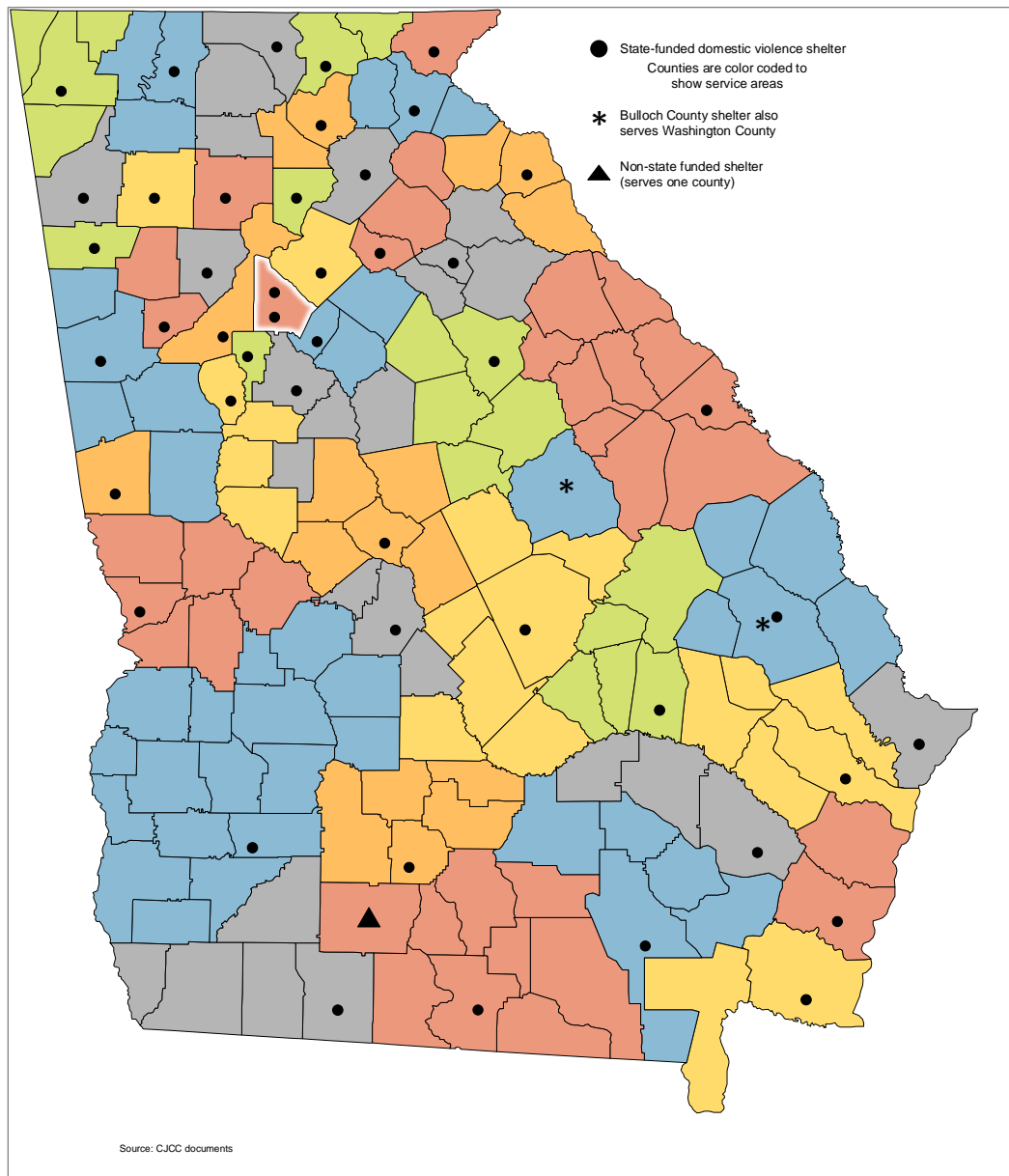
Source: Interviews with center directors

³ An additional shelter has started offering SA services via an agreement with another shelter. However, it is not the recipient of grant funds for SA services.

⁴ Child advocacy centers provide and coordinate services for victims of child abuse.

Currently, CJCC distributes state funding via annual grants to 46 DV shelters and 22 SA centers.⁵ As shown in Exhibits 3 and 4, state funded DV shelters and SA centers are located throughout the state (see Appendix B for a list of state-funded entities and their service areas). Exhibit 3 shows service areas for these DV shelters cover all counties with some southern shelters covering large service areas (up to 17 counties). As discussed in the following section, there is one DV shelter that, while it meets state standards, does not receive family violence grant funding. Its service area overlaps an existing center's service area as shown in Exhibit 3.

Exhibit 3 State-Funded DV Shelters Provide Service in all Georgia Counties

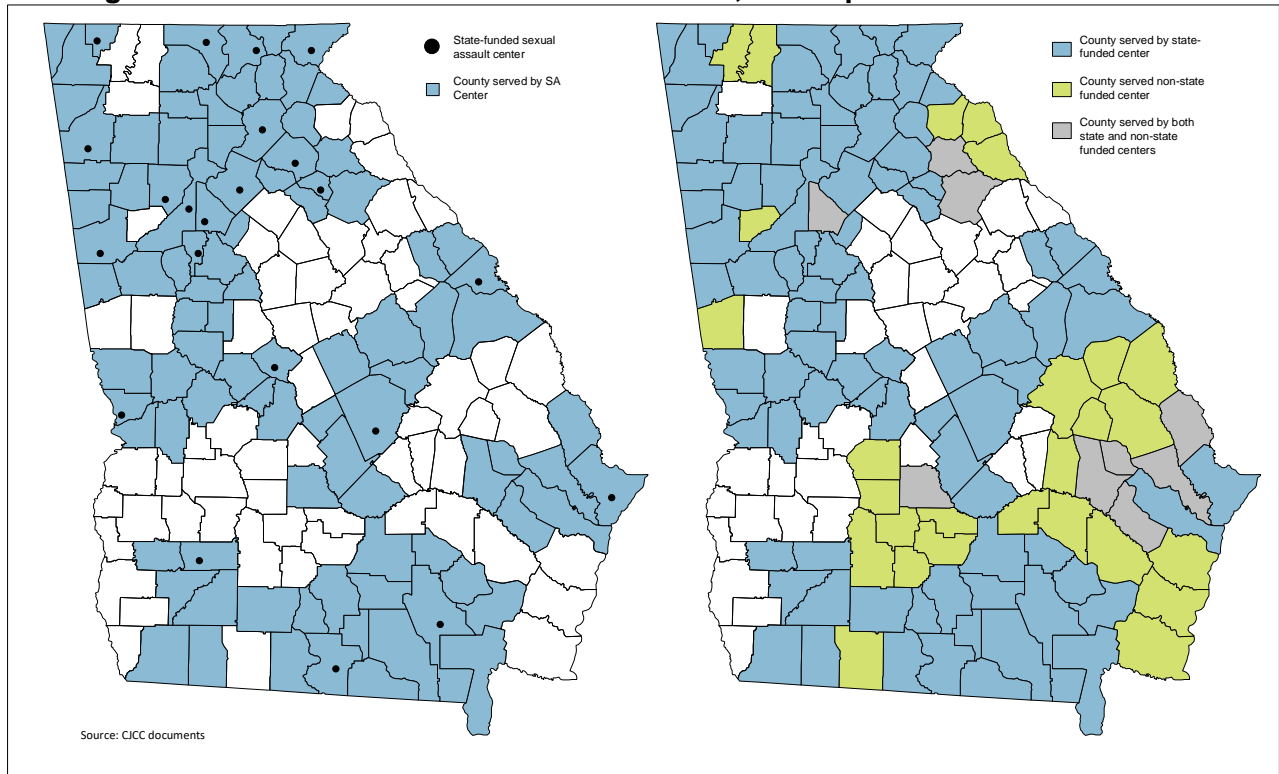


⁵ These 68 grants are awarded to 61 shelters and centers. Seven of the entities are certified as both a shelter and a center and receive a grant for each program.

SA centers have notable geographic gaps in coverage through the middle and southwestern parts of the state. These centers have service areas ranging from 1 to 9 counties. As discussed in the following section, there are sexual assault centers operating in the state that do not receive state funds. **Exhibit 4** shows these centers cover areas not served by state-funded centers and also provide additional service in some counties already served.

Exhibit 4

Coverage Increases with Non-State Funded Shelters; but Gaps Still Exist



Other Shelters and Centers

In order to receive state funding, centers and shelters must meet certification standards. However, while state law outlines a process for entities to apply for certification, state funding has been restricted to the same shelters and centers since at least 2015.⁶ Interviews indicated that funding restrictions may have been in place as early as 2012, but little documentation remains from previous funding administrators. CJCC has treated the family violence funding as “continuation funding” limiting its distribution to current recipients only. As a result, there has been no opportunity for unfunded entities to apply for certification and obtain state funding. Interviews with CJCC and DV shelter and SA center leadership revealed concerns that awards to current recipients would be reduced to accommodate more entities, which would have a significant and detrimental effect on some centers’ and shelters’ ability to provide services.

⁶ Since 2015, the only change has been one sexual assault center closure. CJCC distributed state funding for the closed center equally among the remaining 22 centers that currently receive state funds.

Even though state funding is limited to these 61 shelters and centers, Georgia has other shelters, centers, and community programs that serve domestic violence and sexual assault victims. CJCC staff reported that there are 10 SA centers and 1 DV shelter that meet, or are in the process of meeting, state certification standards and thus would be eligible for state funding if grants were competitive.⁷ Furthermore, there is another DV shelter that, while it is not certified or in process, CJCC staff stated could qualify for state funding based on their experience working with the entity. Because state funding is restricted to the 61 shelters and centers, these entities are not considered for state funding. Furthermore, because CJCC adopted these state certification standards as its own standards, and the 11 certified entities meet those standards, they are performing at the same level as the funded entities. The decision to restrict funding is a historical one.

CJCC also indicated that 18 community programs currently serve victims of domestic violence and receive grant funds (although not state funds). However, these programs do not provide shelter and, therefore, are not required to meet state certification standards.

Shelter and Center Funding Sources

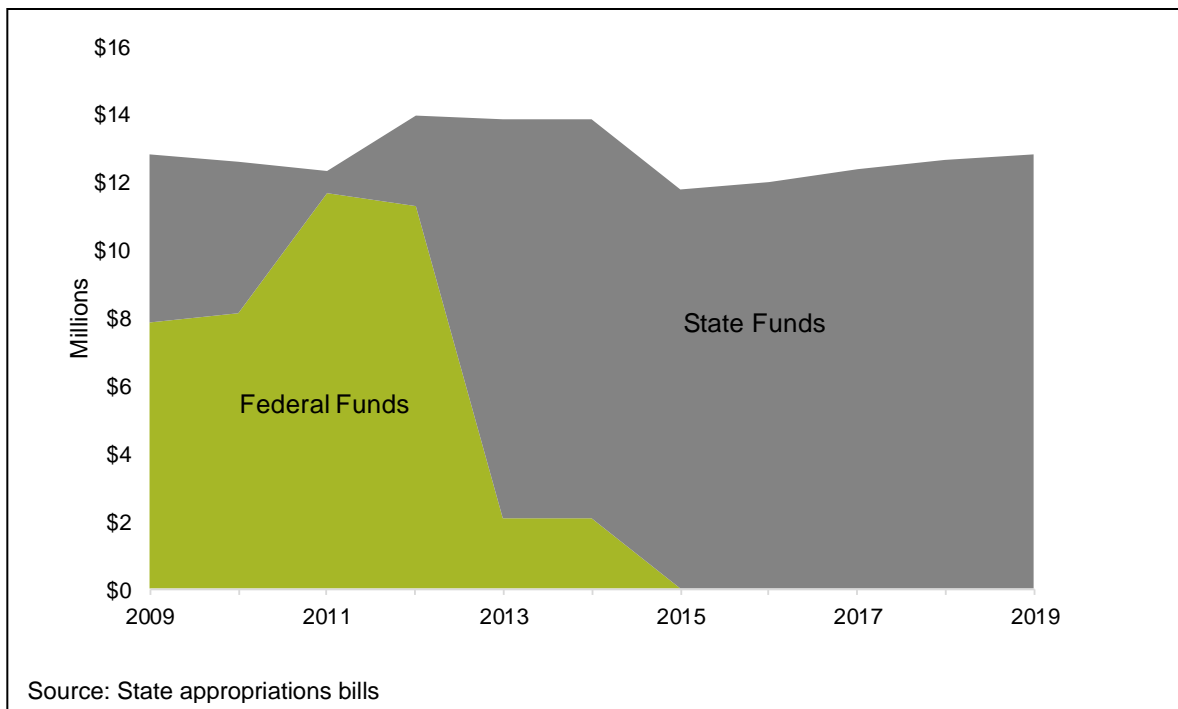
Dedicated State Funding

The state budget outlines dedicated funding for certified shelters and centers under Georgia's family violence program. For the past 10 years, Georgia has appropriated an average of \$13 million annually to the family violence program. **Exhibit 5** shows appropriations were at their highest in 2012 when it reached nearly \$14 million. At that time, family violence funding was primarily federal funds (over 80%) from Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) and the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant among other sources. Funding was at its lowest in 2015, after the state removed federal funding from the family violence budget.

Since the 2015 funding reduction (a 15% decrease), program funding has increased 1%-3% each year, but it remains slightly lower than it was in 2009. The state funded portion of the family violence program went from a low of 5% (\$655,000) in 2011 to 100% (\$11.8 million) in 2015 and has remained entirely state funded since then. In state fiscal year 2019, family violence funding totaled \$12.8 million. When controlled for inflation, the dedicated state funding has decreased by approximately \$2 million.

⁷ Two of these sexual assault centers are part of a dual center (with a DV shelter). These programs receive state funding for the DV portion of their operation and other federal grants through CJCC to support the sexual assault portion of their operation. An additional two centers offer both DV and SA services, but are not eligible for sexual assault funding.

Exhibit 5
Family Violence Program Funding has been Fully State Funded Since 2015



CJCC distributes virtually all of the state family violence funding to DV shelters and SA centers. During fiscal year 2018, CJCC budgeted 99% of the \$12.7 million appropriation for distribution to the certified DV and SA entities. According to the Zero Based Budget report produced by the Office of Planning and Budget (OPB):

- DV shelters were budgeted approximately 92% of the state family violence funding in fiscal year 2018, with average individual awards of \$251,603.
- In the same year, SA centers were budgeted 7% of state funds (\$911,536) with individual awards of \$39,632 each.
- CJCC budgeted approximately 1% to support its administrative expenses.

According to CJCC staff, the agency awards family violence funding based on historical precedent. Staff reported previous family violence funding administrators allocated DV shelter funds using a formula. CJCC does not have documentation that explains the funding formula upon which current funding relies. Former Governor's Office for Children and Families (GOCF) staff and veteran shelter directors reported that the formula included a base amount of \$125,000 and additional funding based on factors such as bed nights, population, services, and service area square miles. According to OPB's report, state administrators last calculated the formula in fiscal year 2012; however, the results of this formula have remained the base funding amount that CJCC awards to DV shelters. CJCC divides additional state appropriations equally among DV shelters on top of the original formula allocation from 2012.

Keeping with historical precedent, and as noted earlier, CJCC awards SA centers equal awards. CJCC currently distributes state funding as annual grants with continuation only status (i.e., no new grantees can apply).

Federal Funding Sources

CJCC is the state level recipient of federal grants for victim services. It is responsible for distributing these grants to programs, known as sub-recipients, throughout the state that meet specified criteria. Certified shelters and centers qualify for several federal victim services grants. **Exhibit 6** provides a general description of each grant administered by CJCC that shelters and centers might receive. These grants are available to eligible victim service programs, of which the state certified shelters and centers are a subset.⁸ Funding from these sources varies based on funding decisions made by CJCC and the federal agencies.

To an extent, federal requirements dictate how CJCC distributes funding. For example, federal law defines the percent of S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) funding that states must allot to different agency types (e.g., law enforcement, courts, victim services, and prosecution). However, CJCC also has leeway to choose how it administers federal grants. For example, CJCC issues all grants as annual awards (though funds may not expire for multiple years) and it has created one-time grant proposals for specific purposes. Unlike state funds, some of the grants below such as Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and Family Violence and Prevention Services Act (FVPSA) may require entities to provide matching funds.

Exhibit 6

CJCC-Administered Federal Funds Available to Shelters and Centers

Funding Source	Purpose
<i>Victims of Crime Act Assistance Grant (VOCA)</i>	<i>Provide direct services to victims.</i>
<i>S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)</i>	<i>Provide services to women subjected to violent crime and strengthen the ability of law enforcement and courts to prosecute these crimes.</i>
<i>Family Violence and Prevention Services Act (FVPSA)</i>	<i>Provide emergency shelter and support services for victims of domestic violence and their dependents. Prevention activities allowed.</i>
<i>Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP)</i>	<i>Support rape crisis centers and other nonprofits that provide services to sexual assault victims.</i>
<i>Preventive Health and Health Services (PHHS) Block Grant</i>	<i>Support sexual assault prevention strategies.</i>
Source: CJCC documents and federal websites	

Though it is not universal, shelters and centers may receive housing and other social service grants administered by other state agencies as well. For example, the Department of Community Affairs administers the Emergency Solutions Grants⁹, the Department of Human Services administers the Promoting Safe and Stable Families grant, and the Department of Public Health administers a sexual assault prevention grant.

⁸ The Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant is available only to certified SA centers because CJCC's application bundles block grant funds with state funds, which are only available to certified centers.

⁹ As discussed later in the report, the portion of this grant that is awarded to shelters is approximately 80% funded with federal dollars; the remaining 20% is state dollars.

In addition, shelters and centers may receive discretionary grants directly from federal agencies; however, our research indicates this is not common or consistent among shelters and centers. For example, the Office on Violence against Women has awarded 18 discretionary grants to 7 certified shelters and/or centers over the past 10 years. Additional detailed information on grants to shelters and centers begins on page 12.

Local and Private Funding

Shelters and centers may also receive revenue from local and private sources including fundraising, operating small businesses (e.g., a thrift shop), and local contributions from foundations or organizations such as United Way.

For shelters and centers receiving funding from local governments, the most prevalent source is local victim assistance program (LVAP) funding. While CJCC grant recipients may receive LVAP funding from the counties they serve, there is no guarantee that they will. CJCC has established additional standards related to LVAP funding, which all entities funded through CJCC are required to meet. Local governments have the discretion to distribute funding among certified entities as they see fit. According to reports from the shelters and centers, half of the certified entities received LVAP funds in 2017. Overall, the shelters and centers received a total of \$1,163,614, with individual awards ranging from \$3,386 - \$282,772.

Local Victim Assistance Program (5%) Funding

Per state law, all Georgia courts must assess a 5% penalty to any fines for criminal offenses or criminal ordinance violations to fund local victim assistance programs. State laws and rules do not dictate how entities must spend the funding, but require that certified entities provide substantial assistance to crime victims including help navigating the criminal justice system.

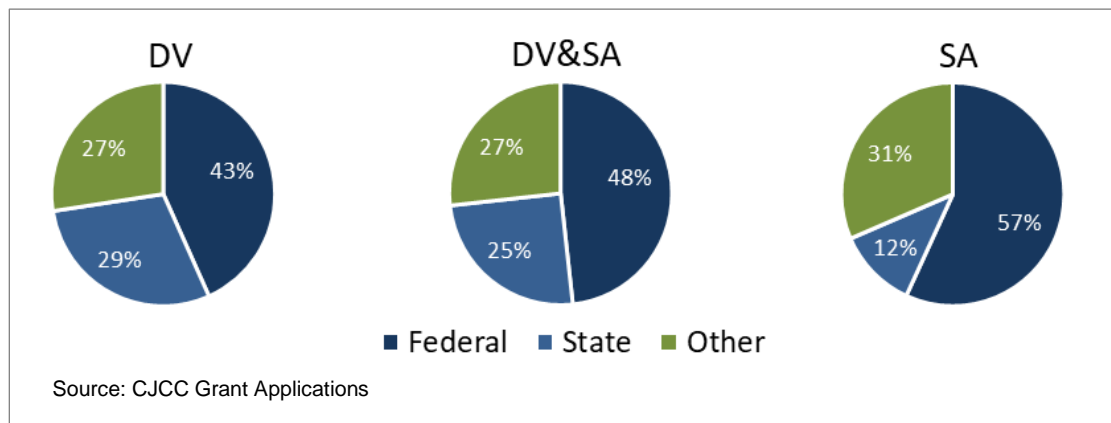
Requested Information

Shelter and Center Revenue Composition

Domestic violence shelters and sexual assault centers rely heavily on state and federal funding.

While DV shelters and SA centers receive revenue from public and private sources, budget information reported to CJCC indicates that they rely heavily on state and federal funding. In fiscal year 2016, federal and state funds made up 72% of shelter and center budgets.¹⁰ These funds represented from 44% to 100%¹¹ of the total budgets for individual entities during this year. Their budgets showed that 93% (55 of 59) of shelters and centers received more than half of their 2016 budget from federal and state grants. Exhibit 7 shows the portion of their budgets by source and by type of entity.¹²

Exhibit 7
Federal and State Funds Represent Over Half of Budgets in Fiscal Year 2016



Analysis by geography showed that rural entities rely more heavily on state and federal funding than urban entities. The 27 urban shelters and centers reported that other sources of funding (e.g., local government funding or private donations) accounted for 31% of their 2016 budget; for the 32 rural entities, other funding accounted for 24% of the budgets.¹³ According to shelter and center directors, rural shelters might have fewer opportunities to raise funds. For example, one shelter noted that there are no large businesses or local United Way available nearby.

¹⁰ Fiscal year 2016 is the year as defined by the individual shelters and centers; 2016 was the last complete year for which budget information was available.

¹¹ The entity 100% funded with state and federal funds was a sexual assault center located within a hospital. All expenses associated specifically with operating the center are funded by state and federal dollars; other overhead expenses are covered by the hospital's budget.

¹² We defined entities based on their state funding. For example, an entity funded only for DV is included in the DV chart even if it also operates a SA center. If an entity receives state funds for both DV and SA, it is included in the dual chart.

¹³ The 32 rural entities includes 15 located in urban counties but with service areas that are mostly rural.

Funding composition is important because it can affect an entity's financial stability. Income diversification is one way to mitigate the risk of funding fluctuations. Audited financial statements of shelters and centers sometimes noted the concentration of state and federal revenue sources as a risk. State law requires family violence shelters to have at least 25% of funding from other sources. According to reported budget information, shelters and centers comply with this requirement. However, it is worth noting that state funding accounted for at least half of the 2016 budget for seven shelters, five of which have entirely or mostly rural service areas.

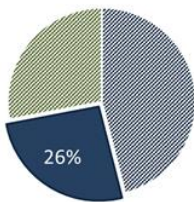
As nonprofits, shelter and center directors have to work with their governing boards to ensure their organizations are financially stable. According to CJCC staff, nonprofit management training is needed because directors vary in their management experience. CJCC staff reported that it has researched training options and it continues to look for ways to provide technical assistance to shelters and centers.

The following sections provide a closer look at the breakdown of federal, state, and other funding shelters and centers receive. These sections include information gleaned from shelters and centers' budgets as reported to CJCC as well as a review of approximately half of shelters and centers' (28 of 60 entities) financial statements for fiscal years 2014 and 2016. The shelter and center budget data provided a high-level breakdown of funding sources, while audited financial statements provided detailed information about each funding category (i.e., individual sources of federal funds).

State Funding

Overall, state funds composed 26% of shelter and center budgets in fiscal year 2016. However, examination by entity type shows that state funds are a more significant revenue source for DV shelters than SA centers. This is reasonable given that SA centers receive a fraction of the state family violence funding DV shelters receive and family violence funding accounts for virtually all of the state funding entities receive. As shown in Exhibit 7, SA center budgets contained 12% state funds compared to DV shelters and dual facilities which had 29% and 25% state funds, respectively. In state fiscal year 2018, the annual grant award for SA centers was \$39,632¹⁴ compared to an average annual grant award of \$251,603 for DV shelters.

budgeted funds
from state \$



The extent to which entities rely on state funding varies. The state-funded portion of fiscal year 2016 budgets ranged from 4% to 68%. For 44% (26 of 59¹⁵) of shelters and centers, state funding represented at least one-third of their 2016 budgets; for seven shelters, state funds accounted for at least half of the budget. Reliance at this level could be problematic if Georgia reduced state funds.



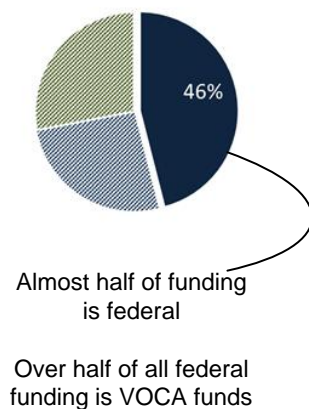
7 of 59¹⁵ shelters had
budgets with over
50% from state funds

State family violence funding composes the vast majority of state funds entities receive and it is the only source dedicated to certified shelters and centers. According to our sample of financial statements, 2% of shelters and centers' state funding in 2016 came from other state sources such as Emergency Solutions Grants (funded by the State Housing Trust Fund for the Homeless) administered by Department of Community Affairs and Civil Legal Assistance grants administered by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

¹⁴ All SA centers receive the same grant award amount.

¹⁵ Budget breakdowns were unavailable for one center.

State funding likely constitutes a smaller portion of shelter and center budgets than it has in the past given that federal funding to these entities has been increasing since 2015, while state funding has remained relatively consistent.



Federal Funding

Overall, federal funds comprised 46% of shelter and center budgets in fiscal year 2016. Review by entity type showed that SA centers relied more on federal funding than facilities with a DV component. Federal funding composed 57% of SA center budgets in fiscal year 2016 compared to 43% and 48% for DV shelters and dual facilities, respectively.

The majority of federal funds to shelters and centers come from victim service grants administered by CJCC. As shown in **Exhibit 8**, Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) was the single most prevalent source of federal funding in fiscal year 2016, composing over half of federal funding for each agency type. As described in subsequent sections, VOCA funding has increased since fiscal year 2016 and likely composes an even larger portion of federal funding today. Other prevalent federal grants administered by CJCC include Family Violence and Prevention Services Act (FVPSA) and S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Together, VOCA, FVPSA, and VAWA comprise at least 70% of federal funds for shelters, centers, and dual facilities in our sample.

As shown in **Exhibit 8**, besides victim service grants, DV shelters in our sample received funding from Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG). ESG grants to DV shelters mostly support the provision of emergency shelter and rapid rehousing (i.e., helping homeless clients transition to permanent housing). For SA centers, the Rape Prevention and Education (RPE) grant was the third largest source of federal funds among our sample centers. The RPE grant funds organizations to provide evidenced-based curriculums that prevent sexual violence (i.e., these funds do not support SA center operations).

Exhibit 8
VOCA is the Largest Source of Federal Funds to Shelters and Centers

Top three federal funding sources by type of entity						
	DV Shelters		Dual Shelters and Centers		SA Centers	
1	Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)	58%	Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)	56%	Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)	53%
2	Family Violence and Prevention Services Act (FVSPA)	17%	Family Violence and Prevention Services Act (FVSPA)	13%	S.T.O.P Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)	17%
3	Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG)	14%	Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG)	13%	Rape Prevention and Education Program (RPE)	15%
		90%		82%		85%

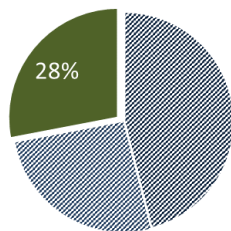
Source: Shelter and center financial statements

As shown in **Exhibit 9**, remaining federal funding varied by entity type. Some shelters receive Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) grants to fund activities that support keeping families together and providing a safe environment for children. Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) and Preventative Health and Health Services (PHHS) block grant provide funding for sexual assault services and prevention activities, respectively. CJCC bundles the majority of FVPSA funding (for DV shelters) and all PHHS block grant funding (for SA centers) as part of the continuation grant application for state funding. In essence, these federal grants are reserved for the state-funded entities every year because other entities cannot compete for these funds.

Exhibit 9 Additional Federal Grants

Additional federal grant sources for each type	
<u>Domestic Violence Shelters</u>	<u>Sexual Assault Centers</u>
<i>Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF)</i>	<i>Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP)</i>
<i>S.T.O.P Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)</i>	<i>Preventative Health and Health Services (PHHS) Block Grant</i>
<i>Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)</i>	<i>Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)</i>
<i>Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)</i>	
<i>Source: Shelter and center financial statements</i>	

Other Funds



Other Funds

In 2016, funds from other sources (i.e., not state and federal dollars) composed 28% of shelter and center budgets. This category includes funds from local governments, contributions and fundraising, and revenues from sales and/or services. Budgets submitted to CJCC provided scant details regarding other funding sources; therefore, the following section includes supplemental information collected from our review of 28 shelter and center financial statements as well as their reports of LVAP funding.

Local Government Funding

According to shelter and center financial statements, not all entities receive local government funds. For those that reported receiving funds from local governments, LVAP funding was the most common source.

Based on annual reports of LVAP receipts, half of shelters and centers (31 of 60) received LVAP funds in calendar year 2017. The amounts varied ranging from \$3,386 to \$282,772. There were two entities that received significantly more funding than others; excluding these two outliers, the median funding amount was \$20,000.

The remaining local government funds reported on shelter and center financial statements were contributions specific to the community. For example, one shelter received an operating grant from a county board of commissioners while another received funding from a local police department.

Contributions, Sales and Services

In addition to local government funds, “other funding” as reported in shelter and center budgets includes donations from individuals, foundations, and revenue

generated from fundraising events. Some shelters and centers also have revenue-generating activities such as thrift stores. Contributions and sales income are often unrestricted, meaning it can be used in any way the entity sees fit. However, private funding may be tethered to grant funding to meet match requirements, in which case it may be subject to the same terms as the grant funds.

According to interviews with 12 shelter and center directors, they use unrestricted funds as match for federal grants, capital expenses, and other costs not covered by state and federal funding.

Agency Response: CJCC concurred with this information.

Trends in Major Revenue Sources

Total funding to DV shelters and SA centers has increased since 2015 and has largely been supported by federal funds; state funding is lower than 10 years ago.

Awards to shelters and centers have increased over the period reviewed. As discussed in the previous section, state and federal funding administered by CJCC composes the bulk of center and shelter funding. Total CJCC-administered funding expended by shelter and centers increased 105% from state fiscal year 2015 to 2018. In fiscal year 2015, median annual expenditures were \$376,020 for DV shelters, \$415,865 for dual facilities, and \$114,654 for SA centers. By fiscal year 2018, the median had increased to \$637,293 for DV shelters, \$830,299 for dual facilities and \$347,714 for SA centers. These increases are due to the substantial increase in Georgia's VOCA allocation over the past five years, as state funding and other federal sources have experienced only modest increases during this time.

State Funding

The family violence appropriation has averaged \$13 million over the last 10 years. It reached a high of approximately \$14 million in 2012, with 80% coming from TANF funds and 20% coming from state funds. Funding was at its lowest point in 10 years at \$11.8 million in 2015, after federal funding was removed from the appropriation and the program became entirely state funded. Since 2015, funding has increased 1-3% each year. The fiscal year 2018 appropriation was \$12.7 million and the fiscal year 2019 appropriation was \$12.8 million. While the state portion of the family violence appropriation has increased since 2015, the overall funding allotted for shelters and centers is lower than it was in 2009.

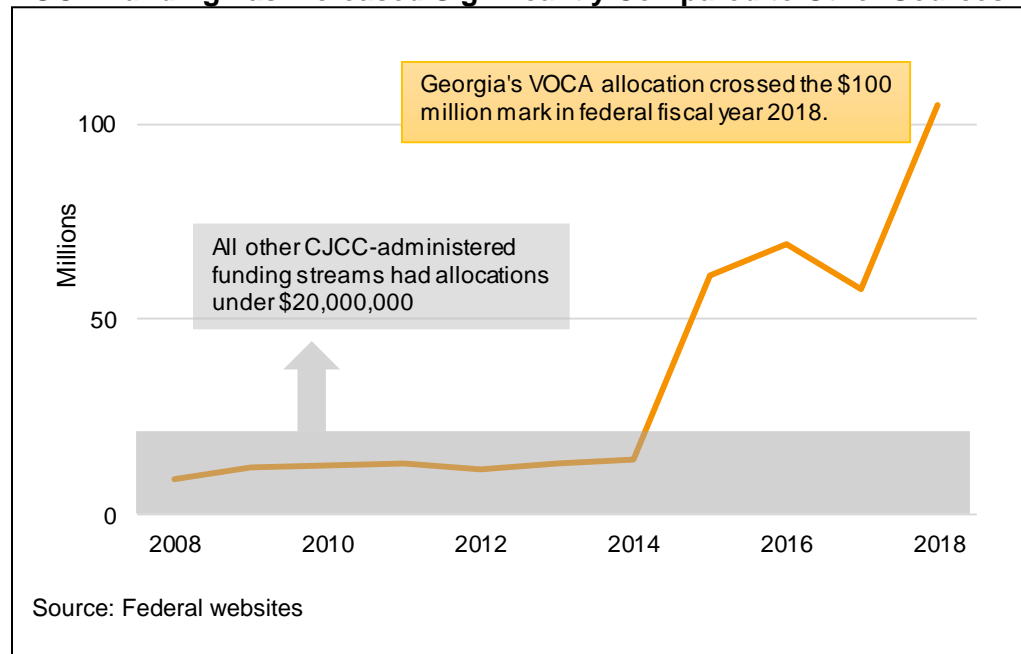
Individual awards to shelters and centers have seen modest increases since state fiscal year 2015. Total state funding to DV shelters increased by 3% in state fiscal year 2017 and 2018. CJCC distributed the 3% increases in equal dollar amounts across all shelters, therefore the percentage increase for each individual shelter varied depending on their original funding level. In fiscal year 2019, DV shelters' funding ranges from \$159,612 to \$443,094 with a median award of \$241,099. Similarly, SA centers have experienced modest increases since state fiscal year 2015. Each center received a \$10,000 (35%) increase in state fiscal year 2016 and a 3% increase (\$1,154 increase) per center in state fiscal year 2017. In state fiscal year 2019, each SA center received an equal award of \$39,632. As noted previously, despite the absolute increase in funding, the value of these awards have decreased considerably when accounting for inflation.

Federal Funding

VOCA funding increased substantially in federal fiscal year 2015; the increase appears attributable to a congressional change in the amount available for distribution. Congress increased the amount available for award by over 200% to approximately \$2.4 billion. As shown in **Exhibit 10**, Georgia's VOCA allocation increased from approximately \$14 million to \$61 million in federal fiscal year 2015. In 2018, Congress increased the cap again to \$4.4 billion, and Georgia's VOCA allocation increased to \$105 million. According to CJCC staff, conversations with staff from the National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators indicated federal funding could be reduced this year. No specific amounts were provided.

Exhibit 10

VOCA Funding has Increased Significantly Compared to Other Sources



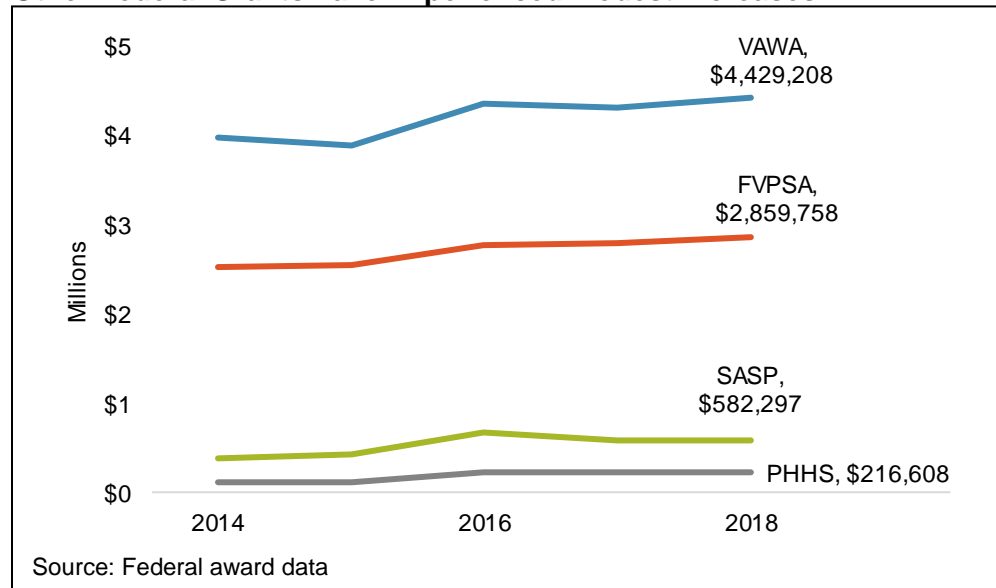
After the increase in 2015, according to CJCC staff, it chose a measured approach to gradually increasing awards to ensure stability for sub-recipients. It has retained enough funding to step down awards gradually if funding levels decrease. CJCC administers VOCA grants in three-year cycles, so grantees that are awarded a VOCA competitive grant are eligible for two additional years of continuation funding at the same level. Our review of grant data showed that CJCC distributed Georgia's federal fiscal year 2015 VOCA allocation over four years with the last grants being made in July 2018. These last grants were one-time competitive awards for larger purchases such as vans and therapeutic playground equipment. CJCC awarded these grants because the 2015 VOCA allocation was set to expire September 30, 2018 at which point the state would have had to return any unspent funds to the federal government. CJCC began distributing the 2016 VOCA allocation in October 2016.

As shown in **Exhibit 11**, over the past five years, there have been modest increases to the other four federal grants CJCC administers. Georgia's FVPSA, VAWA, and SASP allocations increased 12%, 14%, and 38%, respectively from federal fiscal year 2015 to 2018. PHHS has increased only slightly over the period. According to staff, CJCC does

not anticipate significant changes to these funding levels in the near future. The Emergency Solutions Grants grant has not increased over this period; instead, the total amount awarded has decreased by 16% from state fiscal year 2015 to 2019.

Exhibit 11

Other Federal Grants have Experienced Modest Increases



Due to the considerable VOCA increase, CJCC has changed its strategy for awarding federal funding to maximize the number and type of agencies served by the grants. While the individual focus of the grants may differ slightly, most grants pay for direct services. (Information on the purposes of the individual grants is provided on page 8.) As shown in Exhibit 12, median VOCA grant expenditures nearly tripled from state fiscal year 2015 to 2018 while changes in other federal funding sources varied.

Exhibit 12

Median VOCA Grant Expenditures Nearly Tripled from Fiscal Year 2015 to 2018

Grant	SFY 2015		SFY 2018		% Change in median Expenditures
	Shelter/Center Grantees	Median Expenditures	Shelter/Center Grantees	Median Expenditures	
VOCA	53	\$84,507	60 ¹	\$321,138	280%
VAWA	19	\$50,141	18	\$32,988	-34%
SASP	4	\$52,147	7	\$63,199	21%
PHHS	23	\$5,152	22	\$8,738	70%
FVPSA	47	\$36,378	48	\$33,853	-7%

¹This includes all 61 state-funded entities, however two of the shelters receive funding through one governing body, therefore the number of grantees is 60.

Source: CJCC grant data

- Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) - Funds expended by shelters and centers increased from \$4.5 million in federal fiscal year 2015 to \$23.9 million in federal fiscal year 2018.¹⁶ While CJCC awards VOCA grants to other recipients, funds expended by state-funded shelters and centers accounted for 38% of the VOCA expenditures in those years. During the same period, median annual VOCA expenditures per shelter/center have nearly tripled from approximately \$85,000 to \$320,000.
- S.T.O.P Violence Against Women (VAWA) – Total funds expended by centers and shelters decreased from approximately \$950,000 in state fiscal year 2015 to approximately \$700,000 in 2018. While Georgia’s VAWA allocation increased during this period, CJCC made an internal decision to make the VAWA grant competitive and reduce the total amount to the DV shelters and SA centers because of the availability of VOCA funds. Shelter and center expenses accounted for 27% of the approximately \$3.5 million VAWA sub-recipients expended in state fiscal year 2015. In 2018, after grants became competitive, the shelter and center expenses dropped to 15% of the \$4.5 million expended. CJCC chose to award VAWA funds to other eligible grantees whose projects are not eligible for VOCA funding such as courts, prosecutors, and law enforcement.
- Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) – Total SASP funds expended by SA centers doubled between state fiscal years 2015 and 2018 from approximately \$210,000 to \$488,000; these expenditures accounted for 67% and 61% of total SASP expenditures in those years, respectively. Like VAWA, CJCC made SASP grants competitive in 2018. From 2015 to 2018, median SASP awards to SA centers increased from \$52,147 to \$63,199.
- Family Violence and Prevention Services Act (FVPSA) – CJCC divides FVPSA awards into two groups – awards to DV shelters and competitive mini-grants. FVPSA awards to DV shelters have remained unchanged since at least state fiscal year 2015 when family violence funding moved from GOCF to CJCC. CJCC’s awards to DV shelters reflect the GOCF amount; awards range from \$18,700 to \$45,000 with a median award of \$33,000.

Shelters and centers have expended approximately \$1.1 million in FVPSA mini-grants since the funding moved from GOCF to CJCC in 2015. On average, mini-grants were \$30,000 per entity. According to CJCC staff, it has put FVPSA increases towards mini-grant funding in an effort to fund as many grantees as possible, including grantees that are not state-funded entities. It is likely that this accounts for the decrease in median expenditures for state-funded facilities as shown in **Exhibit 12**.

- Preventative Health and Health Services (PHHS) Block Grant – Much like FVPSA, CJCC awards PHHS block grant funds to SA centers as they had been awarded historically under GOCF. Each SA center receives an equal award. From state fiscal year 2015 to 2018, awards increased from \$5,152 to \$8,738. PHHS block grant funding is only available to the 22 currently state-funded

¹⁶ CJCC’s grant system records the amount expended rather than the award amount after the grants have closed. According to CJCC, these amounts should be close to the award amount with only a few exceptions.

SA centers because of how the funds are administered. CJCC bundles state funding for sexual assault centers with PHHS funds as part of the same “continuation only” grant application, therefore these funds are only available to the same sub-recipients.

DCA award lists show that shelters have received fewer ESG grants over time and the awards account for a smaller portion of total ESG funds awarded. Some shelters noted that there were changes to funding regulations that made the funding less attractive.

Agency Response: CJCC concurred with this information.

Funding Limitations

Parameters placed on funding sources and grant administration practices affect shelters and centers’ ability to pay for expenses. We identified advantages to using state funds and several limitations of federal funds based on interviews with center and shelter directors. These points are discussed in more detail below.

State funds provide flexibility to pay for expenses that federal grants do not cover.

Federal grants are largely limited to direct service costs. For example, VOCA regulations define direct services as those efforts that respond to victim needs (emotional, psychological, and physical), assist in stabilizing their lives, and assist in navigating the criminal justice system. Allowable grant expenses often exclude administrative costs such as salaries for executive directors and bookkeepers, and mortgage payments.

During interviews, shelter and center staff explained that such administrative expenses are essential to running their organizations and state funds provided this flexibility. For example, federal funds cannot be used to make mortgage payments. In addition, some administrative activities are required by state standards. For example, state standards require shelters to have an executive/program director who manages the program (including personnel and volunteers) and is responsible for developing, implementing, and monitoring policies. According to interviews with the entities, executive directors also often function as the shelter or center grant writer and fundraiser. Of the 11 directors interviewed (representing 12 facilities), only one had a staff member dedicated to fundraising and development activities. As a result, state funds are often used to pay these expenses, as other sources cannot be used to do so.

Match requirements could present challenges for some shelters and centers.

Federal funds often require recipients to provide a portion of the cost toward the funded project (known as a match requirement). For shelters and centers with small budgets, match requirements can be the deciding factor that determines whether it applies for the funding opportunity. As shown in **Exhibit 13**, for the five grants that had information readily available, three require a match ranging from 20% to 100%. For example, a shelter that receives VOCA, FVPSA, and ESG grants at the median level would receive \$396,340 and would have a match requirement of \$109,703.

Exhibit 13**Match Requirements Range from 20% to 100%**

VOCA	FVPSA	ESG	VAWA	SASP
20%	20%	100%	No Match ¹	No Match
Cash or in-kind	Cash or in-kind	Cash or in-kind		
¹ No match for victim service agencies, but a 25% match applies for other grantees (e.g., law enforcement).				
Source: Federal laws and regulations				

While the ability to provide matching funds sometimes prevents grantees from applying for funding, VOCA administrators have recently begun granting match waivers. In 2015, VOCA funds were used to provide \$50,000 grants to shelters and centers to hire an advocate. Entities that applied for and received the grant could also apply for a waiver from the match requirements; the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)¹⁷ granted all waiver requests. Since 2016, OVC has approved waivers on all VOCA grants awarded to DV shelters and SA centers. For their 2018 VOCA grants, approximately half of shelters and centers (34 of 61) requested and received partial waivers for their VOCA grants with waivers ranging from 11% to 79% of the total match requirement.

CJCC reported that it has changed its process for collecting matching funds as of federal fiscal year 2019. Previously, CJCC required shelters and centers to operate as if the match will be required until OVC makes a determination regarding the match waiver. For example, unless the entity indicates an in-kind match is being applied, CJCC took 20% off each reimbursement as a cash match. CJCC then reimbursed the 20% once the waiver was granted. CJCC reported that as of federal fiscal year 2019, the reimbursement process assumes that those who applied for a waiver have been approved. The entity would owe the match amount should OVC deny the waiver request. As noted above, OVC has yet to deny a waiver request.

Historically, DV shelters were required to use state funds to meet the 20% FVPSA match requirement. In 2018, while there is a still match requirement, CJCC no longer makes shelters use state funds to meet the requirement.

Delays in grant expense reimbursements exacerbate DV shelters' and SA centers' struggles with cash flow and ultimately affects their ability to use funds.

While the shelters and centers are receiving more federal funds, there have been challenges with spending because of how CJCC administers the funds. The grants are reimbursement based, meaning the entities must pay the expenses up front and submit reimbursement requests for the grant funds. According to interviews with shelter and center directors, in some cases they have been unable to front the cash required to cover expenses until reimbursement.

According to grantees, timeliness of grant reimbursements varies as well. For some shelters and centers with limited cash flow, delayed reimbursements inhibit their ability to cover expenses. Ultimately, the entity may de-obligate funding because the grant period expired before they were able to spend all the funding. While we were

¹⁷ OVC, within the U.S. Department of Justice, is the federal agency that administers VOCA funds.

able to identify shelters and centers that de-obligated funds during the period reviewed, we were not able to determine the reason for the de-obligation.

CJCC has taken steps to improve the timeliness of reimbursements. The following actions have occurred or are planned:

- *Accepting electronic signatures* on expenditure reports via email, instead of requiring hard copy signatures. This change has helped speed processing, according to CJCC. It was implemented in October 2018. This change was made as an interim measure while the new grants management system is being implemented (see next bullet).
- *Implementing a new grants management system* that will integrate with the financial system so that reimbursement information flows electronically instead of through paper processes. This change should expedite reimbursement. The system is planned to go live March 2019.
- *Providing advances in state funds* allows additional flexibility. CJCC offered quarterly advance payments for state family violence funding for the first time in July 2018. This allowed shelters and centers to receive a quarter of their funding up-front. Approximately, two-thirds of both DV shelters and SA centers took advantage of this opportunity (29 of 46 shelter, 15 of 22 centers).

Agency Response: CJCC concurred with the information presented in this funding limitations section.

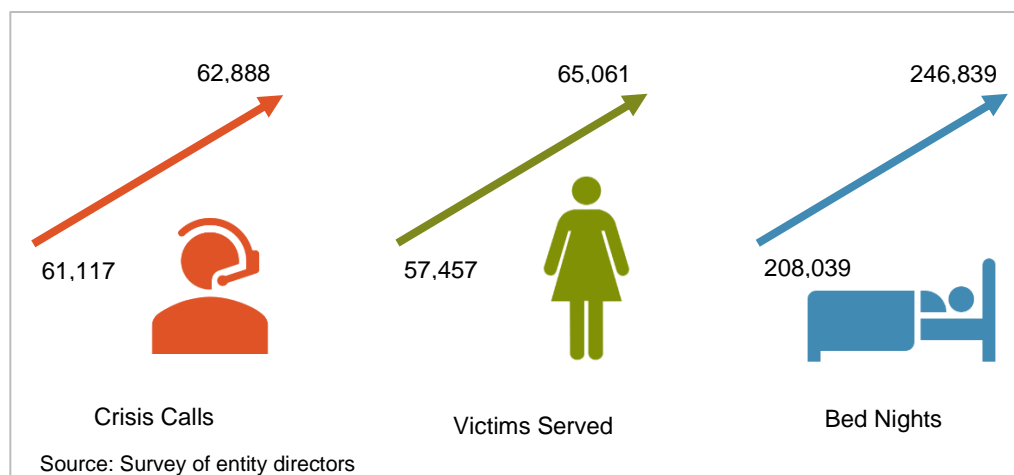
Services

Shelters and centers reported serving more victims and increasing capacity within the past three years.

According to our survey of shelter and center directors, entities have generally seen an increase in victims served and service offerings. Responses from 49 of the 61 (80%) state funded entities indicated victims receiving services has increased 13% over the past three years. As shown in **Exhibit 14**, crisis calls to entity hotlines also increased over the period, as did the number of bed nights shelters reported providing. It is important to note that additional measures are required in order to account fully for the work shelters and centers perform. For example, entities also participate in prevention and community awareness events.

Exhibit 14

Crisis Calls, Victims Served and Bed Nights have Increased between Fiscal Years 2016 and 2018



According to responses from shelter and center directors, they have increased their capacity to serve victims over the past three years. Over half of respondents reported increasing the number of staff, range of services, and locations where victims can receive services within the past three years. Approximately one-third of respondents reported completing a capital project within the past three years.

While many shelters have reported increased capacity, shelters still encounter instances where they must relocate victims (e.g., another shelter or to a hotel) due to capacity limitations. Of the 35 shelters that responded to our survey, 27 reported relocating victims during the past three years because they did not have space to house them. Total victims relocated increased from 1,605 in state fiscal year 2016 to 2,586 in 2018. The top five shelters with the highest number of victims relocated over the three-year period were located in rural counties or had mostly rural service areas.

Interviews with shelter directors indicated that additional services, beyond the typical ones described above, have also grown over the last few years. For example, with the increase in funding, shelter directors indicated they have been able to move beyond the minimum of providing a night in a bed for a victim; they are now able to

provide a case management-type of service that allows them to address all of the victims' needs. Staff indicated this type of service offers the victims the best chance for success. Center directors indicated they have been able to do more outreach and awareness work.

Agency Response: CJCC concurred with this information.

Potential exists for currently collected data to be used to assess performance of centers and shelters.

Because shelters and centers receive federal grants, CJCC, as the state administrator, is required to report on their activities. In support of this requirement, it collects activity data such as number of victims served, number of services provided, types of services provided, etc. from shelters and centers. It is possible that such data could also be used to assess performance. However, the information is not currently available in a manner that would allow us to analyze it in the time available. Problems we encountered included: useful information that is collected but not currently retained and electronic data that is not easily accessible and is potentially unreliable. These points are discussed below.

- Grant Award Amounts: CJCC awards grants and communicates the grant award amount to individual recipients; however, the amount is not retained in its grants management system. As a result, it is not possible to determine how much was awarded for a particular grant in a particular year. Instead, the system retains the amount of funds expended. As a result, the award amount would have to be calculated. One would have to review each individual grant record, determine whether and how much money was de-obligated, and add that amount to the amount expended.
- Activity Reports: Shelters and centers submit two types of reports to CJCC – the state report and the victim services statistical report (VSSR). However, there were limitations with both and there was not always agreement among staff about which source would provide the best data during this review. The two reporting systems are somewhat duplicative. CJCC inherited the state report from GOCF and decided to keep it in place, even though the VSSR contains similar information. Staff indicated that information from the state report is easily accessible while obtaining a VSSR report can take longer. The two reports and the limitations observed are discussed below.
 - State Report: The state report includes information on victims served and their demographics, crisis calls, and shelter bed nights among other data points. According to CJCC staff, data collection for the report has been compromised since 2015 when CJCC implemented the APRICOT system for collecting DV shelter data.¹⁸ The system was customizable, which was viewed as an advantage. It would allow individual shelters to customize their data entry to reflect their activities while the common data fields could be linked to a template that would allow the information to be rolled up at a state level. However, since implementation, there have been

¹⁸ SA centers did not use APRICOT; rather they submitted spreadsheets with activity data.

system problems that inhibit linking and compiling the data at an aggregate level.

CJCC is implementing a new system, CaseWorthy, to replace APRICOT and expects improvements as a result. It is currently in the process of migrating data from the old to the new system. CJCC anticipates completion of the project in mid-February 2019.

- [The Victim Services Statistical Report \(VSSR\)](#): The VSSR collects data to meet federal reporting requirements for VOCA, VAWA and SASP grant recipients. It is a complicated survey instrument that shelter and center staff complete quarterly. The complexity of the data entry increases the likelihood of inaccurate reporting. For example, directors are required to report multiple data points (e.g. number served, county of residence) on different types of victims (e.g., new and existing) for a variety of victimization categories (e.g., assault, sexual assault, domestic violence, etc.).

We observed data that should have matched that did not. For example, there were instances where the number of victims served exceeded the service units reported for a given service. In addition, grantees submit information about services in more than one section of the survey. As a result, there were instances where it was not clear how many services an agency provided (as the services reported changed across sections). These problems raise questions about the reliability of the data.

There have been changes in the way data is collected that have hindered the possibility of trend analysis. For example, in 2016, entities were directed to provide prorated service numbers to indicate how many services were provided with federal funds; in 2017 they were directed to provide total numbers, which CJCC would then prorate based on the grant expenditure percentages.

An April 2018 Office of Justice Programs federal audit found the victim service data unreliable to the point where the auditors were unable to complete their analyses. Ultimately, the auditors concluded that data inaccuracies left CJCC without a reliable basis for assessing program performance.

Agency Response: CJCC indicated that it partially concurred with this information. It noted that “our current grants management and case management systems have limitations and we are working, as noted in the audit, to get new systems online in the early part of 2019. These new systems will be significant upgrades and will address any issues noted in the review.” It also noted that it, “has cleared up all recommendations associated with the Office of Justice Programs federal audit. CJCC also noted that the data collected through the VSSR has been critical to the state because it includes county level data on victimization, which is otherwise not available.”

Matter for Consideration

The process for awarding state grants should be revisited to ensure it is aligned with the state's strategic interests.

Generally, grants are awarded based on an established methodology that takes into consideration important variables related to the program's goals (e.g., location, outcomes, or client served). However, the family violence funding grant award process is currently based on historical precedent; not on these types of factors. CJCC has continued to fund the same grantees at the levels established by GOCF. Since the transfer, CJCC has added funding to each center and shelter, either proportionally or as flat amount across the board, based on the state appropriation. Revisiting the process for awarding family violence funds would allow CJCC to ensure that these funds are having the desired impact in terms of service coverage, access for victims, accountability of the funded entities, transparency of processes, or other identified goals for this funding.

Reportedly, the shelter funding was based on a formula when it was administered by GOCF. The formula considered factors including services provided, service area, and number of bed nights. According to CJCC staff and center and shelter directors, previous state administrators attempted to revise the formula; however, the attempts were unsuccessful. According to interviews, one concern with revising the formula was the potential for adverse impacts to rural shelters.¹⁹ Unlike shelters, the centers have historically received equal funding.

Developing an effective funding methodology is complex and would have to consider multiple factors. Initially, a determination would need to be made about whether eligibility will continue to be restricted to the current grantees. As previously noted, there are other entities that meet state standards, and could be eligible for funding. CJCC would need to determine which factors to consider and, because some may be more important than others, may have to determine weights for individual factors. Additionally, consideration could be given to ensuring existing grant recipients are not adversely effected by changes. For example, current shelters and centers could be "held harmless" in any new funding model, meaning their funding would be grandfathered in and any formula would apply to new centers and shelters. All of these decisions would be driven by CJCC's and the state's goals for the program.

Potential factors that could be considered are listed below. It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive, and, as discussed above, changes should reflect the priorities of the state.

- *Information reportedly considered in the old funding formula could serve as a starting point; however, it would have to be updated to reflect current scenarios.* According to Georgia's Office of Planning and Budget's (OPB) 2019 Zero-Based Budget report, the earlier formula considered:
 - Number of services provided,
 - Number of bed nights,
 - Area's poverty level,

¹⁹ We were unable to obtain documentation of the formula or record of these attempted revisions.

- Service area (number of counties served), and
- Area population.

These factors may still be relevant; however, if used, numbers would need to be updated and recalculated as shelters' and centers' statuses have changed over time. For example, 6 of the 46 state-funded domestic violence shelters have increased bed space in their shelters adding a total of 43 beds since 2012. For 4 of the 6 shelters, the increase equaled an approximate 40%-50% increase in bed space.

- *Performance information could be considered.* As noted earlier, CJCC collects information on a variety of measures. There is potential for this information to be collected and analyzed to assess performance. CJCC, with input from shelter and center directors, would have to identify applicable measures, as well as benchmarks and goals. It would also have to document how the measures would be applied.
- *Consideration could be given to using funding to address specific issues.* For example, a factor in award decisions could be the distance victims have to travel to receive services or the current coverage in a particular area.
- *Information from other states could be used.* Other states also provide similar services and could be a resource for best practices.

Appendix A: Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

Objectives

This report examines the funding models for domestic violence shelters and sexual assault centers overseen by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC), which is responsible for awarding and monitoring the majority of the federal and state funding shelters and centers receive. Specifically, our examination sought to determine the following:

1. What is the composition of individual domestic violence (DV) shelters and sexual assault (SA) center funding (e.g., what percentage is federal funds versus state funds versus local funds)?
2. What are the trends in funding for certified DV shelters and SA centers, by source?
3. Are there conditions (restrictions and requirements) associated with shelter and center federal funding that result in funding gaps? If so, what are the gaps and can state funding be used to address them?
4. What services do individual DV shelters and SA centers provide?
5. Is there information available that could be used to assess the performance of DV shelters and SA centers? If so, how is this information used?

Scope

This special examination generally covered activity related to the funding models of DV shelters and SA centers during state fiscal years 2014 through 2018, with consideration of earlier or later periods when relevant. State family violence funding moved to CJCC in 2015, therefore some financial data (such as individual grant awards) were only available from state fiscal year 2015 onwards. Information used in this report was obtained by reviewing relevant laws, rules, and regulations, interviewing shelter and center officials and staff from CJCC, the Georgia Commission on Family Violence, the Georgia Network to End Sexual Assault, and the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence. We also analyzed data and reports provided by CJCC, individual shelters and centers, and surveyed DV shelter and SA center directors.

Methodology

To determine composition of individual domestic violence (DV) shelters and sexual assault (SA) center funding (e.g., the percentages of federal, state, and local funds) we reviewed 2016 budgets reported by source (federal, state, local, other) by shelters and centers on their VOCA applications. This source included budget information for all entities except one SA center. One limitation of this data is that it is self-reported. We made corrections where possible (e.g., federal funds reported as state funds) to provide the most accurate budget composition possible.

We reviewed audited financial statements to identify major funding sources within state, federal, local and other funds. We obtained financial audit reports from the Nonprofit and Local Government Division of the Department of Audits and Accounts for fiscal years 2014 and 2016. We selected these years because it would allow us to see how revenues changed after the first large VOCA funding increase in 2015. Because not all DV shelters and SA centers were required to provide an audit during the period we reviewed, we contacted executive directors directly to request reports. We

identified the statement of activities and schedule of contractual assistance in the financial audits that contained detailed information on funding sources that allowed us to categorize expenditures by state, federal, local, and other fund sources. We did not obtain all audits requested nor did all the audits contain all the schedules required for detailed analysis. As a result, we were able to assemble a sample of revenues for 28 of 61 agencies representing half of shelters (22 of 46) and centers (11 of 22). It is important to note that this sample includes agencies with clear, detailed, and readily available financial information. Therefore, our sample likely excluded smaller agencies with less funding and less detailed financial statements. For this reason, we relied on the revenue breakdown as reported by all agencies, rather than the financial statement sample. We used to sample to provide details about funding sources (i.e., which grants compose federal funding).

To determine the trends in funding for certified DV shelters and SA centers, by source, we analyzed trends in total state funding for the family violence program as well as Georgia allocations of major federal grants for the past 10 years (information for some sources including FVPSA and PHHS block grant were only readily available for the past 5 years). To examine trends in awards to individual shelters and centers we reviewed CJCC grant award data from state fiscal year 2013 to 2018. We interviewed CJCC about its strategy for awarding grants and any changes in funding sources during the period. We also gathered grant award information for other prominent sources identified during the financial statement review such as ESG, PSSF, and RPE grants to determine if awards to shelters and centers have increased or decreased over time.

To determine whether there are conditions (restrictions and requirements) associated with shelter and center federal funding that result in funding gaps and, if so, what they are and how state funding can be used to address them, we reviewed laws and regulations associated with state and federal funding sources. We also conducted interviews with a sample of shelters and centers (11 directors representing 12 facilities) about how funding restrictions affect their ability to meet client needs. We selected the sample of directors to have a mix of shelters and centers throughout the state (i.e., it includes urban and rural areas).

To determine what services individual DV shelters and SA centers provide, we reviewed state standards for minimum service requirements. To quantify services, we requested activity data from CJCC, but ultimately did not use the information due to data reliability issues. As an alternative, we conducted a survey of shelters and centers asking them to report basic activity data including victims served, crisis calls, bed nights, and victims relocated. We also asked respondents to report on indicators of growth including increases in staff, service locations, services offered and capital projects. We received responses from 49 of 61 (80%) entities. We also interviewed a shelter director and a center director to walk us through service provision scenarios. We subsequently vetted the information with CJCC staff.

To determine whether there is information available that could be used to assess the performance of DV shelters and SA centers, we interviewed CJCC staff about the data it collects on shelters and centers and how the agency uses this information. We also reviewed samples of data from the victim services statistical report and the state report.

This special examination was not conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards (GAGAS) given the timeframe in which the report was needed. However, it was conducted in accordance with Performance Audit Division policies and procedures for non-GAGAS engagements. These policies and procedures require that we plan and perform the engagement to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for the information reported and that data limitations be identified for the reader.

Appendix B: State-Funded Domestic Violence Shelters and Sexual Assault Centers and Counties Served as of Fiscal Year 2019

State-Funded Domestic Violence Shelters		
	<u>Shelter Name</u>	<u>City</u> <u>Counties Served</u>
1	<i>Battered Women's Shelter (The Haven)</i>	<i>Valdosta</i> <i>Atkinson, Berrien, Brooks, Clinch, Colquitt, Cook, Echols, Lanier, Lowndes</i>
2	<i>Camden Community Crisis Center (Camden House)</i>	<i>St. Marys</i> <i>Camden, Charlton</i>
3	<i>Carroll County Emergency Shelter</i>	<i>Carrollton</i> <i>Carroll, Coweta, Haralson, Heard, Meriwether</i>
4	<i>Cherokee Family Violence Center</i>	<i>Canton</i> <i>Cherokee</i>
5	<i>Christian League for Battered Women (Tranquility House)</i>	<i>Cartersville</i> <i>Bartow</i>
6	<i>Circle of Love Center</i>	<i>Greensboro</i> <i>Baldwin, Greene, Hancock, Morgan, Putnam</i>
7	<i>Citizens Against Violence (Safe Haven)</i>	<i>Statesboro</i> <i>Candler, Bulloch, Effingham, Jenkins, Screven, Washington</i>
8	<i>Clayton County Association Against Domestic Violence (Securus House)</i>	<i>Morrow</i> <i>Clayton</i>
9	<i>Columbus Alliance for Battered Women (Hope Harbour)</i>	<i>Columbus</i> <i>Chattahoochee, Harris, Marion, Muscogee, Talbot, Taylor</i>
10	<i>Crisis Line & Safe House of Central Georgia</i>	<i>Macon</i> <i>Bibb, Crawford, Jones, Monroe, Twiggs</i>
11	<i>Fight Abuse in the Home (FAITH)</i>	<i>Clayton</i> <i>Rabun</i>
12	<i>Family Crisis Center of Walker, Dade, Catoosa, & Chattooga Counties</i>	<i>Lafayette</i> <i>Chattooga, Catoosa, Dade, Walker</i>
13	<i>Fayette County Council on Domestic Violence (Promise Place)</i>	<i>Fayetteville</i> <i>Fayette, Pike, Spalding, Upson</i>
14	<i>Flint Circuit Council on Family Violence (Haven House)</i>	<i>McDonough</i> <i>Butts, Henry, Jasper, Lamar</i>
15	<i>Forsyth County Family Haven</i>	<i>Cumming</i> <i>Forsyth</i>
16	<i>Georgia Mountain Women's Center (Circle of Hope)</i>	<i>Cornelia</i> <i>Habersham, Stephens, White</i>

	<u>Shelter Name</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Counties Served</u>
17	<i>Gateway House</i>	<i>Gainesville</i>	<i>Hall</i>
18	<i>Glynn Community Crisis Center (Amity House)</i>	<i>Brunswick</i>	<i>Glynn, McIntosh</i>
19	<i>Halcyon Home for Battered Women</i>	<i>Thomasville</i>	<i>Decatur, Grady, Mitchell, Seminole, Thomas</i>
20	<i>Harmony House Domestic Violence Shelter</i>	<i>LaGrange</i>	<i>Troup</i>
21	<i>Hospitality House for Women</i>	<i>Rome</i>	<i>Floyd</i>
22	<i>International Women's House (IWH)</i>	<i>Decatur</i>	<i>DeKalb</i>
23	<i>Liberty House of Albany</i>	<i>Albany</i>	<i>Baker, Calhoun, Clay, Crisp, Dooly, Dougherty, Early, Lee, Macon, Miller, Quitman, Randolph, Schley, Stewart, Sumter, Terrell, Webster</i>
24	<i>LiveSAFE Resources</i>	<i>Marietta</i>	<i>Cobb</i>
25	<i>Northeast Georgia Council on Domestic Violence (Heart Haven)</i>	<i>Hartwell</i>	<i>Elbert, Franklin, Hart</i>
26	<i>NOA's Ark (No One Alone)</i>	<i>Dahlonega</i>	<i>Dawson, Lumpkin</i>
27	<i>North Georgia Mountain Crisis Network</i>	<i>Blue Ridge</i>	<i>Fannin, Gilmer, Pickens</i>
28	<i>Northwest Georgia Family Crisis Center</i>	<i>Dalton</i>	<i>Cordon, Murray, Whitfield</i>
29	<i>Partnership Against Domestic Violence (PADV - Fulton County)</i>	<i>Atlanta - Fulton</i>	<i>Fulton</i>
30	<i>Partnership Against Domestic Violence (PADV - Gwinnett County)</i>	<i>Atlanta - Gwinnett</i>	<i>Gwinnett</i>
31	<i>Peace Place</i>	<i>Winder</i>	<i>Banks, Barrow, Jackson</i>
32	<i>Polk County Women's Shelter (Our House)</i>	<i>Cedartown</i>	<i>Polk</i>
33	<i>Project ReNeWal Domestic Violence Intervention Project</i>	<i>Conyers</i>	<i>Newton, Rockdale, Walton</i>

	<u>Shelter Name</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Counties Served</u>
34	<i>Project Safe</i>	<i>Athens</i>	<i>Clarke, Madison, Oconee, Oglethorpe</i>
35	<i>S.H.A.R.E. House</i>	<i>Douglasville</i>	<i>Douglas, Paulding</i>
36	<i>Safe Homes of Augusta</i>	<i>Augusta</i>	<i>Burke, Columbia, Glascock, Jefferson, Lincoln, McDuffie, Richmond, Taliaferro, Warren, Wilkes</i>
37	<i>Savannah Area Family Emergency Shelter (Safe Shelter)</i>	<i>Savannah</i>	<i>Chatham</i>
38	<i>Support in Abusive Family Emergencies (SAFE)</i>	<i>Blairsville</i>	<i>Towns, Union</i>
39	<i>The Refuge Domestic Violence Shelter</i>	<i>Vidalia</i>	<i>Emanuel, Montgomery, Toombs, Treutlen, Wheeler</i>
40	<i>The Salvation Army Safe House</i>	<i>Warner Robins</i>	<i>Houston, Peach, Pulaski</i>
41	<i>Tift Judicial Circuit Shelter (Ruth's Cottage)</i>	<i>Tifton</i>	<i>Ben Hill, Irwin, Tift, Turner, Worth</i>
42	<i>Tri-County Protective Agency</i>	<i>Hinesville</i>	<i>Bryan, Evans, Liberty, Long, Tattnall</i>
43	<i>Waycross Areas Shelter for Abused Women & Children (Magnolia House)</i>	<i>Waycross</i>	<i>Bacon, Brantley, Coffee, Pierce, Ware</i>
44	<i>Wayne County Protective Agency (Fair Haven)</i>	<i>Jesup</i>	<i>Appling, Jeff Davis, Wayne</i>
45	<i>Women in Need of God's Shelter (WINGS)</i>	<i>Dublin</i>	<i>Bleckley, Dodge, Johnson, Laurens, Telfair, Wilcox, Wilkinson</i>
46	<i>Women's Resource Center to End Domestic Violence (Women Moving On)</i>	<i>Decatur</i>	<i>DeKalb</i>

State-Funded Sexual Assault Centers		
	<u>Center</u>	<u>City</u> <u>Counties Served</u>
1	<i>Battered Women's Shelter, Inc.</i>	<i>Valdosta</i> <i>Atkinson, Berrien, Brooks, Clinch, Colquitt, Cook, Echols, Lanier, Lowndes</i>
2	<i>Crisis Line & Safe House of Central Georgia, Inc.</i>	<i>Macon</i> <i>Bibb, Crawford, Houston, Peach</i>
3	<i>The Cottage aka Sexual Assault Center of NE GA</i>	<i>Athens</i> <i>Clarke, Madison, Oconee, Oglethorpe</i>
4	<i>DeKalb Rape Crisis Center, Inc.</i>	<i>Decatur</i> <i>DeKalb, Fulton, Henry, Newton, Rockdale</i>
5	<i>FAITH / Fight Abuse in the Home</i>	<i>Clayton</i> <i>Habersham, Rabun, Stephens</i>
6	<i>Grady Rape Crisis Center</i>	<i>Atlanta</i> <i>DeKalb, Fulton</i>
7	<i>Mosaic Georgia (Gwinnett Sexual Assault Center, Inc.)</i>	<i>Duluth</i> <i>Gwinnett, Rockdale</i>
8	<i>The Lily Pad SANE Center</i>	<i>Albany</i> <i>Baker, Calhoun, Decatur, Dougherty, Grady, Mitchell</i>
9	<i>LiveSAFE Resources</i>	<i>Marietta</i> <i>Cherokee, Cobb, Paulding</i>
10	<i>North GA Mountain Crisis Network</i>	<i>Blue Ridge</i> <i>Fannin, Gilmer, Pickens</i>
11	<i>Piedmont Rape Crisis Center</i>	<i>Hoschton</i> <i>Banks, Barrow, Jackson</i>
12	<i>Rape Crisis Center of the Coastal Empire, Inc.</i>	<i>Savannah</i> <i>Bryan, Chatham, Effingham, Evans, Liberty, Long, Tattnall</i>
13	<i>Rape Response, Inc.</i>	<i>Gainesville</i> <i>Dawson, Forsyth, Habersham, Hall, Lumpkin, White</i>
14	<i>SAFE/Support in Abusive Family Emergencies, Inc.</i>	<i>Blairsville</i> <i>Towns, Union</i>
15	<i>Satilla Health Foundation</i>	<i>Waycross</i> <i>Atkinson, Bacon, Brantley, Charlton, Coffee, Pierce, Ware</i>
16	<i>Sexual Assault Center of NW GA</i>	<i>Rome</i> <i>Bartow, Chattooga, Floyd, Polk</i>
17	<i>Sexual Assault Support Center, Inc.</i>	<i>Columbus</i> <i>Chattahoochee, Harris, Marion, Muscogee, Talbot, Taylor</i>
18	<i>Southern Crescent Sexual Assault Center</i>	<i>Jonesboro</i> <i>Butts, Clayton, Coweta, Fayette, Henry, Lamar, Pike, Spalding, Upson</i>

	<u>Center</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Counties Served</u>
19	<i>The Sexual Assault Victims Advocacy Center, Inc.</i>	<i>Ft. Oglethorpe</i>	<i>Catoosa, Dade, Walker</i>
20	<i>University Health Services, Inc.</i>	<i>Augusta</i>	<i>Burke, Columbia, Jefferson, McDuffie, Richmond, Washington</i>
21	<i>West Georgia Prevention and Advocacy Center, Inc.</i>	<i>Carrollton</i>	<i>Carroll, Coweta, Haralson, Heard</i>
22	<i>WINGS / Women in Need of God's Shelter, Inc.</i>	<i>Dublin</i>	<i>Bleckley, Dodge, Johnson, Laurens, Telfair, Wilcox, Wilkinson</i>

Source: CJCC documents

The Performance Audit Division was established in 1971 to conduct in-depth reviews of state-funded programs. Our reviews determine if programs are meeting goals and objectives; measure program results and effectiveness; identify alternate methods to meet goals; evaluate efficiency of resource allocation; assess compliance with laws and regulations; and provide credible management information to decision makers. For more information, contact us at (404)656-2180 or visit our website at www.audits.ga.gov.