



Office of Victim Services

The following is a **Broadcast Email** to all OVS Funded Victim Assistance Programs:

Dear Colleague,

In response to the public health emergency for the COVID-19 virus, New York State has directed all non-essential State employees to not report to work beginning **March 17, 2020**. While some non-essential staff shall work from home, to the extent practicable, grants unit staff will be available to assist their programs and programs should reach out to their staff as needed.

COVID-19 UPDATES

Even with this directive, OVS will continue processing emergency awards and reimbursing your program, even if services are temporarily reduced, provided that your organization has the appropriate policies in place and all staff are treated equally. Please upload already developed policies into the grantee document folder in the Grants Gateway or send an attachment in an email to your contract management specialist.

Additionally, for any expenses incurred due to cancellation of trainings/conferences, OVS will reimburse as we normally would, unless the program received a credit or was refunded those costs. Please do everything possible to mitigate potential expenses by cancelling as quickly as you can and/or obtaining credit for future travel.

OVS **strongly** encourages all programs to file claims through the portal. This allows for faster processing and, if the ability of OVS to process paper claims is delayed, staff will still be able to process electronic submissions so that victims' claims will not be affected.

If your program is going to be significantly reduced or closed because of the health emergency, you **must** let your contract management specialist know immediately. This will allow OVS to assist in redirecting victims to other programs for assistance.

Finally, The New York State Department of Health's Coronavirus website provides the most up-to-date information related to COVID-19. This website is available here:

<https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/>

On behalf of the New York State Office of Victim Services, thank you for your commitment to providing the highest quality services to innocent victims of crime in New York State.

Previous OVS Broadcast Emails are available online at: <https://ovs.ny.gov/victim-assistance-program>. You can also subscribe to future email correspondences from OVS by clicking the *Subscribe Now!* button below.

Subscribe Now!

