

# General Frequently Asked Questions

## For Semi-Annual Progress Report Forms

### **VAWA Measuring Effectiveness Initiative:**

TA/Training on content of the reporting forms:

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## FAQs Related to Submitting the Report

### Q: When is the grant report due?

A: Grantees report two times a year.

One report covers the reporting period of January 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup> and the other report covers July 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.

A January-June report is **due July 30<sup>th</sup>** (30 days after the end of the reporting period).

A July-December report is **due January 30<sup>th</sup>** (30 days after the end of the reporting period).

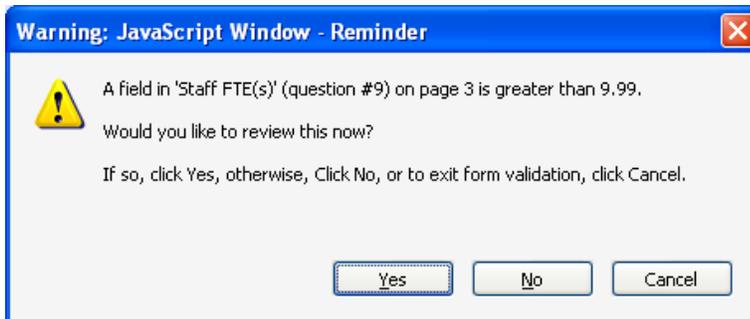
The Grants Management System (GMS) places an automatic hold on grant funds when a report is overdue. The hold is lifted once the overdue report has been submitted.

### Q: Can we save the progress reporting form and return to it later?

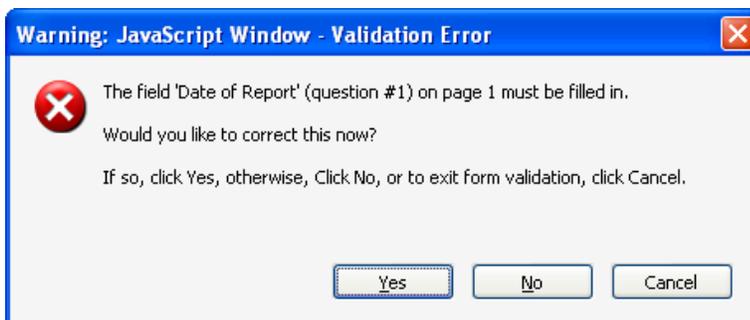
A: Yes, the form is a fillable PDF. We strongly encourage grantees to download and save the form to your desktop. When it is completed and validated, grantees can then upload and submit it in GMS. If you have additional questions about the GMS reporting system, please contact [GMSSupport@usdoj.gov](mailto:GMSSupport@usdoj.gov) or call 866-655-4482.

### Q: What are the validation warnings that appear when we try to validate the GMS form?

A: There are two types of validation errors.



The first is a “soft warning” that indicates there is a potential error on the form. We encourage grantees to look at the issues to double check the data is accurately entered. You will be able to validate your form without making a data change.



The second is a “hard warning” that means there is an error that must be corrected before you can validate the form. You will need to correct the error in order to validate the form.

### Q: Our agency has nothing to report on a section of the form, can we skip it?

A: Grantees must report only on grant-funded activities, so if you have no grant-funded activities to report in a section, please leave it blank. Blank sections can be explained in the narrative section if you choose.

**Q: We need to leave a section of the form blank. What do we do when a validation error occurs because of this?**

**A:** Sometimes the validation messages prompt you to complete a section of the form that is not applicable to your grant activities. We recommend the following workaround:

- If the question includes an “other” category, enter “1” and then explain in the other text box that you “had to enter ‘1’ to validate.”
- If there is no “other” category, enter “999” in the required field, if possible, and use the final narrative question to let us know what you have done: “Had to enter ‘999’ in questions 12 and 13 in order to validate. Please delete the data.”

Grantees can also always call us at VAWA MEI and we can help with working out validation errors.

**Q: Can we attach documents to our progress report?**

**A:** Please copy and paste any data or information related to reporting your funded activities into the appropriate narrative sections. While OVW Program Specialists may ask grantees to attach certain materials and will be able to see what grantees attach, we at VAWA MEI will not receive attached documents. VAWA MEI only has access to data included on the reporting form itself.

**Q: We were awarded our grant in the middle of the reporting period, and will not have our funds released to us during the reporting period. Do we still fill out a report?**

**A:** Yes, OVW requires all grantees to submit a report, even if funds have not yet been released. For example, grantees may receive an award that begins October 1, 2019, but not begin drawing down on these funds until January 1, 2020. Grantees will still need to fill out some sections of the form in order for the form to validate (such as Coordinated Community Response). We ask that grantees fill these sections out and then also provide narrative explaining that “your organization has no grant-funded activities to report” or “budget is still pending OVW approval.” We will see this note and address grantee data accordingly.

**Q: We closed out one grant and began a new grant within the current reporting period. How do we split up the data for the reporting period into the two grant reports we are required to submit?**

**A:** Do your best to divide the activities based on which grant funding supported each activity, but do not double count activities. There are two sections that are particularly tricky when doing this, Staff FTEs and Victim Services.

**Staff FTE (Full-time equivalent):** Staff FTEs should be reported based on what each grant funded. Therefore, the FTE will need to be prorated based on the time covered. For example, if grant A paid for 3 months of a full time employee (1.0 FTE) you will report this as 0.5 FTE because the grant only covered 3 months of the 6-month reporting period.

**Victim Services:** Please make sure that the two reports do not double count any victims served during the 6-month reporting period.

For example, if your agency uses grant funds to serve a victim during the first 3 months of the reporting period and again during the last 3 months of the reporting period, **do not** report this victim in the victim services sections of both forms. The best way to handle this situation is to get an unduplicated count of all victims served for the 6-month reporting period and divide them and the services they received between the two reports. If you report a victim as served in each of the 3 month reports, this will add up to 2 victims served in the 6-month reporting period, which is not accurate.

**Important:** Once you have determined how you will divide your data between the two reports, OVW and VAWA MEI ask that grantees use the final narrative question to list the project numbers for both awards, indicate the time periods that each cover, and verify that FTEs are prorated and that victim services numbers are divided between the two reports.

**Q: When submitting a final report, do we only report on the six month reporting period?**

**A:** Correct, only report on grant-funded activities or activities within the scope of your grant that occurred during the six month reporting period. Do not report data for the entire life of the grant, or aggregated data, in the final report.

## **FAQs Related to Percentage of Grant Funding Allocated to Each Victimization Area**

**Q: How do I determine the percentage of funds allocated to sexual assault, domestic violence/dating violence, and stalking?**

**A:** The allocation of percentages for each victimizations is based on the time and/or resources used to address each area during the 6-month reporting period. Grantees have the discretion to determine those allocations and should consider education, training, victims served, etc., when making those determinations. Whatever method a grantee uses to estimate percentages should be employed consistently across reporting periods.

**Q: Can the percentage of grant funds used for each area change from reporting period to reporting period?**

**A:** Yes! This is normal. Grantees often report changes in funding used for each area because their resources and activities change each period.

## FAQs Related to FTEs

**Q: What is an FTE?**

**A:** An FTE (full-time equivalent) is the metric used to report the hours worked by grant-funded staff. 1.00 FTE is equal to 1,040 hours, or 40 hours per week multiplied by 26 weeks (6 months). A 100% grant-funded staff person who worked the entire 6-month reporting period will be reported as 1 FTE; 1,040 hours worked = 1.00 FTEs. FTEs should be reported in decimals, not percentages.

**Q: What if our agency considers full time to be 35 hours per week, not 40 hours?**

**A:** If 35 hours is considered full time at your agency, you will not use 1,040 of working hours in your calculation. Instead, 1.00 FTE is equal to 910 hours, or 35 hours per week multiplied by 26 weeks (6 months). A 100% grant-funded staff person who worked the entire 6-month reporting period will be reported as 1 FTE; 910 hours worked = 1.00 FTEs. FTEs should be reported in decimals, not percentages.

**Q: Can staff be partially grant-funded?**

**A:** Yes. Grantees should prorate staff FTEs to represent the percent of their salary that is grant funded. This applies to cases of an employee who worked only for a portion of the reporting period, a professional who was contracted for a certain amount of hours, if grant-funds support overtime hours, or if a staff members falls into two or more categories of job functions and their time needs to be divided between those categories on the form.

**Q: How do we report a staff member who has multiple job functions?**

**A:** To report a staff that has more than one job function, first calculate the total FTE of that staff person based on how many grant-funded hours they work each reporting period. Then split up their FTE into the staff categories by estimating the percent of their time performing each job function.

**Q: What if our agency subawards funds to other organizations or agencies that are used to support staff salaries and wages?**

**A:** Report the FTEs associated with funds your agency contracts out or subawards to another entity to pay staff salaries or wages. FTEs should be counted for all grant-funded staff, even if those staff do not work directly for your agency.

## FAQs Related to Training

**Q: What is the difference between training and education?**

**A:** For the purposes of this form, **training** means providing information on sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, enabling professionals or volunteers to improve their response to victims/survivors as it relates to their role in the system. Training is not an educational presentation or prevention education.

**Education** means providing general information that will increase public awareness of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. (For example: presentations to groups such as high school students, community groups, or parents/guardians.)

**Q: What gets reported in the training section?**

**A:** The training section captures the total number of training events provided during the current reporting period that were either provided by grant-funded staff or directly supported (i.e., convened) by grant funds. Professionals who attended those grant-funded training events should be captured in the discipline that fits most closely with their profession.

If non-grant funded staff were sent to training with grant funds, report the training as an event and include them in the number of people trained.

**Q: Is there anywhere in the grant report that we report the trainings that our grant funded staff attended?**

**A:** Grant-funded staff, including subgrantees, attending training should not be reported. However, these staff development activities can be detailed in the narrative.

**Q: Do we report students as trained professionals?**

**A:** If the students are considered pre-professionals trained, please report them in the categories that reflect the profession the students are going into. If the students are not trained as pre-professionals, the students should not be reported in the Training Section.

## FAQs Related to MOU Partners

**Q: Does the Staff section include MOU partners if we are reimbursing organizations for services they provide to program participants?**

**A:** If you are using grant funds to pay for the services that the MOU partner is providing, for example you have an agreement with them to provide counseling services or translation services, report this in the Staff section.

**Q: Can an agency be both an MOU partner and a subrecipient depending on the services?**

**A:** Yes. For example, the agency receives subawarded funds for website management and is also an MOU partner for victim services. Both services are through the same agency, so the agency is an MOU partner and a subrecipient for the different services they are providing.

**Q: If we send an MOU partner to a training, can you report them in our training section?**

**A:** If an MOU partner is not receiving funds for their staffing, then they can be reported in the training section. Please ensure that your agency used grant funds to send them to the training or that the training itself was grant-funded.

## FAQs Related to Reporting Victims

**Q: Are we only reporting victims that asked to receive grant-funded services, or do we include all the victims our agency served during the reporting period?**

**A:** Grantees only report victims who requested grant-funded services.

Served: Victim received all grant-funded services they requested.

Partially Served: Victim received some but not all grant-funded services they requested.

Not Served: Victim did not receive any of the grant-funded services they requested.

Not Counted: Victim did not request any grant-funded services.

**Q: Does it look bad for my agency if we have high numbers of partially served and/or not served victims/survivors?**

**A:** Not at all. By reporting victims as partially served or not served, you are helping OVW and policymakers understand that the scope and burden of violence stretches far beyond what VAWA is able to fund. We encourage grantees to carefully track and report instances of partial service or non-service and to use the narrative questions to provide detail to demonstrate the additional needs that exist in your community. Our aim is to have accurate data, and partial and not served numbers are just as important as served numbers for creating a comprehensive picture of the impact of grant funds.

**Q: How do we track if we have a victim who was served multiple times over multiple reporting periods?**

**A:** Report an unduplicated count of victims for each reporting period. This means that grantees report a victim only once in each reporting period in which the victim receives grant-funded services, regardless of the number of times the victim receives those services. Grantees also report a victim in each reporting period during which the victim receives grant-funded services, so a victim who receives services between February and October of a given year would be counted in both reports submitted for that year.

**Q: How do we report victims/survivors who withdraw from services during a reporting period?**

**A:** If a victim/survivor chooses to discontinue services once they have begun receiving them, then the victim should be reported as served. The same is true if a victim/survivor moves, even if they do not inform you, and they are unable to complete the services. The partially served and not served categories are intended to capture the extent to which issues within your program keep you from providing services to a victim/survivor who requests those services.

**Q: How should we report on providing information and referrals?**

**A:** For the purposes of these forms, providing information and routine referrals by themselves are not considered a stand-alone, grant-funded victim services. If a victim does not receive a grant-funded service then they are not reported on the form. Grantees may elaborate on information and referral services in narrative.

**Q: How should I report demographics for victims who do not fall into the available categories on the form?**

**A:** If a victim/survivor identifies with a demographic category that is not included on the form, please report the victim/survivor in the “unknown category” and use the narrative section to provide further details on demographics. Also note that a survivor can be counted in multiple race/ethnicity categories. OVW is in the process of updating forms to capture more comprehensive and inclusive information about victims/survivors served.

**Q: In order to capture the information for the form, should we put questions about disabilities or immigration status onto an intake form?**

**A:** For the exclusive purposes of OVW grant reporting, questions about disabilities or immigration status should *not* be on your agency intake form. Some service providers will elect to collect this information if it helps them better understand and address victims’ needs, but intake forms should not be driven by OVW grant report fields. Grantees should fill out the “other demographics” based on what they have learned about the victim/survivor through working with them.

**Q: In addition to primary victimization, do we report each victimization and relationship to offender?**

**A:** Yes. The form has a question that reports on the relationships of the victim/survivor to offender by type of victimization. If a victim/survivor experienced more than one type of victimization and/or was victimized by more than one perpetrator, report the victim/survivor in all categories that apply. The total relationships may exceed the sum of all victims/survivors.

**Q: Do we report all of our agency’s hotline calls?**

**A:** OVW asks that you only report grant-funded activities.

- If grant-funded staff are answering the hotline, or supervising volunteers who answer the hotline, you would report all hotline calls handled by the grant-funded staff and/or the volunteers they supervise.
- If grant funds support a portion of the hotline budget, prorate your agency’s total hotline calls to reflect what portion or percent of hotline calls that grant funds support.