

Discussion Guide

Understanding and Reaching Crime Victims with Incarceration Histories: A Webinar for VOCA Administrators, Part 1

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These discussion questions can be used to help facilitate a dialogue with your colleagues about how the content of this webinar applies to your work.

Webinar description:

Survivors who have a history of incarceration often have difficulty locating victim services that are supportive, welcoming, and inclusive. The deep stigma associated with incarceration can also make it challenging for victim service providers to view these survivors as “victims” and feel comfortable serving them. In this [webinar for VOCA administrators](#), Allison Hastings of the Vera Institute of Justice provides foundational information about this population of crime victims that so rarely receives healing services, discusses the barriers that keep these victims from accessing services, and introduces strategies for supporting formerly incarcerated survivors. Jan Lastocy, a former Board and Survivor Council Member of [Just Detention International](#), also shares about her experience of being sexually assaulted while incarcerated and her journey towards finding healing and justice.

Discussion Questions for VOCA Administrators

1. What steps can you take to learn more about reentry and organizations serving formerly incarcerated people in your state?
2. Since the [2016 VOCA rule change](#), there is no longer a federal prohibition preventing VOCA funds from being used to serve survivors in detention facilities. Yet, some in the field remain unaware of this change. What can you do to educate potential grant applicants about the availability of these funds for serving incarcerated and formerly incarcerated survivors?
3. The presenters discussed populations that are disproportionately represented in prisons and jails including LGBTQ people, people with disabilities, people of color, and people with mental illnesses. Do you currently fund organizations working with any of these populations? If yes, how might you support these organizations to expand their knowledge, skills, and practices to enhance services for formerly incarcerated survivors?

Discussion Questions for Victim Service Providers

1. What stood out to you most about Jan's story? How might her story inform the way you deliver services to survivors who have been incarcerated?
2. What steps could you take to learn about local reentry services? How could a partnership or coordination with a reentry service organization help you reach more formerly incarcerated survivors (e.g., making sure each organization has brochures or posters for the other's services, creating a

memorandum of understanding that describes procedures for screening and referrals, etc.)?

3. The presenters discussed populations that are overly represented in prisons and jails including LGBTQ people, people with disabilities, people of color, and people with mental illnesses. What steps could you take to form partnerships with organizations already serving these communities in order to reach more formerly incarcerated survivors?

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