



Ministry  
of Justice

# **COVID-19 Extraordinary Ministry of Justice Funding for Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Services**

**National Rape and Sexual Abuse Support  
Fund Allocation Guidance and Frequently  
Asked Questions**

**May 2020**

1. This guidance refers only to the £5m COVID-19 extraordinary funding being delivered through the national Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund.

## **Background**

2. On 2 May 2020, the Government announced a package of £76m extra funding to support victims and survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence, vulnerable children and their families, as well as victims of modern slavery, during the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Of this £76m funding package, £25m will be administered by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). This is in addition to the £3m per annum (until 2022) funding we are providing to support the recruitment of Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs).
4. Our overarching aim is to ensure that the funding is allocated across the sector in England and Wales, reaching support organisations of all sizes and those with the greatest need. We are trying to keep the processes as simple and efficient as possible to ensure that the funding gets to the organisations that need it as quickly as possible. To achieve this, we are, where it exists, using existing funding channels and data on demand and need.
5. The MoJ funding will be distributed via Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) (£20m) and to organisations already funded through the national Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund (RSF) (£5m). The breakdown in the allocation of this funding is shown in the table below. The guidance document for the allocation through the PCCs is at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-funding-for-domestic-abuse-and-sexual-violence-support-services>
6. The details on how the rest of the £76m funding package is being administered and the purpose of each fund is also provided below. Support organisations may find that they need to request funding from more than one fund, depending on the type of provision they require.
7. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published guidance on 7 May 2020 on how organisations can access the £10m funding allocated for domestic abuse safe accommodation. Details can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-covid-19-emergency-support-fund>.
1. The Home Office launched their £2m funding on 22 May 2020. Organisations eligible for the Home Office fund include:
  - Organisations which provide a national service (i.e. covering all of England and/or Wales).
  - Organisations where the supported victims are very geographically dispersed over multiple PCC areas, and/or no one PCC area is the clear base for the majority of victims.
  - Umbrella or second tier organisations.

- Organisations which do capacity building, or which support other organisations to support victims and survivors. This includes those supporting the police in their response to domestic abuse. It also includes those supporting local authorities or other statutory bodies.

Guidance on how organisations can this funding can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-home-office-extraordinary-funding-for-domestic-abuse-support-services>

2. The National Lottery launched a £200m fund aimed primarily at small to medium organisations in England on 22 May 2020. The fund is part of the Government's £750m financial support package for charities and social enterprises announced by Government on April 8. Details can be found here:

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/covid-19/learn-about-applying-for-emergency-funding-in-england>

## National Rape and Sexual Abuse Fund extraordinary funding

8. All existing recipients of grants from the national Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund will be invited to submit requests for COVID-19 extraordinary funding. All funding requests must be submitted, via the attached template, to [rapesupport@justice.gov.uk](mailto:rapesupport@justice.gov.uk) by 23.59 on 02 June 2020.
9. Rape support centres in the five PCC areas in which full local commissioning is being tested (Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hampshire, MOPAC (London) and Nottinghamshire) and who are already in receipt of funding from the national Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund will also be eligible for this funding, but will need to request funding through their PCC.
10. Those charities funded by the PCC to provide sexual violence (SV) support services other than through the national Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund should submit funding requests through their PCC's published processes – <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-funding-for-domestic-abuse-and-sexual-violence-support-services>
11. All organisations who are not already in receipt of funding from the national Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund should contact their PCC with regard to COVID-19 extraordinary funding for victim support.

## General conditions

12. The COVID-19 extraordinary funding is from **24 March** to **31 October 2020** to meet the additional costs registered charities have incurred or will incur whilst adapting their services during the pandemic, and to cope with demand increases resulting from it, during this time period. For example, funding may be used to:
  - address short term income disruption resulting from COVID-19;

- met essential costs of sustaining current activities, such the purchasing of assets to support the move to remote and digital working, and additional staff to cover those unable to work for reasons related to the COVID-19 emergency; and
- address increased demand.

13. This list is not exhaustive.

14. The conditions of the overarching Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund grant agreement must also be adhered to, thus funding may not be spent on anything outside of these conditions.

15. Organisations must be within England or Wales to be eligible for this funding.

16. Organisations must not use this funding for the development of new projects or services not related to the COVID-19 response, for example designing technology platforms which will not be ready to deliver services for the majority of the funding period.

17. Organisations must ensure that COVID-19 related costs cannot be met from any existing funding stream, including fundraising, private donations and existing grants, before requesting funding from this pot.

18. Organisations are not eligible to apply if their needs can be met through other COVID-19 support measures, such as the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the three-month VAT deferral.

19. Funding can be used to address costs associated with COVID-19 from 24 March 2020 – the first day of lockdown.

20. Any spend organisations commit to beyond 31 October 2020 must be met through their own funds.

21. Please note that the MoJ is working across other Government departments and the National Lottery Communities Fund, sharing relevant data to prevent fraud and duplication of funding. This does not restrict services applying separately to other COVID-19 support packages for different aspects of their service.

### **Assessment criteria**

22. Charities requesting funding for COVID-19 extraordinary funding from the Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund must complete and return the funding request form to MoJ, providing evidence of costs incurred and a robust assessment of actual or anticipated increased demand. Providers will already have much of the information related to costs incurred to date and current and future needs based on their initial funding assessment and subsequent demand monitoring returns sent to the MoJ.

23. Requests for extraordinary funding will be assessed by the MoJ to ensure:

- costs are reasonable in stabilising the existing service and in moving to remote working;
- costs relating to anticipated demand during the funding period are based on a robust assessment of need; and
- loss of funding is guaranteed and not speculative.

## Oversight and reporting process

24. Funding will be allocated as addendums to providers' existing grants for ease and speed of administration. Grant recipients will be expected to report on the COVID-19 funding alongside their standard grant reporting at mid-year (to 30 September 2020, report due 30 October), with a light touch end of grant report to cover the additional duration of the COVID-19 extraordinary funding (to 31 October 2020). In addition, rape support centres in receipt of COVID-19 extraordinary funding will be asked to provide a forecast to MoJ by 30 September of any expected underspend. If there is underspend at the end of the funding period, the usual processes will be adhered to for the MoJ to reclaim or redistribute the funding.

Reporting action	Deadline
Forecast to MoJ of any anticipated underspend	30 August 2020
Mid-year reporting on Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund grants	30 October 2020
End of grant update report on COVID-19 extraordinary funding only	30 November 2020

Funding process action	Deadline
MoJ issue guidance, Q&A and template	19 May 2020
Deadline for responses from rape support centres to MoJ	02 June 2020
MoJ issue addendums to rape support centres	w/c 15 June 2020

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Which organisations are eligible for extraordinary COVID-19 funding from the National Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund?

Any organisation that is already in receipt of a grant from the national Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund, and organisations in the 5 PCC areas in which full local commissioning is being tested (Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hampshire, MOPAC (London), and Nottinghamshire), that are indirectly funded by the Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund via their PCC. Charities must be based within England and Wales.

### 2. What can organisations spend this money on?

Funding can be used to provide support to victims of sexual violence, in-line with the terms of existing grant agreements.

Funding can be used to address short term income disruption where organisations are unable to take advantage of existing government measures.

Funding can be used to meet essential costs of sustaining current activities, such as the move to remote working and digital rather than face to face offer.

Funding can be used to address increased demand, including adapting services to address more immediate beneficiary needs in light of COVID-19.

For example, funding could be used for:

- Short-term contracts for additional staff up to 31 October 2020
- Additional expenditure on existing staff (for example overtime or increased hours), lasting up to 31 October 2020
- Purchase of new equipment, for example laptops and mobile phones, to allow staff to work from home
- Online platforms through which to deliver support or counselling
- Essential spend on existing staff and equipment which can no longer be met during the lockdown because of reduced access to usual sources of funding.

This list is not exhaustive, further details are set out in your existing grant agreements with the MoJ, conditions of which must be adhered to.

### 3. Are there any restrictions on how rape support centres can spend this funding?

In line with usual government grants, rape support centres **must not** use this funding for any of the following:

- campaigning activities (this fund is to support the delivery of direct services for vulnerable people);
- religious activities outside of projects benefiting the wider and not containing religious content;
- political or lobbying activities;
- loan repayments; or
- activities that make profit for private gain.

Funding must not be used for capital works e.g. building repairs.

Funding cannot be used to pay for goods or services that have been bought or ordered before the 24 March 2020.

Funding cannot be used to pay for outstanding debts, which an organisation incurred prior to 24 March 2020.

4. **The request for funding I am going to submit now is different from the needs I outlined in my initial funding needs assessment to MoJ, can I have the funding based on the new amount?**

The funding that was allocated to the national Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund for COVID-19 was based on the returns provided by rape support centres in March and early April. You are free to request a different amount now you have a better understanding of your needs, but the full amount available in the fund is £5 million, so if funding requests exceed that total we will have to consider scaling down amounts provided to each rape support centre.

5. **My service/organisation receives funding for SV services both from the PCC and the MoJ Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund. Do I need to submit a funding request to the PCC as well as a funding request to MoJ for different elements of our service?**

Yes, you will need to submit a funding request to the national Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund to cover COVID-19 related costs associated with the services usually funded by the national Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund, and to the PCC for COVID-19 related costs associated with the services usually funded by the PCC.

6. **Some of our technology, such as laptops and virtual platforms, are used across services that funded by both the PCC and the national Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Fund. Which fund should I request funding from to cover these costs?**

You can request funding for items that are used across services provided through both commissioners from either fund, however you must only submit a funding

request to one fund for this equipment. You must not request funding from both pots for the same equipment.

**7. Can funding requests be made to multiple government funds?**

Whilst organisations can request funding from any of the funding pots, you cannot receive funding for the same purpose from multiple pots e.g. if an organisation is allocated funding via a PCC for purchasing IT equipment to enable remote working, the organisation cannot then request funding for further IT equipment from one of the other government funding pots. They could, however, request funding for counselling sessions from a different fund, as this has not already been requested elsewhere.

**8. In the guidance it states organisations must not use this funding for the development of new projects or services not related to the COVID-19 response, for example designing technology platforms which will not be delivering services for the majority of the window of the grant. Can the funding be used to purchase IT equipment to support moving to remote ways of working?**

Yes.

**9. We expect there to be ongoing implications of COVID-19 beyond 31 October, and beyond the period of movement restrictions. Will there be an opportunity to request further funding?**

At present, there is no further funding available beyond those pots already announced.

**10. The funding request form asks for 'Evidence of assessment (information to support the need outlined in column C)'. What do I need to provide?**

As set out in the guidance, the MoJ needs to ensure that within the funding being requested:

- costs are reasonable in stabilising the existing service and in moving to remote working; and
- costs relating to future demand are based on robust assessment of anticipated need.

We will need to assess funding requests against this criteria, so will need to see evidence of demand modelling based on existing demand data, and evidence that requests for equipment etc are reasonable given the size of the organisation and number of victims supported.

- 11. The funding request for asks for Evidence that this income stream would have been guaranteed, and at this amount, if it had not been disrupted by COVID-19 (information to support the need outlined in columns F & G - further information in the guidance and Q&A). What do I need to provide?**

As set out in the guidance, the MoJ needs to ensure that within the funding requested loss of funding is guaranteed and not speculative.

This means that the MoJ cannot cover costs that are unknown, for example funding streams that may have been bid for but that success in securing was not guaranteed, or amounts of fundraising that are not delineable, such as the amount that may have been collected by street fundraisers.

Loss of funding that could be covered includes planned fundraising events, such as marathons, that have been taken place in recent years, so amounts lost can be quantified. The MoJ will need to see evidence of funding amounts raised in previous years or iterations of the specified event.

- 12. It was announced that the MoJ will be providing £3m per annum in additional funding to further support the recruitment of Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) until 2022. Is this additional funding for ISVAs on top of the £1m already announced this year?**

Yes. This is additional funding to recruit more ISVAs to enable local flexibility and coverage. More information will follow shortly.

- 13. Can this funding be spent on child victims?**

Yes, this funding is for all victims of sexual violence.

- 14. Can the funding be spent on supporting existing clients as well as new referrals?**

Yes, this funding is for all victims of sexual violence.

- 15. Can the funding be spent on male victims and survivors?**

Yes, this funding is for all victims of sexual violence.



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