2019

NATIONAL COMPASSION FUND TRAINING MANUAL
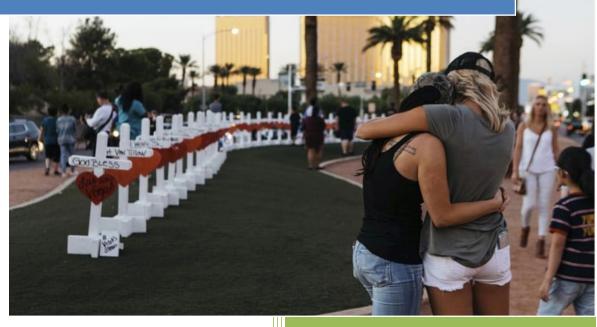
Image credit: Mikayla Whitmore/Las Vegas Sun

RaeAnn Dietlin

National Compassion Fund and

National Center for Victims of Crime

2/28/2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview

The National Compassion Fund provides a single, trusted way for the public to donate directly to victims of a mass crime, such as a shooting or terrorist attack, and ensure that **100% of their donation is going to the victim**. It has been developed by the National Center for Victims of Crime in partnership with victims and family members from past mass casualty crimes, including those from Sandy Hook, Aurora, Virginia Tech, Oak Creek Temple, NIU, Columbine, and 9/11. Since its inception, the National Compassion Fund has responded to events as varied as the Fort Hood shooting, the shooting at Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, FL, the violence at the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, VA, the Route 91 Harvest Festival shooting in Las Vegas, and the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL, among others.

The National Compassion Fund serves donors by honoring their intent, and crime victims by distributing donations directly to them in a fair and transparent way. Many funds that raise money in the name of crime victims are not under any legal obligation to give that money to the victims or their families. They may collect excessive administrative fees or conceal the amount donated or how it's distributed. Others are outright scams. The National Compassion Fund was set up to address this lack of transparency and accountability. It honors the wishes of the donor, and serves the direct needs of victims. The National Compassion Fund can also, if necessary, collect donations for multiple mass tragedies at the same time. Donors can designate which events to donate to, and those funds will be kept separately.

At the same time, the National Compassion Fund avoids overlapping resources with state crime victim compensation programs, which reimburse for specific costs incurred as a result of a crime. While these CVC programs reimburse for specific costs such as funeral expenses, medical treatment and mental health treatment costs, and lost wages, the National Compassion Fund awards victims their portion of the pooled donations as a *gift*. This gift is in recognition of the presumed psychological trauma of the victims of this crime; funds are *not* compensation for any economic loss, nor reimbursement for any expense. This also means that the funds are given to victims without any restriction on their use. The National Compassion Fund believes that victims and survivors are in the best position to determine which use would be most beneficial to their healing. We also believe that empowering victims to decide for themselves is yet another way to help them regain the control taken from them during these events.

Who counts as a "victim" of a mass casualty event can be very subjective, but NCF funds typically include a category for the immediate family of those who were killed in a mass casualty event, victims who were injured and hospitalized overnight, victims who were injured and given outpatient treatment, and victims who were not injured but were present/suffered psychological trauma. In certain cases there are insufficient funds to include the latter category; however, recognition of psychological trauma in addition to physical injury and death is a defining principle of the National Compassion Fund and we include those victims whenever we can.

The Fund is a subsidiary of the National Center for Victims of Crime, registered as a 501(c)(3) charity, and donations are tax-deductible to the extent of the law.

LIFE CYCLE OF AN NCF RESPONSE

As a VERY brief overview, a typical fund will flow through all of the following steps:

- Mass violence event occurs

- NCF does initial outreach to the local municipality offering services

- NCF helps identify or establish a local 501 (c)(3) nonprofit to assist with local donations as well as identify local steering committee members

- NCF provides guidance on who should be on the steering committee

- NCF guides the steering committee in drafting the fund protocol (with an initial draft and then a final version), incorporating public input via e-mail and a town hall

- (Fundraising for donations to victims is ongoing throughout this time)

- Based on eligibility criteria listed in the protocol, NCF develops application claim forms, sets up them up in an online application portal, and makes applications available to the public

- NCF and partners from claims processing firms, law enforcement, and hospitals begin validating applications during the open application period

- NCF and partners continue validating applications after application period has closed, throughout the processing period, specifically working with applicants with "deficiencies" (missing information/documentation or issues of unverified presence/treatment for injury) to try to resolve them if possible

- NCF finalizes a list of approved applicants at the same time as fundraising ends, and NCF guides the steering committee in setting a distribution plan (i.e. benefits amounts), though the steering committee makes the final distribution plan decision

- NCF (usually) handles all or most of distributing 100% of the funds collected to the approved victims

Typically, the pre-application period (reaching out, setting up a steering committee, creating a protocol and applications) takes about 1-2 months, the application period is open for about 1 month, the processing and approval period takes about 1 month, and distribution takes anywhere from 1 to 5 months. Distribution is significantly impacted by the type of fund and how we can pay people. In Cincinnati, for example, we had all adults with no special cases that needed trusts and could do almost all payments electronically, so it was completely wrapped up within a few weeks (including a couple of initially-failed payments that had to be redone). For school shootings in particular, we are dealing with lots of payments to minor victims that need trusts/UTMA accounts that take a long time to set up (especially because victims and/or their parents can feel very overwhelmed by the process of setting them up). In addition,

family situations surrounding deceased victims are often contentious in any fund, but with school shootings especially we see divorced parents who are both legal heirs but who are *very* unwilling to cooperate with each other on distribution plans. While the bulk of the payments for these types of funds can be handled within the first month or two (depending on the size of the victim universe and the number of failed electronic payments that need follow-up and reissues), we always have stragglers that drag out for months. So a fund can last anywhere from about 4 months to 1 year.

WHO'S WHO ON THE NCF TEAM

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/RESPONSE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director oversees the fund at the "big picture" level, and is the highest point of decision-making *within* the enduring National Compassion Fund team/structure, though the Steering Committee formed from local community leaders for each response is in charge of final decisions about their particular fund. The ED is responsible for developing and managing relationships with relevant local stakeholders from the affected community in the early stages of the response, and remains the primary point of contact with the locally-formed Steering Committee throughout the response, including assisting the Steering Committee with the fundraising process and coordinating and attending key meetings held with the Steering Committee in which the Draft Protocol, Final Protocol, and Final Distribution Plan are finalized. The ED is therefore also responsible for drafting proposed protocols and proposed distribution plans (drawing from documents from past responses and modifying them as appropriate), which the Steering Committee makes the final decision to approve or modify. In addition, throughout the response the ED makes sure that the overall process is moving appropriately and in accordance with the approved timeline/deadlines, including by periodically checking in with the rest of the NCF team and by using the online portal to review the status of the overall application pool. The ED is responsible for the administrative budget (i.e. managing hours in Nexonia, managing costs and paying bills for services used for administrative purposes by NCF), and for liaising with the NCF Board of Directors. During distribution, the ED signs off on all outgoing payments to ensure that victims are being paid the correct amounts; he is the "last check" on internal mechanisms that push payments from NCF's bank accounts to the victims' bank accounts. He is also responsible for initiating any check-based payments that are being processed through NCF's Bank of America accounts. The ED can also: a) answer media requests for information, and b) answer victim/applicant questions and complaints *after* they have already been escalated unsuccessfully through VictimConnect and/or the Program Coordinator.

The current long-term Executive Director is Jeff Dion, who worked from the beginning with the victims of the Aurora theater shooting and other events to develop a structure that would serve both victim and donor needs, thus creating the National Compassion Fund. However, as NCF attempts to expand its operations and explore more flexible working arrangements, we *may* create a position ("Response Director") which performs the tasks typically performed by the ED, but on an *individual* basis for a response to a single mass casualty event. The idea is that we would be able to build a "bench" of response directors who could rotate leading each response, rather than having a single director who performs these tasks for every response that NCF takes on even as they overlap with each other.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee has as much (if not more) seniority and decision-making power as the Executive Director; however, the composition of the Steering Committee changes with every mass casualty incident. The Steering Committee is made up of local civic and business leaders from the affected community; after an incident if a community accepts NCF's assistance, the ED helps put together this group of leaders. Though NCF and the ED in particular consistently give guidance and make suggestions throughout the process of a given fund response, all final decisions are ultimately up to the Steering Committee. This includes the approval of the protocol that determines the eligibility criteria, obligations, and timeline of the fund, as well as the distribution plan that dictates how much money goes to each eligible category. The Steering Committee is also involved in the fundraising of donations and the management of those donations throughout the fund. Once the fund is fully complete with all benefits distributed, that particular Steering Committee will disband, while the overall architecture of the National Compassion Fund remains in place, waiting to be activated.

PROGRAM COORDINATOR/VICTIM OUTREACH SPECIALIST

This position combines two roles which can usually be collectively handled by a single individual: 1) the program coordinator role, which handles day-to-day/operational tasks necessary for the timely and effective implementation of any given funding response, and 2) the victim outreach specialist role that works with victims from the "distal"/lower-payment-tier category/ies (usually this means the category of "being present/psychological trauma" but sometimes the PC/VOS also works with the injury category applicants).

The Program Coordinator acts as a focal point to conduct operational activities that involve other players in the response—other NCF staff, other NCVC staff, partners in the review process, the Executive Director, and others as needed. While the ED is in charge with establishing some of these relationships initially (i.e. with law enforcement or medical partners assisting us with the application review process), the PC ensures that the day-to-day tasks these entities are responsible are going smoothly, whether by answering questions, troubleshooting problems, or proactively working with them to get program implementation tasks done.

The PC will actively reach out to NCVC's technical team, the communications team, or the VictimConnect hotline throughout the response for scheduled tasks (i.e. updating the VC Hotline staff with information they need to answer calls, ensuring that scheduled e-mails for the NCF contact list are sent, or ensuring that appropriate website changes are made on the day of application launch). The PC will also reach out to the tech team or comms team if technical or communications-related issues arise throughout the response which can be resolved without input/approval from the director (i.e. they notice a glitch in the application workflow and bring the issue to the attention of the technical director). Conversely, for implementation issues involving any of these groups as well as any newer NCF team members with questions, the PC is usually the first point of contact; staff from these teams will typically reach out to the PC with any questions or issues and only escalate to the Executive Director if the PC cannot answer the question or resolve the issue.

The Program Coordinator is also the first point of contact for our partners in processing applications (i.e. claims processing firms, law enforcement, hospital staff) if they have questions about the process or how to handle a specific case—the PC should usually be able to answer these questions without escalating to the ED. Conversely, if the PC notices that a processing partner is consistently handling applications incorrectly, they should politely conduct outreach to resolve the misunderstanding without the ED.

In their capacity as the Victim Outreach Specialist, their two primary tasks are a) working with victims in the lower-payment-tier categories to resolve any deficiencies in their applications, and b) managing and answering questions that come to the general help e-mail that is established for each response. They are also responsible for other production tasks related to their "category" of claims; for example, if they are working with the psychological trauma category, they will be responsible for creating the application template for that category (and any documents that go with it). They will also draft/edit approval notification and denial templates for their category, and handle sending these unless they are being conducted via mailchimp, which the comms team controls (even if this is the case, the VOS is responsible for creating the spreadsheets needed to do approval notification through mailchimp and for coordinating with the comms team to ensure approvals are sent).

In resolving deficiencies, the VOS regularly checks their workflow inbox on the application portal for a given response, e-mails the applicants to try to resolve whatever is wrong with the application (i.e. clarification of information, obtaining a missing HIPAA or proof-of-relationship document, getting additional evidence of presence, etc.), and then tracks the outreach in the application. They continue to work with the deficient applicant until the deficiency is resolved and the application can be sent forward, or until the process ends in a denial for that deficient application (they are responsible for all denials in their category). They conduct outreach to resolve deficiencies via the general help e-mail that is set up for that response (i.e. msdfund@victimsofcrime.org). Simultaneously, they answer any e-mails that come to the general help e-mail address outside of deficiency resolutions.

Lastly, the PC/VOS typically ends up handling many of the tasks facilitating distribution of funds. For electronic distributions, this will typically mean exporting application data to create spreadsheets of payees, importing the spreadsheet data into CashPro Accelerate, and uploading the resulting CashPro Accelerate text file into the banking portal. For checks, this will mean creating and updating a spreadsheet of check recipient information to be sent to the ED.

CORE IMPACT VICTIM OUTREACH SPECIALIST

The Core Impact Victim Outreach Specialist fills a similar role to the above position, minus the PC/VOS's duties as Program Coordinator. However, while the PC/VOS typically works with the categories of victims in the lower payment tier (typically present/psychological trauma), the Core Impact VOS works specifically with the category/ies that demand a great deal of personalized attention. They always work with the families of victims who were killed, and they usually also assist the victims who have sustained a physical injury during the event. The exception for the injury category is if the event has had an incredibly high number of injured victims who would stretch the capacity of the Core Impact VOS to provide the usual level of individualized assistance (as in the case with Las Vegas).

Similar to the PC/VOS, the Core Impact VOS's tasks include working with victims in the higher-payment-tier categories to resolve any deficiencies in their applications, but they also *proactively* reach out to the victims in their category/ies of responsibility to encourage filling out applications and provide guidance to them while they do so. This means that early on in the process they use the information gathered by the NCF contact list along with any other information about victims that is shared with NCF to compile a spreadsheet of killed/injured victims (and relevant family members/attorneys for the killed victims), along with as much of their contact information as possible, in order to facilitate outreach *before* the application period begins.

They are also responsible for other production tasks related to their "category" of claims; for example, if they are working with the death and injury categories, they will be responsible for creating the application templates for those categories (and any documents that go with them, such as the consent form that death beneficiaries have to fill out, or the HIPAA that injured victims have to fill out). They will also draft/edit approval notification and denial templates for their category, and handle sending these unless they are being conducted via mailchimp, which the comms team controls (even if this is the case, the VOS is responsible for creating the spreadsheets needed to do approval notification through mailchimp). Most of the time, for the number of victims in the categories that the Core Impact VOS works with, it is easier for them to send approval notices from their own e-mail rather than involving the comms team. It should also be noted that while the PC/VOS maintains the general help e-mail for a given fund and uses that e-mail address to resolve deficiencies and conduct outreach, the Core Impact VOS typically just uses their own NCF e-mail address. Correspondence by e-mail is helpful for keeping a record of conversations, but because the hallmark of the Core Impact VOS's role is providing personalized attention, they also talk to their clients on the phone frequently.

In resolving deficiencies, the VOS regularly checks their workflow inbox on the application portal for a given response, e-mails the applicants to try to resolve whatever is wrong with the application (i.e. clarification of information, obtaining a missing HIPAA or proof-of-relationship document, getting a legal heir included in the distribution plan, etc.), and then tracks the outreach in the application. They continue to work with the deficient applicant until the deficiency is resolved and the application can be sent forward. In the categories the Core Impact VOS works with, NCF can sometimes allow a little more leeway in recovering missing documentation closer to the end of the processing deadline, but they can still deny applications as incomplete if they fail to send a necessary document by that deadline (*excluding consent forms for distribution*, which don't speak to an application's eligibility but simply impact how we pay it out). That being said, if a deceased victim does not have any family member who submits an application, even by the processing deadline, the Core Impact VOS simply continues to work with the appropriate family member until they do submit a late application. This is in acknowledgement of the immense trauma these family members are often going through.

Lastly, the Core Impact VOS does a great deal of hand-holding and low-level mediation for tense family situations that come into play for victims who have been killed (or parents of minor injured victims with higher amounts of money involved). While NCF's position is generally that we want families to work out agreements between any legal heirs or parents of living minor victims on their own (which NCF will then abide by), the reality is that the Core Impact VOS spends a good deal of time talking to multiple parties

with grievances against each other, and trying to subtly guide those parties toward an agreement. Even in situations in which the family members all get along with no competing claims or disputes in distribution, the victims that the Core Impact VOS works with are typically dealing with higher levels of trauma and end up talking about their experience and what they are going through in the aftermath. Dealing with all of these victims with compassion and sensitivity is a key part of the Core Impact VOS's job.

Please note that the following three "Who's Who" roles work for NCVC, NCF's parent company. While they have been involved in NCF responses in the manner described below while NCF was a program of NCVC and more directly integrated, NCF and NCVC's level of integration is evolving as NCF transitions operating more independently as a subsidiary. Everything in the three sections below could change!

VICTIMCONNECT HOTLINE

The VictimConnect Hotline's phone number (1-855-4-VICTIM/1-855-484-2846) is used as a helpline to answer general questions about the fund. This includes providing *general* information about town halls, eligibility, the application process and timeline (including the passing of an application deadline), and clarifications of the meaning of the application status that applicants can view when they log in to check their application (i.e. "Pre-qualified" means the application is in progress but has passed the initial check for any missing information, "deficient" means there is something that needs to be resolved that you should have received an e-mail about but is *not* a denial, etc). They can also sometimes troubleshoot simple issues by phone. Typically, for more specific/complicated problems or an in-depth status check on an individual application, VC transfers calls to the appropriate VOS for the caller's category. For very large funds we *may* train an appointed VC person and give them the administrative permissions to be able to check an individual application's status, so that victims' individual questions can be handled directly by calling, without the need to transfer calls or direct them to send an e-mail. VictimConnect serves as a parallel source of information/assistance with the general help e-mail set up for that particular event/fund (i.e. SantaFeStrong@victimsofcrime.org).

TECHNICAL TEAM

The tech team is vital to the maintenance of NCF's two main digital spaces, the NCF homepage and the application portal for each individual fund. Typically lower-level tech staff can handle updates to the NCF homepage (i.e. updating the homepage to include the links, header graphic, and language for a newly-opened fund). They may also be able to help with smaller-scale issues of the application portal, such as helping an applicant reset their password, as well as with setting up the general help e-mail for a fund and giving administrator privileges for that address to the PC. However, the tech director (Sam Webster) does most of the tasks related to the application portal. One of the biggest tasks is setting up the application portal for a new fund, including taking the application templates that the VOSs create (in word doc form) for a new fund, and inputting those applications into the code of the application portal—basically, setting up the entire online application process. The tech director also is the one who gives administrative permissions/access to NCF's external partners assisting us with application review (i.e. law enforcement,

hospital employees, the staff from the claims processing firm, etc). This access is what allows them to do their section of the review process via the application portal. The tech director also troubleshoots anything technical that is going consistently wrong with the application process, especially with the workflow of the applications (the way that they automatically "flow" from one review step to another).

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

The Communications team assists NCF with management of the contact lists that are set up following each response, and with the scheduled e-mails we send out to everyone who has signed up for that contact list (i.e. announcements of the draft and final protocols, announcement of the application period, and reminders about the application deadline). They sometimes assist with approval and denial notifications, or with the dissemination of things like press releases. Most of our communications also have to be translated into Spanish as well, so the comms team usually manages that process—in the past we have used other NCVC employees who speak Spanish to accomplish the translation of scheduled communications. The comms team usually works in close connection with the Program Coordinator, reviewing and approving a communications schedule for each fund response early on in the process.

NCF DIGITAL SPACES AND HOW TO USE THEM

PUBLIC-FACING WEBSITES

https://nationalcompassionfund.org

This is the NCF "homepage," where we make announcements about individual funds (i.e. funds for each individual incident they we are officially assisting with—the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Victims' Fund, the Jacksonville Tribute Fund, etc.); people can also come here to learn about the National Compassion Fund in general, including our mission, our history, the overall process, FAQs, and how to contact us. For every individual fund/response, the homepage is the first place to go to for the following: the link to donate, the link to sign up for the contact list to receive updates about that particular fund, the draft/final protocol which includes eligibility criteria and timeline of the response, and a link to the application portal when the application period is ongoing. It will also clearly list the deadline to apply while the application period is ongoing (and will specify that the application period for that fund is closed once the deadline has passed). Sometimes we also link to information about that fund's steering committee, or include information about/footage of the town hall explaining the application process and getting feedback from the community.

The homepage will usually only list the two most recent funds (possibly more if we have more than two actively taking donations and/or accepting applications at the same time). The information for all current and past funds is still retained on the "Funds" tab (for example, if you need to look up the eligibility criteria for a much earlier fund, you can go to the "Funds" tab to access that fund's final protocol).

Some of the general information about the NCF still needs to be updated on the NCF homepage/website to reflect the transition to NCF being its own 501(c)3, so information on those pages should be verified before being used or given out.

Error! Hyperlink reference not valid. *i.e.* https://santafe.nationalcompassionfund.org

For each individual funding response we do, our tech director creates a *separate* online application portal, which victims use to apply for benefits during the open application period, and which NCF staff and other reviewers use to review applications and manage most of the application process. Each individual application portal site is essentially the same in how it functions, though the applications that victims fill out change slightly from one fund to the next.

The application portal/s are a *major* part of any fund, and anyone who will be reviewing applications (including new NCF employees) should receive a screenshare-based training in how to use the application portal from the technical director. However, the section of this manual, "Reviewing Applications and Resolving Deficiencies," also reviews the application portal functions and the review process the application portal facilitates in relative detail. The manual does not include live visuals of the website, and so a training by the technical director is still recommended.

OFFLINE/FILE-SHARING SPACES

Please note that NCF's Dropbox access is contracted through NCVC, but as the integration between NCVC and NCF is worked out with NCF as a newly-created subsidiary, NCF may pursue a different hosting service. This may also apply to the domain name used for e-mail management. The *functioning* of filesharing spaces and e-mail should be roughly the same regardless, as these have been honed as best practices.

We try to save most of the files we create/use for NCF in Dropbox. Once you access the NCVC/NCVC Team Folder on Dropbox, the main National Compassion Fund folder is "ncf" (before going deeper into any subfolders, you will notice that this training manual is stored within the ncf main folder). Within the main ncf folder are folders for each fund we have responded to from the fall of 2018 onward, as well as a folder that contains all materials from responses before fall of 2018. NCVC switched from SharePoint to Dropbox in fall of 2018, which is why the funds that occurred after that point have their own distinct folders within the main ncf folder. The folder "11-30-18 discont'd sharepoint…" is a copy of the folder for NCF materials that existed when we were using SharePoint; including all of that folder's subfolders. That folder contains distinct folders for all of the funds prior to fall of 2018 (including MSD and Las Vegas); it also contains a great deal of general NCF material that was created and saved prior to the transition to Dropbox. In short, if you are looking for general NCF materials not specific to any fund, you should either look in the SharePoint copy folder or the ncf folder one level up. If you are looking for materials relevant to a specific fund, you should look in that fund's folder within ncf for anything Santa Fe or later, or within the Sharepoint copy folder's sub-folders for anything Santa Fe or earlier. Santa Fe in fact has folders in both, as it was ongoing during the Sharepoint-to-Dropbox transition; some of the files are overlapping, but some are distinct.

Within each fund's individual folder (I.e. "Parkland," "Jacksonville"), you can usually find additional sub-folders; at the very least there should be:

- An Approval and Payments folder
- An Application Files folder
- An Application template and edit documents folder

The "approval and payment folder" contains application approval notification templates, payment spreadsheets used throughout the electronic distribution process, and some other payment files. For the funds where we used Bill.com (an older payment platform we are transitioning away from) instead of Zelle, you should see folders that contain the individual approval letters we used as "invoices" to facilitate their Bill.com payments. There should also be a folder called "Application Files" that contains a copy of any files we used to resolve deficiencies in victims' applications during the validation process (i.e. birth certificates that had to be e-mailed in after initial online submission, images demonstrating victims' presence at a mass casualty event where it could not be verified by law enforcement, missing HIPAAs, etc). Another important set of files will be the application templates; each new fund we do we draw from the previous fund's application template Word Doc to update the application template to be appropriate for the new fund. These files will be within the sub-sub-folder "Fund City Name/Application templates and edit documents" for example, "Cincinnati/ Application templates and edit documents."

Each fund's folder should also contain the **final distribution plan** (the amounts that go to each payment tier), the **final protocol**, and a **final export of all applications' answer fields for each category of applications** created before decommissioning an individual application portal. There will also be a great many other files that were used throughout the application and distribution process, with varying usefulness.

In general, we try to save anything relevant to NCF on a cloud storage space (whether Dropbox or, in the past, Sharepoint) so that all team members can access these materials at any time. When team members save files to their own desktop but not to Dropbox, it can sometimes cause problems when a team member is out of office/on vacation and other team members need access to something.

E-MAIL MANAGEMENT

Alongside the VictimConnect hotline, a general help e-mail will usually be set up for that response (i.e. msdfund@victimsofcrime.org), which is maintained and answered by the PC/VOS. The e-mails that come in tend to be general questions about the fund and eligibility, specific questions from someone who is concerned about their own application, and complaints about missing the application deadline or receiving a denial. During the public comment period after the draft protocol has been released, this e-mail is also expected to receive any e-mail input from victims/the general public about improvements to the draft protocol prior to the final protocol. The PC/VOS will compile these comments and pass them on to the ED/Steering Committee.

The ED, Core Impact VOS, Steering Committee members, and external partners helping with the review process typically use their own work e-mails for any communications related to NCF; the PC/VOS is really

the only one who maintains a separate, fund-specific e-mail address. For *all* e-mail addresses being used within NCF, best practice is to keep, and *not* delete, any communications that involve victims or their representatives (i.e. attorneys, family members). These e-mails are essentially NCF's communications record, and they often become important when someone who was denied (especially for not responding to e-mails trying to resolve a deficiency) reaches out belatedly to complain that they were never contacted.

In that vein, we have four e-mails that are currently "dormant" but are useful as archives of communications:

- claimantservices@victimsofcrime.org: *includes e-mails for Route 91 Harvest Festival shooting in Las Vegas, NV*
- msdfund@victimsofcrime.org: *includes e-mails for MSD High School shooting in Parkland, FL*
- Jacksonville@victimsofcrime.org: *includes e-mails for EA tournament shooting in Jacksonville, FL*
- Cincinnati@victimsofcrime.org : *includes e-mails for Fifth Third Bank shooting in Cincinnati, OH*

Santa Fe and Charlottesville did not have distinct e-mail addresses set up for victim assistance; their communications records, where they exist, are primarily in the accounts of rdietlin@victimsofcrime.org and eroberts@victimsofcrime.org. Most of these e-mails are in e-mail folders marked as Charlottesville/Santa Fe, but not all.

The msdfund@victimsofcrime.org and claimantservices@victimsofcrime.org e-mails in particular also have a robust selection of e-mail templates for frequently-used and –needed communications saved in the "Drafts" folder. Saving e-mail responses to common questions or situations (i.e. asking for a commonly-missing application document, explaining that the application deadline is passed, troubleshooting issues with electronic distribution) in your "Drafts" folder is a great way to keep them accessible/on hand so that they can easily be used again and again as questions from victims come into your e-mail. Some of the most commonly-used templates from past responses are included at the end of this manual.

BANKING WEBSITES FOR DISTRIBUTION PROCESS

NCF uses two main websites to carry out and monitor distribution: Bank of America's bank-to-bank portal and CashPro Online. Both are maintained by external organizations of which we are clients (Bank of America and CashPro, respectively).

Bank of America's bank-to-bank portal is where NCF can upload spreadsheets listing transaction details that effectively act as "requests" for Bank of America to process all listed transactions. The login information for the bank-to-bank website is included in the Key Contacts and Account Information section, and some of the process that goes into creating and uploading these spreadsheets are described in the Step-by-Step Distribution section. However, any new staff who will be using this website should receive a document from NCF's Bank of America contacts on using the bank-to-bank portal.

CashPro Online is a website where NCF staff can *review* transaction reports to monitor the distribution process, primarily the electronic distributions. While NCF has a company ID listed in the Key Contacts and Account Information section, each new NCF staffperson will need to be set up by Bank of America/CashPro personnel as an administrator for CashPro Online, and will need to set up a username and password. Contingent with this set-up, each new NCF employee should receive a virtual training on using CashPro Online. In general, NCF mainly uses CashPro Online to look at Digital Disbursement Detailed Listing reports under the "Statements" tab on CashPro Online—these reports display all transactions for a given day, including those that were successfully completed, those that are pending, and those that failed and were credited back to NCF's Bank of America account.

ANALOG MAIL AND PHYSICAL LOCATIONS

Our physical locations rarely come into play except as spaces to conduct our work (a significant portion of which can be done remotely), but should we ever need to send or receive anything by post, we use the address of the NCF office in Alexandria: 1450 Duke Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314.

Jeff Dion and Haley Ziegler work out of the Alexandria office. The VOSs have, in the past, worked in the NCVC office in Arlington (partially because these positions typically worked on other NCVC projects as well)--that may change in the future.

VictimConnect staff, tech staff, and communications staff all work on all of NCVC's projects and therefore work out of the NCVC office in Arlington. In general, most communications with these employees can happen by e-mail, so being in different locations doesn't affect things too much. Our relationship with/use of the NCVC VictimConnect, tech, and communications staff continues to evolve and may undergo changes as NCF begins to stand on its own as a subsidiary.

STEP-BY-STEP: PRE-APPLICATION PERIOD

1. The mass violence event happens, and we prep ourselves for opening the Fund. The Executive Director (Jeff) identifies and reaches out to the companies/organizations/municipal authorities affected by the shooting and asks if they want our assistance—typically sending a letter (via e-mail) detailing what we can offer and what we have done in the past. Sometimes they say no and want to handle it themselves or through another organization/law firm (which we always respect); sometimes they reach out to us for assistance first but we are fully at capacity and simply can't take on that response. Throughout this process the ED identifies the 501(c)3 organization that is best placed to be NCF's local partner with whom we jointly carry out the response; often it is a 501(c)3 that is already taking on the response (meaning that after the ED learns who they are he makes sure to reach out to *them*).

2. Once we have said that we're going to help, the tech team (usually Sam) puts up a page on the NCF website's homepage publicizing the new fund. At some point before this happens, the fund is named in coordination with the partner 501(c)3. At this stage, the updated homepage will typically include: a graphic slider with the name of the fund and a paragraph explaining what NCF does/will do in response beneath that, a "Donate Now" button that links to whichever donation

platform is being used for that response, and a button linking victims (or the public) to sign up for a contact list which NCF maintains. The tech team also sets up this contact list and the page where people sign up for it; it is set up on the website so that people can get emails about the progress of the Fund, including the release of the draft and final protocol, the application portal launch announcement/link/instructions, and application deadline reminders. The actual contact list itself, which only Sam has access to, synchs automatically with Mailchimp, so that the comms team can also use Mailchimp to actually send these e-mails when it is time. Sometimes people think filling out this form is the application for benefits, and the Program Coordinator/Victim Outreach Specialist gets distressed calls after the application period closes because the applicant was confused. We've revised our language when we send out these emails to make it very clear that the contact form and the application are different.

3. The entire NCF team works to gather information about the "victim universe" for that incident. The ED does this by working with law enforcement, hospitals, administrators of the venue where the event occurred, and any other relevant party who has knowledge about numbers of those present/injured/killed—at least those who are willing to work with us and are allowed to share that information (typically sharing *numbers* of people is not an issue, but sharing names can be iffy and sharing contact information is a violation of most organizations' privacy protocols). The rest of the NCF team, including Victim Outreach Specialists/Program Coordinator, and/or any NCF intern, may also gather information to begin to create lists of victims and any information we have about them (mainly this includes their name, whether they were present, injured, or family of someone killed, and any contact information we have for them such as e-mail address, phone number, and home address). For some of the names, especially those who were killed, we can use news sources that have publicized this information; for the other categories we start by using the contact list sign-ups. A VOS or intern will ask Sam to give us the excel spreadsheet file of all of the contact list registrants; the NCF team sorts through this information to create lists of the people in our victim universe as well as how many people we are missing from each category. In particular, if the contact list is missing the personal representative of a victim who was killed (i.e. no one who seems legitimately related to a killed victim signs up for the contact list), the Core Impact VOS will work with the ED to try to make contact with those family members (or an attorney).

4. The ED travels to the community and they help establish a Steering Committee that is made up of community members. The Steering Committee will be comprised of a combination of business leaders and civic leaders with some knowledge of the victim services field—the former because the Steering Committee is heavily involved in fundraising and financial decisions. The Steering Committee ultimately makes the final decisions on the eligibility categories and criteria (i.e. who we can help), as well as the final distribution plan (i.e. how much money we can give each category). The Steering Committee will typically include a key representative from our partner 501(c)3, but is not the *same thing* as the 501(c)3—they are more like a temporary "board." The Steering Committee always draws exclusively from members of the community, but does not generally include victims who were directly impacted, since there could be a conflict of interest in

them making financial decisions for themselves and for other victims who they may personally know. Forming the Steering Committee sometimes drags on as the community works this out.

5. The Steering Committee develops a Draft Protocol that above all establishes the categories of eligibility for that Fund. The Draft Protocol also gives some additional logistics about the fund, including practices surrounding outreach, complaints, tax liability, procedures for cases involving minors or competing family members wanting to apply for a single decedent, etc., and also establishes a timeline for applications and distribution. The Draft Protocol gets posted on the NCF website homepage in both English and Spanish (if we have known victims who only speak another language—Portuguese, Urdu, etc. we have the protocol translated into that and posted as well). Either the ED or the Program Coordinator/VOS sends it to Trusted Translations to get it translated (which takes a couple of days). In addition to posting the Draft Protocol online, NCF works with the comms team to send an e-mail announcing the its release and including a link to the online Draft Protocol so that everyone on our contact list can read it. The email encourages people to read it and send comments to a dedicated general help email address that Program Coordinator/VOS manages. Sometimes this e-mail coincides/overlaps with the announcement of the Town Hall meeting. ***It is a good idea for the Program Coordinator/VOS to meet with the Comms team to establish a Comms schedule at this point, using the timeline outlined in the Draft Protocol as a guide to set the e-mail dates for the Draft Protocol release, the Town Hall announcement and reminder, the Final Protocol release, the application launch e-mail, and the application deadline reminders (there are usually 3-4 reminders).*

6. The ED works with the Steering Committee and the partner 501(c)3 to set up a Town Hall (in the affected community) to explain the Draft Protocol (i.e. how that Fund will work), and to take input from victims and the wider community. The Program Coordinator/VOS (or intern) sets up the Eventbrite event for the Town Hall once the date, time, and location are confirmed. Sometimes there are two on the same day at different times, to allow more people to attend. The Program Coordinator/VOS also works with the comms team to ensure that an announcement for the Town Hall is sent out to the contact list; then usually they coordinate a reminder for the Town Hall as the date approaches. The Town Hall occurs; the ED always attends and sometimes a VOS will also attend. The Committee takes all feedback received at the Town Hall; sometimes the NCF team can add to their developing victim universe/victim contact list using the registration for the Town Hall as well.

7. The Program Coordinator/VOS compiles any suggestions for the Draft Protocol received through the established e-mail and sends it to the Steering Committee/ED. The Steering Committee reviews these suggestions as well as those received during the Town Hall, and uses this input to make changes (where possible) to the Draft Protocol, which now becomes the Final Protocol. The Program Coordinator/VOS works with the tech team to ensure that the Final Protocol is posted on the NCF website in place of the Draft Protocol (NCF also gets the Final Protocol translated into Spanish, and any other pertinent language, using Trusted Translations—and ensures this is posted to the NCF website as well). The Program Coordinator works with Comms to send out the Final Protocol by e-mail to the contact list.

8. The Program Coordinator/VOS should make sure that the most relevant information from the Final Protocol, particularly the eligibility criteria and the timeline of application/distribution are forwarded to the VictimConnect supervisors and staff. They should also make sure that the VC staff have the links to all of the major websites (the NCF homepage, the contact list, the Final Protocol, and when it becomes available, the application portal).

9. Using the final eligibility criteria set out in the Final Protocol, the NCF team starts working on the online application for benefits. **Depending on how little time they have between the Final Protocol release date and the application launch date, it can often be a good idea to start this process earlier, after the Draft Protocol is released, and then make any adjustments necessary after the Final Protocol is released.** The VOSs use the word document templates for the previous incident's applications as a starting point, and make any necessary updates to create the new applications. Each VOS edits the application for whichever categories of applicant they are responsible for (i.e. if the Core Impact VOS will be working with victims in the Death and Injury categories they edit those applications; if the Program Coordinator/VOS will be working with victims in the "present" category they edit that application). While making these edits, it is important to highlight new changes in yellow, so that a) the staff who will be translating the updates into Spanish know which parts of the Spanish need to be updated, and b) so that Sam knows which parts of the application need to be changed, since he will use the old online application portal to build the new online application portal. Once the application edits are finished, NCF usually asks an internal NCVC staffperson to translate the new edits into Spanish (we don't need the things that have already been translated into Spanish to be translated again— just the parts that are new). Once the translation is also complete, NCF staff send the updated application templates to Sam so that he can make the edits for the application portal.

10. Once the tech director has the applications ready online, it is time for beta-testing. The Program Coordinator/VOS sends an e-mail, with instructions and attachments, asking other staff members to test the new applications to make sure everything makes sense and functions well. The ED or the Program Coordinator also sends the same e-mail to the Steering Committee so that they can beta-test the applications. The NCF staff also beta-test the applications, and everyone sends comments on technical issues or confusing language they encountered to Sam, so that he can make final updates the applications before the portal launch.

11. Throughout the pre-application period, the ED works to identify 1) a claims processing firm that can assist us with the application vetting *pro bono*; 2) an institution that can authoritatively confirm victims' presence during the shooting (this could be law enforcement drawing from witness lists, a representative of the impacted school drawing from attendance lists for a school shooting, or employers drawing from office records for a shooting at an office/business of some kind); 3) major hospitals that injured victims were taken to who can help validate the treatment of injury applicants. The ED passes on the names and e-mails of the staff from these entities who can assist with application validation to the Program Coordinator, who ensures that the tech director has this information in order to add these people as administrators on the application portal. The Program Coordinator also reaches out to these groups to schedule trainings for each,

since they will all need to learn how to use the online application portal for their part of the review process. Some combination of the ED, the Program Coordinator, and the tech director conduct webinar trainings (using screenshare) of the staff from these entities on how to use the back end of the application portal to validate to conduct each group's respective step in the process of validating applications. If there is time this should be done after the online application is ready but before the application goes live—but usually there is not enough time for this, and the trainings are done in the first week or two of the open application period.

STEP-BY-STEP: APPLICATION PERIOD

1. The application portal goes live at a set time on the date specified in the Final Protocol; this "launch" is managed by the tech director. Once the portal is live, the Program Coordinator works with the tech team to add an "Apply Here for Benefits" link to the application portal as well as a clear indication of the application deadline date on the NCF website homepage, and works with the comms team to send out an e-mail to the contact list announcing the application's availability/linking to the application portal, including basic instructions about the application process and documents needed throughout the application process. The comms team should also edit the contact list registration e-mail to ensure it now includes the link to the application portal and an indication of the application deadline (this addition goes after the sentence reminding registrants that contact list registration is *not* the same thing as applying for benefits).

2. The Program Coordinator/VOS should check in with VictimConnect often during the early stage of the application period to see if they have questions about NCF calls they are receiving. If certain questions get asked often it may be easier to send e-mails addressing the answers so that all VC staff have the correct responses. In general, if someone has specific questions about their application, they can reach out to the VOS via e-mail or the VOS's direct phone line (while VictimConnect can answer more general questions). However, in a particularly large response it may be appropriate to give one VC staffperson administrative access to view applications so that they can answer people who are calling to ask specific questions about their own applications. If this occurs, the VC staff will need to be trained on using the application portal/reading an application and reviewer comments.

3. The Program Coordinator/VOS continues to work with the comms team throughout the application period to ensure that emails are scheduled and sent out as reminders to fill out the application by the deadline. These are people who are going through what is probably the most horrible period of their lives, and trauma may be preventing them from staying on top of things. We therefore typically send 3-4 reminders: a reminder at the halfway point, one week from the deadline and/or a couple days before the deadline (depending on the length of the application period), and on the morning of the last day to apply.

4. As applications begin to come in and go through the review process on a rolling basis (i.e. as each one enters the system), the VOSs continually check their workflow inbox to address any deficient applications. They can use the application's outreach section to keep track of their outreach

progress if there are large numbers of victims who would otherwise be difficult to keep track of. The full application validation process is explained in the "Reviewing Applications and Resolving Deficiencies" section. Any applications that seem, on their face, like they are invalid (i.e. from someone who blatantly doesn't meet the eligibility criteria) can be denied at any point, although if it seems like an applicant has misunderstood the application language and accidentally answered in a way that disqualifies them, it is a good idea to e-mail them to clarify and confirm before denying them.

5. The Program Coordinator/VOS continues to answer questions that come in through the general help e-mail (cityname@victimsofcrime.org), while also using that email address to address deficiencies; any questions that come from family members of deceased victims or, if appropriate, from injury victims, should be forwarded to the Core Impact VOS.

6. Throughout the entire process, the Core Impact VOS communicates directly with the families of the deceased to give them personal attention and any extra help they need, drawing from the initial victim contact list at first and adding/correcting information as applications from those families come in with more accurate contact details. If a smaller number of victims were impacted overall and we have the capacity, the Core Impact VOS will also work with the injury victims to give them extra help. We of course want everyone who fits the Final Protocol to submit applications, but we want to make sure that those who have lost a loved one don't get left out because they missed an email or a deadline—though in reality if a family member (who is the only legal heir) of a deceased victim misses the application deadline because they aren't responding or for any other reason, we will work with them to take a late application. Regardless, the Core Impact VOS tries to ensure that we have an application for every deceased victim by the time the application period closes. They also identify anyone in their categories who will need to set up a trust, and inform them that they should begin this process to receive the funds more quickly. Minors (living minor victims who were injured/psychologically impacted or minor beneficiaries included in a distribution plan for a deceased family member) need trusts to receive benefits above a certain amount (often $10,000), and typically applicants in the higher categories *do* end up being allotted benefits amounts that exceed this number, so the Core Impact VOS should communicate as early as possible to the parents/guardians that a trust will be needed. Those on Medicaid may also need a special needs trust to avoid receiving a sizeable amount of money that increases their income level and bumps them *off* of Medicaid, so they should also be advised to consider a special needs trust to receive the money without it being counted against them.

STEP-BY-STEP: PROCESSING PERIOD AND FINAL APPROVAL

1. The application period closes. During this time, VC and the PC/VOS tend to get calls/e-mails from victims who missed the application deadline. In some of the larger funds where donations are continuing to come in, exceptions to take a late application can *sometimes* be made, but generally not, which is an unfortunate reality. We *never* tell victims who missed the application period that we can see if an exception can be made, but particularly with cases that seem extreme (i.e. NCF missed an injury victim who was shot/hospitalized), it may make sense to keep the ED informed—

he in turn can take the issue to the Steering Committee, who may decide to accept a late application *if* there are some belated donations available. For those in the lower payment tier categories who missed the deadline, we are fairly firm that nothing can be done.

2. Throughout the remaining weeks of the processing period (before the processing period ends), all reviewers continue to work on their step of the application validation process (see "Reviewing Applications and Resolving Deficiencies" for an in-depth description of this process). About two weeks before the deadline for processing, the VOSs should send final reminders to each person whose application is missing information/documentation. Applicants that do not send these materials by the two-weeks-out deadline are considered incomplete and are denied as such. If someone sends the materials a little bit late (but still before the processing deadline), we can try to push them through whatever review steps still remain for them, but in general VOSs try to resolve deficiencies by two weeks before because we sometimes discover *other* deficiencies at later steps in the review process within those two weeks, and we need to give the applications time to finish the full validation process.

3. While working to resolve deficiencies, both VOSs should be maintaining a comprehensive view of the status of the categories they are responsible for. They can use the application portal's "Export" function to download relevant fields and run checks on the status of all applications in their category—especially if they are dealing with a large number of applicants (the ED will also typically "keep an eye" on applications by doing this). If there are a small number of applicants in a category (i.e. 2-10 deceased victims), sometimes it is easier to simply check the situation by looking through the application entries in the application portal.

4. In the days leading up to the processing deadline, which corresponds with the date of the Steering Committee meeting to give final approval of all applications and to approve a funding distribution plan for those applications, the entire NCF team makes sure that all applications have made it past the Final Review step. This often means communicating with our other review partners to check in on things that *they* are responsible for that are not yet done, reminding them of the deadline, and checking up fairly closely on the progress of applications that still have pieces of the validation process unfinished (these check-ins with our other review partners are typically by conducted by the PC/VOS, or sometimes the ED). If we have an application for a deceased victim but the legal heirs are still coming to an agreement on the distribution plan, that is an acceptable application status as long as everything else about the application is complete. But all presence validation and medical validation needs to be *done* before the Steering Committee meeting/processing deadline.

5. If any of these validation steps are not complete by the processing deadline, those applications would have to be denied or receive less than they would have if our team had completed the validation on time, so that we do not delay distribution to the rest of the applicants whose applications *are* finished. The distribution plan accounts for 100% of the funds, dividing the total donations equally within each category (i.e. $250,000 to all deceased victims, $20,000 to all those injured and hospitalized overnight, $10,000 to those injured and treated on an outpatient basis, and $3,000 to all of those present without injury).Because 100% of the donations are allotted in this final distribution plan, there is no way to "wait" on one or two applications while moving forward with payment for the rest. The only exception so far has been in Las Vegas,

where we were very behind on the entire outpatient category, and so we created a distribution plan that reserved a certain amount for that entire category while proceeding to pay out the deceased and those injured on an inpatient basis.

6. Usually in conjunction with the processing deadline, the collection period for donations closes, so that the Steering Committee can divide the total donation amount among all the approved applications.

7. The ED crafts a proposal for a distribution plan based on the totals of the approved applications in each category and the total amount of donations collected, and takes that to the Steering Committee. In a major meeting, the Steering Committee does a final review of all the approved (and denied) applications and either agrees to the ED's distribution plan or makes modifications based on any concerns or issues they have.

8. Once the distribution plan is finalized, the VOSs use the approval letters from the past fund to create new/updated templates for the approval notifications for each of their respective categories (for injury, we will usually need to create templates for each sub-tier, because each one will have a different payment amount). Then either the VOSs or the comms team (or some combination of the two) use these templates to send out the actual approval notifications to the approved applicants in batches. If the fund is small, with not too many applicants in each category, the VOSs send out these notices to the applicants using the general help e-mail or their own @victimsofcrime.org e-mail. If the fund is large with a lot of applicants, the NCF team usually enlists the comms team's help in sending out the approval notifications via mailchimp (the PC/VOS will usually need to create a spreadsheet of all the victims' names and e-mails to facilitate this process).

9. Sometimes the ED also works with the Steering Committee on a press release announcing the details of the distribution plan to the public for the sake of transparency (these details include the numbers of applications in each category and the funding amount each category will be receiving, as well as the total amount of money raised—it does *not* include information about individual victims receiving benefits, nor is it ever appropriate for us to release such information to the public or to journalists who ask for this information).

STEP-BY-STEP: DISTRIBUTION PERIOD

1. At this point, if someone calls/e-mails because they missed the application, there's *really* nothing we can do because we have allotted 100% of the donated funds to the approved victims (even if we technically still have donation money in the bank account because we are still working on paying people out, we have already notified people of the money they would be receiving). **However, we always reserve money for each deceased victim, so even if the appropriate family member/s of a deceased victim have completely missed the application period, they are the exception that will be included in the distribution plan regardless**—The Core Impact VOS will just keep trying to get the family to fill out the application. For anyone else affected who missed

the deadline, we can recommend they try to apply for crime victim compensation from their state, which is completely separate from us and our funds. This is a government-run program run by each state's Attorney General Office that reimburses for specific expenses incurred as a result of a crime (i.e. funeral expenses, lost wages, hospital bills, mental health treatment expenses). We can look up that state's CVC website and refer the victim to it as a recommendation.

2. Once the distribution plan is finalized and all the applicants have been notified of their approval or denial, we are ready to begin distributing benefits (paying people). The payment process can adjust to meet the needs of the fund, but typically we prefer to send as many payments as possible using Zelle, which is a third party service that allows money to be moved quickly from our bank into the target bank account, without NCF having to have the recipients' banking information. Checks are more expensive for NCF to send, so we reserve use of checks for times when a recipient has to set up a trust to receive the benefits (which often occurs for minor victims/minor family members of deceased victims who are included in the distribution plan, or those on Medicaid who need to create a special needs trust), or when multiple Zelle transfers have been attempted but have failed. Wire transfers (which are not the same thing as Zelle transfers) are even more expensive for NCF, so we only do wire transfers for international transactions (i.e. for victims who reside and have bank accounts out-of-country).

3. We typically include information about next steps for the payment process in the approval notifications. Because we use electronic distribution via Zelle (coordinated via Bank of America's bank-to-bank platform), the VOSs typically include a request for approved applicants to send us a corrected e-mail address *if* the e-mail address we are sending the approval notice to is not what they use for Zelle, or to send us their phone number if they use *that* for Zelle. We try to give applicants several days, sometimes a week, to send the VOSs that information before beginning distribution. If we do not receive a corrected e-mail address or phone number, we use the contact e-mail address we already have on record for electronic distribution. If we know that certain applicants will need to begin setting up trusts, the VOSs (usually the Core Impact VOS ends up with the trust cases) will follow up a more generic approval e-mail outlining payment next steps that don't apply to that applicant with a tailored e-mail explaining that they will need to go through a different process for payment.

4. The PC/VOS typically ends up handling many of the tasks facilitating distribution of funds, though the Core Impact VOS will usually maintain their own spreadsheet tracking their categories of victims, the information needed to pay them, and their payment status.

    a. For electronic Zelle distributions, this will typically mean doing all of the following: 1) exporting application data to create spreadsheets of payees in each category (excluding those who can't be paid electronically, and correcting any e-mail addresses exported from the applications with updated e-mail addresses or phone numbers that applicants have sent us), 2) sending those spreadsheets to the ED for approval, 3) once approval has been obtained, opening the CashPro Accelerate program and creating a digital disbursement sheet, copy-pasting the regular Excel spreadsheet information to do so and making sure

that Transaction IDs are generated for each transaction, 4) exporting the Digital Disbursement sheet created in CashPro Accelerate as a text file via the "export to e-mail" option and saving it in the ncf Dropbox (in that fund's "Approvals and Payments" folder), and 5) uploading that text file into Bank of America's bank-to-bank portal, which releases the payments to Zelle. **Please note that anyone taking on the PC/VOS role will most likely need to have CashPro Accelerate installed on their computer, and during that installation, a CashPro representative should also train them on CashPro Accelerate basics for creating a Digital Disbursement sheet, a Cancelation sheet, and using export to e-mail. This training can be arranged through our Bank of America contact, Enrique, listed in the "Key Contacts" section.**

b. For checks, this will mean creating and updating a spreadsheet of check recipient information, which the PC/VOS will send to the ED; the ED will then request the check be released from our bank.

c. *If* any wire transfer is required for international transactions, we need to get their bank and routing number as well as the swift code; there is a sample template that we ask the recipient to fill out located in the 11-30-18 discont'd SharePoint…/Las Vegas/Canadian Banking Info folder on Dropbox.

5. First, we typically process payments for batches of electronic distributions category by category. This means deceased victims, injured victims, and present victims will all have separate payment spreadsheets (leaving off the ones that will need checks). We try to send out all categories (i.e. death, injury, presence) on the same day or at least within a couple days of each other, to try to get as many people their benefits as simultaneously as possible.

6. After the electronic distributions are sent out, the VOS(s) do follow-up to make sure that the funds have completed the transfer to all the target bank accounts, and/or work with anyone whose payment is pending or has failed. We can check the status of electronic payments using statements/digital disbursement detailed listing reports found on CashPro Online.

a. Transactions that show up in these reports as "pending recipient enrollment" mean that the recipient either hasn't signed up for Zelle yet, or signed up using a different e-mail address/phone number than the one we used to send the payment. For these we will give the recipient as much information as we can about how to sign up for Zelle, or ask them to contact Zelle customer service if they are having trouble signing up/confirming what e-mail address or phone number they are registered with. We try to help them sign up appropriately *before* 14 days pass from the date of the initial transfer attempt, because Zelle will only hold onto funds for someone who has yet to register for 14 days.

b. Transactions that show up in these reports as "Failed ACH posting" or "Failed Memo Posting" failed entirely and were sent back to our bank account (though you should also pull up the Credit Processed Report to confirm for sure the money came back to our account). This usually occurs because of a problem on the target bank/target account's

end; in the past we have had these occur because someone's account was frozen at the time of transaction because of unrelated issues, because their bank is a smaller credit union that puts caps on the amount of money that can be transferred in one day, etc. For these we typically see if the recipient has any idea why the transaction might have failed, and if not, try to have them contact their own bank to find out. If we can figure out the issue and resolve it, we can reissue the payment electronically. If we can't figure out why the transaction failed or if we try a second time and it fails a second time, we send a check.

7. Sometimes people call or e-mail and say they didn't receive their electronic payment when the Digital Disbursement Detailed Listing Report shows "Completed ACH Posting" or "Completed Memo Posting," either of which means that the payment successfully reached the target account—at least, it reached the account associated with the e-mail address/phone number we used as the Zelle token. In these cases, we want to carefully confirm that the e-mail address/phone number that is listed in the report belongs to the intended recipient *and* is the one that they have registered with Zelle. If it is correct, we usually encourage them to check multiple bank accounts for a transaction matching the amount we sent, because what has usually happened is that the recipient just assumed the money would go into a particular account, when in fact they have a different account registered with Zelle than the one they were expecting.

8. While Zelle follow-up is occurring (usually handled by the PC/VOS), the Core Impact VOS tends to handle most or all of the follow-up needed for those who require trusts to be set up (and therefore need checks). The Core Impact VOS ideally will already have informed them that they will need a trust, so they should already be working on setting one up. It is the victim's responsibility to set up a trust, which we can't do for them, but sometimes we are able to provide referrals for a pro bon trust attorney/service. The Core Impact VOS mainly explains that a trust will be needed (including which kind, i.e. UTMA, special needs, etc.) and keeps in touch checking on their progress towards setting up the needed trust. When the trust is set up, the Core Impact VOS asks the applicant to confirm with the bank/trust attorney the following items that we need in order to make out the check appropriately so that it can be deposited:

    a. The payable-to name: Often for UTMA trusts in particular this will say something like "[Parent name] for the benefit of [minor victim name]" or "[Parent name] custodian of [minor victim name]," so we need to confirm the exact language (we also almost never issue a check without the victim's name on it, unless it is with their clear consent).

    b. The mailing address: Most people elect to have the check sent to their home (which is fine), but some trust firms/banks want it to be sent to their own address.

    c. The memo line: Often a bank will want the account number of the trust included in the memo line, though not always—we can also put anything else the recipient's bank wants included in the memo line.

9. Once all benefits are distributed, the fund is completely closed/ended. Either the ED or the PC will do a master export of all application data for all of the categories of application, so that the

information can be retained. Then our tech director decommissions that particular application portal.

REVIEWING APPLICATIONS AND RESOLVING DEFICIENCIES

All applications are submitted via our online application portal. As previously mentioned, technically a new portal (with a unique web address) will be set up for each individual fund/event, allowing us to run multiple application periods at the same time if we need to, but all the application portals are basically "copies" of the same basic system, and all of them function in essentially the same way.

Step-by-step PowerPoint presentations showing past examples of the actual online applications themselves are in the main ncf folder under "VictimConnect training." Those PowerPoints show what an application looks like to the victim/applicant filling it out. *This* section covers what happens to applications on the *back* end of the site, accessible only to administrators who are given this access by our tech director.

First, every new administrator will receive an e-mail with a temporary password, which they will then be able to change on the application portal by following the instructions in that e-mail. Once you set up a new password, that password and username combination can transfer from one version of the application portal to another, so that you don't need to choose a new password for each fund.

Once your login and permanent password have been updated and you log in to the application portal, you will be taken to the homepage. From this page, an applicant who *doesn't* have administrator privileges would only see the choice to apply for benefits or to view/edit an application they have already have filled out, but by logging in (with an e-mail that is for an administrator account) you are automatically given access to the dashboard that we use for application review. To get to the dashboard, hover your mouse near the top left of the screen where it says "National Compassion Fund Benefits" and click "Dashboard."

Once you are on the dashboard, there are two main options usable to administrators within NCF staff (i.e. the tech director, VOSs, and ED). These are **Forms/Entries** and **Workflow/Inbox**. Both are accessible on the left-hand sidebar.

FORMS/ENTRIES MODE

Forms/Entries mode allows users to:

- View an overview of and number count of all applications in a particular category at a time
- Change the overview to list itself by relevant categories such as "Workflow Step" in order to quickly get a sense of the status of all applications (works best for smaller funds; for larger ones exports, discussed at the end of this section, are more helpful)
- **Search for an application in a particular category** using any field that exists in the application or any keyword that appears anywhere in the application
- **Open an application** directly from the Entries page or from search results in order to:

- o View the application without editing it, including viewing other reviewers' notes on the application and the log of the workflow steps and reviewers the application has passed through so far
- o Edit and save changes to the application, including correcting information in the body of the application, uploading missing/newly-received documents to the application, and adding reviewer notes

First, clicking "Entries" will by default bring up either all entries for contact/technical assistance (which anyone who is not the tech director can ignore) or all entries for just one of the application categories. The header at the top of the page that opens up will list the entries category that has been opened (i.e. "Jacksonville Tribute Fund Application for Benefits for Being Present in the Restaurant"). In order to switch to any other category of application entries, just click on the dropdown arrow next to the header title. This will give you the option of each category of applications available. There is no way to open a page that lists every single application in every single category at the same time while in Forms/Entries mode (you *can* do an export of data for all applications in each distinct category, and combine these in an Excel spreadsheet—discussed in "Exporting Application Fields"—but that's it).

Once you have selected a category of entries (i.e. applications), the page populates with a list of *all* of the applications in that category. This list will include partial applications that **have not been submitted** (i.e. the applicant is still yet to finish the application), as well as complete and submitted applications that should be moving through the review workflow. Even without conducting a search, this page is useful for quickly checking the number of complete applications in a particular category, which displays on a bar along the top but below the category header (it also shows the number of partial applications, and "trashed" applications, which should *only* include beta-test applications that we have no use for once the application period begins).

Besides checking the application count, an unfiltered Entries page can also be used to quickly skim a list of all applications *if* there aren't too many applications in that category—for example if you are the Core Impact VOS and you want to quickly check that all 5 of the deceased victims have an application in. The Entries page will list each application's contact e-mail, first and last name (of the victim), the final status, and the workflow step. "Final Status" will either say "pending" or be blank—"pending" means that the application has actually been completed and submitted by the applicant; blank means the application is only a partial and has not yet been submitted. The "Progress" and "Saved by" columns are not usually useful.

By default, the Forms/Entries page will arrange the list of applications from earliest to most recently *started* (not submitted). You can also click "Workflow Step" to arrange all applications by which step of the review process they are currently in; it can be helpful to do this if you want to quickly check the status of all applications or see how many are in, for example, the "final review" stage without doing an export. For larger funds with many applications, an export usually becomes necessary.

Also along the top bar is the search option. The search terms default to "Any form field/contains/_____" and this option can be used to search for *nearly* everything you would want to use to search for a particular

application. Most often, you will end up using someone's first or last name or their e-mail address (or the name/e-mail address of an applicant who filled out the application on the victim's behalf). However, you can drop down the "Any form field" option to search by any specific field that exists in the application, ranging from date of birth to the street address to "Was the victim present during the shooting?" to the application status. The most useful of these search parameter options is "Entry ID," which is very close to the end of the dropdown menu. Sometimes another reviewer might have a question about a particular application but only ask by the four-digit entry ID that is auto-assigned to each application (which can be viewed in the top right corner when you open an application). The "Any form fields" keyword search doesn't handle direct input of an entry ID well because of numbers in addresses and phone numbers, so the best way to quickly pull up an application if all you know is the entry ID is to specifically filter the search using "Entry ID/is/[Ex: 7328]" as the search criteria.

Once you have searched to find a particular application you want to either view or make changes to, you can hover beneath the contact e-mail listed, Hovering your mouse there will give you the options of View, Mark Read, Trash, or Edit. "Mark Read" has no real purpose in the NCF process. You should *never* hit "Trash" on an application unless you are *certain* that the application was a fake beta-test application that shouldn't be in the list of "real" applications. Even if we are denying an application, or even if the application is a partial application that will not be included in the distribution because it was never properly submitted, we do not trash it.

"View" will open up the application. What actually comes up are the following application sections:

- A sidebar on the right that includes the Entry ID, submission date and time, User ID for the applicant in the top box, a middle box that isn't used, and a "workflow" box that can be used to manually send the application to a particular step in the review workflow
- The body of the application as filled out and submitted by the applicant (and/or including any edits later made by NCF staff if an applicant made a mistake that had to be corrected)
- Below the body of the application, a section used by reviewers to track the review process, including dropdown menus related to the review process, a text box for reviewer notes, reviewer uploads (for additional documents) and medical review uploads, and a section for tracking deficiencies outreach, all of which are discussed in the "Workflow Steps" section after this
- Below *that,* a "Notes" section that logs each workflow step the application has been through and the administrator/reviewer who worked on the application for that step

In "View" mode you can see all of these things but you cannot change any of them, so it is mainly useful if you just need to quickly skim an application (i.e. a victim calls and wants to ask if everything about their application is okay, another reviewer has a question about a particular application and wants your input, etc.). However, if you first open up the application in "View" mode but realize you need to make changes, you can click on the blue "Edit" button in the top right corner under the "Entry" box in the sidebar.

Whether you go from "View" to "Edit" or simply click "Edit" straight from the main Entries page, "Edit" mode (within Forms/Entries mode) gives you access to edit and save changes to an individual application. You can alter or add text in any field of the application if an applicant has made a mistake. If an applicant

has submitted the wrong document (i.e. an image of a driver's license instead of a birth certificate), you can remove the incorrect document and upload the correct one. You can also leave a reviewer note, which is **standard when making any changes to an application**. However, if you close or navigate away from the open application without hitting the blue "Update" button near the top right, your changes will not be saved; *any* edits, to the body of the application or to the reviewer sections, must be finalized with the "Update" button.

Hitting "Update" while in Edit mode within Forms/Entries mode does nothing more than save the changes you've made; it does *not* have any impact whatsoever on the automated workflow that each application goes through in order to be reviewed step-by-step. The workflow is discussed below.

WORKFLOW STEPS

In order to confirm that it meets eligibility requirements, every application goes through several review steps via our application portal, and usually each one has a different reviewer. The typical workflow for each of the categories we usually include is as follows:

Present/Psychological Trauma: Submitted→ Initial Qualification→ Presence Review→ Final Review→ Payment Clearance

Injury: Submitted→ Initial Qualification→ Presence Review→ Medical Confirmation→Final Review→ Payment Clearance

Death: Submitted→ Initial Qualification→ PR Status/Final Review→ Payment Clearance

At any point in the workflow, the application can also get sent to the "Deficient" workflow step, where the VOS for that category will review it, do outreach to resolve the deficiency, and manually send it back to the workflow step it came from once the issue is resolved. An application can also be denied at any point in the workflow, and it will then go to the "Denied or withdrawn" workflow step.

A more detailed explanation of each workflow step follows:

Submission: After an applicant fills out their application and hits "submit", the application enters the workflow, automatically going into the "Initial Review" step. **For a step-by-step walkthrough of what the applicant sees when they are filling out an application, please see the PowerPoints for each application category in the Dropbox folder: NCVC Team/ncf/VictimConnect training!**

Initial Qualification: This step is usually handled by a pro bono claims processor (in the past we have worked with Angeion, Hogan Lovells, and Wiley Rein). At this step, the reviewer checks the application to make sure that it is valid on its face and is not missing any documents or information that we need to validate it. If no information and documentation is missing and the application appears valid, the reviewer submits it to the next workflow step by changing Claims Status to "pre-qualified"; if anything is wrong they send it to the deficiencies workflow step as "deficient." Some things they check for include:

- Making sure it seems like victim is the one who filled out the application *or* if another applicant filled it out (i.e. a parent, other family member, or attorney), making sure they included their full name, address, phone number, e-mail, and document proving their relationship to the victim (i.e. a birth certificate or retainer agreement)
- Making sure the answers on the application indicate that the applicant is actually eligible and filled out the application for the right category, i.e. they were actually present in the restaurant where the shooting took place, were actually physically injured, etc.
  - We sometimes get people who were connected to the event but don't meet the eligibility criteria, i.e. they are a student where a shooting took place but weren't present on the day of the shooting, who still answer honestly to the question asking about their presence in the eligibility area/describe their experience honestly in the narrative section
  - We also sometimes get people who fill out an injury application, when their answers and narrative reveal that they were not actually physically injured but rather have mental health impacts—this would get sent to deficiencies so that a VOS can reach out and ask the applicant to fill out the correct application
- For injury applications, making sure the medical provider information appears to be filled out completely and correctly and the HIPAA is attached and *also* filled out correctly and signed
- For death applications, making sure that the death certificate and proof of relationship (usually birth certificate or marriage certificate) are attached, and that consent forms for all legal heirs are filled out, signed, and attached (who the legal heirs would be can be confirmed using the answers in the application about various relatives of the deceased)
- Making sure the application has been signed, and by an adult over the age of 18

If any of the above doesn't check out, the Initial Qualification reviewers change the "Claim Status" dropdown menu from blank to "Deficient," leave a reviewer note explaining what is wrong/missing along with the date and their initials, and hit "Submit," automatically routing it to the Deficiencies reviewer for that category (which will be the PC/VOS or the Core Impact VOS, depending on the category). If everything checks out, they will change the "Claim Status" dropdown menu to "Pre-qualified" and hit "Submit," automatically routing the application to the next step's reviewer.

Presence Review: Please note that this step does not exist for Death benefits applications, for whom the deceased victim is already known to have been present and the family member/s receiving benefits don't need to have been present. This step is handled by a reviewer (or reviewers) who can vary from one fund to the next, depending on the mass violence event. It will always be someone who can work off of records to confirm someone's presence at the shooting within the area the eligibility criteria are limited to. Past examples have included law enforcement employees who have verified witness lists, school staff using attendance lists, and employers using employee records. The reviewer checks the victim name to see if it shows up on the list they have, so that the victim's eligibility can be validated. If the victim doesn't appear on the list, the Presence reviewer changes the "Presence Status/Attendance Status" dropdown menu from blank to "Not Present" and hits "Submit," automatically routing it to the Deficiencies reviewer for that category (which will be the PC/VOS or the Core Impact VOS, depending on the category). In this case, if there is no reviewer note, just the dropdown menu change to "Not Present" is sufficient. If the victim is

on the list, the reviewer will change the "Presence Status/Attendance Status" dropdown menu to "Present" and hit "Submit," automatically routing the application to the next step's reviewer.

Medical Confirmation: This review step only exists for Injury applications; all other applications will go straight to the Final Review (or PR Status/Final Review) step. This step can be handled by different reviewers depending on the application. There is one "path" for victims treated at "in-house" hospitals, and another for those treated at "other" medical providers.

For most funds, the ED is able to identify the hospitals in the area that received and treated the majority of the victims in the immediate aftermath of the mass casualty event. Usually these hospitals will work with NCF to find an employee (one for each relevant hospital) to be a reviewer. This person will be a hospital employee who has access to full medical records and can verify whether a person really was treated for an injury as a result of the shooting. When filling out the application, the victim can select from a list of the hospitals we are working with, and so the application portal system can route the application to that specific hospital's employee/reviewer automatically when the application gets to the Medical Confirmation step. Without giving us the medical records themselves, the reviewer will check whether the victim was treated at that hospital at the level they claimed:

- If the victim said they were treated but not hospitalized overnight (i.e. treated as an outpatient), the medical reviewer will confirm that they were indeed treated, and for an injury resulting from the mass casualty event.
- If the victim says that they were treated overnight (i.e. hospitalized as an inpatient), the medical reviewer will confirm the number of nights, and that they were for an injury resulting from the event.

If anything about the treatment the victim has claimed is inaccurate, the medical reviewer changes the "Medical Status" dropdown menu from blank to "Conflicting Information," leaves a note about *what* specifically is inaccurate (i.e. treated but not by the qualifying date, not for an injury from the shooting, treated only 2 nights at this hospital even though they answered 4 nights, etc.), and hits "Submit," automatically routing it to the Deficiencies reviewer for that category (which will usually be the Core Impact VOS). If there is no record of the victim having been treated by that hospital at all, the medical reviewer will select "No Record" and hit "Submit." If all of the medical information is correct, the reviewer will change the "Medical Status" dropdown menu to "Confirmed" and hit "Submit," automatically routing the application to the next step's reviewer.

"Other" Medical Providers: When they fill out their application, an applicant can select from a list of "in-house" hospitals that we believe are the main hospitals, *or* they can select "other" for their treatment provider, and fill in that "other" provider's information. If they select "other," instead of getting routed to an employee at the hospitals we've established a working relationship with at the Medical Confirmation step, the application will be routed to the same claims processing firm conducting the Initial Qualification step—this claims processor also handles "other" medical provider applications. They will e-mail or fax a copy of the victim's completed HIPAA, a medical verification form asking for the basic information we need to validate the application, and a cover letter explaining the purpose of the fund, to the "other"

medical provider listed. This is why we ask the applicant for the e-mail/fax information for their medical provider's "custodian of record" or medical records office/department. The claims processing firm then has to rely on that medical provider to return the medical verification form, completed with information verifying:

- whether the victim was treated for an injury as a result of the shooting by X date,
- whether they were treated as an inpatient or outpatient, and
- their date(s) of treatment, or admission date and discharge date.

If a medical provider is non-responsive, the claims processing firm has to continually try to contact them until they get an answer—this category of injury applications is often the most troublesome. If the medical verification form is returned and it is inconsistent with what the victim has said on the application about their treatment, the claims processing firm reviewer uploads a scan of the verification form into "Medical Reviewer Uploads," changes the "Medical Status" dropdown menu from blank to "Conflicting Information," leaves a note about *what* specifically is inaccurate, and hits "Submit," automatically routing it to the Deficiencies reviewer for that category (which will usually be the Core Impact VOS). If the medical verification form indicates that there is no record of the victim having been treated by that provider at all, the claims processing reviewer will upload a scan of the verification form, select "No Record" and hit "Submit." If all of the medical information is correct, the reviewer will upload the verification form, change the "Medical Status" dropdown menu to "Confirmed" and hit "Submit," automatically routing the application to the next step's reviewer.

Final Review (or PR Status/Final Review for Death benefits): This step is handled by the same claims processing firm that did the Initial Qualification (and the "other" medical confirmations). At this stage, they review the entire application to make sure absolutely nothing seems wrong or missing, *and* ensure that any deficiencies that came up throughout the review process have been resolved, checking the log of progress in the reviewer notes, the uploads of any documents that needed to be added, and checking all of the dropdown menus to make sure they say "pre-qualified" and "present", as well as "confirmed" for medical status if it is an injury application.

- For injury applications, it is also important to check that the hospitalization nights listed in the body of the application match what was confirmed. If the applicant was initially wrong but have accepted the lower number of nights the hospital(s) confirmed, the field in the body of the application **must be updated**. Having this information in the reviewer notes only will lead to issues with the payout process, which relies on downloading fields from the application. The Final Review should carefully check that this field has been updated appropriately if it was wrong when the application was first submitted
- For death benefits specifically, by this stage in particular the application needs to have a distribution plan that includes all legal heirs and has attached complete, signed consent forms from each legal heir attached

If the reviewer notices *anything* that was missed or not correctly resolved, the reviewer changes the "Claim Status" dropdown menu from "Pre-qualified" to "Deficient," leaves a reviewer note explaining

what is wrong/missing along with the date and their initials, and hits "Submit," automatically routing it to the Deficiencies reviewer for that category (which will be the PC/VOS or the Core Impact VOS, depending on the category). If everything checks out in the final review, they will change the "Claim Status" dropdown menu to "Approved" and hit "Submit," automatically routing the application to the next step's reviewer.

Payment Clearance: This is the *truly* final final review, where a *second* pro bono claims processing firm does a final check. They are looking for the same things that the earlier "Final Review" step checks for, but with a fresh set of eyes that has not already seen this application multiple times. If they catch anything wrong, the reviewer changes the "Ready for Payment" dropdown menu from blank to "Not Approved," leaves a reviewer note explaining what is wrong/missing along with the date and their initials, and hits "Submit," automatically routing it to the Deficiencies reviewer for that category. Finally, if this last look shows that everything about the application is correct and we are able to fully verify that this person meets the eligibility criteria for funding, the reviewer changes the "Ready for Payment" dropdown menu to "Ready for Payment" and hits "Submit." At this point, the application routes to the step "Application Complete," the workflow ends, and the validation for that application is complete.

In general, the workflow relies on the dropdown menus towards the bottom of the application (just above the reviewer note). If the dropdown menu is changed, then when a reviewer hits the "Submit" button the system "reads" this dropdown menu and is pre-configured to route the application to the appropriate step and reviewer. If a reviewer leaves comments in the reviewer notes section but forgets to change the dropdown menu for that step, the system **cannot** "read" those notes. In addition, if the reviewer has left the dropdown menu for that step blank, the system will kick the application out of the automated workflow; it will end up in "workflow complete"—a kind of no-man's land where the application can't move forward or be seen in any reviewer's workflow inboxes.

If an application appears in Forms/Entries mode with the term "complete" in the "Final Status" column, this means it has dropped out of the workflow erroneously and is stuck in workflow complete. To fix this, it is necessary to open the application, restart the workflow, and then manually send the application to the step it should have gone on to. Manually sending applications through the workflow are covered in the next section.

RESOLVING DEFICIENCIES STEP-BY-STEP:

Resolving deficiencies first starts with identifying them. As an application makes its way through the workflow, various reviewers identify something wrong with the application, change the appropriate dropdown menu to "Deficient," "Not Present," "Conflicting Information," etc., and the application is automatically routed to the correct VOS's workflow inbox. As mentioned, the Core Impact VOS will receive the deficient death benefits applications and usually the deficient injury applications (at any step in which they are found to be deficient), and the PC/VOS will receive the deficient present applications.

To begin working on resolving deficiencies, the VOS will therefore access Workflow/Inbox mode on the application portal's dashboard sidebar. This will open a page—an "inbox"—that lists all the deficient applications the VOS has to work on. The VOS then goes through them one by one. Clicking on the application name opens up the application; *however*, the application will open in "Workflow" mode rather than "Forms/Entries" mode. While they appear to be the same, Workflow mode isn't as convenient for deficiencies reviewers. Other reviewers have the same type of Workflow inbox (i.e. that receives all applications that have come to "their" step of the review process), but when other reviewers review the application, leave notes, and alter dropdown menus and then hit "Submit," coding in the program is able to send the application automatically to the correct next step. This is *not* true for applications at the Deficient workflow step. They cannot be automatically routed to a next step because there are a variety of steps deficient applications might need to go to next.

Because of this, workflow mode is useful to first check for deficient applications, but VOSs reviewing deficient applications should **click on the Entry ID in the top right corner** when they first open the application directly from the Workflow Inbox: Clicking on the Entry ID then opens up that same application in *Forms/Entries mode* instead. When going through several deficient applications in the inbox, it generally helps to use the CTRL button while opening each new application that needs to be resolved, so that the application opens in a new page while you keep the Workflow Inbox open (and can get back to it easily to finish going through other deficient applications).

Resolving Deficiencies Step-by-Step:

1. Access the application through your workflow inbox (which lets you know it is deficient), but then switch to Forms/Entries mode by CTRL + clicking the Entry ID in the top right corner.
2. Scroll down to the reviewer notes and dropdown menus towards the bottom of the application to see what the prior reviewer identified as a problem—straightforward deficiencies like not being on a list verifying presence may mean that there are no reviewer notes and only a dropdown menu that says "Not Present," but most other deficiencies will have a note in the Reviewer Notes section.
3. For **most** deficiencies, use the contact e-mail listed in the application to send an e-mail to the applicant explaining the issue and asking them for whatever is missing/needed. There are templates for some common deficiencies at the end of this manual.
   a. If there are a small number of applications in deficiencies, it is easier to e-mail them right away as you go through each application one by one.
   b. For very large numbers of applications, it is easier to go through your entire inbox of deficient applications and use the outreach fields farther down to categorize each deficiency, then export a list of deficient applications along with their contact e-mail, name, workflow step, deficiency type, and outreach notes so that you can send a batch e-mail to all of the applications with the exact same problem (for example, you may have 25 applications in your inbox in one day that are all missing HIPAAs, making a single e-mail sent to all applicants at the same time much easier even with the extra effort to export a spreadsheet). Exports are covered at the end of this section, but essentially you will be able to copy the e-mail addresses that correspond to one

particular deficiency type from the exported spreadsheet, paste the e-mail addresses **in the Bcc section of the e-mail,** and then use a single e-mail template with "Good afternoon" or "Dear applicant" as a generic greeting so that everyone with the same issue can be e-mailed at once. **It is very important to put ALL e-mail addresses in Bcc instead of Cc, so that we do not share anyone's confidential contact information with others**. G-mail will send these e-mails even if you leave the "To" section blank, as long as there are e-mail addresses in the Bcc section.

    c. Be careful about who you are e-mailing if the applicant and the victim are not the same—you may need to make edits to the e-mail templates if the person you're talking to is, for example, a parent of a victim rather than the victim herself (first vs. third person, etc).

4. **This section is optional.** Track the outreach you've begun towards the bottom of the page, after the reviewer notes and reviewer uploads sections. If this is your first time working with this application, select "Outreach Started" for Outreach Status. Include the "Initial outreach date" (the current date you are sending the e-mail), and select a deficiency type from the dropdown menu, which includes the most common deficiencies. If the deficiency doesn't fall into any of those categories, select "Other" and leave a note in Outreach Notes to explain the deficiency. Although this section is optional, it is a very good idea to at least track the outreach status and initial outreach date, even if you are working with a smaller number of applications and don't need to run exports to send e-mail batches to lots of applicants. **If you are working with large numbers of deficient applications, it is *strongly* recommended to fully fill out the outreach section so that it can be useful in an export spreadsheet.** Not only will this help with sending e-mails to large numbers of applicants with the same deficiency in batches instead of one by one; it is also **incredibly** difficult to keep track of "where you are at" with outreach for 50+ applications without keeping track in these fields.

5. Wait for the victim/applicant to respond with the missing document/information.

    a. Sometimes the victim will reply without the item you need (they don't have the birth certificate required, they need more time to find social media posts to support their presence, they completely misunderstood what you were asking for, etc). Simply continue to work with the applicant respectfully and patiently until you receive the item needed to verify their eligibility.

    b. Sometimes the victim doesn't reply at all. Every 2 weeks or so it is a good idea send follow-up e-mails to non-responsive applicants with deficiencies. The applications for anyone who has a deficiency but hasn't responded to outreach will still be in your inbox, so you can keep up with them that way for smaller funds, or keep track of which ones you've already reached out to using exports for larger funds. You can use the exact same e-mail language as before, but be sure to edit the subject line to include nudging language like "2ND NOTICE: MISSING DOCUMENTATION FOR JACKSONVILLE TRIBUTE FUND." You should always send at least two e-mails to an applicant who isn't responding, and ideally 3 (depending on how long or short the application/processing timeline is). If you are working on your last round of e-mails to try to get ahold of non-responsive applicants, you should edit the subject line to

include "FINAL NOTICE: MISSING INFORMATION/DOCUMENTATION FOR _____ FUND." You should *also* clearly state in the opening paragraph of the e-mail, in bold, "**If we do not receive a reply by [final date to receive missing documentation], your application may be denied.**"

    c. Often victims end up calling instead of simply replying to the e-mail with the missing information/documentation, because they want the reassurance of talking things through. It is completely fine to work with an applicant this way, and if all that is missing is information (such as a medical provider's name, contact information, and custodian of record information), we can resolve the deficiency over the phone. Obviously, documents have to be sent by e-mail, in which case you can simply reiterate the main information from the e-mail about what is missing and why we need it, patiently talk to the applicant, and ask them to go ahead and send it by e-mail.

    d. Sometimes people call or dither in their e-mail because they don't have a scanner to capture a missing document. Reassure them that we can use a photo taken on a phone (which they can then e-mail) as long as it is clear and large enough to be legible.

6. Once the victim/applicant has sent the missing item, access their application again via the "Forms/Entries" mode search option, clicking "edit" (at this point there is no need to go through the Workflow Inbox, but you can also access the application that way if convenient).

7. Add the missing document/information to their application. This might mean adding or correcting information in the body of the application, replacing an incorrect document (i.e. a parent applying on behalf of an injured child uploaded *their* birth certificate instead of their child's) with the correct one within the body of the application, or adding additional documentation that won't fit in the provided spaces in the body of the application to the Reviewer Uploads section.

8. ALWAYS leave a note in Reviewer Notes, at the bottom of any reviewer notes that already exist. The note should include a) the date, b) your initials, and c) what you changed and where (i.e. "added applicant name and contact information in application" or "uploaded proof of presence in reviewer uploads").

9. Go to the top right and click "update" to save those changes (which will NOT save without this step—even document uploads).

10. From there, deficiencies reviewers have to manually send the application back to whatever step the application has just come from:

    a. Click "view" under the "workflow" box on the right-side panel

    b. The page will refresh with an "admin" box where the "workflow" box used to be on the right-side panel; open up the dropdown menu and select whichever workflow step you received the deficient application from (i.e. initial qualification, presence review, medical confirmation, etc.)

    c. Hit "apply" just under the dropdown menu, which will send the application to the workflow step you've selected

11. The application should now have left the Deficient workflow step and therefore no longer be present in your Workflow Inbox.

It is also possible to make and save edits while in Workflow mode by hitting "Submit," but for VOSs resolving deficiencies, it is usually easier to use Forms/Entries mode to make changes, and then manually send the application to the appropriate workflow step. As mentioned, this is because the "deficiencies" step is not a part of the ordinary workflow and cannot automatically send an application for which the deficiency has been resolved to any workflow step. Hitting "Submit" will therefore save the changes but do nothing to send the application on automatically to where it needs to go—so you'll need to leave Workflow mode and go to Forms/Entries mode to manually route the application anyway. **The one exception wherein VOSs reviewing deficiencies can easily use the "Submit" button straight in Workflow mode to save changes, *and* automatically route the application where it needs to go is in the case of denials**, which are covered shortly.

Below is a list of the most common deficiencies in each category and workflow step, with their solutions:

Application type	Workflow Step	Deficiency	Solution
Injury or Present (signature and proof of rel. issues also apply to Death)	Initial Qualification	Missing application signature	If application period still open, ask applicant to log in, edit application w/ new signature; if application period closed, ask applicant to e-mail image of signature in response to certification language at end of application
		Minor filled out application on own behalf incl. signing	If application period still open, ask minor to log in, change "is the applicant the victim…?" answer to "no," fill in parent's name and contact info as the "applicant," have parent upload the minor victim's birth certificate as proof of relationship, and have parent edit the minor's signature to be *their* signature; if application period closed, obtain all the above info/docs via e-mail and VOS can edit/upload docs and sign. image to application instead

		Language in application indicates applicant is not victim but the applicant filled it out as if they were (but applicant seems to be an appropriate person)	If application period still open, ask non-victim applicant to log in, change "is the applicant the victim…?" answer to "no," fill in their own name and contact info as the "applicant" and make sure the victim's contact information is correct for the *victim*, and upload the appropriate proof of relationship document; if application period closed, obtain all the above info/docs via e-mail and VOS can edit/upload docs to application instead
		DOB listed in application differs from birth certificate (for minor victims)	Make a quick phone call to ask parent to confirm correct DOB of minor victim, edit application DOB to be correct
		Parent uploaded DL or their *own* birth cert. as incorrect proof of relationship (for minor victims)	Ask applicant-parent to send minor victim's birth certificate in order to demonstrate relationship between person applying and victim who was impacted
		Applicant's name does not appear on proof of relationship document	E-mail explaining purpose of proof of relationship is to demonstrate applicant's connection to victim and see if they have additional documentation demonstrating guardianship or similar; upload add'l docs to reviewer uploads
		Applicant's last name *only* doesn't match birth certificate	(typically occurs if mother listed on birth cert is applicant but has remarried) E-mail asking for new marriage certificate; upload document to reviewer uploads
		Applicant such as grandparent or paralegal answered "other" for relationship to victim and wasn't prompted to upload proof of relationship	E-mail applicant to recover missing proof of relationship document (could include retainer agreement for actual attorney, guardianship order, etc.); upload document into application
		Victim/Applicant responded "no" to key eligibility Q (i.e.	**If other info in application (i.e. experience narrative) makes it unclear if alleged victim was or wasn't**

		"were you present in the X room during the shooting?"	**present,** or if there is reason to think they misunderstood the question's phrasing, e-mail applicant to confirm they understood the question correctly, rephrasing to make sure question is clear; if other info in application (i.e. experience narrative) makes it clear the applicant falls *outside* eligibility criteria (i.e. "I was just outside the room…"), gently explain the criteria and limitations of funding, and deny the application
	Presence Review	Victim can't be verified by presence reviewer as present	Send e-mail asking for any of the following (varies w/ response): social media posts from the day of the shooting including the victim's name/image that reference being present at shooting or being present right before the shooting, texts to family/friends that reference being present at shooting (texts from during or after), additional support such as ticket/flight info if shooting took place at ticketed event, or receipts from venue (i.e. restaurant) if they are dated/timestamped close to shooting, confirmation of class attendance *directly* from teacher/other school official can be used for school shootings where attendance list is imperfect; screenshots of any of the above are fine, ask for DL if their texts/social media posts only include their face (i.e. in their avatar/profile pic) but not their name; copy **ALL** supporting documentation images into word doc, review to ensure supporting documentation verifies victim's presence with name and date/timestamps OR that you have received 3-4 decent supporting items making it highly likely alleged victim was actually present even if no single item completely verifies presence; upload all documentation into reviewer uploads
Injury only	Initial Qualification	Missing HIPAA	E-mail applicant attaching copy of blank HIPAA, ask them to fill out and

			either log in and upload HIPAA if application period is still open, or e-mail HIPAA back to you if closed; upload HIPAA into body of application
		Incorrectly filled-out HIPAA	(i.e. signature or date is missing; name is referencing applicant instead of victim who was injured) E-mail applicant attaching copy of blank HIPAA, ask them to fill out new HIPAA making necessary corrections and either log in and upload HIPAA if application period is still open, or e-mail HIPAA back to you if closed; remove incorrectly filled-out application and upload correct HIPAA
		Missing "other" medical provider information	If google search can be used to fill in info (including contact for medical records), this is usually quicker; otherwise e-mail/call applicant asking them to confirm missing medical provider info and fill missing info into application
		Not physically injured	If narrative or medical provider indicates victim was treated for *mental* health services instead of for physical injury: a) if application period is still open, e-mail them to request they fill out a "present" application instead, or b) if the application period is closed, e-mail applicant to let them know that we can process them as a "present" applicant but not an injury applicant, manually send application to presence review (or final review if presence review has already been successful) with **very clear notes** that application should be reviewed as if it were a present application—**DO NOT CHANGE MEDICAL STATUS TO CONFIRMED!** This will unfortunately mean the application will need to be manually sent through the last few steps of with workflow, but if changed to "confirmed" the application could end up incorrrectly included in the final distribution plan as an injury claim
	Medical Confirmation	Number of hospitalization	**Calls are usually easier to resolve these!** Call applicant to explain that

		nights cannot be confirmed by 1st hospital (no 2nd provider listed	their provider could only confirm X nights out of Y nights the applicant listed, check 1) whether they are sure about the number of inpatient *nights* (not days, and not outpatient treatment)—often applicants add a night because they are including the discharge day, or include outpatient treatment days, which cannot be added to total of nights because inpatient nights get higher payment amount anyway (add'l outpatient treatment doesn't affect outcome), and 2) whether there is a second provider they forgot to list who can account for the remaining inpatient nights they listed—if so, get *all* info including Dr's name, hospital name, address, and medical records contact e-mail address or fax; if applicant was mistaken and accepts this, modify their number of nights listed (or switch from 1 night to "outpatient"); if applicant gives info on second provider, add 2nd provider info and manually route to "final review" with clear note to claims processing firm that they still need to verify remaining nights w/ 2nd provider
		Number of hospitalization nights cannot be confirmed by 1st hospital (2nd hospital listed)	This will likely get routed to deficiencies because of the automated workflow, but if the second provider is listed, manually send application to "Final Review" with clear note to claims processing firm that they still need to verify remaining nights w/ 2nd provider; **check dates of service listed in application to make sure they seem appropriate/2nd provider seems likely to be able to confirm remaining nights—call applicant if discrepancy seems likely**
Death benefits	Initial Qualification	Missing death certificate	E-mail/call explaining need for death certificate; upload missing document to body of application once received
		Missing proof of relationship doc(s)	E-mail/call explaining purpose of proof of relationship is to demonstrate applicant's connection to deceased victim and asking for appropriate docs;

			upload docs to body of application (or reviewer uploads if more than 1 doc)
		Distribution plan contradicts who should legally be included (legal heirs) based on application Qs and intestacy laws of state	E-mail/call explaining that NCF has to distribute benefits according to that state's intestacy laws (i.e. 50/50 to living parents of unmarried, childless killed victim regardless of circumstance) *or* at least have consent of all those entitled to funds under intestacy laws, and let applicant know we can't release funds until consent forms are received from all legal heirs, suggest they work with other legal heirs to reach an agreement; when distribution plan is altered and consent forms are sent, change in application and upload add'l consent forms
	PR Status/Final Review	Distribution plan includes all legal heirs but some/all consent forms are missing/have errors	E-mail applicant attaching blank consent forms and ask for consent forms that have all blanks filled out appropriately and are signed, dated, and notarized; upload when received (application that is otherwise complete can still be approved for inclusion in distribution plan)
		Consent forms are not notarized	E-mail applicant attaching blank consent form and ask for newly filled-out and notarized form (bc they must sign in front of notary) ; upload when received

DENIALS

Not Present (or No Treatment)

Any applications that seem, on their face, like they are invalid (i.e. from someone who blatantly doesn't meet the eligibility criteria) can be denied at any point, although if it seems like an applicant has misunderstood the application language and accidentally answered in a way that disqualifies them when they may in fact be eligible, it is a good idea to e-mail them to clarify and confirm before denying them. If during the process of attempting to resolve a deficiency it is revealed that the victim isn't actually eligible at all, these can also be denied right away. This usually occurs because a victim clarifies that they were not present within the required location scope during the shooting (i.e. "Not Present"), or did not receive the treatment they said they did in responses where the victim *must* have received treatment to be eligible (i.e. Las Vegas, in which they had to have received medical treatment, or Cincinnati, where they had to have received mental health treatment). Final denial notifications are sent out at the end of

processing, but if a victim's ineligibility comes out during outreach communications attempting to resolve deficiencies, the VOS should sympathetically explain that the victim is not eligible at that earlier time rather than waiting for final notification.

Apart from blatantly ineligible applicants, VOSs should try to get as many people included as possible and work with victims/applicants as much as they can. However, we do need to be able to establish that the application does indeed meet the eligibility criteria (i.e. we have to be able to demonstrate that they were present, received the medical treatment they said they did if they are applying as injured, or are clearly the appropriate relative of a victim who was killed). Sometimes we are trying to prove someone was present but they just have no documentation or any other way to verify that they were. While these cases should be handled with sympathy and sensitivity, making every effort to be creative and include whatever we can as proof of presence, if we can't get something that will work, we do unfortunately have to deny these applications.

If someone has applied with an injury application but can't be verified as physically injured, this is *not* an outright denial if the response has a category for those who were simply present. These cases are not truly ineligible if we can still include them as a "present" application. If the application period is still open when the medical confirmation fails to go through, the VOS should ask the applicant to fill out the appropriate present application. If, however, the application period has already passed, the VOS can manually skip the medical confirmation step and send the application to final review while a) leaving clear notes to the claims processing reviewers to treat this application as a present application, and b) reaching out to the applicant to explain that their treatment could not be verified but that they should still be eligible in a lower payment tier.

Incomplete

Many of our denials occur because applicants have left out vital documentation that we need to verify the application and never respond to attempts to resolve the deficiency; these are "incompletes". We always send multiple rounds of e-mails to try to get a response from applicants with these types of deficiencies. At a minimum, about two weeks before the deadline for processing, the VOSs should send final reminders to each person whose application is missing information/documentation. They should send one reminder with *clear language in the subject line* a few days before the two-weeks-out deadline to receive missing materials/information, and another reminder on the last day to receive missing materials/information, also using clear language in the subject language (i.e. "FINAL REMINDER, DUE DEC. 15TH: Missing documentation for Jacksonville Tribute Fund"). It should clearly state in the first paragraph of the e-mail that the application can be denied if we do not receive the missing information/documentation by the specified date.

If the deadline for the last date to receive missing documentation passes, all deficient applications with outstanding deficiencies that have received no response should be denied as incomplete on that day. If an applicant *has* responded saying something like "I will get it to you by this weekend" by the deadline to receive missing documentation, VOSs can use their judgement in allowing minor extensions. Additionally,

if a non-responsive applicant whose application was denied as incomplete sends the missing documentation after the deadline to send it but while there is still enough time to finish processing that application before the *final* processing deadline, the VOS may also be able to make an exception for those cases and get the application approved—but only if there is still enough time to push the application through the rest of processing before final approvals. The VOS can manually change the application from its denial status for these cases.

If an applicant who did not respond to e-mails asking for their missing documentation/information calls or e-mails after the processing deadline (i.e. once the distribution totals have been set by the Steering Committee), there is nothing that we can do to reverse a denial at that time, even if the applicant now has the missing documentation. The denial must stand even if the applicant complains that they didn't see the e-mails or that we should have tried calling them if we didn't get a response by e-mail, or even if it turns out the applicant listed a contact e-mail address that had something wrong with it. This is why our applications include language asking applicants to fill in an e-mail address for the contact e-mail that they check often "as e-mail is the primary form of outreach." **If it turns out that NCF staff have been sending e-mails to an e-mail address different than what the applicant listed, but the processing deadline has already passed, the ED should be notified immediately.** The VOS should always copy-paste e-mail addresses directly from the application or from an export of application fields in order to avoid this error.

Duplicates

The two main types of duplicates are scenarios in which an applicant submitted more than one application in a single category (usually by accident, i.e. having trouble with our application portal and double-submitting), and scenarios in which the applicant submitted an application in both the injury and the present category as a "just in case" measure. Even though NCF asks applicants to only fill out one application per victim, we still get applicants who try this—which is easy enough for us to deal with.

The PC/VOS should do a "de-dupe" after the end of the application period, when all applications have been submitted, to identify and deny any true duplicates. The PC/VOS can export the names and DOBs of all applications in all categories and then sort the export by last name to single out any potential duplicates. The claims processing firm working through initial review or the presence reviewers also sometimes find duplicates and send them to deficiencies. In either case, the VOS should *very carefully* review the two (or sometimes three) applications to ensure that the victim is the same for both applications. The VOS should double-check the names *and* dates of birth, and review the basic facts of the application, to make sure they are not family members with very similar names/DOBs who were all victimized by a shooting (in particular, watch out for children who have the exact same as their parents, or twins with very similar names and the same DOB). Once the VOS is sure that the application is a duplicate for an application in the same category, they should deny it with a reference to the entry ID of the duplicate application NCF is "keeping" for approval.

The other kind of duplicate must be handled differently. If someone has filled out an application in both the injury and present categories just in case their injury verification doesn't work out, the PC/VOS should keep the present application in deficiencies until the injury application fails to be verified. If verification

of their medical treatment is attempted but doesn't succeed, at this point the VOS can proceed using the duplicate present application, and the injury application can be denied. If medical treatment *can* be verified, the PC/VOS should then deny the duplicate present application.

Denial Step-by-Step

To process a denial in the application portal dashboard, do the following:

1. You can deny an application easily while in workflow mode--just click on the application straight from your inbox.
2. In workflow mode, change the claim status option from "deficient" to "denied or withdrawn" (this is the only time the VOS changes the claim status dropdown menu and relies on the automated workflow)
3. Leave a comment in reviewer notes (with the date and your initials) that says "Application denied" and the reason why, i.e. "HIPAA was not correctly filled out; no response after multiple attempts to contact victim; application denied as incomplete"
4. *Optional but helpful for keeping track of denial reasons in large funds: go down to where you track your outreach, and change the "denial type" dropdown menu to one of the options that fits, or "other"*
5. Then hit "submit" in the top right corner; IF you are in workflow/inbox mode the system will recognize that you changed the claim status to "denied or withdrawn" and will automatically send it to the "denied" step.
6. All of the above can *also* be done via Forms/Entries mode (find the application using the search function and click "edit", follow steps 2-5 above, then manually send the application to the workflow step "Application Denied" using the process described in Step 10 of "Resolving Deficiencies Step-by-Step"). However, anything that has the clear potential to be denied should be in the VOS's inbox, making the workflow mode easier to use for denials. The exception is if a duplicate is discovered during the de-dupe process and needs to be denied.

EXPORTING APPLICATION FIELDS

Exporting application data is very useful for creating payee sheets and other lists of applicants and their information that may be needed. It is also useful for creating a spreadsheet to use while sending e-mails to batches of applicants when the applicant pool is very large. Lastly, exports are helpful for running checks on an entire category of applications to understand the overall status of these applications.

12. In the Application Dashboard, go to Forms→Import/Export
13. For "Select a Form", choose the category of applications you want to export (i.e. death, injury, being present—there is no way to do all of them at the same time)
14. The page will display every field that exists for the application category you've selected. Choose all of the ones you need, i.e. if you are trying to create a spreadsheet to help you e-mail all the deficient applicants for a very large fund, you would need everyone's names and

e-mail addresses as well as any fields that tell you whether an application is deficient and what the deficiency is (contact e-mail, victim's first name, victim's last name, applicant's first name, applicant's last name, claim status, attendance status, medical validation IF it's an injury application, reviewer notes, Entry ID, Final Status). For the example just given, you would likely also want to include Outreach status, Initial Outreach Date, Deficiency Type, and Outreach Notes—but the VOS would have to have been tracking their outreach progress using these fields. You should *always* include Entry ID and Final Status (see 15a!). For downloading fields to create a payee sheet, you typically want to include all of the fields you would for working with deficiencies *excluding* reviewer notes and outreach fields but including other fields relevant to their payment tier, i.e. Were you hospitalized overnight?/How many nights were you hospitalized? (for injury applications), etc. For payee sheets it is also a good idea to include workflow step fields such as claim status, presence review, medical confirmation, and ready for payment to double-check that you are paying out a completely approved application.

15. Download the export file and begin to use Excel's "sort" option to delete the applications you don't care about for your purposes:

    a. Final Status will list "pending" for all submitted applications, so as a first step in Excel you can sort applications by that column, keep all applications that say "pending" in Final Status, and delete all rows that are blank in Final Status (the blank ones are partial applications that you almost always want to remove because we do not review or deal with those). Including Entry ID also helps with this process because *occasionally* you get glitchy applications that were somehow submitted but have no information in any of the fields—you don't have to worry about these, but you will want to remove them in order to avoid distorting your spreadsheet.

    b. After this there are other categories of application you may want to remove depending on what you are doing. For example, if you are only trying to look at deficient applications so you can send e-mail batches for large funds, you would want to sort by Claim Status (which lists whether an application is deficient or not for deficiencies at the Initial Review Stage), then Presence Status (which will list whether the person is confirmed present or not) and then Medical Confirmation if the application is an injury application (which will list if the medical reviewer said the application's medical information was confirmed, conflicting, or had no record). Once you've sorted applications into these different categories, you can delete the ones that are not deficient (i.e. they are Pre-qualified, Present, and Confirmed, or blank in any of these categories which indicates that they haven't gone through those review steps yet). For the remainder, you can sort them as needed to group the deficiencies into like categories. This is helpful whether you want to e-mail deficient applicants or run a check to make sure no applications are getting stuck in the system because of a glitch or because a reviewer is sitting on it without reviewing it. If creating a payee sheet, you should not have any deficient applications left, but the above-described sort is useful for separating the approved versus the denied applications (you should remove the "denied" rows).

16. ALWAYS be sure to save the file as an Excel Workbook instead of a CSV file! When you download the export file it will automatically export as a CSV, which will lose the functionality of anything you've done if you only save a CSV copy and not an .xls copy.

ZELLE FAQS

Zelle is the third party service NCF typically uses for our electronic distributions of payments, which are preferred over checks or wire transfers wherever possible. When using Zelle to facilitate an electronic distribution, NCF completes the necessary steps to have Bank of America release a payment *from* our Bank of America account *to* Zelle (at which point the money is out of our hands); Zelle then sends the money the rest of the way *to* the target bank account, so long as they have someone registered whose e-mail address/phone number matches the e-mail address/phone number NCF originally sent the payment with.

There are a few key points to understand about Zelle:

1. A victim/applicant *must* register/enroll in Zelle in order to receive an electronic distribution from NCF; NCF will provide them with the link to register with Zelle.
2. Zelle registers its clients by connecting either an e-mail address or a phone number (depending on what the client chooses) to the bank account information the registrant provides to Zelle; individuals or organizations (such as NCF) can then send a payment *to* a particular e-mail address or phone number, called a "token."
3. There can only be one token per bank account with Zelle; a single bank account cannot be registered with both the registrant's e-mail address *and* their phone number, although someone could have two Zelle accounts connected to two separate bank accounts—one with their e-mail address and one with their phone number.
4. Some people's banks auto-enroll them with Zelle; they should check with their bank if they aren't sure whether they are registered for Zelle using their e-mail address or their phone number as their token.
   a. Chase Bank in particular tends to auto-enroll their customers, typically defaulting to their phone number rather than their e-mail address.
5. **Every step of the transfer must be using the same token (the e-mail address or phone number being used/on record): NCF's bank, Zelle, and the recipient bank account must all have the same token on record.** If any of these parties do not have the same e-mail address/phone number as the others, the payment cannot successfully go through. Therefore, if a victim/applicant registers with Zelle for the first time, they should use the e-mail address that NCF has on record as the contact e-mail—NCF defaults to using the contact e-mail address over any phone numbers they have on record.
6. If the victim/applicant is already enrolled in Zelle but their registration uses a different e-mail address than the application contact e-mail, or uses a phone number instead of an e-mail, they

should send the corrected e-mail address/phone number to NCF so that NCF uses the right token to send the payment.

7. Zelle is completely independent of both NCF and Bank of America (the bank which NCF uses to hold money in our donation accounts and our separate account for administration), and so we cannot check on whether an applicant has successfully enrolled in Zelle, or what e-mail address or phone number a victim has used to enroll, or which bank account they have registered. They must call Zelle customer service if they need these questions answered.

8. Payments transfer more quickly if applicants enroll *prior* to NCF's release of payments to Zelle; therefore we try to encourage all recipients to enroll ahead of distribution.

9. If someone is enrolling for the very first time, however, Zelle's policy is that a first-time payment can take 2-3 days to process, as a security measure on Zelle's end.

10. If someone is already enrolled in Zelle and the payment NCF is sending is not someone's first time using Zelle, the payment should go through in a matter of minutes after Bank of America releases the funds.

11. If a payment is released to Zelle with a particular token, but Zelle does not have anyone enrolled with that token (i.e. the e-mail address or phone number don't match anyone Zelle has registered), the payment will sit with Zelle for up to 14 days—these are regular days, not business days.

    a. During this time period, someone can still enroll with Zelle using the token NCF has sent out the payment with in order to have the payment finish transferring; NCF actively conducts outreach to try to encourage anyone who hasn't properly enrolled prior to sending the payment to Zelle to do so before the 14 days are up so that the payment can finish transferring without being sent back to us.

    b. *If* the 14 days pass without anyone registering for Zelle under the token NCF has sent out the payment using, Zelle returns/credits the payment to NCF's bank account.

12. Once the payment has been sent out to Zelle, NCF cannot simply correct an e-mail address/phone number if it turns out the recipient gave us the wrong one. We have to either wait for the 14 days to pass and then reissue the payment correctly once we can confirm the money has been returned to our bank account, or complete a spreadsheet for a digital cancellation to cancel the payment before the 14 days pass, then re-issue the payment correctly after we can confirm that the cancellation worked and the money was returned to our bank account.

KEY CONTACTS AND ACCOUNT INFORMATION

Board members:

Marc Lenahan (attorney based in Texas, Board Chair): law@lenahanlaw.com

Danny Gordon (GoFundMe contact who works specifically with GoFundMe's disaster/crisis response efforts): dgordon@gofundme.com

Bethzaida Garcia (helped with and was impacted by Pulse response and works with victims in Florida): Bethzaida.Garcia@osceola.org

Key NCF Personnel:

Jeff Dion, Executive Director: jeff@nationalcompassionfund.org

Dan Levey, acting Core Impact VOS: dlevey@nationalcompassionfund.org

Sam Webster, Technical Director (involvement with NCF may vary): swebster@victimsofcrime.org

Sarah Raminhos, Lumix contact (involvement with NCF may vary): sraminhos@victimsofcrime.org

Translation services (use for translation of draft and final protocols):

Trusted Translation: Kurt Mehdi: kurtm@trustedtranslations.com

Contacts in claims processing firms we work with on initial review and final review steps:

Angeion:

- Blueberry Keller: BKeller@angeiongroup.com
- Eamon Willard: ewillard@angeiongroup.com

Hogan Lovells:

- Ashley Johnson: ashley.johnson@hoganlovells.com
- Sallie Woodell: sallie.woodell@hoganlovells.com

Wiley Rein: Josephine (Josie) Gibbens: jgibbens@wileyrein.com

Venable: Janice Roberts: JRoberts2@venable.com

Zelle distribution process/banking:

Enrique Mora (general bank contact; can link NCF staff with other services, i.e. CashPro, if necessary) :

(980) 218-1401; enrique.j.mora@baml.com

Banking portal (uploading disbursement sheets to release payments): https://b2biportal.bankofamerica.com

Username and Password for banking portal: natcfund, Aur0r@victims

CashPro Online (checking on reports of successful/unsuccessful payments):
https://cashproonline.bankofamerica.com

Company ID: natio132

Username and password will need to be set up for each individual (will need to be added as an administrator)

CashPro Accelerate Information:

Client ID: XA63E8GUZ5

Account numbers can be found via CashPro Online by looking at the different account selections (next to tick boxes in lower left corner) for "Reporting." Please note that NCF maintains 4 different accounts in order to accommodate the potential for multiple ongoing responses that need to hold donations in different accounts—before entering the account information into CashPro Accelerate, please confirm with ED which account is being used for the fund in question!

Eventbrite login/password: Either the NCVC Comms team or Tech team should have an Eventbrite account already set up; they can share the login information (or NCF staff can create a new account)

Victim Outreach Communications Templates

The e-mail templates below are all taken from communications for previous funds, namely the Las Vegas Victims' Fund (the response to the Route 91 Harvest Festival shooting in Las Vegas) and the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Victims' Fund (the response to the Parkland shooting) for the general inquiries and deficiencies outreach, and the Cincinnati and Jacksonville response for the approval and denial templates. When using these templates, it is incredibly important to alter the text for the name of the fund, the partner 501(c)3 organization name, the deadlines and other dates, and in some cases the exact language surrounding eligibility requirements. It is also important to alter any of the hyperlinks that change specific to the individual funding response. Additional language may need to be altered depending on the exact nature of future responses (i.e. the type of location, the way presence is being verified, the general victim population), especially for the templates for responding to deficient applications.

Responses to General Inquiries/Pre- and Post-Application/Processing-Period Inquiries

Response to E-mail Submission of Public Input for Draft Protocol

Dear _____,

We sincerely thank you for your feedback on the draft protocol for the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Victims' Fund, and will consider it carefully. Input from those impacted by the attack is *vital* to creation of a final protocol that reflects survivors' experiences while meeting the intent of the fund, and those who donated to it, to give 100% of funds to victims of the MSD shooting, and we appreciate your taking the time to write in.

The final protocol is planned to be released on April 30th, on the National Compassion Fund website and on the Broward Education Foundation's MSD High School Victims' Fund website. It will also be sent out by e-mail to everyone who has signed up for the National Compassion Fund's contact list. If you haven't already, we encourage you to sign up for the contact list not only to receive the release of the final protocol, but also for other updates about the fund, including the launch of the online application portal for victims and families of those killed to apply (planned for May 1). Please feel free to respond to this e-mail with any further questions, and thank you again for your feedback.

Best wishes,

General Inquiries about Specific Event/Fund

Dear _____,

Thank you for reaching out. The applications for the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Victims' Fund are **now available** on http://benefits.nationalcompassionfund.org (you will need to first register as

a first-time user, i.e. create a user account, and *then* log in and fill out an application). A link to the live application portal is also posted on the [National Compassion Fund website](#), and we have sent out the link directly to everyone on our contact list.

The deadline to submit an application is May 31st. You can see the final protocol, which explains how the fund works and who is eligible, [here](#). More information is available on the [National Compassion Fund](#) website and on the Broward Education Foundation's [MSD victims' fund](#) website, including translated versions of the final protocol.

Also, **please sign up for the National Compassion Fund's [contact list](#)** if you haven't! The National Compassion Fund is helping the Broward Education Foundation process applications, and signing up for the contact list is the *best* way to receive updates about the fund's application process**.** We will also send out reminders for the application deadline to anyone on this list, so please do sign up!

One final thing we want to make clear to all victims is that that we are separate from the [Florida crime victim compensation program](#), which we also encourage you to apply to if you have expenses directly related to the shooting. Please know that there is no information-sharing between these two programs, and so signing up for/applying to one does not mean you have automatically applied for the other. I hope this helps, and please feel free to respond to this e-mail with any other questions.

Best wishes,

Response to Inquiry about "Pre-Qualified" Application Status/"What's happening to my application right now?" question during application or processing period

Dear _____,

Thank you for checking in. Your application is currently "pre-qualified," meaning that it has all the information and documentation we need from you, but it is still going through the validation process. For the "present without sustaining gunshot wound" category, the validation process simply verifies that the school's attendance records match the information in the application--we handle this on our end.

Processing is ongoing throughout the rest of June, so most likely you will not hear from us during that time. We will send out final notifications of the application decisions in early July, when all applications have finished processing.

If anything *does* come up during the validation process, we will be sure to e-mail you! And just to let you know, you can always check the claim status of your application by logging in to http://benefits.nationalcompassionfund.org and selecting "View or Update Existing Application." It will say "pre-qualified" if everything is fine but the application is still processing, "deficient" if any issues come up, and "cleared" when it has been processed completely and is approved. Let me know if you have any other questions!

Best wishes,

Response to requests for updates/next steps for payment near processing deadline/final approvals but before distribution:

Dear _____,

Funds will *begin* distribution on March 5, per the [Final Protocols](#). The funds are divided among the *total* number of valid claimants; during the stage between completion of processing (February 28) and distribution (March 5), the steering committee will look at the "whole picture" of valid applications to determine the exact amount that will go to each category of applicant. Outreach to set up distribution, including getting everyone's payment preferences, will take place around March 5; you should get an electronic notice from our partners, Bank of America. You will also see an approval letter quite shortly with some additional information about Bank of America's process of setting up to receive payments. Please let me know if you have any other questions.

Best wishes,

Response to inquiries about/issues with Zelle distribution process (exclude first paragraph if applicant has NOT asked to receive a check instead of an electronic payment)

Dear ____,

Thank you for reaching out. Because checks are more expensive to send than electronic transfers, and because the electronic transfer process is *genuinely* faster once someone is enrolled with Zelle (which is a quick enrollment process), the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Victim's Fund is processing all payments for the "present" category as electronic payments, barring some exceptional circumstances.

The way that our electronic disbursement process works in most cases--cases without any kind of special account--is that we will push through a payment electronically to Zelle, a third party service that moves money between our bank account and the target bank account. The funds will go **from** our bank account, **through** Zelle, **to** your/the victim's bank account. The only information we need in order to do this from our end is the correct name and e-mail associated with the account we want to send the money to, through Zelle.

We do understand that for those who are using Zelle for the first time this can seem intimidating, and we've tried to provide materials that help recipients as much as possible. The PDF that we linked to in the approval e-mail should walk you through Zelle enrollment step by step (" For a preview of what enrollment with *Zelle* will look like, **please** [see an example here](#)**).**

If you are having issues receiving your payment, you may want to contact your bank to make sure they have the same e-mail address or phone number we are using to send the payment on record (and to

make sure there are no other issues with receiving the transfer, such as a temporarily frozen account, a negative balance, or a daily limit on how much you can transfer, which can sometimes occur with small credit unions). If you've contacted your bank and confirmed they are not the source of the issue, you may also want to contact Zelle. In the event that the customer contacts Zelle, a customer service representative can assist with issues related to the Zelle registration process, at the following:

Customer Service at **1-866-839-3488**, 1-501-748-8506 (outside the U.S.)

7 days a week, 8am — Midnight Eastern Time

I would recommend trying to contact Zelle first if you're just having trouble with the enrollment process, and calling your bank first, followed by Zelle, if you are confident that you are enrolled in Zelle but are still having trouble receiving your payment. If either of those options don't work please reach back out!

Best wishes,

Response to those who have missed the application period (remove 3rd paragraph if applicant has NOT expressed frustration about not hearing about the fund before the end of the application period)

Dear _____,

Thank you for reaching out to the Marjory Stoneman Douglas (MSD) Victims' Fund. [***If applicant believes they filled out an application but they didn't, include language here explaining what went wrong, i.e. "Unfortunately, we have no record of a submitted application for anyone by your name or e-mail address in our system. We do see that you started an application in our system but never finished and submitted it/that you created a user account on our application portal but did not go on to start an application/that you signed up for our contact list to receive updates about the fund, which is different from an actual application for benefits."***]

Unfortunately, the deadline to apply for this fund passed on May 31, 2018, and we are no longer accepting applications. This is the deadline that was set by the Committee as well as stated in the Final [Protocol](#) that governs the distribution of the Fund. The Committee adopted an extremely broad eligibility standard which allowed every person on campus to be eligible for benefits without any requirement of having sought treatment. That broad eligibility, however, needed to be balanced with strict enforcement of deadlines. In addition, all funds have been allotted at this time, with no funds remaining. Because the distribution totals have now been set by dividing up the total amount of funds received among the total number of applications received and vetted, accepting any late applications now would mean taking away funding from someone who did submit an application.

We absolutely understand your frustrations about not being aware of the fund. Spreading awareness for a fund like this is difficult because our organization does not have access to the contact information of victims, but we make a sincere effort to spread awareness as much as possible. For this fund we held three town halls discussing the fund and the application process, we advertised the fund in the news, we

ran a contact list with frequent updates, application period announcements, and deadline reminders, and we worked with the school to spread awareness to MSD parents. We did not have oversight over the school's communications, but as we understood it they had advertised the fund on the website and had sent out *some* form of communication about it.

We are sorry that you will not be able to receive benefits from this fund, and we absolutely want to acknowledge that your child is a victim of the attack in our eyes. Not being able to take a late application simply means that there are limits to who this fund can cover and what we can do for someone who has missed the deadline. We do strongly encourage you to apply to the Florida crime victim compensation program, which is separate from our fund and which reimburses for crime-related expenses, such as mental health treatment, lost wages, etc. As a longer-term provider they may be better able to assist you and your needs at this time. We sincerely hope that even if it is not through this fund, you are able to receive some financial or other assistance.

Sincerely,

OUTREACH E-MAILS FOR RESOLVING DEFICIENCIES

Outreach to minor applicant

Dear applicant,

Thank you for applying for benefits from the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Victims' Fund. It seems that you filled out an application on your own behalf as a minor (if this is the e-mail for the victim who was present during the shooting).

Unfortunately, because you are a minor, we need a parent/guardian's input on this application. You answered "yes" to the question "Is the person filling out this form (The Applicant) the person who is eligible for the benefits (The Victim)?" and so you were not prompted to enter a parent's/guardian's information. If you select "no," our application automatically asks for their contact information and asks for the victim's (your own) birth certificate.

We don't need anyone to submit a completely new application, but we will need you to send the following to this e-mail:

1. Your parent/guardian's contact information as the "Applicant," including:
    1. *Their* name
    2. *Their* address
    3. *Their* phone number and e-mail
    4. *Your* e-mail ("Victim's e-mail")

2. **A copy of *your* birth certificate** (the birth certificate of the victim who was present, showing *your* relationship to the applicant/parent)

3. You appear to have signed the application yourself, and we cannot accept the signature of a minor. We will also need your parent to sign off on this application. Please include/CC them in the response to this e-mail so that we can discuss how best to do this now that the application period has closed and applicants can no longer edit their own applications.

If this is the e-mail of the parent/guardian, please note that when we say "you" in the instructions above, we are referring to the minor victim who we believed filled out an application on their own behalf.

We need these things by June 20th at the very latest. Please let me know if you have any questions**.**

Best wishes,

Outreach if applicant appears to be different from victim but they answered "yes" to "Is the person filling out this application (the applicant) the victim who was present?"/didn't fill in applicant information:

Dear applicant,

Thank you for applying for benefits from the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Victims' Fund. It seems that you filled out an application on behalf of your child, the victim (i.e. the person who was present during the shooting).

This is completely fine, but you answered "yes" to the question "Is the person filling out this form (The Applicant) the person who is eligible for the benefits (The Victim)?" If you select "no," our application automatically asks for your own contact information and asks for the victim's birth certificate.

Therefore, we will need you to reply to this e-mail with the following:

1. As the "applicant" filling out an application on behalf of your child (which we require for minors), please include:
   1. *Your* name
   2. *Your* address
   3. *Your* phone number and e-mail
   4. *Your child's* e-mail (we only need this for our records; we will still send e-mails to *you*)
2. **A legible copy of your child's birth certificate**, which demonstrates the parent-child relationship between you, the applicant, and your child, the victim eligible for benefits
   1. If you are a legal guardian who is not the parent, please send a copy of custody/guardianship appointment documents
   2. If your current last name does not match either your last name listed on the birth certificate *or* the child's last name--i.e., if you are the child's mother and remarried, please

also send a copy of your marriage certificate, to completely demonstrate the relationship between yourself and your child.

We need these things by June 20th at the very latest. Thank you in advance!

Best wishes,

Outreach if applicant's proof of relationship to victim is missing/inadequate:

Dear applicant,

Thank you for submitting an application to the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Victims' Fund on behalf of your child. We do need to resolve one issue before it moves forward with processing. The document you submitted as proof of relationship to the victim does not demonstrate any guardianship relationship between you and the victim (your child). What we need is a full birth certificate for the victim, listing the parents' names (and therefore demonstrating the relationship between you, the applicant, and your child, the victim eligible for benefits). You are welcome to just e-mail the birth certificate to this email address, and we can upload it to your application for you.

We need this by June 20th at the very latest. Thank you in advance!

Best wishes,

Outreach if parent's last name on birth certificate does not match applicant's last name:

Dear applicant,

Thank you for submitting an application to the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Victims' Fund. We do need one more thing before your application moves forward. Because your current last name does not match either the maiden name or the child's last name listed on the birth certificate, we're assuming you simply re-married, but we'd like to add a copy of that marriage certificate to completely demonstrate your relationship/guardianship with the victim (your child). You can just respond to this e-mail with that copy, and we can upload it to the application from our end.

We need this by June 20th at the very latest. Thank you in advance!

Best wishes,

Outreach for Missing/incorrectly completed HIPAA:

Dear applicant,

In your recent submission of an application for injury benefits from the Las Vegas Victims Fund, your HIPAA form was left blank and unsigned. This form is an important part of our verification process.

Please do the following:
1. Log back into your account on benefits.nationalcompassionfund.org
2. Select "View or Update Existing Entry"
3. Select "Edit Entry"
4. Download the "HIPAA Release" (the download hyperlink is towards the bottom of the application) fill it out completely and sign it. You will need to print it out in order to complete the signature. If you already have your own copy that has been filled out correctly and signed, please skip this step.
5. Select "remove" to remove the HIPAA form currently uploaded to your application; this HIPAA version was not correctly filled out.
6. Upload the fully complete HIPAA form: a scanned copy or a clear photo image are both acceptable.
7. Go to the bottom and hit "Submit," which will make this update to your application without changing any of your other information.

Alternatively, you can send a complete and signed HIPAA scan directly to this e-mail, and we will upload it on our end. This is the only correction to your application we currently need. Please upload/send a correct version of the HIPAA form by 11:59 PM PST on **January 31st, 2018**. Please reach out to this e-mail address if you have any questions or concerns about uploading your HIPAA release.

Best wishes,

Outreach if initial presence review could not confirm presence (supporting documentation needed):

Dear applicant,

Thank you for submitting your recent application for benefits through the Las Vegas Victims Fund. During our application review, law enforcement officials were unable to verify that you were present at the Route 91 Harvest festival/concert. Law enforcement's lists of verified people who were present sometimes miss people, even those who have given a statement, and so this is not disqualifying. However, we would like to know whether you have any other documentation to verify your presence that night. This could include things like a scan of your ticket purchase (PREFERRED), or social media posts with dates/timestamps that show you at the festival/concert on October 1 or checking in with family or friends afterwards (a screenshot of these posts would be preferred). **If your social media images have only your face, but not your name, a copy of your driver's license would also be helpful, so we can match your face to the name**

on your application. If you have these things available, please reply to this e-mail (we can add it to your application from our end; there is no need to add it yourself). If you believe you have some other documentation not listed that verifies your presence, you are also welcome to send that. Please be assured that we will do everything we can to work with you through this verification process; however, **we need this information by February 20th.** Thank you in advance, and please reach out with any questions.

Best wishes,

Response to applicants who have sent documents/information to resolve their deficiencies:

Dear applicant,

Thank you so much for following up! We've received your documentation and it will be reviewed and added to your application. Thank you for your patience during this process.

Best wishes,

APPROVAL AND DENIAL TEMPLATES

Master Template for Death/Injury Approvals (alter/fill in for each individual category or payment tier):

Dear _____,

Thank you for applying to the Cincinnati Strong Victims' Fund. We are pleased to inform you that your application as (a victim of the Fifth Third Tower shooting (6 September) who was injured)/(as a family member of a victim who was killed in the Fifth Third Tower shooting (6 September)) has been approved and you will receive a distribution. You have been approved for Category [A/B/C] Payment, for (physical injuries resulting in 4-7 night(s) of inpatient hospitalization)/ (deceased victims killed as a result of the attack), with a distribution amount of _____.

Distribution is set to begin on a rolling basis starting sometime in the week of January 15th. Except for those who will be depositing their funds into trust accounts, payments will take place electronically through *Zelle®*. In this process, funds will be deposited into your bank account using your e-mail address. **If you are already enrolled in Zelle but are enrolled using your phone number instead, please notify us by e-mailing Cincinnati@victimsofcrime.org.** Please note that funds can only be deposited in a US Dollar account held with a bank or credit union located in the United States.

In the meantime, we ask that you do the following to help us distribute your payment quickly and successfully:

1. If you are not already enrolled in *Zelle*, it is strongly recommended that you do so prior to distribution, so that your payment can be processed more quickly.

2. You can enroll in *Zelle* by visiting [www.clearxchange.com/receive.](www.clearxchange.com/receive) Once there, select your bank and enroll with *Zelle*. You should enroll with the **same email address you are receiving this e-mail to**, in order to ensure you receive the distribution.

3. **If your bank is not listed,** select "My bank isn't listed" and continue your enrollment by providing the required information.

4. Whether you enroll early, enroll after distribution begins, *or* are already enrolled with *Zelle* through your bank, **please ensure that you are enrolled using e-mail address you have received this approval e-mail at,** which is the e-mail address that the Cincinnati Strong Victims' Fund has on record, via your application. Again, if you are already enrolled but with your phone number, please notify cincinnati@victimsofcrime.org.

5. Please ensure that the target account to which you wish to receive the benefits has a **positive balance**.

Those that do not have a bank account or are depositing the funds to a UTMA account or trust may receive a check instead of the electronic transfer. Please reach out to cincinnati@victimsofcrime.org to set up this process.

You may use this gift in any way you see fit to assist in your recovery. Please consider working with a certified financial planner to help you make the most of your gift and protect yourself from fraud. Attached is information from the FINRA Foundation that may assist you in that regard.

On behalf of the Cincinnati Strong Victims' Fund Steering Committee and the National Compassion Fund, it has been an honor to serve the families and survivors of this tragedy, as well as the many corporations and individual donors who wished to give directly to show their support for those impacted by the September 6th attack. We know that this distribution can never make up for what you have gone through, but we hope that it can serve as acknowledgement of the love and support people feel for those impacted by September 6th attack and can assist you financially in your road to recovery.

Sincerely,

Kristen Wevers

Chair of the Cincinnati Strong Victims' Fund Steering Committee

Master Template for Approvals for Present Category/Example of Complete Approval Template:

Good afternoon,

Thank you for applying to the Cincinnati Strong Victims' Fund. We are pleased to inform you that your application as a victim of the Fifth Third Tower shooting (6 September), who was present and sustained psychological trauma as a result that led them to seek multiple sessions of mental health treatment, has been approved and you will receive a distribution. You have been approved for Category C Payment, for psychological trauma, with a distribution amount of $5,347.12.

Distribution is set to begin on a rolling basis starting sometime in the week of January 15th. Except for those who will be depositing their funds into trust accounts, payments will take place electronically through *Zelle®*. In this process, funds will be deposited into your bank account using your e-mail address. **If you are already enrolled in Zelle but are enrolled using your phone number instead, please notify us by e-mailing Cincinnati@victimsofcrime.org.** Please note that funds can only be deposited in a US Dollar account held with a bank or credit union located in the United States.

In the meantime, we ask that you do the following to help us distribute your payment quickly and successfully:

1. If you are not already enrolled in *Zelle*, it is strongly recommended that you do so prior to distribution, so that your payment can be processed more quickly.

2. You can enroll in *Zelle* by visiting [www.clearxchange.com/receive.](http://www.clearxchange.com/receive) Once there, select your bank and enroll with *Zelle*. You should enroll with the **same email address you are receiving this e-mail at**, in order to ensure you receive the distribution.

3. **If your bank is not listed,** select "My bank isn't listed" and continue your enrollment by providing the required information.

4. Whether you enroll early, enroll after distribution begins, *or* are already enrolled with *Zelle* through your bank, **please ensure that you are enrolled using the e-mail address you have received this approval e-mail at,** which is the e-mail address that the Cincinnati Strong Victims' Fund has on record, via your application. Again, if you are already enrolled but with your phone number, please notify cincinnati@victimsofcrime.org.

5. Please ensure that the target account to which you wish to receive the benefits has a **positive balance**.

Those that do not have a bank account or are depositing the funds to a UTMA account or trust may receive a check instead of the electronic transfer. Please reach out to cincinnati@victimsofcrime.org to set up this process.

You may use this gift in any way you see fit to assist in your recovery. Please consider working with a certified financial planner to help you make the most of your gift and protect yourself from fraud. Attached is information from the FINRA Foundation that may assist you in that regard.

On behalf of the Cincinnati Strong Victims' Fund Steering Committee and the National Compassion Fund, it has been an honor to serve the families and survivors of this tragedy, as well as the many corporations and individual donors who wished to give directly to show their support for those impacted by the September 6th attack. We know that this distribution can never make up for what you have gone through, but we hope that it can serve as acknowledgement of the love and support people feel for those impacted by September 6th attack and can assist you financially in your road to recovery.

Sincerely,

Kristen Wevers

Chair of the Cincinnati Strong Victims' Fund Steering Committee

Denial Template for Incomplete:

Dear First name Last name,

Thank you for your application to the Jacksonville Tribute Fund. Unfortunately, your application has been denied because you did not provide sufficient information and documentation to allow us to verify [……………………]. Despite our having reached out to you by email numerous times, we did not receive the necessary information by December 12th, the last date on which it could be provided. Without this, your application unfortunately could not be validated in accordance with our protocol.

As stewards of the donations made by donors from across the country, the Jacksonville Tribute Fund Committee was entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that 100% of the funds donated go to the families of the deceased and survivors of the attack at Chicago Pizza restaurant and game bar (26 August), as those donors intended. While we make great effort to resolve issues of missing or inaccurate documentation or other issues that bar an application from being verified, if any application ultimately does not meet these standards, we cannot approve it.

 We do want to acknowledge that for those who are denied, this denial does not mean we believe you are not a victim of this tragedy or were not impacted by it. We do strongly encourage you to apply to the Florida crime victim compensation program, which is separate from our fund and which reimburses for crime-related expenses, such as mental health treatment, lost wages, etc. As a longer-term provider they may be better able to assist you and your needs at this time. We sincerely hope that even if it is not through this fund, you are able to receive some financial or other assistance.

Sincerely,

Eric Smith

Chairman of the Board

Denial Template for Not Present:

Dear _____,

Thank you for your application to the Jacksonville Tribute Fund. Unfortunately, your application has been denied because your presence within the Chicago Pizza restaurant/game bar or the attached patio during the shooting could not be verified by our deadline of December 12th. Without this, your application unfortunately could not be validated in accordance with our protocol.

As stewards of the donations made by donors from across the country, the Jacksonville Tribute Fund Committee was entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that 100% of the funds donated go to the families of the deceased and survivors of the attack at the Chicago Pizza restaurant/game bar (26 August), as those donors intended. In order to maintain the integrity of the distribution process, we are required to ensure that each applicant can be verified as someone who was present in the restaurant or on the patio during the shooting. While we make great effort to resolve issues of presence validation or other issues that bar an application from being verified, if any application ultimately does not meet these standards, we cannot approve it.

We do want to acknowledge that for those who are denied, this denial does not mean we believe you are not a victim of this tragedy or were not impacted by it. We do strongly encourage you to apply to the Florida crime victim compensation program, which is separate from our fund and which reimburses for crime-related expenses, such as mental health treatment, lost wages, etc. As a longer-term provider they may be better able to assist you and your needs at this time. We sincerely hope that even if it is not through this fund, you are able to receive some financial or other assistance.

Sincerely,

Eric Smith

Chairman of the Board