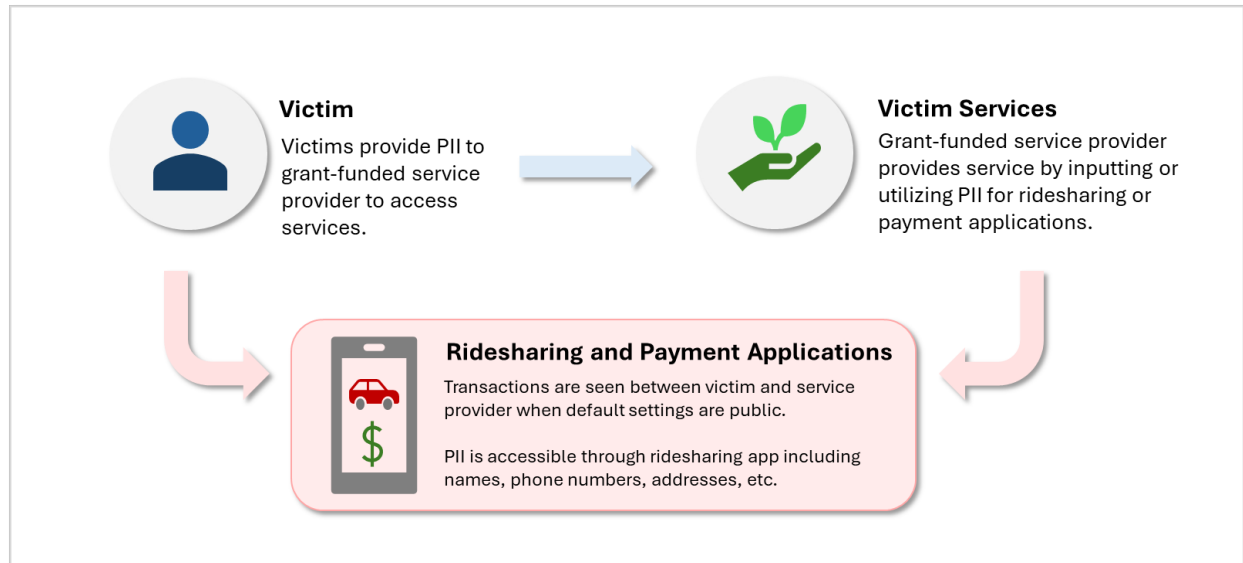


## Bulletin

### Ridesharing Information for Subrecipients of VOCA and VAWA Funding

Rideshare services can be integral to meeting transportation needs and a valuable resource for victims of crime to receive services. However, the use of rideshare services for victims of crime have raised concerns regarding the lack of user privacy and potential exploitation of data.



According to the [GSA Rules of Behavior for Handling Personally Identifiable Information \(PII\)](#), PII “refers to information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual’s identity, either alone or when combined with other personal or identifying information that is linked or linkable to a specific individual.” PII is also defined in the Violence Against Women Act ([34 U.S.C. 12291\(a\)\(25\)](#)) as “individually identifying information for or about an individual including information likely to disclose the location of a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, regardless of whether the information is encoded, encrypted, hashed, or otherwise protected, including--(A) a first and last name; (B) a home or other physical address; (C) contact information (including a postal, e-mail or Internet protocol address, or telephone or facsimile number); (D) a social security number, driver license number, passport number, or student identification number; and (E) any other information, including date of birth, racial or ethnic background, or religious affiliation, that would serve to identify any individual.”

While few State Administrative Agencies (SAAs) provide direct service to victims of crime, all partner with subrecipient agencies that provide varied victim services throughout their state, territory, or Tribe. Subrecipient agencies may offer access to rideshare services, so the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) and the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) encourage SAAs to raise awareness of this issue with their state partners.

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#### *I. Privacy and Confidentiality Requirements*

Numerous state and federal laws protect data privacy and the confidentiality of PII in professional relationships. The U.S. Congress has codified victim confidentiality in the Violence Against Women Act (34 U.S.C. 12291(b)(2)), the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (42 U.S.C. § 10401), and the Victims of Crime Act (34 U.S.C. § 10101 et seq.). These laws prohibit sharing PII about victims without informed, written, time-limited consent, and they prohibit disclosure of individual information without written consent. Additionally, some (but not all) OJP and OVW awards include measures to address victim confidentiality and privacy, such as requiring written policies to maintain confidentiality and guidance on reporting breaches. SAAs and subrecipients should review their award conditions to ensure compliance with confidentiality and privacy requirements.

#### *II. Raising Awareness*

OVC and OVW recognize the importance of raising awareness of safeguarding victim information when using rideshare services with all SAAs and the over 6,000 subrecipients they fund. We encourage SAAs to provide continued notice of these potential risks to their subrecipients through increased education and outreach. Below are some resources that may help in outreach.

[\*Using Uber: Safety & Privacy Considerations for Survivors\*](#), National Network To End Domestic Violence, Safety Net Project, March 2023.

[\*APPLE SAFETY CHECK TIPSHEET\*](#), National Domestic Violence Hotline, 2023.

[\*National Institutes of Health's National Library of Medicine, "Safeguarding patients from technology-facilitated abuse in clinical settings: A narrative review," PMCID 9931347, January 4, 2023.\*](#)

[\*Safety Net Project: Exploring Technology Safety in the Context of Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Assault, and Violence Against Women\*](#), National Network to End Domestic Violence, Safety Net Project, 2019.