

About the Office on Violence Against Women

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) was created to implement the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and subsequent legislation.

OVW provides financial and technical assistance to communities to help them create programs, policies, and practices to end sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. In 2002, OVW became a permanent part of the Department of Justice with a Director who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

A Coordinated Community Response

VAWA requires a coordinated community response to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. The law asks jurisdictions to bring together stakeholders from diverse backgrounds to share information and use their distinct roles to improve community responses to violence against women.

Community stakeholders include, but are not limited to: victim advocates, police officers, prosecutors, judges, probation and corrections officials, health care professionals, leaders within faith communities, and survivors.

VAWA takes a comprehensive approach to violence against women by combining tough new penalties to prosecute offenders while implementing programs to aid victims.

Grants Available

Currently, OVW administers several grant programs authorized by VAWA, including formula grants and discretionary grants. Since it was established in 1995, OVW has awarded over \$8 billion in grants and cooperative agreements and has launched a multifaceted approach to implementing VAWA. In addition to overseeing grant programs, OVW often undertakes a number of special initiatives in response to areas of special need. These special initiatives allow OVW to explore different innovations in the violence against women field and share promising practices that can be replicated nationwide.

What Is the Violence Against Women Act?

The Violence Against Women Act is a comprehensive legislative package designed to improve criminal justice responses to *sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking* and to increase the availability of services for victims and survivors.

VAWA was first passed by Congress in 1994, and was reauthorized in 2000, 2005, and 2013. Each reauthorization has made the law stronger and more inclusive.

VAWA 2013 reauthorized critical grant programs established by the original law, and creates innovative new programs. The reauthorization strengthens federal laws by closing a jurisdictional gap that left many Native women without adequate protections and by banning discrimination against domestic violence survivors in public housing. Additionally the law increases protections for immigrant women and ensures that LGBT Americans have equal access to the many services funded by VAWA.



Four Focus Areas

OVW's grant programs focus on ending sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. These crimes can happen to *anyone regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, or gender*. They affect people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels, and they occur regardless of whether the victim and perpetrator are currently or formerly married, living together, dating, friends, or strangers.

Domestic Violence is a pattern of abusive behavior in a relationship that is used by one partner to maintain power and control over another current or former intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behavior that intimidates, manipulates, humiliates, isolates, frightens, terrorizes, coerces, threatens, hurts, injures, or wounds someone.

Sexual Assault is any nonconsensual sex act or attempted sex act proscribed by federal, tribal, or state law, including when the victim lacks capacity to consent.

Stalking is a pattern of repeated and unwanted attention, harassment, contact, or any other course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear. Stalking is dangerous and can often cause severe and long-lasting emotional and psychological harm to victims. Stalking often escalates over time and can lead to domestic violence, sexual assault, and even homicide. Stalking can include frightening communications, direct or indirect threats, and harassing a victim through the internet.

Dating Violence is violence and abuse committed by a person to exert power and control over a current or former dating partner. Dating violence often involves a pattern of escalating violence and abuse over a period of time. Dating violence covers a variety of actions, and can include physical abuse, physiological and emotional abuse, and sexual abuse. It can also include "digital abuse", the use of technology, such as smartphones, the internet, or social media, to intimate, harass, threaten, or isolate a victim.

Resources

If you are victim or survivor of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking and need assistance, you can find local resources at www.justice.gov/ovw/local-resources. Or to speak with a trained advocate call:

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or 1-800-787-3224 (TTY)

National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-4673 (Calls are connected to a local rape crisis center)

National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline: 1-866-331-9474 or 1-866-331-8453 (TTY)

Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) Grants: Six Steps to a Strong Grant Application

Nineteen grant programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) help communities serve victims of domestic/dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and hold offenders accountable for their crimes.

Here are six strategies to help you prepare a competitive grant application.



Assemble a team.

Coordinated community response--meaning collaboration across justice system components, victim services providers, culturally specific organizations, and others--is the cornerstone of all VAWA grant programs. With or without grant funding, communities benefit when people work together.



Identify gaps.

What does your team need to better serve victims and hold offenders accountable? Training for police? Legal assistance for victims? Transitional housing? Explore <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/grant-programs> to determine which OVW grant program(s) fund what you need.



Prepare.

Review past years' solicitations to get a handle on the program's eligibility, scope, and requirements to apply. Read an OVW report to Congress to learn what grantees accomplish with their funds. Identify resources and strategies that can help your team better respond to domestic and sexual violence.



Make the case.

Use data and anecdotes to describe your community and the challenges it faces in combating domestic and sexual violence. Avoid jargon, write clearly, and use concrete examples. Speculate realistically about the potential impact of grant funding.



Follow instructions.

Be sure to follow **all** of the instructions in the solicitation. Contact OVW if anything is unclear. Failure to follow seemingly minor steps can result in an application being removed from consideration before it even goes to peer review.



Have a plan B.

Grant funding isn't guaranteed, and it doesn't last forever. How will your team work toward a safer a more just community if you don't receive a grant? And if you do obtain funding, what will your team do to sustain its efforts beyond the funding period?

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) administers 19 grant programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and subsequent legislation. These grant programs are designed to develop the nation's capacity to reduce domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking by strengthening services to victims and holding offenders accountable.

FORMULA GRANT PROGRAMS

OVW administers four formula grant programs and distributes funds according to the enacting legislation.

- STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program
- Sexual Assault Services Formula Grant Program
- State and Territorial Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Coalitions Program
- Grants to Tribal Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalitions Program

STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program, awarded to states and territories, enhances the capacity of local communities to develop and strengthen effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies to combat violent crimes against women and to develop and strengthen victim services in cases involving violent crimes against women. Each state and territory must allocate 25 percent for law enforcement, 25 percent for prosecutors, 30 percent for victim services (of which at least 10 percent must be distributed to culturally specific community-based organizations), 5 percent to state and local courts, and 15 percent for discretionary distribution.

Sexual Assault Services Formula Grant Program is the first federal funding stream solely dedicated to the provision of direct intervention and related assistance for victims of sexual assault. The SASP Formula Grant Program directs grant dollars to states and territories to assist them in supporting rape crisis centers and other nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations or tribal programs that provide services, direct intervention, and related assistance to victims of sexual assault and their families. Funds provided through SASP are designed to supplement other funding sources directed at addressing sexual assault on the state and territorial level.

State and Territorial Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Coalitions Program provides grants to each state domestic violence coalition (determined by the Department of Health and Human Services) and sexual assault coalition (determined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) for the purposes of coordinating victim services activities and collaborating and coordinating with federal, state, and local entities engaged in addressing violence against women. Statewide sexual assault coalitions provide direct support to member rape crisis centers through funding, training and technical assistance, public awareness activities, and public policy advocacy. Statewide domestic violence coalitions provide comparable support to member battered women's shelters and other domestic violence victim service providers.

Grants to Tribal Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalitions Program supports the development and operation of nonprofit, nongovernmental tribal domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions. Tribal coalitions provide education, support, and technical assistance to member Indian service providers and tribes to enhance their response to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Eligible applicants must meet the statutory definition of a "tribal coalition."

DISCRETIONARY GRANT PROGRAMS

OVW administers 15 discretionary grant programs and is responsible for creating program parameters, qualifications, eligibility, and deliverables in accordance with authorizing legislation.

Consolidated Grant Program to Address Children and Youth Experiencing Domestic and Sexual Assault and Engage Men and Boys as Allies creates a unique opportunity for communities to increase collaboration among non-profit victim service providers, violence prevention programs, and child and youth organizations serving victims ages 0-24. Additionally, it supports organizations and programs that promote boys' and men's role in combating violence against women and girls. Eligible applicants are nonprofit, nongovernmental entities, Indian tribes or tribal nonprofit organizations, and territorial, tribal or unit of local government entities.

Enhanced Training and Services to End Abuse in Later Life Program addresses elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, including domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, against victims who are 50 years of age or older through training and services. Eligible applicants include states and territories, Indian tribal governments and tribal organizations, units of local government, and nonprofit, nongovernmental victim services organizations with demonstrated experience in assisting elderly women or demonstrated experience in addressing sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

Grants to Enhance Culturally Specific Services for Victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program supports the development of innovative culturally specific strategies and projects to enhance access to services and resources for victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Eligible applicants are community-based programs whose primary purpose is providing culturally specific services.

Grants for Outreach and Services to Underserved Populations supports the development and implementation of strategies targeted at adult or youth victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking in underserved populations, and victim services to meet the needs of such populations. Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations that serve populations traditionally underserved due to geographic location, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, underserved racial and ethnic populations, and populations underserved because of special needs (such as language barriers, disabilities, alienage status, or age).

Grants to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking on Campus Program strengthens the response of institutions of higher education to the crimes of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking on campuses and enhances collaboration among campuses, local law enforcement, and victim advocacy organizations. Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education.

Grants to Support Families in the Justice System improves the response of all aspects of the civil and criminal justice system to families with a history of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, or in cases involving allegations of child sexual abuse. Eligible applicants are states, units of local government, courts, Indian tribal governments, nonprofit organizations, legal services providers, and victim services providers.

Grants to Tribal Governments to Exercise Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction assists Indian tribes in planning, implementing, and exercising “special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction” to hold accountable non-Indians who commit crimes of domestic violence or dating violence or violate certain protection orders in Indian country. Eligible applicants are Indian tribal governments that have jurisdiction over Indian country.

Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Grant Program (also known as the Arrest Program) encourages partnerships between state, local, and tribal governments, courts, victim service providers, coalitions, and rape crisis centers to ensure that sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking are treated as serious violations of criminal law. Eligible applicants are states and territories, units of local government, Indian tribal governments, state, local, tribal, and territorial courts, victim service providers, state and tribal coalitions, and government rape crisis centers.

Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program strengthens civil and criminal legal assistance programs for adult and youth victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking who are seeking relief in legal matters relating to or arising out of that abuse or violence. Eligible applicants include private nonprofit entities, territorial organizations, Indian tribal governments and tribal organizations, and publicly funded organizations not acting in a governmental capacity, such as law schools.

Rural Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence and Stalking Assistance Program enhances the safety of rural victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking, and supports projects uniquely designed to address and prevent these crimes in rural areas. Eligible applicants are states, territories, Indian tribes, local governments, and nonprofit entities, including tribal nonprofit organizations.

Sexual Assault Services Culturally Specific Program creates, maintains, and expands sustainable sexual assault services provided by organizations that are uniquely situated to respond to the needs of sexual assault victims from culturally specific populations. Eligible applicants are nonprofit organizations that focus primarily on culturally specific communities.

Training and Services to End Violence Against Women with Disabilities Grant Program establishes and strengthens multidisciplinary collaborative relationships and increases organizational capacity to provide accessible, safe, and effective services to individuals with disabilities and Deaf individuals who are victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Eligible applicants are states, units of local governments, Indian tribal governments or tribal organizations, victim services providers, and nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations serving individuals with disabilities.

Transitional Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program funds organizations to assist victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking who are in need of transitional housing, short-term housing assistance, and related supportive services. Eligible applicants are states, units of local government, Indian tribes, and other organizations with a documented history of effective work concerning sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

Tribal Governments Program enhances the ability of tribes to respond to violent crimes against Indian women, enhance victim safety, and develop education and prevention strategies. Eligible applicants are federally-recognized tribes or an organization that is acting as the authorized designee of a federally-recognized Indian tribe. Applications for the Tribal Governments Program are submitted through the DOJ Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation.

Tribal Sexual Assault Services Program enhances the ability of tribes to create, maintain, and expand sexual assault services in Indian tribal lands and Alaska Native villages. Eligible applicants are federally-recognized tribal governments, tribal organizations, and nonprofit tribal organizations.



Grant Program Points of Contact

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) administers a variety of grant programs authorized by the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and subsequent legislation. These grant programs are designed to develop the nation's capacity to reduce domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking by strengthening services to victims and holding offenders accountable. Listed below are each competitive grant opportunity and the email address and phone number to contact the program with questions or to request additional information.

- **Consolidated Grant Program to Address Children and Youth Experiencing Domestic and Sexual Assault and Engage Men and Boys as Allies**
Email/phone: OVW.ConsolYouth@usdoj.gov | 202-514-0390
- **Enhanced Training and Services to End Abuse in Later Life Program**
Email/phone: OVW.Elder@usdoj.gov | 202-616-6728
- **Grants to Enhance Culturally Specific Services for Victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program**
Email/phone: Paule.Tessier@usdoj.gov | 202-353-8408
- **Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Grant Program**
Email/phone: OVW.ICJR@usdoj.gov | 202-307-6026
- **Grants for Outreach and Services to Underserved Populations**
Email/phone: OVW.Underserved@usdoj.gov | 202-307-6026
- **Grants to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking on Campus Program**
Email/phone: OVW.Campus@usdoj.gov | 202-307-6026
- **Grants to Support Families in the Justice System**
Email/phone: OVW.JFF@usdoj.gov | 202-307-6026
- **Grants to Tribal Governments to Exercise Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction**
Email/phone: OVW.TribalAffairs@usdoj.gov | 202-307-6026
- **Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program**
Email/phone: OVW.LAV@usdoj.gov | 202-307-6026

- **Rural Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence and Stalking Assistance Program**
Email/phone: OVW.Rural@usdoj.gov | 202-305-1660
- **Sexual Assault Services Culturally Specific Program**
Email/phone: OVW.SASP.Cultural@usdoj.gov | 202-307-6026
- **Training and Services to End Violence Against Women with Disabilities Grant Program**
Email/phone: OVW.Disabilities@usdoj.gov | 202-307-6026
- **Transitional Housing Assistance Grants for Victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program**
Email/phone: OVW.TransitionalHousing@usdoj.gov | 202-307-6026
- **Tribal Governments Program**
Email/phone: OVW.TribalAffairs@usdoj.gov | 202-307-6026
- **Tribal Sexual Assault Services Program**
Email/phone: OVW.TribalAffairs@usdoj.gov | 202-307-6026
- **Technical Assistance Program**
Email/phone: OVW.TechAssistance@usdoj.gov | 202-307-6026