

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Act Program - VAWA Recovery Act Solicitation

The Criminal Justice Division (CJD) of the Governor's Office is soliciting applications for projects that reduce and prevent violence against women.

Purpose: The purpose of the VAWA Recovery Act Program is to assist in developing and strengthening effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies to combat violent crimes against women and to develop and strengthen victim services in such cases.

Available Funding: Federal funds are authorized under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5). Funds will be managed in accordance with the federal guidelines for the Violence Against Women Act of 2000 (VAWA 2000) and by the Violence Against Women Act of 2005 (VAWA 2005) as amended (U.S.C. §§3796gg- through 3796gg-5).

This solicitation is being issued in accordance with federal guidance issued as of the posting of the Request for Applications (RFA). Applicants are advised that additional federal guidance could become available and could affect information requested, timelines, reporting requirements, certifications, and other matters related to this RFA.

Funding Levels: Minimum grant award - \$5,000.

Required Match: None.

Standards: Grantees must comply with the accountability and transparency requirements of the Recovery Act and all statutes, requirements, and guidelines cited in the *Texas Administrative Code* (1 TAC Chapter 3) applicable to this funding.

Prohibitions: Grantees may not use grant funds or program income to support the following services, activities, and costs:

- (1) proselytizing or sectarian worship;
- (2) lobbying;
- (3) any portion of the salary of, or any other compensation for, an elected or appointed government official;
- (4) vehicles or equipment for governmental agencies that are for general agency use;
- (5) weapons, ammunition, explosives, or military vehicles;
- (6) admission fees or tickets to any amusement park, recreational activity, or sporting event;
- (7) promotional gifts;
- (8) food, meals, beverages, or other refreshments unless the expense is for a working event where full participation by participants mandates the provision of food and beverages and that event is not related to amusement and/or social activities in any way;
- (9) membership dues for individuals;
- (10) any expense or service that is readily available at no cost to the grant project or that is provided by other federal, state, or local funds (e.g., supplanting), including the Texas Crime Victims Compensation Fund;
- (11) fundraising;
- (12) cash payments to victims;
- (13) employment agency fees;
- (14) legal assistance and representation in civil matters other than protective orders;
- (15) legal defense services for perpetrators of violence against women;
- (16) liability insurance on buildings;

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- (17) major maintenance on buildings;
- (18) property loss. Grant funds may not be used to reimburse victims for expenses incurred as a result of a crime, such as insurance deductibles, replacement of stolen property, funeral expenses, lost wages, and medical bills;
- (19) services for programs that focus on children or men;
- (20) activities exclusively related to violence prevention, such as media campaigns to educate the general public about violence against women;
- (21) services to any person incarcerated for committing a crime of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking;
- (22) relocation expenses. Grant funds may not support expenses for victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking such as moving household goods to a new location in another state or acquiring furniture or housing in a new location;
- (23) creation of a voucher program. Grant funds may not support the creation of a voucher program where victims are directly given vouchers for such services as housing or counseling; and
- (24) prosecution of child abuse. Grant funds may not be used to pay for the prosecution of child sexual abuse when the victim is now an adult.

Eligible Applicants:

- (1) State agencies;
- (2) Units of local government;
- (3) Nonprofit corporations;
- (4) Indian tribal governments;
- (5) Crime control and prevention districts;
- (6) Universities;
- (7) Colleges;
- (8) Community supervision and corrections departments;
- (9) Councils of governments (COGs); and
- (10) Faith-based organizations. Faith-based organizations must be tax-exempt nonprofit entities as certified by the Internal Revenue Service.

Program Eligibility:

- (1) Applicants must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number assigned to its agency at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do>;
- (2) Applicants must be registered in the federal Central Contractor Registry (CCR) database at <http://www.ccr.gov>; and
- (3) Programs funded with VAWA Recovery Act funds must meet one of the following goals as identified in the Recovery Act S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Implementation Plan:
 - (a) Promote training to criminal justice and victim service professionals that improve those systems' response to victims of violence against women.
 - (i) Train law enforcement, first responder dispatch operators, and court personnel on the dynamics of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, and acquaintance/dating violence, especially in rural areas.
 - (ii) Encourage and train on-site victim advocates within law enforcement and prosecution agencies.
 - (iii) Train service providers and first responders on how to build their capacity to assure they are adequately prepared to provide quality services to victims.
 - (iv) Develop stronger training programs and materials for courts, prosecutors, law enforcement, and victim service providers to strengthen community response and collaboration.
 - (v) Provide training to Apartment Associations and others on Texas' new Lease Termination statute, Senate Bill 83, for victims of sexual assault. Senate Bill 83

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effective January 1, 2010, amends Property Code §92.016 and provides victims the ability to terminate a lease agreement before the end date without penalties and fees if certain documentation is met.

(vi) Promote training for law enforcement, selected medical personnel, and rape crisis advocates on non-reporting forensic exams.

(b) Improve the criminal justice system's response to adult female victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking and acquaintance/dating violence.

(i) Support innovative programs such as the rollout of a new court bench book, development of prosecutor training guides, as well as specialized courts, prosecution units, and law enforcement units.

(ii) Accommodate victims who have limited English proficiency through contracts for services and by supporting training and certification expenses for translators.

(iii) Provide for technology and equipment upgrades.

(c) Strengthen victim restoration services and processes.

(i) Provide core services to victims giving priority to those that focus on reducing the economic burden of victims. Examples include connecting victims with local food banks, arranging for long-term housing and transportation services, improving the job prospects for victims by arranging for skills building training, and providing child care services while victims participate in the criminal justice process or receive assistance.

(ii) Review current standards and prepare recommendations for best practices.

(iii) Accommodate victims who have limited English proficiency (LEP) and promote model pathways to safety and victim restoration for victims with LEP through contracts for services and by supporting training and certification expenses for translators/interpreters.

(iv) Strengthen victim services data collection systems including upgrades.

(d) Increase collaboration and communication across all levels of government and among all victim service systems.

(i) Retain and further develop skills of existing crime victim coordinators, liaisons, and direct victim services staff to continue strong victim service programs across communities.

(ii) Support initiatives to increase long-term communication between law enforcement and survivors.

(iii) Support family violence and sexual assault research projects that focus not only on gaps in existing victim service systems or identifying unreported victims, but that also provide an evaluation of the state's system of addressing domestic violence and sexual assault in Texas.

(iv) Promote local level multi-disciplinary teams to coordinate services within communities and to perform community assessments that evaluate how well communities are working together toward victim restoration.

Project Period: Grant-funded projects must begin on or after April 1, 2010, and will expire on or before March 31, 2011.

Application Process: Applicants can access CJD's eGrants website at <https://cjdonline.governor.state.tx.us> to register and apply for funding.

Preferences: Preference will be given to applicants that promote comprehensive victim restoration while incorporating an emphasis on cultural competency in underserved populations. Applicants are also encouraged to streamline administrative and reporting processes by consolidating grant requests whenever possible in lieu of submitting multiple applications.

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Closing Date for Receipt of Applications: All applications must be certified via CJD's eGrants website on or before December 21, 2009.

Selection Process:

- (1) For eligible local and regional projects:
 - (a) Applications will be forwarded by CJD to the appropriate regional council of governments (COG).
 - (b) The COG's criminal justice advisory committee will prioritize all eligible applications based on identified community and/or comprehensive planning, cost and program effectiveness.
 - (c) CJD will accept priority listings that are approved by the COG's executive committee.
 - (d) CJD will make all final funding decisions based on approved COG priorities, reasonableness of the project, availability of funding, and cost-effectiveness.
- (2) For state discretionary projects, applications will be reviewed by CJD staff members or a group selected by the executive director of CJD. CJD will make all final funding decisions based on eligibility, reasonableness of the project, availability of funding, and cost-effectiveness.

Contact Person: If additional information is needed, contact Angie Martin at amartin@governor.state.tx.us or (512) 463-1919.