



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

OHIO IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

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OHIO VAWA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2010
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INTRODUCTION

Formerly an independent cabinet-level agency, the Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) became a part of the Ohio Department of Public Safety in 2005. By statute, OCJS is the lead criminal justice planning and assistance office for the state and is commissioned with administering over \$20 million in state and federal criminal justice funding annually.¹ OCJS also evaluates programs and develops technology, training materials, and products for criminal justice professionals and communities statewide. OCJS has been designated by the Governor of Ohio to administer Ohio's federal STOP Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) funding.

The Ohio VAWA Implementation Plan was developed as a collaborative effort of OCJS and the STOP Committee. The STOP Committee, a multidisciplinary group of stakeholders, helps guide strategic decision-making on VAWA criminal justice projects, policies, and practices throughout the state.

VAWA funding is also provided to three of Ohio's major metropolitan counties; Cuyahoga (Cleveland), Franklin (Columbus), and Lucas (Toledo), through their respective Regional Planning Units (RPU). RPUs promote and foster cooperation and coordination amongst governmental units and agencies, and improve the justice system through planning, analysis, technical assistance, and information management. RPUs conduct their own criminal justice assessments, including violence against women and family violence issues in order to determine the best use of justice funds at the local level. Information gleaned from these assessments is used to project spending trends for current and future grant cycles.

The goal of this Implementation Plan is to identify and fund programs that increase the awareness of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence, and to facilitate and enhance collaborative efforts amongst courts, law enforcement, prosecution, and victim service agencies to foster a stronger coordinated response toward the elimination of violence against women.

The Ohio FY10 VAWA Implementation Plan is organized into three sections:

- Section I:** Describes the planning process used to develop the Implementation Plan
- Section II:** Summarizes the needs of victims and VAWA subgrantees as identified through three structured collaborative processes: Focus Groups, Conference Calls, and a Needs Assessment
- Section III:** Outlines Ohio's VAWA program priorities and describes how the state will address them

Overview of Ohio's VAWA Implementation Plan

Created as a partnership initiative, the Ohio VAWA Implementation Plan is based upon the belief that in order to meet the needs of its victims and communities it is vital that Ohio continue to support all applicable VAWA Program Areas.

VAWA priorities were determined through a three-pronged approach. OCJS sought input from its' constituents through a Family Violence Needs Assessment; Focus Groups; and Conference Calls.

¹ ORC 5502.62

I. PLANNING PROCESS

As the state agency appointed by the Governor of Ohio to administer Ohio's VAWA funding, OCJS assumed the lead role in the creation of the FY 2010 Implementation Plan for Ohio.

The STOP Committee provided assistance in the identification of target project planning areas and funding priorities. It also reviewed the Plan's ongoing development and approved it upon completion. The STOP Committee is comprised of representatives from law enforcement, the courts, related state agencies, victim service providers, and various other key stakeholders, each of which shares the commitment to stop the cycle of domestic violence. It also consists of representation from the Ohio Domestic Violence Network (ODVN), the leader in the provision of training and technical assistance for intimate partner and family violence, and the Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence (OAESV), a coalition of sexual assault organizations throughout Ohio, whose mission is to work towards the elimination of all forms of sexual violence and to advocate for the needs of survivors and co-survivors of sexual violence. The STOP Committee was charged with the responsibility of collecting information regarding local and statewide needs. These identified needs were used to guide the Plan's priorities.

The committee reviewed a series of needs assessments and surveys to inform the implementation planning process. The following assessments were conducted through OCJS and include: the 2008 Ohio Family Violence Needs Assessment: Survey of Direct Service Providers; the 2008 Ohio Family Violence Needs Assessment: Focus Group Project; and the 2009 Ohio Peace Officer Task Analysis (OPOTA). Additionally, the committee reviewed a 2009 Economic Impact Survey conducted through ODVN; and the Family Violence in Ohio Statewide Assessment Report conducted by the Health Policy Institute of Ohio (HPIO) and the Ohio State University College of Public Health. STOP Committee members participated in conference calls with the purpose of discussing strategies for the development of the new three year plan that outlines specific priorities and goals. The findings of these assessments are discussed in detail in Section II of the Implementation Plan.

II. NEEDS AND CONTEXT

Ohio's Geographic Characteristics

Ohio is a diverse state, consisting of large metropolitan areas, rural regions and Appalachian communities. In 2009, the population of Ohio was estimated to be 11,542,645. Ohio's ten largest counties account for nearly 53% of the state's total population; and four out of five Ohioans live in metropolitan areas.² Just under half of the population lives in the three largest metropolitan areas of Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Columbus; and in addition to these urban areas³, there are 32 of Ohio's 88 counties designated as Appalachian. This accounts for over one-third of all Ohio counties. Nearly 13% of Ohio's residents live in the Appalachian regions which are located in the eastern and southern part of the state. The designation of "Appalachian" was made in 1965 by the Appalachian Regional Commission to enhance economic development through federal legislative initiatives in response to the area's persistent poverty and economic despair.⁴

Ohio's Residents

According to the American Community Survey 2006 estimates, 51% of Ohio's population is female³. Additionally, 2009 Ohio County Profiles indicate that more than 13% of the population is over the age of 65-years.² Additionally, based on U.S. Census projections, from 2000-2030 the percentage of Ohioans aged 65 and over will increase from 13% to 20% of the total Ohio population. Nearly 85% of the population is White; 11% of the population is Black or African American; and nearly 2% is Hispanic or Latino. In all, the total minority population for Ohio is estimated at 16%.³

Approximately 87% of Ohioans aged 25 and older have at least a high school degree or higher; and of that approximately 31% have obtained an Associate's degree or higher.² 21% of residents living within the three largest urban areas of Ohio (Cuyahoga, Franklin, and Hamilton) hold an Associate's degree or higher; and 18% of residents living in Appalachian Ohio, hold an Associate's degree or higher.³

The per capita personal income for Ohioans was estimated at \$35,889 in 2008. However, in contrast, the per capita personal income for Appalachian Ohioans was estimated at \$29,630. The median poverty rate for counties was estimated at 9.55 percent, with 44 of Ohio's counties above and 44 below the median. 29 of Ohio's 32 Appalachian counties were above the median poverty rate; and overall the 14 counties with the highest poverty rates were all Appalachian.⁵

² Ohio Department of Development, *Ohio County Profiles*. September 2009

³ United State Census Bureau, *American Community Survey 2006-2008 3-Year Estimates*

⁴ Appalachian Regional Commission

⁵ Ohio Department of Development. *The Ohio Poverty Report*. June 2009

Ohio's Crime

Crime statistics indicate that sexual assault and domestic violence are serious problems in Ohio. Overall, the rates of reported rape have decreased 11% (per 100,000 population) in Ohio from 2008 to 2009. In 2009, there were 4,022 reported rapes in Ohio a rate of 34.8 per 100,000. This rate is still higher than the U.S. rate of 28.7 and the Midwest rate of 24.7 per 100,000.⁶

The Ohio Attorney General reported that for 2009, law enforcement received 69,470 calls concerning domestic incidents. Of these, 49% resulted in arrests. Approximately 8% resulted in an arrest other than domestic violence. There were 56,302 reported victims, of which 45% were victims of spousal or live-in-partner abuse. Of the incidents of spousal abuse, 78% involved wives being victimized by their husbands.⁷

Characteristics of Victims of Domestic Violence

Reported Victims	
Relationship	
Wife	19%
Husband	6%
Parent	13%
Non Spousal with Child	15%
Child/Children	8%
Other Family Member	12%
Former Spouse	2%
Live-In Partner	20%
Other	5%
Race/Ethnicity	
Asian	>1%
African American	19%
Caucasian	77%
Native American	>1%
Hispanic	2%
Other	1%
Age	
0-17	8%
18-40	66%
41-59	23%
60-84	3%
85 and Older	>1%
Gender	
Male	26%
Female	74%

⁶ Office of Criminal Justice Services, *Crime in the U.S.* 2009

⁷ Ohio Attorney General Domestic Violence Report 2009

Source: *Ohio Attorney General 2009 Domestic Violence Reports*

Assessment of Ohio's Needs

2008 Ohio Family Violence Needs Assessment

In 2008, OCJS conducted a two-part effort to determine what services and resources are lacking in Ohio related to domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. The first assessment was a survey directed at service providers and other relevant professionals. The second assessment was developed through focus groups with victims.

Survey of Direct Service Providers: Two goals were established for the survey: (1) identify gaps in services and (2) to identify and obtain a better understanding of the populations that service providers and agencies experience difficulty in serving. The survey was sent electronically to a variety of individuals; and a total of 174 surveys were completed. Staff from OCJS collaborated with members from the Family Violence Prevention Center Advisory Council to collect potential survey participants. 87 out of 88 Ohio counties are represented in the survey. Some survey respondents provided services for multiple counties, while others acknowledged they offered statewide services. Counties represented by the respondents were grouped by county type for two purposes: (1) to see how well the sample represents the state and (2) to use an analytical tool in assessing survey responses. A category was created to group respondents who stated their agency served more than one county in Ohio. Counties were classified as follows: Rural/Non-Appalachian-33 counties with populations under 100,000 without the designation of "Appalachian"; Rural/Appalachian- 27 counties with populations under 100,000 designated as "Appalachian"; Medium-23 counties with populations above 100,000 but less than 500,000; Large-5 counties with populations above 500,000; Multiple Counties-Agencies that serve multiple counties; and Ohio-Agencies that serve all Ohio counties.

Findings from the survey indicated that regardless of agency type or county size, services such as financial assistance to victims, housing, public transportation, child care, job training, and job placement are all lacking in some communities. Housing, especially shelters, is more likely to be sufficient at the initial stage to meet the immediate needs of victims. However, as victims move through the process, meeting housing needs becomes more challenging; and housing is deficient at the intermediate and long-term stages for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

Focus Group Project: Focus groups were held with different groups of victims across the state of Ohio, beginning in June 2008 and ending in September 2008. Participants represented the following groups: Immigrant/Refugee victims; victims from a rural county; victims from a medium sized county; victims from a large county; Deaf victims; and victims from the Gay and Lesbian population.

A common theme emerged from each group despite the diverse representation. Specifically, victims lack information about the availability of services. Victims repeatedly stated they were not sure where to seek assistance except for calling the police. If they chose not to call the police, they turned to family and friends; and if they did not have that support, they remained in the abusive relationship. Housing, counseling, job placement, legal/court advocacy, and access to interpreters were mentioned time after time by victims as services and resources lacking in their communities. In addition, participants expressed a need for extended length of shelter stays, and improved responses from law enforcement.

2010 STOP Committee Conference Call

In 2010, the STOP Committee convened via conference calls to examine both the 2007 3-year Implementation Plan, and findings of the needs assessments developed by OCJS and other relevant sources. The committee members noted that findings from the needs assessments were still in alignment with the previous 2007 plan. Core services from the victims perspective is of significance; and grant funding should continue to be linked to programming costs with the majority of dollars being dedicated to core services (outreach to special populations, staffing, advocacy, crisis counseling, and 24-hotline personnel). Additionally, training across disciplines was identified as an area that needs to be implemented on a continued basis. This was an emphasis within earlier plans; however the committee discussed the importance of emphasizing a training focus on law enforcement officers. Specifically the discussion focused on officers that abuse and the response to those incidents. The committee recommended expanding training emphasis to support the development and implementation of policies that focus on officer involved domestic violence. Finally, the committee recommended expanding on previous efforts to support systems collaboration. It was discussed that building collaborations begins with coalition building, and there is a need to provide capacity building and technical assistance to develop active, effective and sustainable coalitions.

The following additional sources were reviewed by the STOP Committee to assist informing the implementation planning process:

Family Violence in Ohio Statewide Assessment Report

This report was developed through the Family Violence Prevention project, a collaborative project through the Health Policy Institute of Ohio (HPIO) and The Ohio State University College of Public Health. The report describes the scope of family violence down to the county level. STOP Committee members referred to findings within this report to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the prevalence of family violence within the state and differences across the counties.

Economic Impact Survey-Ohio Domestic Violence Network

In 2009, the Ohio Domestic Violence Network distributed a survey to their constituents to gain a better understanding of how the economic downturn impacted Ohio domestic violence survivors and service providers. Findings from the survey showed that shelters were receiving more calls which indicated an increased need for domestic violence services. The increased needs were also in some cases resulting in the development of shelter waiting lists. Additionally, respondents were reporting longer shelter stays. 53% of the respondents indicated that there had been an increase in the number of battered women who returned to abusive partners due to economic barriers; and 50% of respondents are reporting more severe violence.

2009 Ohio Peace Officer Task Analysis (OPOTA)

This research project was implemented through OCJS with the purpose of developing appropriate data that can be utilized by the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission (OPOTC) to assess the current Basic Training curriculum and improve how law enforcement officers are trained in Ohio.

III. PRIORITIES AND APPROACHES

Ohio's VAWA grant program plan is a collaborative effort of OCJS, the STOP Committee, the FVPC Advisory Council and current and former VAWA recipients, which includes victim service agencies, victim advocates, shelters, human service agencies, social service providers, medical providers, other ancillary services, and legal services which includes the courts, prosecutors, and law enforcement agencies. Finally and most importantly, the needs of the victims and survivors of domestic violence, stalking and sexual assault are expressed in our program plan. The Ohio VAWA Implementation Plan's priorities are based on programmatic experience from past funding cycles, analysis of data from the assessments conducted since the 2007 Implementation Plan, and constituent input. The current plan serves to direct state priorities for the next three years.

A. Relation to Prior Implementation Plans

The Focus Groups, Conference Calls, and Needs Assessment all served to validate the benefits of continuing to distribute funds based on needs identified by the field. OCJS will continue to fund statewide and local programs that increase the awareness of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking issues, promote effective and appropriate collaborative efforts amongst key stakeholders, and strive to reduce and/or eliminate violence against women. OCJS will continue to support all of its current VAWA Program Areas, addressing seven of the eleven identified Program Areas in its VAWA Request for Proposals:

- VA1 Training.** Supports training for law enforcement officers, judges, prosecutors, and court personnel.
- VA2 Enhancement Efforts.** Supports the development, training, and expansion of units of law enforcement officers, judges, prosecutors, and court personnel.
- VA3 Policy & Protocol Development.** Supports the implementation of more effective law enforcement, court, prosecution policies, protocols, orders, and services.
- VA4 Data Collection & Communication Systems.** Supports the installation of computerized systems to identify and track protection orders.
- VA5 Victim Service Programs and Visitation Centers** Supports the development and strengthening of victim service programs and visitation centers.
- VA6 Stalking Programs.** Supports the development and strengthening of programs to address stalking.
- VA7 Sexual Assault Programs.** Supports training for sexual assault programs and forensic medical examiners.

As Ohio does not have any federally recognized Indian tribes, the only area not supported is that of "developing, enlarging, or strengthening programs addressing needs and circumstances of Indian tribes in dealing with violent crimes against women." Remaining Program Areas, including disabled victims and immigration issues, are addressed in the Underserved Victims section of this Plan.

In 2011, OCJS does not foresee significant changes to the types of projects that are funded within the aforementioned program areas with the following exception. Applicants requesting funding in support of visitation centers must clearly demonstrate the following eligibility criteria in order to be considered for funding:

- Ensure a secured and adequate space for the location; and hours of operation;
- Type of supervision;
- Describe how often and what type of domestic violence training project staff receive;
- Demonstration of need/uniqueness of the service area;
- Description of procedures to address liability issues;
- Letters of participation from Court and Jobs and Family Services;
- Means of referrals;
- Target population

B. Priority Areas

Types of Programs

OCJS received input from victim service providers, law enforcement, court personnel, and prosecution regarding key VAWA issues or concerns in the state:

Provide Training for All Disciplines

In 1994, Ohio enacted House Bill 335, comprehensive legislation to reduce and prevent domestic violence in the state. House Bill 335 required all ADAMH/ADAS and Mental Health Boards, human service agencies, law enforcement agencies, and other social service agencies to provide relevant training on the dynamics of domestic violence to their constituents.

While constituents' input and the Needs Assessment results highlighted the necessity for training for all disciplines, multiple references were made to specialized training surrounding specialized domestic violence related issues for law enforcement. Victims suggested sensitivity trainings as well as training in protection order enforcement. In response, OCJS will prioritize and fund educational programming around these areas. This is in keeping with Ohio's past focus.

Additionally, the 2010 Implementation Plan recognizes the need to expand training; and to encourage the development of model policies and training protocols that focus on officer involved domestic violence. In 2008, an executive order was signed by the Governor that created both policy and training centered around workplace domestic violence for Ohio's state employee's. It is respectfully named the Barbara Warner Workplace Domestic Violence Policy. The purpose of the policy is to address and reduce the impact of domestic violence in the workplace at the state-level; however, the desired outcome is that these trainings will eventually filter down and serve as a model for county and local level entities. Additionally, in 2003, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) drafted a model policy with the purpose of providing guidance for law enforcement officials to establish policies focused on officer involved domestic violence. It should be noted that both of these policies offer law enforcement agencies tools in which to address domestic violence incidents that are perpetrated by law enforcement employees, however as noted within the IACP model policy, each department is unique and must evaluate and develop policies specific to the each individual department with respect to laws and regulations.

Improve Access to Services for Underserved Populations

The 2008 Needs Assessment continues to reaffirm earlier findings that victims with mental illness, substance abuse, criminal backgrounds or no work history are especially difficult to serve in terms of housing and employment. Specifically, it is difficult to place and keep victims from these populations in shelters, transitional, and more permanent housing. As noted within the previous plan, more resources are needed to address the problems and issues inherent within individuals presenting with these histories and/or disorders.

The non-English speaking and ethnic/cultural minorities' victim client base continues to grow. Participants in the Focus Groups supported this conclusion by expressing concerns regarding the inadequacy of existing services for the underserved populations, which includes the elderly, the Appalachian, lesbians/gays/bi-sexuals/transgendered, and/or immigrant populations. With Ohio's population continuing to diversify, projects must prepare themselves to serve the changing face of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking victims. Ohio's 2010 Implementation Plan calls for continued Victims Services funding to be dedicated to outreach efforts for special populations in an effort to bridge the widening gap.

It is important to note that Ohio's VAWA Implementation Plan requires all projects to identify an underserved population for services. Projects are also encouraged to apply and use funding to print materials in multiple languages to best serve diverse populations in the community, as well as to use funds to provide cultural sensitivity training and to hire culturally diverse staff.

Facilitate Systems Collaboration

A recognized strength of the VAWA grant program is the requirement that courts, prosecution, law enforcement, and victim service providers collaborate in the implementation of projects. These collaborations have not only proven essential to the success of a specific project, but also build communication bridges between systems. However, it is recognized that the process of building collaborations is difficult and often a burdensome process; despite the purpose of the intended outcome. As a result, the committee discussed the need for strategies that would allow for longer term technical assistance and training towards collaboration. The OCJS application process requires that applicants identify the collaboration board members and the board's purpose. As part of the 3-year plan, the committee has also identified the need for applicants to identify objectives and outcome measures for the stated over-all purpose of the collaboration boards. In following years, the applicants will be asked to provide a brief summary of the boards' activities and effectiveness in meeting the stated objectives. Additionally, the committee recommended emphasizing utilizing coalition building language rather than collaboration building; in that coalitions emphasize networking and the sharing of resources, and collaborations are a component of that process. It is with this goal in mind that the 2010 Ohio VAWA Implementation Plan will continue attempts to transform cultures through the development of a coordinated community response to domestic violence.

In 2010, Ohio enacted two separate components of Family Violence legislation that have impacted the distribution and implementation of VAWA funding decisions in Ohio; House Bill 10, and House Bill 19. The purpose of House Bill 10 is to allow a court to issue a civil protection order to a child who has had or has a dating relationship with the minor respondent if certain offenses are alleged; including but not limited to assaulting or stalking another youth with whom the minor respondent had a dating relationship; and to include foster parents under the scope of the domestic violence laws. While the original intent of HB

10 was to create a mechanism to offer protection to victims of teen dating violence, the law, as enacted, went beyond simply addressing teen dating violence cases to include youth violence broadly speaking. The purpose of House Bill 19 is to require school districts to adopt a dating violence policy and to include dating violence education within the health education curriculum. It is important to note that although House Bill 19's area of focus is not eligible for funding under the VAWA statutes; it is considered an important and relevant component of the collaborative process to affect a coordinated community response.

The 2010 Implementation Plan will continue to encourage projects to develop their information technology systems (both hardware and software) to increase communication and information sharing. The previous plan identified communication as lacking due to incompatible computer systems. OCJS recognizes the need to continue support for projects that develop compatible information technology systems to increase victim safety.

In December 2010, staff representing OCJS and the Ohio Supreme Court attended the National Leadership Summit on State Court Responses to Domestic Violence hosted by the National Center for State Courts and the Office of Violence Against Women. The purpose of the conference was to bring states together to discuss and begin developing state action plans related to improving the utilization of the 5% set-aside designated in support of court projects. While a preliminary action plan was drafted at the conference, ongoing discussions are planned and these will determine how funding directed in support of court-based projects is impacted.

Improve Access to Long-Term Services

The Needs Assessment also revealed that while most counties have services in place to meet the immediate needs of victims of domestic violence, supportive services such as employment assistance, transportation, childcare, and transitional housing, that make it possible for survivors to obtain employment and long-term housing are not always available. Since a primary focus of VAWA funding is on immediate responses to victims in need, OCJS will provide funding assistance to projects that help women move beyond abusive relationships and also assist them in securing long-term stability via housing and gainful employment.

OCJS' constituents discussed the need to continue linking victim services funding directly to programming that will fund core services. Twenty-four hour personnel to staff shelters with crisis counseling and the initiation of 24-hour emergency hotlines are priorities. Victim advocates will also be priorities of this plan.

Support Sexual Assault Programs

The need for sexual assault programs is a recurring theme in Ohio, as is the need for specialized health professionals and sexual assault nurse examiners. Through the VAWA solicitation and review process, OCJS will communicate this critical priority in an effort to increase both the number and quality of short-term as well as longer-term counseling options available for sexual assault survivors in the state.

Distribution of Funds for Core Categories

Allocation of VAWA funds in Ohio is defined by federal allocation methods: at least 25% to law enforcement; at least 25% to prosecution; at least 30% to victim services, of which 10% must be directed to culturally specific community-based organizations, and at least 5% to courts.

Adhering to this federal guideline has achieved success in reaching the range of disciplines and collaborations necessary to serve Ohio's VAWA needs.

Distribution of Funds Based on Population and Geographic Areas

OCJS is committed to the equitable distribution of funding throughout the state. For grant administration purposes, all of Ohio's counties are served directly by OCJS, with the exception of three large metropolitan counties served by Regional Planning Units (RPU): Cuyahoga, Franklin, and Lucas. A formula, consisting of 1-part crime to 1-part population, is used to determine the amount of funds the RPUs receive each year. The RPUs, responsible for planning and distribution of funds to their communities based on local needs and conditions, administer and evaluate VAWA-funded initiatives consistent with this Implementation Plan.

OCJS' VAWA proposals are reviewed and scored by a team of OCJS grant coordinators and external practitioners. While projects are not given preference based on their geographical area, final funding decisions are reviewed to provide an overall even distribution of funds throughout Ohio. To assist in the equitable distribution of these funds to reduce and prevent violence against women, OCJS, in partnership with other state agencies and the statewide coalitions, participates on an Interagency Victim Assistance Coordinating Council (IVACC). IVACC has established a four-pronged strategy for serving victim needs in Ohio:

- 1. Identify all Ohio projects receiving victim service funding from OCJS, the Ohio Department of Health, and the Ohio Attorney General's Office.** Purpose: To determine counties not receiving funding for future outreach efforts.
- 2. Develop technology to improve coordination.** Purpose: To enable IVACC members to share information electronically regarding state-funded victim programs for faster, streamlined tracking.
- 3. Create specific codes for different types of victim services available from different disciplines and agencies.** Purpose: To identify types of programs available in Ohio's 88 counties.
- 4. Increase coordination among agencies funding victim programs.** Purpose: To promote meaningful services with limited resources while avoiding duplicative services.

To maximize the number of projects that may be funded, OCJS caps all VAWA proposals at \$60,000.

C. Grant Administration Strategy

Methods Used to Release the Solicitation

OCJS provides subgrantees and other interested constituents information about the availability of grant funds in several different manners. Information about all our funding streams, including a grants calendar and the actual solicitation, are available online from its website, www.ocjs.ohio.gov. Additionally, notice of funding availability is also provided within

the OCJS' *Criminal Justice Weekly*, a regular electronic newsletter to a broad range of constituents that include criminal justice organizations and service providers.

Timeline

Earlier this year, OCJS released a Grants Calendar that provided customers with Request for Proposal release dates; due dates; notification dates, and project start dates for *all* OCJS federal grants. The Ohio VAWA solicitation was released on April 30, 2010. Applications were due on June 1, 2010. Award notifications were just recently made in November 2010, with a project period running from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011. OCJS is currently in the process of determining the timeline for the 2011 grant cycle.

Technical Assistance

OCJS provides technical assistance sessions that includes grant writing seminars designed to improve prospective subgrantees confidence in writing the grant application. Applicants are encouraged to contact OCJS staff for assistance with any part of the proposals and solicitation process.

Review of Proposals

The initial OCJS grant review is an internal review conducted by the OCJS grants coordinators and the VAWA program specialist for fiscal and program compliance with state and federal guidelines. The next phase includes a peer review team of state and local professionals, including law enforcement, prosecution, victim services, and court personnel who will participate in a review of the applications using a grant review matrix. Next, OCJS will facilitate a grant review with the outside professionals to discuss each proposal. This phase of the process includes the peer review team making a recommendation to approve or deny funding in support of the project. The final phase of the review is conducted with the VAWA program specialist, management staff, and the OCJS Director to review the team's recommendations. This phase of the process is intended to ensure that distribution of VAWA funds will address priority areas and reflect the agency's commitment to fund projects in highly populated areas, historically depressed regions, and within Ohio's 32 Appalachian counties.

It is important to note that each phase of the review process is assigned a score based on an internal matrix. The grant coordinator's score accounts for 10%, the peer review team's score accounts for 60%, and the Director's review accounts for 30% of the entire score. Ultimately, these scores are entered into the agency's Grants Management Information System and are used to factor into overall award decisions.

Organized by discipline, all recommendations and scores are included in the funding plan for the OCJS Director's review. Once the review is completed, the funding plan and the Director's recommendations are forwarded to the Director of the Ohio Department of Public Safety for final recommendations and approval.

D. Addressing the Needs of Underserved Victims

Federal guidelines identify VAWA underserved populations to include geographic location (rural isolation), underserved racial and ethnic populations, special needs populations (language barriers, disabilities, alienage or age) or any other population identified in consultation with the U.S. Attorney General. All VAWA projects must identify at least one underserved population.

Previous data gathered through the 2004 Assessment of Domestic Violence in Appalachian Ohio, and the more recent 2008 Family Violence Needs Assessment and the Ohio Poverty Report identified Appalachian and immigrant women as underserved racial and ethnic groups in Ohio.

Additionally, the 2000 Census highlighted Latina women as being a particularly underserved population in Ohio. The 2000 U.S. Census concluded that 1.9% of Ohio's population is Latino. In relation to the state's general population, this is admittedly a small component. However, reports⁸ indicate that this component of the population is growing rapidly. Accordingly, victim service providers will need to adapt their services to meet the needs of these constituents. OCJS is providing leadership in this effort by translating materials into Spanish, most notably a domestic violence awareness and prevention Media Campaign Tool Kit. OCJS also provided funding to the ODVN to translate a number their brochures into Spanish. Translated materials included a small safety plan, brochures on civil, criminal, and stalking protection orders and a guide for family and friends. While these materials have not been directly funded by VAWA, they supplement Ohio's efforts to provide resources to underserved population.

While there may be other underserved populations in Ohio given the state's range of diversity, the above groups were specifically identified as needing services. OCJS has adopted various strategies to address the needs of each of these underserved populations in the state.

E. Monitoring and Evaluation

OCJS has based its approach to program evaluation on the guidelines for evaluating drug control projects developed for the National Institute of Justice by Abt Associates.⁹ Instead of the typical process and outcome evaluations, those guidelines support *Implementation, Results* and *Outcomes*. This three-part process is the foundation for OCJS evaluation efforts.

Implementation addresses the way program activities are organized and carried out. For example, *Is a women's shelter project generating the expected number of clients and providing the anticipated services?* The vehicles used to monitor OCJS-funded projects include desk reviews and site visits by OCJS representatives. Desk reviews are conducted on VAWA funded programs in order to ensure that the programs are fiscally and programmatically compliant. Site visits are also conducted by Field Representatives to assess whether project implementation is consistent with the approved funding plan. In the future, OCJS monitoring will include documentation of lessons learned and best practices.

Results address what are sometimes referred to as short-term outcomes. For example, *Is the number of protection orders granted lower than expected?* The primary vehicle for collecting Results information at OCJS is through performance reports. In addition to the annual federal VAWA progress report requirement, OCJS requires all subgrantees to complete a semi-annual performance report. The performance report is tailored to meet

⁸ Cohn, D'Vera, *Hispanics Declared the Largest Minority*, *Washington Post*, June 19, 2003, A01.

⁹ National Institute of Justice and Bureau of Justice Assistance, *Evaluating Drug Control and System Improvement Projects: Guidelines for Projects*, August 1989.

Ohio's funding directives and statutory language. All data that OCJS tracks as an indicator of program success is gathered through performance reports.

Outcomes address whether a program achieves its ultimate goals. OCJS has funded outcome evaluations to assess program outcomes. Such evaluations are usually conducted by in-house researchers, by Ohio universities, or by a collaboration of the two. Programs are selected for outcome evaluations based on their strategic interest to the state strategy and their implications for justice in Ohio.

The goal of this multi-tiered evaluation approach is to generate information for decision makers as they develop Ohio's crime control and prevention strategy and allocate subsequent funding. It has also been a long-term goal of OCJS that its evaluation information be useful to practitioners as they design and implement initiatives at the local level. OCJS views evaluation as a service that helps projects achieve their objectives and meet their needs.

F. Barriers to Implementation

While OCJS does not anticipate atypical barriers arising from the implementation of its VAWA Plan, one possible issue or concern for future projects is the burden of the match requirement being shifted from the local projects to the State. Requiring State government to assume mandatory financial responsibility for match in the event that the projects are not able to do so creates a significant challenge in a time when shrinking budgets have become commonplace.

CONCLUSION

Ohio's VAWA Implementation Plan represents a solid and ongoing collaborative effort to identify and address violence against women. OCJS will continue to work with its STOP Committee; IVACC, and the FVPC Advisory Council to monitor and implement this broad-based strategy over the next three years.

The ambitious but practical 2010 VAWA Implementation Plan represents a focus on true systems collaboration; multi-disciplinary training; victim sensitivity awareness; improved access to services for underserved populations; access to long-term services, and support of sexual assault initiatives. These priorities represent the most basic challenges OCJS must support through VAWA funding to stop the violence that so many women experience everyday in Ohio.

Ohio, like most other states, strives to meet the immediate needs of victims, while steadily working toward future strategies to address its underlying issues. With the support of a wide range of justice professionals and practitioners, Ohio's VAWA Implementation Plan will ultimately impact the effectiveness of system wide initiatives for truly effective, long-term change.