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# VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

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## OHIO S.T.O.P. VAWA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2 0 1 4

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Ohio S.T.O.P. VAWA Implementation Plan  
Time period Federal Fiscal Years 2014, 2015 and 2016  
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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<sup>1</sup>. 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 Services\*Training\*Officers\* Prosecutors (S.T.O.P.) Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) funding.

Ohio's major metropolitan counties: Cuyahoga (Cleveland), Franklin (Columbus), and Lucas (Toledo) receive S.T.O.P. VAWA funding 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 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 the 2014 3-Year Implementation Plan (Federal Fiscal Years 2014 through 2016) 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 S.T.O.P. VAWA Implementation Plan 2014 was approved January 2014 and 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 S.T.O.P. VAWA subgrantees as identified through three structured collaborative processes: planning conference calls; a statewide survey; and regional focus groups.
- Section III:** Outlines Ohio's S.T.O.P. VAWA program priorities and describes how the state will address them.

### **Overview of Ohio's S.T.O.P. VAWA Implementation Plan**

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

S.T.O.P. VAWA priorities were determined through a three-pronged approach. OCJS sought input from its constituents through a statewide needs assessment survey; regional focus groups, and planning committee conference calls.

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<sup>1</sup> ORC 5502.62

## **I. PLANNING PROCESS**

As the state agency appointed by the Governor of Ohio to administer Ohio's S.T.O.P. VAWA funding, OCJS assumed the lead role in the creation of the 2014 Implementation Plan for Ohio. Within OCJS is the Family Violence Prevention Center which serves as an information clearinghouse for public and private organizations that provide assistance to victims. The center also includes a multi-disciplinary advisory body, the Ohio Family Violence Prevention Advisory Council, comprised of state experts and community leaders on domestic, sexual and family violence prevention and intervention. The S.T.O.P. VAWA Implementation Planning Committee is a committee of the Family Violence Prevention Advisory Council. The committee membership was expanded beyond the Advisory Council membership to ensure broad-based representation in the planning process and promote efforts to improve services for the needs of the underserved, unserved and inadequately served populations.

The Ohio S.T.O.P. VAWA Implementation Planning Committee is a multidisciplinary group of stakeholders, whose purpose is to assist with strategic planning related to the S.T.O.P. VAWA criminal justice projects, policies, and practices throughout the state. Stakeholders in the planning process represented the following key program areas:

- State sexual assault coalition
- State domestic violence coalition
- Law enforcement entities
- Prosecution entities
- Court entities
- Civil legal assistance attorneys
- Victim service providers
- Population specific agencies

The Implementation Plan was developed during several planning conference calls that began in August 2012. Preliminary calls discussed the status of the 2010 3-year plan; and included planning for a statewide needs assessment to assist with the development and/or update of the 2014 3-year plan. The committee called for the implementation of a comprehensive state-wide needs assessment. The needs assessment was implemented as a two-phased process to better determine the services and resources that are lacking in Ohio. The first assessment was developed as an online survey that was used to gather baseline information from direct service providers across the state. The survey results were subsequently used to guide focus group questions that would be implemented as part-two of the process.

The findings of these assessments are discussed in detail in Section II of the Implementation Plan.

## **Coordination with Related Federal Funding Programs**

OCJS is a member of the Interagency Victims Assistance Coordinating Committee (IVACC). This committee is composed of key Ohio agencies that administer victim assistance funding. The committee was established to increase collaboration among state agencies with the ultimate goal of improving services for victims of violence. This interagency collaboration has been an important element for informing the state planning process.

- Office of Criminal Justice Services:
  - S.T.O.P. VAWA
  - Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA)
- Ohio Department of Health
  - Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Prevention Program (SADVPP),
  - Rape Prevention Education (RPE) Program
  - Sexual Assault Service Program (SASP)
- Ohio Attorney General's Office
  - Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)
  - State Victims Assistance Act (SVAA)
  - Ohio Victims of Crime Compensation Program

## **II. NEEDS AND CONTEXT**

### **Ohio's Geographic Characteristics**

Ohio is a diverse state, consisting of large metropolitan areas, rural regions, and Appalachian communities.

In 2012, the population of Ohio was estimated to be 11,544,225. 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. Three of the largest metropolitan areas are Cincinnati, Cleveland and Columbus; in addition to these urban areas<sup>2</sup>, there are 32 of Ohio's 88 counties designated as Appalachian. This accounts for more than one-third of all Ohio counties. Nearly 17% 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<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Office of Research Ohio Development Services Agency, (April 2013) *2013 Ohio County Indicators Report*. Retrieved from <http://www.development.ohio.gov/files/research/C1091.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Development Services Agency, Ohio County Profiles, Appalachia (ND), Retrieved from <http://www.development.ohio.gov/files/research/C1090.pdf>

## Ohio's Residents

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 51% of Ohio's population is female. Additionally, more than 14% of the population is older than 65-years; 83.4% of the population is White; 12.5% of the population is Black or African American; 3.3% is Hispanic or Latino; 1.8% of the population is Asian, and 0.3 percent is estimated to be American Indian or Alaskan Native.

Approximately 87% of Ohioans aged 25 and older have at least a high school degree or higher; and of that approximately 24% have obtained a Bachelor's degree.<sup>4</sup>

The per capita personal income for Ohioans was estimated at \$25,618 in 2011. The average poverty rates for Ohio are approximately 14.3%; however, the highest rates of poverty occur in Ohio's Appalachian counties. The 32-Appalachian counties had a rate of 16.7 % overall, and the nine counties with the highest rates of poverty in Ohio were Appalachian<sup>5</sup>.

## Ohio's Crime

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention nearly one in five women (18%) and one in seventy-one men (1%) have been raped in their lifetime. One in four women has been the victim of severe physical violence by an intimate partner while one in seven men has experienced the same. One in six women (16%) has been stalked during their lifetime, compared to one in 19 men (5%).<sup>6</sup> Crime statistics also indicate that sexual assault and domestic violence are serious problems in Ohio. In Ohio the rate of reported forcible rape was 31.7 per 100,000 which is a decrease of 0.6% from earlier years, yet compared to the U.S. findings that forcible rape<sup>7</sup> decreased by 0.5%<sup>8</sup> it is still a significant criminal justice concern. Additionally, in 2011, 7,972 victims of sexual assault reported to law enforcement agencies, and of these 85% were female and 15% were male victims. While 60% represented juvenile victims with an average age of 15 years.<sup>9</sup>

The Ohio Attorney General reported that for 2012, law enforcement received 68,277 calls concerning domestic violence incidents. Fifty-one percent of these calls resulted in the filing of domestic violence charges or protection order or consent agreement violations. Approximately 9% resulted in the filing of other charges, but not domestic violence or protection order or consent agreement. There were 56,146 reported victims; more than 40% were victims of spousal or live-in partner abuse. Of the incidents, 77% involved wives being victimized by husbands.

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<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts (June 2013), Retrieved from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/39000.html>

<sup>5</sup> Ohio Development Services, (February 2013), *The Ohio Poverty Report*, Retrieved from <http://development.ohio.gov/files/research/P7005.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2011) *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2010 Summary Report*, Retrieved from [http://www.publicsafety.ohio.gov/links/2013\\_VAWA\\_Needs\\_Assessment.pdf](http://www.publicsafety.ohio.gov/links/2013_VAWA_Needs_Assessment.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> 2011 Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) revised definition of rape: "Penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim." (Retrieved from <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/cjis-link/march-2012/ucr-program-changes-definition-of-rape>)

<sup>8</sup> Ohio Statistical Analysis Center, OCJS Special Report *Crime in the U.S. 2012*, Retrieved from <http://www.publicsafety.ohio.gov/links/ocjs-Crime-in-US2012.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence, (nd), *The State of Rape Crisis Services in Ohio*, Retrieved from <http://www.oaesv.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/The-State-of-Rape-Crisis-Services-in-Ohio.pdf>

**Characteristics of Victims of Domestic Violence<sup>10</sup>**

<b>Relationship</b>		<b>Reported Victims</b>	
Wife		16.72%	
Husband		4.91%	
Parent		13.06%	
Non Spousal with Child		14.69%	
Child/Children		8.21%	
Other Family Member		13.67%	
Former Spouse		2.33%	
Live-In Partner		19.00%	
Other		7.41%	
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
Asian		>1%	
African American		24%	
Caucasian		72%	
Native American		>1%	
Hispanic		2%	
Other		>1%	
<b>Age</b>			
0-17		7%	
18-40		64%	
41-59		24%	
60-84		4%	
85 and Older		>1%	
<b>Gender</b>			
Male		26%	
Female		74%	

<sup>10</sup> *Ohio Attorney General 2012 Domestic Violence Reports*

## Assessment of Ohio's Needs

### 2013 Ohio Family Violence Needs Assessment

In 2013, OCJS collaborated with the Ohio Family Violence Prevention Center Advisory Council to develop and implement a statewide needs assessment for the purpose of identifying gaps in service for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The needs assessment was implemented as a two-phased process to better determine the services and resources that are lacking in Ohio. The first assessment was developed as an online survey tool that was used to gather baseline information from direct service providers across the state. The survey results were subsequently used to guide focus group questions. The survey was available online from February 28, 2013 through March 20, 2013. Approximately 71% or 295 individuals completed the report, and approximately 56% of the survey respondents were law enforcement officials. Survey participants self-selected their particular agency type and were directed to questions specific to the selected agency type. Once these questions were completed, all survey respondents were routed to a set of questions on funding, training, and underserved communities.<sup>11</sup>

### Part 1 Online Survey

Survey respondents were requested to identify and answer the survey questions according to the following types of agencies: Court; Prosecution; Law Enforcement; Non-Profit/Victim Service; Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE)/Healthcare program; and Other (this category required specification). Additionally, the respondents were requested to identify the county or counties they served.

Some major findings from the online survey include:

- Many communities stated that 24-hour and toll-free crisis hotlines are readily available in their communities.
- Safety planning with victims frequently occurs across the state.
- Victim cooperation (recanting) was identified as a challenge when serving victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking.
- Training for law enforcement was identified as needed regarding enforcement of civil protection orders, identifying primary physical aggressors, and sensitivity when dealing with victims. Law enforcement respondents stated that officer apathy is an issue of concern.
- Domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking victims were identified as lacking transportation, transitional housing, child care, and civil legal assistance. All were available but insufficient to meet the demand in the community.
- Accessing Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) was not a serious problem according to survey respondents; *however during focus groups this varied greatly based on the region.*
- Child custody issues were rated as serious/very serious by approximately 40% of respondents.
- The majority of respondents felt severely unequipped to serve the following underserved communities: deaf, immigrant, and refugee victims. *Fifty percent of the respondents for the court category indicated that they do not provide language access or interpretation services. Less than half, 33%, of the respondents provide written materials in languages other than English.*

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<sup>11</sup> The full report can be viewed at [http://www.publicsafety.ohio.gov/links/2013\\_VAWA\\_Needs\\_Assessment.pdf](http://www.publicsafety.ohio.gov/links/2013_VAWA_Needs_Assessment.pdf).

- The majority of survey respondents in the court category believed it was very important to have specialized prosecutors as well as law enforcement units for sexual assault and domestic violence cases. Nearly all respondents (68%) believed batterer intervention services to be critical for their communities.
- Training for judges and advocates was rated the highest with 50% of the respondents stating that training is very important.
- Lack of funding to sustain programming for victims was a very serious concern for 35% of respondents.
- The majority of survey respondents from non-profit organizations and prosecution had applied to OCJS for S.T.O.P. VAWA funding in the past. This was found to be in stark contrast to survey respondents from the remaining four categories with over 50% of them having never applied to OCJS for S.T.O.P. VAWA funds.

## **Part 2 Focus Groups**

A total of seven, 90-minute focus groups were conducted in five Ohio regions: Northwest, Northeast, Central, Southwest, and Southeast. Focus groups consisted of 102 interdisciplinary participants who represented all sections of the criminal justice system as well as members of health systems and non-profit organizations. Questions for the focus groups were developed after reviewing the findings of the online survey. Each focus group responded to the following five questions:

1. From your perspective, what are the barriers to services for domestic violence victims in your community?
2. From your perspective, what are the barriers to services for sexual assault victims in your community?
3. From your perspective, what are the barriers to services for stalking victims in your community?
4. What barriers do victims face in your community regarding access to interpreters?
5. What do you think would be the most effective intervention; without taking cost into consideration, that would help victims?

Overall themes emerged from the focus groups conversation:

- Regardless of the region, all focus group participants identified transportation, housing, childcare, and legal aid as a great need for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
- Nearly all focus group participants shared the need to increase or promote public education and awareness around what constitutes domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking in addition to what services are available for victims.
- Training for law enforcement, prosecutors, courts as well as for frontline staff and advocates was emphasized.
- Adequate and appropriate access to interpreters varied across the state; however, there was a universal need for more court-certified interpreters who are well-versed in domestic violence issues.
- Finally, each group had participants that recommended developing holistic, one-stop shops in their communities to effectively meet victims' needs.

## **Workgroup Planning for Priority Areas**

To determine priority area recommendations for the 2014 Implementation Plan, the S.T.O.P. Committee formed smaller workgroups based upon the same needs assessment program

categories (Court; Prosecution; Law Enforcement; Non-Profit/Victim Service (*note: Non-Profit will be referred to as Victim Service throughout the remainder of the plan*); Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE)/Healthcare program; and “Other”). Refer to Section III.B of the plan.

### **III. PRIORITIES AND APPROACHES**

As previously discussed, the 2014 Implementation Plan has been a collaborative effort. Partners in this process have included members of the S.T.O.P. Implementation Planning Committee (a committee of the Family Violence Prevention Advisory Council) and current and former S.T.O.P. VAWA recipients. This multi-disciplinary committee includes representatives from the state sexual assault coalition, state domestic violence coalition, law enforcement, prosecution, court, victim service providers, and population specific organizations. The planning meetings, the development of the statewide needs assessment process/implementation and review of findings have all been critical to informing the 2014 3-year plan.

#### **A. Relation to Prior Implementation Plans**

Previously the plan called for an emphasis on the following: training for all disciplines; improving access to services for underserved populations; facilitating systems collaboration; improving access to long-term services; and supporting sexual assault programs. Although some similarities remain between the previous implementation plan and 2014 plan, the new plan provides more defined priorities that seek to encourage innovative approaches to serving victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

The 2013 needs assessment continues to affirm the need for training and technical assistance across the state. In 1994, Ohio enacted House Bill 335, a comprehensive legislation to reduce and prevent domestic violence in the state. House Bill 335 required all Alcohol Drug and Mental Health/Alcohol Drug and Addiction Services and Mental Health Boards, human service agencies, law enforcement agencies, and other social service agencies to offer education on the dynamics of domestic violence to their constituents.

In 2008, an executive order was signed by the Governor that created both policy and training centered on workplace domestic violence for Ohio’s state employees. 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 at the county and local level. Additionally, in 2003, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) drafted a model policy with the purpose of providing guidance to 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 to address domestic violence incidents that are perpetrated by law enforcement employees; however as noted in 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.<sup>12</sup> The 2006 IACP Investigation Sexual Assaults Model Policy was not referenced in the previous plan, however the 2014 plan acknowledges this model policy as an important tool. The IACP’s policy

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<sup>12</sup> International Association of Chiefs of Police, global leadership in policing (July 2003) Domestic Violence by Police Officers Model Policy, Retrieved from: <http://www.theiacp.org/tabid/299/Default.aspx?id=1130&v=1>

recognizes “the special needs involved in sexual assault investigations, this policy is an all-inclusive document that covers first response, investigation, and prosecution”<sup>13</sup>

The 2014 plan continues to recognize the need to facilitate systems collaboration. 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. House Bill 10 authorizes a juvenile court to issue a civil protection order in the context of teen dating violence against a 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. 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. In contrast, 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. Although activities in furtherance of House Bill 19 are 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.

Additionally, the 2014 plan will continue to require courts, prosecution, law enforcement, and victim service providers to 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 long term technical assistance and training towards collaboration. The OCJS application process requires that applicants identify the collaboration board members and the board’s purpose. The 2014 plan also identifies additional components that seek to expand collaborative opportunities in efforts to better leverage the success of projects.

The previous plan identified communication as lacking due to incompatible computer systems. OCJS recognizes the need to continue to support projects that develop compatible information technology systems to increase victim safety. Therefore, the 2014 plan will continue to encourage projects to develop information technology systems (both hardware and software) to increase communication and information sharing.

The prior implementation plan focused on seven of the previous fourteen statutory purpose areas and a summary is listed as follows (*However, it should be noted that while only seven of these areas were stated as priorities for funding, the remaining purpose areas were addressed in the “Underserved Victims” focus of the plan*):

- 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 and Protocol Development.** Supports the implementation of more effective law enforcement, court/prosecution policies, protocols, orders, and services.

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<sup>13</sup> International Association of Chiefs of Police, global leadership in policing, (November 2006) *Investigating Sexual Assaults Model Policy*, Retrieved from: <http://www.theiacp.org/tabid/299/Default.aspx?id=1133&v=1>

- VA4 Data Collection and Communication Systems.** Supports the installation of computerized systems to identify and track protection orders, arrests, and violations of orders, prosecutions, and convictions.
- 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 Nurse Examiners (SANE).** Supports training for sexual assault forensic medical examiners.

The 2013 Reauthorization Act of 2013, Pub.L. No. 113-4 (VAWA 2013) was enacted on March 7, 2013; and seven additional new purpose areas were added. Additionally, the reauthorization ensures that domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking are included in all the purpose areas. VAWA 2013 also requires states to allocate 20% of the total federal award towards projects that meaningfully address sexual assault across two or more of the federal mandated allocations (victim services, law enforcement, prosecution, and courts). Refer to *Distribution of Funds for Core Categories*, Section III.D.

Following the reauthorization, OCJS determined it was important to include within its Request for Proposal (RFP) process specific details regarding the federally applicable purpose areas. As a result, all applicable purpose areas were included within the June 2013 RFP; applicants were requested to detail in their application how the proposed project fit within one of the fourteen statutory purpose areas. **In 2014, OCJS RFPs will include a description of all of the VAWA purpose areas to promote Ohio's communities to better strategize the types of programs and services that will be implemented in support of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.**

**S.T.OP VAWA funding requests must meet one of the following applicable purpose areas:**

1. Training law enforcement officers, judges, other court personnel, and prosecutors to more effectively identify and respond to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, and dating violence, including the use of nonimmigrant status under subparagraphs (U) and (T) of section 101(a)(15) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a));
2. Developing, training, or expanding units of law enforcement officers, judges, other court personnel, and prosecutors specifically targeting violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and domestic violence;
3. Developing and implementing more effective police, court, and prosecution policies, protocols, orders, and services specifically devoted to preventing, identifying, and responding to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and domestic violence, as well as the appropriate treatment of victims;
4. Developing, installing, or expanding data collection and communication systems, including computerized systems, linking police, prosecutors, and courts or for the purpose of identifying, classifying, and tracking arrests, protection orders, violations of

protection orders, prosecutions, and convictions for violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, dating violence, stalking and domestic violence;

5. Developing, enlarging, or strengthening victim services and legal assistance programs, including sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, and dating violence programs, developing or improving delivery of victim services to underserved populations, providing specialized domestic violence court advocates in courts where a significant number of protection orders are granted, and increasing reporting and reducing attrition rates for cases involving violent crimes against women, including crimes of sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and domestic violence;
6. Developing, enlarging, or strengthening programs addressing the needs and circumstances of Indian tribes in dealing with violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and domestic violence;<sup>14</sup>
7. Supporting formal and informal statewide, multidisciplinary efforts, to the extent not supported by state funds, to coordinate the response of state law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, courts, victim services agencies, and other state agencies and departments, to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, and dating violence;
8. Training of sexual assault forensic medical personnel examiners in the collection and preservation of evidence, analysis, prevention, and providing expert testimony and treatment of trauma related to sexual assault;
9. Developing, enlarging, or strengthening programs to assist law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, and others to address the needs and circumstances of older and disabled women who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking or sexual assault, including recognizing, investigating, and prosecuting instances of such violence or assault and targeting outreach and support, counseling, and other victim services to such older and disabled individuals;
10. Providing assistance to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in immigration matters;
11. Maintaining core victim services and criminal justice initiatives, while supporting complementary new initiatives and emergency services for victims and their families;
12. Supporting the placement of special victim assistants (to be known as “Jessica Gonzales Victim Assistants”) in local law enforcement agencies to serve as liaisons between victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking and personnel in local law enforcement agencies in order to improve the enforcement of protection orders. Jessica Gonzales Victim Assistants shall have expertise in domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and may undertake the following activities:

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<sup>14</sup> Ohio does not have any federally recognized tribes, and therefore this purpose area under the Federal Statute is not applicable.

- developing, in collaboration with prosecutors, courts, and victim service providers, standardized response policies for local law enforcement agencies, including the use of evidence-based indicators to assess the risk of domestic and dating violence homicide and prioritize dangerous or potentially lethal cases;
  - notifying persons seeking enforcement of protection orders as to what responses will be provided by the relevant law enforcement agency;
  - referring persons seeking enforcement of protection orders to supplementary services (such as emergency shelter programs, hotlines, or legal assistance services); and;
  - taking other appropriate action to assist or secure the safety of the person seeking enforcement of a protection order.
13. Providing funding to law enforcement agencies, nonprofit nongovernmental victim services providers, and State, Tribal, Territorial, and local governments (which funding stream shall be known as the Crystal Judson Domestic Violence Protocol Program) to promote—
- the development and implementation of training for local victim domestic violence service providers, and to fund victim services personnel, to be known as “Crystal Judson Victim Advocates,” to provide supportive services and advocacy for victims of domestic violence committed by law enforcement personnel;
  - the implementation of protocols within law enforcement agencies to ensure consistent and effective responses to the commission of domestic violence by personnel within such agencies such as the model policy promulgated by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (“Domestic Violence by Police Officers: A Policy of the IACP, Police Response to Violence Against Women Project” July 2003); and
  - the development of such protocols in collaboration with State, Tribal, Territorial and local victim services providers and domestic violence coalitions.
- **Note:** Any law enforcement, State, Tribal, Territorial, or local government agency receiving funding under the Crystal Judson Domestic Violence Protocol Program shall, on an annual basis, receive additional training on the topic of incidents of domestic violence committed by law enforcement personnel from domestic violence and sexual assault nonprofit organizations and, after a period of two years, provide a report of the adopted protocol to the Department, including a summary of progress in implementing such protocol. As such, States and Territories are responsible for ensuring that each subgrantee receiving funds under this purpose area will receive the required annual training. States are also responsible for ensuring that subgrantees submit their two-year report to the Department. States and Territories **must** notify and provide OVW with a list of subgrantee recipients awarded STOP funds under the Crystal Judson Domestic Violence Protocol Program.
14. Developing and promoting State, local, or tribal legislation and policies that enhance best practices for responding to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking;

15. Developing, implementing, or enhancing Sexual Assault Response Teams, or other similar coordinated community responses to sexual assault.
16. Developing and strengthening policies, protocols, best practices, and training for law enforcement agencies and prosecutors relating to the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault cases and the appropriate treatment of victims;
17. Developing, enlarging, or strengthening programs addressing sexual assault against men, women, and youth in correctional and detention settings;
18. Identifying and conducting inventories of backlogs of sexual assault evidence collection kits and developing protocols and policies for responding to and addressing such backlogs, including protocols and policies for notifying and involving victims;
19. Developing, enlarging, or strengthening programs and projects to provide services and responses targeting male and female victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, whose ability to access traditional services and responses is affected by their sexual orientation or gender identity, as defined in section 249(c) of title 18, United States Code; and
20. Developing, enhancing, or strengthening prevention and educational programming to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, with not more than 5 percent of the amount allocated to a State to be used for this purpose.

The 2014 Implementation Plan will also continue to require that applicants who request funding in support of visitation centers clearly demonstrate the following eligibility criteria to be considered for funding:

- A secured and adequate space for the location; and hours of operation
- Type of supervision
- Frequency and type of domestic violence training project staff receive
- Demonstration of need/uniqueness of the service area
- Procedures to address liability issues
- Letters of participation from the court and Jobs and Family Services
- Means of referrals
- Target population

## B. Goals and Objectives

### Goal 1

Multidisciplinary and program specific projects will meaningfully address and ensure coordinated community responses for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

#### Objectives:

- Provide training for multidisciplinary and program specific agencies to ensure a coordinated community response.
- Coordinate resources, address barriers and advocate for increased access to economic justice needs.
- Increase access to resources for underserved populations and limited English proficient victims.

### Goal 2

Domestic violence homicides will be reduced throughout the state.

#### Objectives:

- Provide training to multidisciplinary and program specific agencies to ensure a coordinated community response.
- Provide technical assistance for the provision of countywide fatality reviews.
- Coordinate resources, address barriers and advocate for increased access to economic justice needs.
- Increase access to resources for underserved populations and limited English proficient victims.

### Goal 3

Meaningfully address services for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

#### Objectives:

- Provide training to multidisciplinary and program specific agencies to ensure a coordinated community response.
- Coordinate resources, address barriers and advocate for increased access to economic justice needs.
- Increase access to resources for underserved populations and limited English proficient victims.

## C. Priority Areas

### Types of Programs

As previously stated, to determine priority area recommendations for the 2014 Implementation Plan, the S.T.O.P. Committee formed smaller workgroups based upon the same needs assessment program categories (Court; Prosecution; Law Enforcement; Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE)/Healthcare program; and Other). **In 2014, OCJS will require applicants to describe how their project aligns with the S.T.OP. VAWA Implementation Plan priorities for Ohio; and define a supporting objective.** It is also expected that the following will assist OCJS to identify programs or projects that meaningfully address sexual assault across two or more of the federally mandated allocation areas. Refer to *Distribution of Funds for Core Categories*, Section III.D.

### COURT

#### ➤ **Training:**

Training was identified as an overall need for judges, magistrates, court personnel and clerks of courts. Findings noted that there was an ineffective or inadequate sanctioning of offenders.

#### ➤ **Access to Justice:**

Inadequate access to court interpreters was identified as a prevalent need throughout the assessment process. *It was also noted, that this was consistent throughout the program areas that interpreter access was lacking as an adequate resource.* The lack of appropriate interpreter services can lead to the improper use of family members, bilingual court staff and/or advocates to provide interpretation.

➤ **Court Protocol:**

It was recognized that effective court policies and procedures are needed to ensure appropriate and successful responses.

- **Interpreters and issuance of civil protection orders.** Policies and procedures should be implemented to ensure victims are not turned away when attempting to file protection orders. This is especially true for undocumented immigrants who are in need of services.
- **Victims of stalking and sexual assault** face barriers related to issues of “credibility”. Legal processes are lengthy, and many victims of sexual assault drop charges because of the difficulty they experience accessing the justice system.

## PROSECUTION

➤ **Specialized Units:**

There is a need for enhancement and/or creation of specialized units for sexual assault, domestic assault and stalking. There should be added emphasis that these units collaborate with victim advocates. It was also noted that funding for specialized units could be a benefit as it can lower the number of cases per prosecutor.

➤ **Training:**

Findings indicate that this is an ongoing need and emphasized in four particular need areas:

- **Trauma Informed Practice**
- **Evidence**—specifically to determine what is admissible; the use of experts, DNA and toxicology; and how to build a stalking case.
- **Culturally and competently** serving clients from diverse populations.
- **Cross training and collaboration** with other agencies to expand and enhance capacity and to avoid the duplication of services.
- **Reduce the incidence of charging or only going forward with prosecuting “one issue.”** It is critical that the entire victim experience is recognized and may include domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking; and not either/or incident.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

➤ **Training:**

To enhance law enforcement’s response to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking, training will be an ongoing need. Within the training context it was noted that training could occur in a variety of venues and not just at the local agency level. Training topics can be incorporated into law enforcement focused statewide agency trainings (i.e. Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy, online accessible eOPOTA trainings). The following topics were identified as important for law enforcement:

- **Explaining and enforcing** Civil Protection Orders and Temporary Protection Orders.
- **Investigating domestic violence** complaints to determining the primary aggressor on domestic violence calls.
- **Interviewing skills and victim sensitivity.**

- **Serving Deaf and limited-English-proficient (LEP) victims.** It was determined that many law enforcement officials feel they are lacking resources to adequately serve these populations.
- **Sexual assault and stalking-focused training.** Many law enforcement officials do not have specialized units dedicated towards victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. Specifically it was noted that agencies that did have specialized units were more likely to have the following: increased success in prosecutions, better victim support and satisfaction, increased involvement of victim advocates, and were actively collaborating with the local Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) and the Prosecutor's Office.

## VICTIM SERVICE

### ➤ **Special/Underserved Populations:**

Significant gaps continue to exist in regards to services that are for and received by marginalized and underserved populations. Some of the populations identified through the assessment include but are not limited to: Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Homeless, Mental Health/Substance Abuse, limited English proficient; Undocumented individuals; Teens/Youth, Persons living in poverty, Amish, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex.

- **Training, outreach, collaboration, goal setting.** Within the context of serving special and underserved populations is the need for continued training, building, expanding and enhancing outreach efforts, and building and expanding innovative and effective collaborations and partnerships.

Applicants will continue to be required to respond to the following questions:

*“What are the underserved populations your project will serve?”*

- *Avoid identifying “all” victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking as underserved.*

*“Why are the populations currently underserved?”*

- *What are the barriers to services for the populations?*
- *Are the underserved populations attempting to access services? If not, then why not?*

*“How will the project meet the needs of the underserved populations?”*

- *What efforts will or are occurring to promote the elimination to barriers to accessing services, and help increase the utilization of services for underserved populations?*

In addition, previous strategies to outreach, collaboration, and partnership for underserved populations will be requested in the RFP.

Changing the approach to serving underserved populations should be developed by considering whether the marginalized community falls into one of the following three tier populations:

- **Unserved:** populations that have no services available to them.
- **Underserved:** populations that have minimal access and are in need of more outreach and support.
- **Inadequately served:** Historically marginalized populations that may be overrepresented, but remain inadequately served with specific reference to the quality of service and a “one-size-fits-all” approach.<sup>15</sup>

Incorporating the three tier system into the RFP planning process will be useful for the identification of culturally specific programs and projects to be funded from the required 10 percent set aside. Refer to *Distribution of Funds for Core Categories*, Section III.D *Culturally Specific Services*, and *Addressing the Needs of Underserved Victims*, Section III.F.

➤ **ECONOMIC JUSTICE:**

Findings throughout the survey continue to support the need for Economic Justice for victims. Access to civil attorneys, housing, and transportation was noted as an especially important need that can increase victim safety.

- **Civil attorneys** are an essential resource to assist with a variety of civil needs experienced by victims, and that includes but is not limited to: civil protection orders; custody, divorce, immigration, housing, bankruptcy, employment and school/education issues.
- **Supervised visitation/exchange centers** are recognized to encompass all systems, but they are also important in relationship to divorce and custody hearings. The 2014 plan will continue to require applicants to provide details that respond to the following criteria:
  - Ensure a secured and adequate space for the location; and hours of operation;
  - Describe the type of supervision;
  - Describe how often and what type of domestic violence training project staff receive;
  - Explain the need/uniqueness of the service area;
  - Describe procedures to address liability issues;
  - Include letters of participation from court and Jobs and Family Services;
  - Describe means of referrals;
  - Describe target population.
- **Housing** continues to be a prevalent need that encompasses emergency, transitional and permanent needs. Findings indicate the continued need to develop and create collaborative relationships with agencies serving persons in need of housing.

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<sup>15</sup> Women of Color Network, 2013

- Applicants will be requested to identify a representative from community housing, and/or whether they are actively participating on their regional Continuum of Care (CoC) committees.
- **Transportation:** Lack of accessible transportation perpetuates isolation and prevents accessible economic justice related to the aforementioned needs.

### **SEXUAL ASSAULT NURSE EXAMINER (SANE)/HEALTHCARE PROGRAM; AND OTHER**

- **Increase number of SANEs available across the state:**  
Findings indicate that across the state the need for 24/7 SANEs is significant, and especially within underserved populations. There is significant need for hospital administrator support of SANEs to eliminate the extensive travel victims often have to make for a sexual assault exam and kit collection. It was also noted one of the largest reasons for the low number of SANEs was lack of funding.
- **Enforce existing laws and regulations:**
  - **Ensure compliance** occurs related to unallowable billing for sexual assault exams.
  - **Provide interpreters** for limited English proficient survivors.
  - **Address kit testing, storage, and protocol.**
- **Increase the number of sexual assault centers throughout the state:**  
It was noted that there should be a priority on underserved areas which includes southeast Ohio. The 2014 plan recognizes the need for continued collaboration between OCJS, the state sexual assault coalition and other relevant state agencies to seek solutions to providing services to these underserved areas.
- **Specialized units for domestic violence and sexual assault.**
  - **Training-neurobiology of trauma:** Many law enforcement and members of the legal community are not familiar or do not understand the neurobiology of trauma and often have preconceived expectations as to how a victim will look or act following an assault.
  - **Address child custody issues:** Many child sexual abuse victims are still in the custody of the perpetrator.

## **D. Grantmaking Strategy**

### **Distribution of Funds for Core Categories**

Federal requirements mandate the VAWA funding distribution within Ohio's justice system. OCJS determines funding categories for projects based on the agency implementing the project and the services most directly supported by the project. All of the allocation categories mentioned below are disbursed based on the type of organization that benefits from the VAWA program and the type of services supported by the program. Discretionary funding may be used for any of the categories as deemed appropriate by OCJS.

- Law Enforcement 25%
- Prosecution 25%
- Victim Services 30% (**\*10% must go to culturally specific community-based organizations**)
- Court 5%
- Discretionary 15%

Pursuant to the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 (H.R. 3402), S.T.O.P. funding decisions must take into consideration that 10% of the 30% that is allocated to victim services must be distributed to community-based organizations that provide culturally specific services.

*The term ‘culturally specific’ means primarily directed toward racial and ethnic minority groups (as defined in section 1707(g) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300u–6(g)). “(7) CULTURALLY SPECIFIC SERVICES.—The term ‘culturally specific services’ means community-based services that include culturally relevant and linguistically specific services and resources to culturally specific communities.*

Under VAWA 2013, 20 percent of funds granted to a state shall be allocated for programs or projects in 2 or more allocations (victim services, courts, law enforcement, and prosecution) that meaningfully address sexual assault, including stranger rape, acquaintance rape, alcohol or drug-facilitated rape, and rape within the context of an intimate partner relationship.

#### **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 each RPU receives each year. The RPUs are responsible for planning and distributing funds to their communities based on local needs and conditions. Additionally, the RPUs administer and evaluate VAWA-funded initiatives consistent with this Implementation Plan.

OCJS implements a 3-pronged grant application review process. The initial OCJS grant review is conducted by the OCJS Grant Coordinators as an internal review to ensure fiscal and programmatic compliance with state and federal guidelines. At the same time, a peer review team of state and local professionals, comprised of law enforcement, prosecution, victim services, and court personnel participate in a review of the submitted applications using a grant review matrix to score applications. Finally, grant applications are reviewed with the OCJS Director, the S.T.O.P. VAWA program planner, the OCJS Family Violence Prevention Director and management staff to make final funding recommendations. While projects are not given preference based on their geographical area, final funding decisions are reviewed to foster an 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 S.T.O.P. VAWA proposals at \$60,000.

## **E. 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 the website, [www.ocjs.ohio.gov](http://www.ocjs.ohio.gov). Additionally, notice of funding availability is also provided within the OCJS's *Criminal Justice Bulletin*, an electronic newsletter distributed on a biweekly basis 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 constituents with Request for Proposal release dates; due dates; notification dates, and project start dates for *all* OCJS federal grants. The Ohio S.T.O.P. VAWA solicitation was released on June 3, 2013. Applications were due on June 28, 2013. Projects are funded January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014. OCJS is in the process of determining the timeline for the 2014 grant cycle.

### **Technical Assistance**

OCJS hosts a Bidder's Conference following the release of the S.T.O.P. VAWA solicitation. This conference serves a dual purpose as it provides an overview of the S.T.O.P. VAWA application requirements and provides a forum for prospective grantees to ask questions about the grant writing process. OCJS also provides grant writing workshops several times a year. Applicants are encouraged to contact OCJS staff for assistance with any part of the proposals and solicitation process.

### **Consultation with Victim Service Providers**

OCJS requires a collaboration board component with all applications. This component must include a list of the collaboration board members, the goals of the collaboration board and a

description of how the agencies/organizations work together to achieve the goals of the collaboration board. OCJS also requires all non-victim service provider applicants to submit letters of participation that detail both the involvement and role of the victim service providers during the development of applications. The purpose is to promote safety, confidentiality, and economic independence for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

### **Review of Proposals**

The initial OCJS grant review is an internal review conducted by the OCJS grants coordinators and the VAWA program planner 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 participate in a review of the applications using a grant review matrix to score applications. Next, OCJS facilitates 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 planner, the OCJS Family Violence Prevention Center Director, management staff, and OCJS Director to review the team's recommendations. This phase of the process is 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.

### **F. 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 OCJS applicants that request funding through the S.T.O.P. VAWA solicitation must also identify at least one underserved population.

As discussed in Section III.B of the Priorities, OCJS will require applicants to address the following:

*“What are the underserved populations your project will serve?”*

- *Avoid identifying “all” victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking as underserved.*

*“Why are the populations currently underserved?”*

- *What are the barriers to services for the populations?*

- *Are the underserved populations attempting to access services? If not, then why not?*

*“How will the project meet the needs of the underserved populations?”*

- *What efforts will or are occurring to promote eliminating barriers to accessing services, and help increase the utilization of services for underserved populations?*

Further consideration is to expand the definition of underserved to unserved, underserved and inadequately served using the three tiered matrix.

- **Unserved:** *populations that have no services available to them.*
- **Underserved:** *populations that have minimal access and are in need of more outreach and support.*
- **Inadequately served:** *Historically marginalized populations that may be overrepresented, but remain inadequately served with specific reference to the quality of service and a “one-size-fits-all” approach.<sup>16</sup>*

Utilizing the three tier matrix in the review process will assist OCJS in determining culturally specific programs and projects to be funded from the required 10 percent victim service set aside. Additional criteria will be evaluated to determine if the applicant is eligible to receive funding from the culturally specific set aside such as whether the primary role of the applicant is to provide services to racial and ethnic populations, or whether it has demonstrated competency to provide services to culturally specific targeted populations. Further consideration will include assessing whether the representatives from the targeted communities have been included with the planning and development of outreach and services to be provided.

## **G. 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.<sup>17</sup> 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 S.T.O.P. VAWA funded programs to ensure that the programs are fiscally and programmatically compliant. Site visits are also conducted by OCJS 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.

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<sup>16</sup> Women of Color Network, 2013

<sup>17</sup> National Institute of Justice and Bureau of Justice Assistance, Evaluating Drug Control and System Improvement Projects: Guidelines for Projects, August 1989.

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, OCJS subgrantees are required to submit the annual federal S.T.O.P. VAWA progress report, known as the MUSKIE report.

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, Ohio universities, or a collaboration of the two. Programs are selected for outcome evaluations based on interest in the state strategy and the 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.

## **H. Barriers to Implementation**

While OCJS does not anticipate atypical barriers arising from the implementation of its VAWA Implementation Plan, one possible 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 S.T.O.P. VAWA Committee, IVACC, and the Family Violence Prevention Center Advisory Council to monitor and implement this broad-based strategy.

The ambitious but practical 2014 S.T.O.P.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 every day 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 S.T.O.P.VAWA Implementation Plan will ultimately enhance the effectiveness of system-wide initiatives for truly effective, long-term change.