

STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program

Purpose

Administered through the Maine Department of Public Safety, the STOP Program supports communities in their efforts to develop and strengthen effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies to combat violent crimes against women and to develop and strengthen victim services in cases involving violent crimes against women. Violence against women crimes includes sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking.

The STOP Program promotes a coordinated, multidisciplinary approach to enhancing advocacy and improving the criminal justice system's response to violent crimes against women. It encourages the development and improvement of effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies to address violent crimes against women and the development and improvement of advocacy and services in cases involving violent crimes against women. The Maine Department of Public Safety has been the state administrative agency (SAA) for the U. S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program since 1995.

Recognizing that most victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking are women, this grant opportunity is named the Violence Against Women STOP Formula Grant. However, services can also be provided to male victims of these crimes.

Allocation of Funds

The STOP Program Funds are to be distributed to public and nonprofit agencies to carry out programs and projects specified under the eligible statutory purposes. States must allocate at least 25 percent of each year's grant award to law enforcement programs, at least 25 percent to prosecution programs, at least 5 percent for court programs, and at least 30 percent to nonprofit, nongovernmental victim service programs of which at least 10 percent is to be distributed to culturally specific community-based organizations. The remainder of the funds may be spent at the discretion of the state to address the statutory program purposes of this program.

Federal Statutory 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 domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, including the appropriate use of nonimmigrant status under subparagraphs (T) and (U) of section 101 (a)(15) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)).

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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 domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

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 domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, as well as the appropriate treatment of victims including implementation of the grant conditions in section 40002(b) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (34 U.S.C. 12291(b));

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 domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

5. Developing, enlarging, or strengthening victim services and legal assistance programs, including domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking programs, developing or improving delivery of victim services and legal assistance 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 domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

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 domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

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 domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

8. Training of sexual assault forensic medical personnel examiners in the collection and

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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 individuals 50 years of age and over, individuals with disabilities, and Deaf individuals who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, including recognizing, investigating, and prosecuting instances of such violence or assault and targeting outreach and support, counseling, legal assistance and other victim services to such 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, including rehabilitative work with offenders.

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:

- a) 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;
- b) notifying persons seeking enforcement of protection orders as to what responses will be provided by the relevant law enforcement agency;
- c) referring persons seeking enforcement of protection orders to supplementary services (such as emergency shelter programs, hotlines, or legal assistance services); and d. taking other appropriate action to assist or secure the safety of the person seeking enforcement of a protection order.

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13. Providing funding to law enforcement agencies, 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: a. 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; b. 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 c. 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, and any subgrantee of such an agency, shall (1) receive specialized training, on an annual basis, from domestic violence and sexual assault nonprofit organizations on the topic of incidents of domestic violence committed by law enforcement personnel and (2) provide a report to the Department of the protocol(s) adopted in connection with the Crystal Judson Domestic Violence Protocol Program, including a summary of progress in implementing such protocol(s), once every two years. 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, and ensure that all subgrantees satisfy the requirements of this paragraph.

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.

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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 of the United States Code.
20. Developing, enhancing, or strengthening prevention and educational programming to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or female genital mutilation or cutting, with not more than 5 percent of the amount allocated to a state to be used for this purpose.
21. Developing, enhancing, or strengthening programs and projects to improve evidence collection methods for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, including through funding for technology that better detects bruising and injuries across skin tones and related training.
22. Developing, enlarging, or strengthening culturally specific victim services programs to provide culturally specific victim services and responses to female genital mutilation or cutting.
23. Providing victim advocates in State or local law enforcement agencies, prosecutors' offices, and courts to provide supportive services and advocacy to Indian victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
24. Paying any fees charged by any governmental authority for furnishing a victim or the child of a victim with any of the following documents: (A) A birth certificate or passport of the individual as required by law. (B) An identification card issued to the individual by a State or Tribe, that shows that the individual is a resident of the State or a member of the Tribe.

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Maine Priority Areas

- Coordinated Community Response/Multi-disciplinary Response. Initiatives seeking funding under this priority area will aim to improve coordination of the justice system's response to domestic violence, sexual violence, and dating violence.
- Victim Service Maintenance and Expansion. This priority area emphasizes upholding key victim services as well as expanding services to underserved areas and populations.
- Enhanced Adjudication Process. These programs support the management of offender behavior and ensure victim safety
- Training. The JAC provides funding to victim services providers, law enforcement, prosecution, medical services personnel, and other first responders
- Policy, Procedures, and Planning. Funding in this priority area is geared toward developing evidence-based policies and practices in responding to domestic violence and sexual violence
- Technology and Information. Awards in this priority area are used to improve the sharing of information across systems to improve the safety of victims and safeguard evidence for prosecution purposes

Match Requirements

State and Local units of government must provide 33% of the total project cost in cash or in-kind match. Tribes and victim service providers under the victim services allocation category are not required to provide match. This provision does not relieve the State from providing the full match.

Subgrantee Organization Eligibility Requirements

- Be a public or nonprofit organization, or a combination of such organizations.
- Comply with the applicable provisions of STOP, the Program Guidelines, and the requirements of the OJP Financial Guide.
- Maintain statutorily required civil rights statistics on victims served.
- Grantees and subgrantees shall develop a plan for implementation.

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- Applicants and grantees must certify that its laws, policies, and practices do not require that the victim bear the costs associated with the filing of criminal charges against the offender, or the costs associated with the filing, issuance, registration, or service of a warrant, protection order, petition for a protection order or witness subpoena, whether issued inside or outside the state.
- Applicants are discouraged from proposing projects that include activities that may compromise victim safety.

Eligible Subgrantee Organizations

State and local units of government and public and private nonprofit organizations are eligible to receive STOP funds.

Allowable Services

In general, STOP Program funds may support personnel, training, technical assistance, evaluation, data collection, and equipment costs to enhance the apprehension, prosecution, and adjudication of persons committing violent crimes against women, and enhance services that meet the needs of women victimized by violence.

Website Links Disclaimer

The website links below are made available as a public service and reliance on any such information is at the user's own risk. The State of Maine, its agencies, officers and employees do not warrant the accuracy, reliability, completeness or timeliness of any information on these websites and may not be held liable for any losses caused by any person's reliance on the information available on these websites.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About STOP Formula Grants

The United States Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women has an excellent website with many of the frequently asked questions about STOP. This page is updated regularly.

<https://www.justice.gov/ovw/page/file/1008816/download>

Links to Additional Information

Office of Justice Programs Uniform Guidance

<https://ojp.gov/funding/Part200UniformRequirements.htm>