



Department of Justice

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PAO
(202) 514-2007
TDY (202) 514-1888

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AWARDS RECOVERY ACT GRANT TO SUPPORT NEW YORK TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAMS **COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

\$1.2 Million to Support Programs in New York City, Albany and Otsego Counties

WASHINGTON – Attorney General Eric Holder today announced that more than \$1.2 million in Recovery Act funds have been awarded to three New York transitional housing programs by the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) Recovery Act Transitional Housing Program. The funds are being awarded to Girls Educational & Mentoring Services in New York City, Equinox in Albany County, and Opportunities for Otsego Inc., in Otsego County.

“The most vulnerable in our society too often bear the greatest burden in times of economic hardship, which is why dedicating these funds to help survivors and their families get back on their feet is a concrete example of the Recovery Act at work,” said Attorney General Holder. “Providing viable temporary housing options and services that promote self-sufficiency are critical and proven steps toward violence-free lives.”

The Department of Justice is awarding \$499,864 to Girls Educational & Mentoring Services (GEMS) in New York City to provide transitional housing services to at least 30 commercially sexually-exploited and/or domestically-trafficked victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking or sexual assault annually. GEMS will also provide a broad range of support services to clients in the program, including safety planning, counseling, case management, education and employment training, health care, child care support and follow-up services after the clients leave the program. It is the goal of the program to help ensure that survivors develop the skills to transition to independent living and to re-integrate into the community.

The Department of Justice is awarding \$330,262 to Equinox in Albany County to provide rental assistance and supportive services for up to 24 months to victims of domestic violence who are homeless or fleeing from violence. The project will place an emphasis on assisting survivors to find apartments that will eventually become their permanent homes. Clients will receive housing search and rental assistance, safety planning, support and empowerment groups, case management, education and job training assistance, job placement services and temporary financial assistance with related costs such as child care and transportation.

The Department of Justice is awarding \$395,935 to Opportunities for Otsego Inc., for the organization’s Violence Intervention Program (VIP) which will increase the availability of transitional housing for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking and sexual assault in this rural county by providing short-term rental and utility assistance for victims and increase the ability of victims to obtain jobs by providing employment counseling, job training, and educational support. Specifically, the project will serve 18 to 23 households, an estimated 36 to 40 individuals, over the life of the project and will work with victims to obtain and maintain permanent housing, maintain personal

safety and wellness, obtain and maintain employment and economic growth and remove barriers to accessing safety and support service. The goals will be accomplished by offering housing location assistance, coordinating payment of housing expenses (i.e., first month's rent, security deposits, incidentals), offering 50 percent monthly rental subsidies for 6-12 months, case management, coordination with community employment services, transportation assistance, referrals to supportive services and collaboration with community partners.

The landmark American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, signed into law by President Obama, provides the Justice Department's Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) with \$43 million for the Transitional Housing Assistance Program to provide holistic, victim-centered support services that move individuals into permanent housing.

Transitional housing programs meet the goals of the Recovery Act through employing victim advocates and other personnel to assist victims, renovating housing for victims, offering additional housing units, and increasing job opportunities for victims through training, education and other support services. The award period for these grants is 24-36 months.

OVW, a component of the U.S. Department of Justice, provides leadership in developing the nation's capacity to reduce violence against women through the implementation of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and subsequent legislation. Created in 1995, OVW administers financial and technical assistance to communities across the country that are developing programs, policies and practices aimed at ending domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.

More information is available at www.ovw.usdoj.gov.

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