

OVW Fiscal Year 2024 Financial Assistance Grants for Victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence and Stalking Program Pre-Application Information Session Transcript

SHARON ELLIOTT: Welcome again, everyone. I'm Sharon Elliott in the Office on Violence Against Women. I'm the program coordinator for this program, the OVW Fiscal Year 2024 Financial Assistance Grants for Victims of Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence and Stalking. On behalf of my supervisor, Michelle Brinkley, who is unable to join us today, I again say welcome. Tonette Ngassa is our team lead, and I have my colleagues are with me, Kelly Marino, who is a program manager on the Transitional Housing Unit, and Alanda Thomas, who is a financial analyst with our Grants Financial Management Division. Alanda will speak to us a bit later about the questionnaires that are a part of the application process. So, let's get started.

So, the program description for our Financial Assistance Program for Victims. OVW's Financial Assistance for Victims Program supports victim service providers, Tribal governments, and Tribal organizations to provide flexible financial assistance to survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, alongside other victim services. Flexible financial assistance is intended to support survivors in achieving safety, stability, and healing by paying for necessities that are not easily met by traditional service providers and with the flexibility to meet self-identified needs quickly. Eligible applicants are limited to victim service providers, including culturally specific and population-specific organizations, Tribal governments, and Tribal organizations.

All applicants must have a documented history of providing flexible financial assistance to survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. The purpose area for this program. These funds can be used to provide survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking with flexible financial assistance for self-identified needs that are not easily met by traditional service providers. And here I want to make a distinction between client assistance and flexible financial assistance. Client assistance is typically program-directed, meaning the program identifies the areas in which they will assist survivors. Flexible financial assistance is survivor-directed, whereas the survivor determines what they need. It is important to make this distinction as you review the solicitation to ensure as an applicant you have a documented history of providing flexible financial assistance to survivors and that work is clearly demonstrated in your proposal. And also being able to make this distinction so that you know the difference between client assistance and flexible financial assistance.

Prohibited activities and limits to funding. We will talk about activities that compromise victim safety, out-of-scope activities, and limited use of funds. Activities that compromise victim safety. OVW does not fund activities that jeopardize victim safety, deter, or prevent physical

or emotional healing for victims, or allow offenders to escape responsibility for their actions. Applications that propose any such activities may receive a deduction in points during the review process or may be eliminated from consideration. Information on activities that compromise victim safety and recovery or undermine offender accountability may be found in the Solicitation Companion Guide. Out-of-scope activities. Research projects. Prohibited research does not include assessments conducted for internal improvement purposes only. For information on distinguishing between research and assessments, see the Solicitation Companion Guide.

Direct victim assistance. These grant funds are intended to support victims directly with flexible financial assistance to pay for self-identified needs. These grant funds cannot be used by victim service providers to support direct services to victims. The definition of a victim service provider can be found in the Other Program Eligibility Requirements section of this solicitation found on Page 10.

Activities focused on prevention efforts. Grant funds may not be used for prevention activities, such as financial literacy, outreach to elementary and secondary schools, implementation of educational programs regarding sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking intervention, and public awareness campaigns. Limited use of funds. Recipients may use up to 2% of grant award funds to conduct an assessment for internal improvement purposes only, such as by convening a listening session to identify service gaps in the community or surveying training participants about the quality of training content and delivery. Applicants considering such assessments must refer to the OVW research decision tree in the Solicitation Companion Guide to ensure that the activity does not qualify as human subject research.

The Solicitation Companion Guide also provides additional information on federal requirements related to research, assessments, and surveys. During the first year of the award period, recipients may not provide direct cash assistance to survivors. Payments made on behalf of survivors will be made directly to vendors. However, in the second year of the award period, recipients will be allowed to provide direct cash assistance to victims. For projects that intend to provide direct cash assistance to survivors, this direct assistance is limited to 10% of the applicant's total budget. Year 2 of direct cash assistance will be informed by data gathered from year one progress reports and other grantee data indicating whether there is a need for direct cash assistance and how it will be used. Recipients may use grant funds to pay survivors' debts in order to facilitate safety and stability. Only 10% of the applicant's budget may be used for this purpose.

Federal award information. The grant award period is 24 months. We anticipate the award period will start October 1, 2024. Awards will be made for up to \$500,000a and that is for the entire 24-month period, it is not per year. New applicants, so, this is a first-time program, so for FY 2024, FY 2024 is the first time awards have been made under this program. So, for that

reason, all applicants for this program are new applicants. OVW estimates that we will make approximately 15 awards.

Program requirements. Participation in OVW-sponsored training and technical assistance. Collection of and reporting on performance indicators, using your bi-annual performance report. Participation in an assessment or evaluation, if OVW conducts one that requires recipient involvement. Send the project coordinator and one other key staff member to an OVW grantee orientation. The other program requirements consist of recipients developing policies and procedures to govern the distribution of flexible financial assistance to victims. If funded, the applicant must submit to OVW policies and procedures governing eligibility for and distribution of flexible financial assistance to victims within 60 days of award notification for OVW to review. So, if you are a successful applicant, you will be required to submit your policies and procedures to us for review within 60 days after you have been notified of your award. Recipients will be required to revise and/or remove an activity that OVW determines may compromise victim safety, is out of scope, unallowable, or does not conform to best practices for providing flexible financial assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Eligibility information. Eligible entities are victim service providers including culturally specific and population-specific organizations that provide direct services to victims as one of their primary purposes. Tribal government, Tribal organizations. Tribal governments and Tribal organizations must identify the victim services agency or component that will administer the flexible financial assistance project alongside other victim services. Faith-based and community organizations, including culturally specific organizations, Tribal organizations, and population-specific organizations, that meet the eligibility requirements are eligible to receive awards under this solicitation. All applicants must have experience administering flexible financial assistance to victims and must describe that in the Letter of Experience. Please see eligibility information on Page 8 of the solicitation for definitions and descriptions of victim service provider, Tribal government, Tribal organization, culturally specific and population-specific organizations. Ineligible and disqualifying factors. Applications submitted by ineligible entities or that do not meet all program eligibility requirements will not be considered for funding. An application deemed deficient in one or more of the following categories may not be considered for funding.

Applications that compromise victim safety, out-of-scope activities, unallowable cost, pre-award risk assessment, completeness of application contents, and timeliness. Meaning, did you get your application in on time? See Page 9 of the solicitation for more information on disqualifying factors. Other program eligibility requirements. All certification and other eligibility related documents must be current and developed in accordance with the FY 2024 solicitation. OVW will consider only one application per organization for the same service area. If an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, OVW will review only the most recent system-validated version submitted before the deadline.

Application and submission information. Your letter of Intent is due July 30, 2024. Please follow formatting and technical requirements as outlined in solicitation. Application contents must include required documents and meet program eligibility requirements. OVW will not contact applicants for missing items on the list below. Applications that do not include all the following documents will not be considered for funding. Those documents include the proposal narrative, the budget detail worksheet and narrative, the Letter of Experience that is signed and currently dated on or before July 25, 2024. Please refer to the Letter of Experience section for more information.

Application and submission information continued. So, applications for this program will be submitted for a two-step process. The first step is submission of the SF-424 and SF-LLL in grants.gov. And No. 2 is the submission of the full application including attachments in the grant system. You should see solicitation Pages 10 through 12 for complete details. In Step 1 all applicants must complete the forms that I mentioned. SF-424 and SF-LLL are due by August 24. The full application is due in JustGrants on August 20. Step 2 is the standard applicant information. Applicants begin Step 2 of the application submission process by reviewing the standard applicant information, making edits as needed, confirming the authorized representative, verifying the legal name and address and entering a ZIP code or codes affected by this project.

Application content. Your application must include the proposal abstract, the data requested with application, your proposal narrative, the budget detail worksheet and narrative, and the Letter of Experience. Let's talk about each of these parts. I'm sorry. The proposal abstract. The abstract is a short summary, no more than two pages double-spaced, of the proposed project describing the primary activities for which funding is requested, who will benefit, how the applicant will measure progress in completing project goals and objectives.

Data requested with application. Applicants must complete three questionnaires. Those questionnaires are the pre-award risk assessment, the applicant questionnaire, and the Financial Assistance for Victims Program summary data sheet. They are required, however they are not scored. As I mentioned, Alanda Thomas from our Grants Financial Management Division has joined us today. A bit later she will talk a bit more about the pre-award risk assessment and budget-related resources available to you as you complete your application.

The proposal narrative. The proposal narrative is a total of 60 points. The narrative may not exceed 15 pages. Reviewers will not read beyond the page limit. The total point value, as I mentioned, for the proposal narrative section is 60 points. Applicants must upload the proposal as an attachment in JustGrants. The proposal narrative must include these three sections which make up the 60 points. That would be the purpose of the proposal; in that, you want to discuss the communities in your service area, the communities to be served, the current availability of flexible financial assistance, need and gaps in flexible financial assistance, and how this funding will address the needs. You can also address in the What Will Be Done section,

that that section has a point value of 30 points. The application here must provide a clear link between the proposed activities and the need identified in the purpose of the proposal section above. Do not include any of the activities listed as out-of-scope or unallowable activities described in a solicitation. We don't want those in your project narrative at all.

The third part of the proposal is the Who Will Implement the project, which carries 10 points. Here you will talk about the organizations and people responsible for implementing the project. You should see Pages 12 and 13 of the solicitation for full details on this section.

Budget detail and worksheet. All applications must include a detailed budget and budget narrative as an attachment in JustGrants. Budgets must present a clear link between the specific project activities the proposed budget items. In that budget, include sufficient funds to provide language access or describe other resources available to ensure meaningful access for persons with limited English proficiency. Include funds to attend OVW-sponsored training in the amount of \$7,000 for applicants in the 48 contiguous states and \$10,000 for applicants in the territories, Hawaii, and Alaska. These amounts are for the 24-month project period and not per year. Limit debt assistance to no more than 10% of the total budget. Limited direct cash assistance no more than 10% to be offered in 10% of the second year of the program only.

Letter of Experience. All applicants must include a signed and currently dated LOE describing the applicant's documented history of effective working providing services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, including providing flexible financial assistance to victims. If the applicant is a Tribal government or Tribal organization, the LOE should describe the experience of the victim service component or agency that will administer the FAV Program. The LOE must be on the applicant letterhead and the LOE has a value of 20 points. The LOE is limited to two pages. Additional pages will not be reviewed. Applications will be removed from consideration if the LOE is missing, not a separate document, or not signed and currently dated on or before July 24, I'm sorry, July 25, 2024. A sample LOE is available on the OVW website. You can also see a full details of the LOE, I believe on Page 17 of the solicitation.

Submission and deadline information. Unique entity identifier, the UEI, and the System for Award Management, or we know that as SAM. Entities applying for the first time must register with the following systems. Sam.gov registration includes receiving a UEI and takes an average of two to three weeks. Grants.gov registration takes an average of one week. JustGrants registration needs to be completed only after successful submission of Step 1 of the application as described under How to Apply. We strongly encourages all applicants to begin the registration process or ensure that all accounts are active and up-to-date by July 23. Failure to do so may result in missing the application deadline and therefore not being considered for funding. I can't emphasize that enough. Hopefully you checked your registration or you began your registration when you became aware of the solicitation. You don't want at the time of submission to be confronted with an incomplete application or incomplete registration when

you're ready to submit your application. Failure to submit the submission deadline will result in an application not being considered for funding. Applicants should refer to the list on pages 20 and 21 of the solicitation to ensure that all required steps and deadlines are met. Ensuring all required steps or deadlines are met. Failure to begin registration or application submission by the deadlines stated in the list previously mentioned is not an acceptable reason for late submission. Registration time frames are estimates. I will say that as well. See those related submissions beginning on Page 19 of the solicitation. You will find that Pages 19 through 21 in the solicitation.

Submission information and other submission requirements, we will continue to talk about that here. OVW policy and applicants experiencing technical difficulties during the registration and submission process. Here we will discuss technical difficulties with SAM or Grants.gov. Technical difficulties are issues beyond the applicant's control. OVW can confirm when each registration and/or submission action began. As an applicant, you should contact SAM or Grants.gov support as soon as you are aware of a problem, maintain documentation of when the issue began and all communication with technical support. Before the Grants.gov deadline, notify OVW, via email at OVW.FinancialAssistanceProgram@usdoj.gov, stating that you, the applicant, are experiencing technical difficulties with SAM or grants.gov. Provide us with regular updates to this program via the email address I just provided. You can see full details on Page 20 of the solicitation.

OK. Here we are to talk about technical difficulties while applying in JustGrants. For that, you would contact OVW's JustGrants Support at OVW.JustGrantsSupport@usdoj.gov or 866-655-4482, and certainly this information is in the solicitation as well, as soon as the applicant is aware of a problem and again maintain all documentation of your communication with JustGrants Support. You would contact us via email at the financial assistance program email I provided earlier and also stated in the solicitation prior to the JustGrants deadline, which is 8:59 p.m. Eastern Time on August 20, 2024. If an applicant must submit their application via email due to a technical difficulty, they must do so by the JustGrants application deadline, but no earlier than four hours prior to the deadline. The email absolutely must include a detailed description of the technical difficulty, the contact information, the name, telephone, and email, for the person making the request, the applicant's UEI number, the JustGrants application number and User Support tracking numbers, the complete application, so all of the parts I mentioned earlier and that are also outlined in the solicitation. You will submit those and I will name them here again. The complete application consists of the SF-LLL, SF-424, the proposal narrative, the budget and budget narrative, and the LOE. I would also like to note that the OVW support process is a separate helpdesk and is dedicated to OVW's applicants. See Page 21 of the solicitation for full details.

Submission information and other submission requirements. Here we will talk about the policy on late submission, on a late submission request due to severe inclement weather or natural or man-made disasters. Cases of severe inclement weather or natural or man-made disaster are

the only circumstances under which OVW may accept applications after 8:59 p.m. Eastern Time on August 20, 2024. Contact this program at the email provided in the solicitation and that I mentioned earlier as soon as the applicant is aware of severe weather or a natural or man-made disaster that may impede the submission of an application by the deadline. Applicants impacted by severe weather or a natural or man-made disaster occurring on or around the deadline must contact OVW within 48 hours after the deadline or as soon as communications are restored. See Page 21 of the solicitation for full details.

Application review information. So now, you have submitted your application and you got it and you got everything into the system and your application has moved forward for further review. So here we will talk about that process. Applications will be scored based on the degree to which the application responds to each section and addresses each element of the section. Applications will be scored based upon the quality of the response, capacity of the applicant and any partners, and the level of detail provided. Each element must be addressed in the section in which it is requested. Points may be deducted if the applicant does not include the information in the appropriate section regardless of if it is included elsewhere within the application. Each section will be reviewed as a separate document and will be scored as such. Specifically for the Financial Assistance for Victims Program, scoring will be as follows: proposal narrative, 60 points; purpose of the proposal, 20 points; what will be done, 30 points; who will implement the proposal, 10 points; the budget worksheet and budget narrative, 20 points; and finally, that all-important letter of experience, 20 points. The reviewing and selection process. Applications will be subject to a peer review and programmatic review. Peer review is where OVW will subject all eligible, complete, and timely applications to a peer review process that is based on the criteria outlined in the solicitation. OVW may use internal reviewers, external reviewers, or a compilation of both.

For programmatic review, all applications considered for funding will be subject to a programmatic review. That review consists of assessing the application for compliance with the program scope, the activities, and activities that compromise victim safety. OVW reserves the right to deduct points from applications for the following reasons. Compromising victim safety and recovery, undermining offender accountability, you could receive a deduction of up to 25 points. If there are out-of-scope or unallowable activities, a deduction of up to 25 points as well. Formatting and technical requirements, a 10-point deduction, up to 10 points can be deducted. Applications exceeding the page limit can be deducted up to 15 points. For full details see Pages 22-23 of the solicitation. Successful applicants will receive OVW award notifications electronically from JustGrants, not from grants.gov, solely from JustGrants. Recipients will be required to log into JustGrants to review and accept the award. The authorized representative must acknowledge having read and understood all sections of the award instrument and submit the required declaration and certification to accept the award. These steps will be completed electronically in JustGrants. See Page 23 of solicitation for full details. As we near the end of our presentation, and as mentioned earlier Alanda Thomas from GFMD will join us now to talk about the questionnaires and resources

available to you. Alanda.

Alanda Thomas: OK. I'm sorry about that. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to unmute for a couple of seconds. Good afternoon. My name is Alanda Thomas and I'm a financial analyst with the GMFD division. In the next couple of slides, we are going to focus on aspects of your application that relate to the documents that our financial team, the Grants Financial Management Division, reviews. More specifically, we will discuss some items that GFMD has identified from prior years' applications that could help with expediting our review process. So, for today, we are going to highlight certain aspects of the pre-award risk assessment and provide you with a link to a detailed webinar on how to develop the budget that will be included in your application.

First, we will highlight the items identified in the Summary Data Sheet, which is completed by all applicants. Specifically, two items that we would like to discuss are the single audit response and the IRS three-step safe harbor procedure. OVW requests that all applicants provide a statement as to whether they have expended \$750,000 or more in federal funds during their last fiscal year. If they have, then they indicate that, and also specify the end date of their last fiscal year. However, GFMD is finding that applicants do not always include all of this information. Please ensure that this question is answered in its entirety on the summary data sheet, question No. 3. Another item we would like to highlight from the solicitation is specifically for non-profit organizations. If you use the IRS three-step safe harbor procedure to determine your executives' compensation you are required to provide a disclosure letter. Please refer to the solicitation for further details and a link to a sample letter. Note that there are four required parts of this disclosure letter. The sample letter provided outlines all four parts of the disclosure, so please be sure to follow the sample and provide a response to each of the four pieces.

The next item that we would like to discuss is the pre-award risk assessment questions, which assists GFMD during their pre-award risk assessment review for all applications. Each applicant must prepare a response to all 11 questions, and each question has multiple parts. We have noticed from prior years that applicants do not fully answer all parts of the questions, which in turn requires GFMD to reach out to the applicant and which may delay funding decisions. Some of the most common issues we have encountered have been, for example, question No. 2, where the applicant indicates that they do indeed have internal policies, but they don't provide a brief list of the topics covered in their policies and procedures. On question No. 3, some applicants failed to provide tracking expenditures, and more specifically, whether or not it tracks budgeted versus actual expenditures. These are a few examples, but make sure you read each piece of each question and provide a full and comprehensive response. Next slide.

This next slide will quickly highlight some resources that are available as you are creating a budget to be submitted with your application. Over the last couple of years, GFMD has developed a detailed webinar presentation on how to, I'm sorry, a budget to be submitted with

OVW applications. This presentation addresses some of the challenges you may face with your budget and provide some insight about OVW's budget review process.

Next up is uniform guidance that can be found at 2 CFR 200. Use your favorite search engine for this one. Other resources include the DOJ Financial Guide and the solicitation itself. We know this can be a lot of information to process, so if you have any questions about the GFMD information discussed, please feel free to contact the GFMD helpdesk at 1-888-514-8556 or by email at OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov. That is the best way to contact us. Someone supports that every day until 6:00 and we try to respond within the hour, though it may take a couple of hours.

SHARON ELLIOTT: Thank you, Alanda.

ALANDA THOMAS: You're welcome.

SHARON ELLIOTT: The information you shared is very helpful to our applicants, so thank you again. As we come to a close of our presentation and open up for Q&A, I encourage each applicant to really read the solicitation in its entirety before applying. Follow the solicitation, the information in the application should be as detailed as possible. Ensure that each section is completely addressed, even if it feels redundant. Answer each of the questions independent of each other. But also showing how they link. Number all pages. Fully name and limit the use of acronyms in the application. You may know what you're acronyms mean, but we may not, or whoever reviews the application may not know what your acronyms mean. Please name them and limit the use of those acronyms. Information submitted beyond what is required in the solicitation is not likely to be read by staff or peer reviewers. Please, please, please utilize the Solicitation Companion Guide and all of the other resources available to you on our website. There are lots of applicant resources that are available. Please take advantage of that. You can also ask us questions here. We have some time for that and also via email.

Right now, what I'm going to do is we will open up the questions, but how I want to start this conversation or start the Q&A session is to answer some of the questions that you had on the registration form. We will start there. I first want to start by saying there are some questions that came in that unfortunately we can't answer. Some of those questions were around how geographic decisions are made, how award decisions are made, geographic distributions of awards and how to make applications more competitive. Those are good questions, but unfortunately those are areas we cannot provide answers or feedback on. Where we can answer, let's start here.

There was a question that came in about the history of financial assistance requirements. Just real brief because we don't have a lot of time although there was a lot of work that went into researching this topic for our office and that brought us here today. To briefly answer

this question, over the last year or so, OVW's Research and Evaluation team and other OVW staff conducted lots of research, participated in listening sessions on topics around flexible and unconditional financial assistance. This program Flexible Financial Assistance to Victims, and program requirements is the culmination of the results of that research and OVW's programming utilizing the tools of flexible financial assistance to further our work in supporting survivors. I hope whoever asked that question, that is a sufficient answer. If not, you can shoot me an email.

I want to also offer a couple of definitions and clarifications based on several of the questions that came in. One of those questions was the definition for flexible financial assistance. Now, here we are. Excuse me. Flexible financial assistance are unrestricted funds used to support survivors in achieving safety and stability and healing from the harm they have suffered. This is a broad definition. However, in the context of you as an advocate to this program, it leaves space for applicants with experience in administering flexible financial assistance to examine the ways in which you have previously assisted survivors and perhaps using these funds to fill in gaps of survivor needs not previously met.

Questions have come in about the examples asking for examples of the use of flexible funding. Because we are asking, not just asking, but the requirement for this program for all applicants is you have a documented history in administering flexible financial assistance, you should have some idea around the types of that are eligible. Because it is flexible, there are lots of things that are eligible. You have to be the person that answers that for your area. I will give you some examples. Transportation, education, employment, children's needs, safety needs, housing, and debt. These are just examples but keep in mind that you have the flexibility to define the parameters of your project. That is the beauty of this program. Asked what are the greatest needs of the survivors served and how could these particular funds help them. You have space to be creative. You have space to think about the survivors you serve and how these funds will best serve them.

There was a question that came up about the direct services language that is in the solicitation. The question is this, "The RFP says funding cannot be used for direct services for DV survivors, is the financial assistance part of direct services?" It is. To clarify that, flexible financial assistance must be provided alongside the direct services a survivor is receiving. Look at it this way: the services you are currently providing and the FFA being secondary to that. They're both services, the financial assistance is working in tandem with what you are already doing. There are some questions about eligibility. The question is, "Are organizations serving victims of human trafficking, eligible to apply?" The answer to that is yes if serving survivors, if you are serving survivors within the context of one of the four VAWA crimes, meaning are you serving survivors that are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking?

Next question "Are partnerships required?" They are not. Next question, "How much experience are you looking for in terms of having administered funds?" The answer to

that is applicants would need to describe their experience in the LOE. When we receive that information, then we are able to determine how much experience do you really have, do you have 20 years, or do you have a week? Do you have documented history in supporting survivors and administering financial assistance?

Next question, eligibility around what classifies as nongovernmental entities. I was not sure what that question was, but I will attempt to answer it by saying nonprofits are typically nongovernmental. If that is not the answer you are looking for or you need something different, just shoot me an email, please. Minimum expectations and criteria or victim eligibility. Answer, victim eligibility means they are survivors of one of the four VAWA crimes and receive services from the applicant organization. Again, you have some experience in administering these funds. You will know or should know what the eligibility around what your program looks like. The eligibility is minimal in terms of the program serving survivors of VAWA crimes and receiving services from the applicant organization. Next question. "Does our experience providing flexible financial experience have to be victims of crime, can it be to homeless clients?" The answer is these funds support victims of VAWA crimes, one of the four VAWA crimes. Next question, a coalition asked if they qualified to apply as a pass-through coalition. The answer to that is no, this is not funding for coalitions. We are directly funding programs for flexible financial assistance to survivors. Next question came from a family justice center. An FCJ, Family Justice Center, is not eligible, however, a victim service provider organization, you may work within that FJC, you may be eligible to apply.

The next category of questions were primarily around budgets and allowable costs. The first question is, "Does this program cover a personnel salary? If so are there stipulations?? Yes, funds may be used to cover salaries to administer the program such as writing policies, tracking expenditures, activities, stipulations, I'm not sure what the submitter was asking, the program would determine the cost associated with this program. Hopefully I am answering that. If not, please feel free, if you are on the call to provide clarification, shoot me any mail.

KELLY MARINO: Sharon, we have gone a number of questions related to staff salaries and personnel costs. There were some other nuances that may help the person included that they may have originally submitted. I think most of the questions are is very sort of cap or allowable amount related to personnel costs that could be attributed to the award?

SHARON ELLIOTT: There isn't a cap, but what I would remind applicants of is that the funds are to support, you need the personnel to administer the program. What does that look like realistically within your respective organization? That's what you want your budget to reflect. You also want your budget to reflect how are these funds primarily being used to support survivors? You have to balance that, determining how much time your staff will spend on administering a program, tracking expenditures, writing the policies, monitoring activities, submitting the biannual progress reports, those kind of things. How much time does that take and how much do you want to charge to support? Let's see. The next question is -- I

just talked about that. Next question, "What is the maximum amount that could be allocated toward client funds?" My answer is this. Awards will be made for up to \$500,000 for the award period of 24 months. The only limitations are the amounts budgeted for payments with debt, which is 10% and in year two, if you are allocating funds for direct cash assistance, which is also 10%. Those are really the only places where you see some limitations that we have placed. Hopefully that answered the question. The next question, "Is giving a client landlord a rent check directly OK?" The answer to that is direct payments to vendors is allowable. Next question, "Is there a minimum request amount?" I'm guessing are you asking is there a minimum amount that you would request for an award and that answer is no, we are making awards up to \$500,000, you as the applicant organization, would determine the cost of your project, if it is less than \$500,000, let that be your request.

The next category of questions that I have is somewhat around the experience in administering flexible financial funds. This question is, "Will my experience administering HUD rapid rehousing funds count as prior experience with flexible funding?" My answer here is – really, I'm answering with a question because I don't know the components to rapid rehousing. My question to that is, does the program serve survivors of VAWA crimes and have a specific focus on administering flexible financial assistance? That is my question to you, because I don't know the components of rapid rehousing. All I could speak to is what the requirements are for this program in terms of your experience. You having to provide some documented history around administering flexible financial assistance. Next question, what are some examples of organizations one might partner with to deliver this program? There are no required partnerships for this program.

and applicant organization has to have expertise in administering flexible financial assistance. Next question. "If you are a victim service provider but have never received OVW funding, are you still considered a victim services provider?" OK, so my question to this, I'm answering it as best I can based upon how it was asked, applicants may not have necessarily received prior OVW funding. Next question. "If we have a grant pending, if we have a grant pending of decision can we apply for another grant with another statement of work for another population?" My answer to that is, this grant may serve as an additional resource. Your organization will have to determine if they are eligible and would this program address survivors' needs in your community. Next question: ""We would like clarity on eligibility guidelines around victim services providers who can apply." So, the eligibility in the solicitation spells out quite clearly who can apply and there also some there also definitions for a victim services provider and all of the, there are some definitions for other applicants as well. So I would encourage you to revisit that list and read the descriptions or definitions for each of those different categories and see if that fits. If you meet the definition of a victim services provider. Next question. "Are current OVW grantees less likely to win this award? How may 15 similarly scoring awards be distributed across the U.S.?" My answer to that is this is a competitive discretionary program with limited funds. And the last question that I have is one

again about partnerships. "Please address expectations around partnership subrecipients." And my answer is partnerships are not required for this program.

Kelly, so what questions, are there any questions that you have that we need to address or I can open up the floor for questions from participants on the call.

KELLY MARINO: Yes, so we received quite a few questions and I know that we have a fairly hard stop at 2:30 because of our interpreters who've been so wonderful to join us today.

SHARON ELLIOTT: Yes.

KELLY MARINO: So I will go ahead and get to some of the questions. We had a number of questions following your clarification around the eligibility of domestic violence, sexual assault, or dual coalitions applying. "Are coalitions who are seeking to provide pass-through grants to local organizations in their communities eligible to apply?"

SHARON ELLIOTT: No.

KELLY MARINO: OK. "Is a coalition eligible to apply in a different capacity?" Because I think there's a question around if they provide direct assistance to survivors.

SHARON ELLIOTT: If they're providing direct assistance. I would say yes, but not as a pass-through.

KELLY MARINO: OK. Thank you for the clarification. We asked about regional applications. "Can a group of victim service providers apply?"

SHARON ELLIOTT: I saw that that question and there was there was something. Can we table that one, because, yeah, and get the name, get the contact information if you don't have it, of the person that submitted it and I'll answer that one.

KELLY MARINO: OK.

SHARON ELLIOTT: OK thank you.

KELLY MARINO: Sounds good. All right, some of the other questions I have one if Alanda's still here around the <unintelligible>. There seems to have been an update to the <unintelligible> amount, would that be allowable to use the 15% instead of the 10% so um would that be allowable to use the 15% instead of the 10%? I'll leave that to Alanda or GMFD to answer. There were a number of questions around how much direct assistance can be given to survivors. Is there a minimum or maximum amount of assistance that a survivor?

SHARON ELLIOTT: That's one of those areas where the program, they get to say they get to examine the their service area, their community, and say because they've had experience administering flexible financial assistance they're able to identify those gaps and say this is the area where these flexible financial assistance funds are most needed and here's the dollar amount that we need that we are requesting rather to meet this particular need.

KELLY MARINO: We had a few folks mention that they had missed the Grant.gov deadline are they able to continue on with their application process?

SHARON ELLIOTT: Well the deadline I think is the 20th. Wait a minute, the registrations had to be completed by the 23rd which I think is tomorrow. So I don't think they've missed anything but it's important that they have their Grants.gov registration active so that they can submit their SF-424 SF-LLL and to have those systems in place so that they can submit their application you know, just complete the complete the application process. Excuse me.

KELLY MARINO: And to be clear if they missed if eventually they do end up missing the Grants.gov deadline they would not be able to complete their just grants application, right?

SHARON ELLIOTT: Right. They would not be, exactly.

KELLY MARINO: Excellent. So be sure to mind the deadline. OK, some of the questions we've already answered around what type of flex funding is available, but there were questions around gift cards and direct cash assistance. Are those two things the same thing or are gift cards and direct cash assistance considered two separate?

SHARON ELLIOTT: Those are considered, they're considered two separate things. A program can use gift cards. We have, as I mentioned before and you'll see described in the solicitation, that direct cash assistance is only allowable in year two and you would make that the determination of direct cash assistance based upon, say in year one there were lots of situations where survivors needed to have cash in hand to do, to pay for something, to do something, to pay for something that they needed, and you said that, "Our data, the results of our data says that we need direct cash assistance for these reasons." So, that's going to support your allocation of direct cash assistance in year in year two, your use of direct cash assistance, excuse me. So only in year two can you provide survivors with direct cash assistance. If you have some idea of what that is already, you can you know prepare for that. You can say, based upon our experience and it could be recent, "Based upon our experience see a need for direct cash assistance in these areas," so you're prepared for that for year two. But only in year two, to answer your question, direct cash, I mean, gift cards are fine. Direct cash assistance in year two only.

KELLY MARINO: OK, thank you very much. We have a point of clarification around the Letter of Experience. Endy noted that the PowerPoint says on or before the 25th but it was said verbally that, oh, I'm sorry. The PowerPoint noted on or after the 25th the presenter noted on or before the 25th and they're asking which is the deadline

SHARON ELLIOTT: I'm sorry. It's on or it's on or after the 25th of July. So the whole point is that you have a currently dated, currently signed and dated LOE.

KELLY MARINO: Excellent. We have some questions around, a bunch came in. Are hotel costs allowable under this award?

SHARON ELLIOTT: Hotel costs? Hotel costs. I would need to know more about that.

KELLY MARINO: OK. All right. Could make part of the funding a subgrant to another agency who would then provide the services to a survivor? For example a workforce training presenter or child care?

SHARON ELLIOTT: I would ask why, if the applicant organization is required to have the experience in administering the funds, why would you have that as a subrecipient situation with someone else? You know, a partner with someone else? I would just need to know more about the reasoning behind that.

KELLY MARINO: OK. The LOE appears to be single-spaced. Is the single spacing therefore allowed for the LOE if it's also submitted on letterhead?

SHARON ELLIOTT: Hold on on second, I'm trying to remember. I'm at a loss I can't remember what it say from the solicitation, like I just drew a blank.

KELLY MARINO: Let's see. I don't believe it says anything about formatting in the solicitation directly around spacing. It just says the LOE is limited to two pages, additional pages will not be reviewed.

SHARON ELLIOTT: To two pages? OK.

KELLY MARINO: And then a sample available on the website.

SHARON ELLIOTT: OK. So it's just limited to two pages. Oh, here we go. we go let me see. Oh, yeah. Here we go. It's limited to two pages there's nothing um that speaks to spacing.

KELLY MARINO: And that's different from the narrative, which is and the remaining parts of the application that need to be double-spaced correct?

SHARON ELLIOTT: Right. Maybe they got those things ... it was something that had to be double spaced and I'm not sure what that is right now but anyway, LOE, two pages. I'm pretty sure you don't have to double space that because then you wouldn't have a lot of room to really talk about your experience and so forth. Even the LOEs that I've seen, they're not double-spaced.

KELLY MARINO: All righty. So there's a second question that I think clarifies the group victim service providers applying but also it looks like a few other folks are interested in applying as a group entity with other domestic violence or other homelessness programs in their community so, if you have those questions you can email the Financial Assistance Program email that's listed in the chat and then we'll follow up with you, or if you want to reach out. What performance measurements will be required? Will these be entered in a PMT system?

SHARON ELLIOTT: Performance measurement, we have the biannual performance report that will be required and that report is submitted via through our JustGrants system.

KELLY MARINO: All right. Can children of survivors receive flexible financial assistance?

SHARON ELLIOTT: Children. Meaning, I mean flexible financial assistance is for the family, is it to support an activity of the child, is that how it's framed? Because if that's the case, yeah I guess, yes.

KELLY MARINO: OK. If the attendee is present and wants to clarify on the types of services that they are proposing, you can put that in the chat. Otherwise we'll just keep on marching through the questions.

SHARON ELLIOTT: OK.

KELLY MARINO: If a client requests housing vouchers or subsidies and we administer those by HUD or COC contracts, is that flexible financial assistance?

SHARON ELLIOTT: No.

KELLY MARINO: OK. Regarding the limited use of funds, could 2% of our award be used for ongoing internal assessment of DV service program data, including the provision of financial assistance? This would involve database specialist time ensuring the accuracy of our victim services data throughout the full program period.

SHARON ELLIOTT: I think I saw that one, and I believe they can. The solicitation mentions that 2% allocation for what they the submitter is asking, so I will say yes to them.

KELLY MARINO: Excellent. There is a question some folks have asked it around the budget worksheet at the end of the solicitation after page 27, there is a full budget worksheet that you all can reference that's the budget worksheet that has been referenced throughout this call today. OK. OK. Are self-care, and this will this looks like it'll be our wrap-up question are things um such as health self-care and well-being services such as yoga, and I saw earlier acupuncture and dance classes something that's considered an allowable cost.

SHARON ELLIOTT: Yes.

KELLY MARINO: OK, we answered that one pretty quickly so one last. Can funding be used for immigration legal services?

SHARON ELLIOTT: I think we talk about that in the in the solicitation and I'd have to go back to that, to that section which I don't have it in front of me but if you can make note of that we can get that question. I'll get that question answered.

KELLY MARINO: All right. Well, that looks like it wraps up our time, so thank you very much.

SHARON ELLIOTT: All right. Thank you so much, Kelly, and thank you all for attending this pre-application call. We really appreciate your interest in all of OVW's programs. If there are outstanding questions that you still have that you need some answers to feel free to send us an email at the email address that was mentioned in this presentation, but more importantly it's in the solicitation. So thank you again. The the recording will be available to you or on our website actually, sometime soon, so look out for that. Again, thank you and enjoy the rest of your week.

