

Office on Violence Against Women: FY 2026 Legal Assistance for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, and Sexual Assault Grant Program

Grants.gov Funding Opportunity Number: O-OVW-2026-172580

Application Deadlines in Eastern Time (ET):

- 1: Complete SF-424 and Submit in Grants.gov: **July 31, 2026, by 11:59 pm ET**
 - 2: Submit full application in JustGrants: **August 4, 2026, by 4:59 pm ET**
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U.S. Department of Justice

OVW

Office on Violence Against Women

Working Together to End the Violence

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1. BASIC INFORMATION

Purpose of the Funding

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) is a component of the United States Department of Justice. OVW administers Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grants designed to prevent and respond to domestic/dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

This is a notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for the **Legal Assistance for Victims (LAV) Grant Program**. This program increases access to legal assistance for victims of domestic/dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking who are seeking relief in legal matters relating to or arising out of that abuse or violence. It funds projects that provide comprehensive legal assistance, as defined in 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(24). The projects must include organizations that have a mission and history of providing direct services to victims of domestic/dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. See [Eligibility](#) and [Program Description](#) for more information.

This NOFO has two application categories:

- **Category 1:** Legal Assistance for Victims (LAV)
- **Category 2:** LAV Expanding Legal Services Initiative (More information [here](#).)

Funding Details

Announcement Type	Initial
Assistance Listing Number	16.524
Statutory Authority	34 U.S.C. § 20121
Grants.gov Opportunity Number	Category 1: C-OVW-2026-00001-PROD Category 2: C-OVW-2026-00002-PROD
Expected Total Amount of Funding	Category 1: \$40,300,000 Category 2: \$4,700,000
Anticipated Number of Awards	Category 1: 50 Category 2: 10
Award Type	Grant
Anticipated Award Amounts	Category 1: \$750,000 - \$900,000 Category 2: \$400,000 - \$750,000
Expected Award Periods	Category 1: 36 months Category 2: 24 months (Both starting on October 1, 2026.)

Key Dates and Times

NOFO Release Date	June 4, 2026
Pre-application Q&A Sessions	Category 1: June, 16, 2026 Category 2: June 30, 2026
SAM.gov Registration/Renewal	Start the process at least 30 days before deadlines
Step 1: Grants.gov Deadline	11:59 p.m. ET on July 31, 2026
Step 2: JustGrants Deadline	4:59 p.m. ET on August 4, 2026
Anticipated Notification Date	By September 30, 2026

See [Questions?](#) at the end of this NOFO for agency contact information.

2. ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants

The types of entities that are eligible to apply are:

Government Entities

- Indian Tribal Governments,¹ including Tribal organizations²

Nonprofit Entities

- Private nonprofit entities³
- Territorial organizations
- Tribal nonprofit organizations⁴
- Publicly funded organizations not acting in a governmental capacity, such as law schools

Education Entities

- Public and state-controlled institutions of higher education (law schools)
- Private institutions of higher education (law schools)

Recipients with grants ending by September 30, 2026 may apply but are unlikely to be funded if they have enough funds to carry the project through September 30, 2027.

Faith-based organizations that meet the eligibility requirements for this program are eligible to apply (more information is in the [Application Companion Guide](#)).

Cost sharing and application limit: This NOFO does **not** require cost sharing (match). You may submit more than one application under this NOFO if each application

¹ Must be federally recognized, see 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(22).

² Defined at 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(45).

³ Entities with or without 501(c)(3) status with the Internal Revenue Service.

⁴ Defined at 34 U.S.C. § 12291(a)(44).

proposes a different project in a different service area. If you submit multiple versions of the same application, only the most recent system-validated version will be reviewed.

Additional Eligibility Factors

Certification: You must submit the following certification. See [Additional Application Components](#) for how to submit.

- Delivery of Legal Assistance Certification — Pursuant to 34 U.S.C. § 20121(d), to be eligible for an award, applicants must certify in writing that they will comply with statutory requirements related to supervision, training, and expertise of individuals providing legal assistance with grant funds. See [sample certification letter](#).

Required Partnerships

1. The application must include a nonprofit, nongovernmental or Tribal organization with the mission or purpose of providing **direct services to victims** of domestic or dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. (Tribal governments may meet this requirement through a victim services division or component of the Tribe.) The organization may be a multi-service organization with a distinct division or program with the mission or purpose of serving victims of these crimes.
2. The application must include a nonprofit, nongovernmental or Tribal organization with experience and expertise in providing **legal representation** by an attorney to victims of domestic/dating violence sexual assault, or stalking. (Tribal governments may meet this requirement through a division or component with such experience/expertise, including lay (non-lawyer) legal advocacy if the project will serve victims in Tribal court matters only.)

Note: Experience providing **only** legal referrals is not sufficient to meet requirement #2.

Applicants must show the required partnerships (see [Memorandum of Understanding or memorandum of Exemption](#)). Applications without the required partnerships will not be considered for funding.

Disqualifying Factors: Factors that may result in removal during the review process are described on the [OVW website](#). In addition, any nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding the tax described in section 511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code is ineligible.⁵

⁵ See 34 U.S.C. § 12291(b)(15)(B)(ii).

3. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Statutory Authority/Program Goals and Objectives

Per 34 U.S.C. § 20121, funds must be used for **one or more of the following purposes**:

1. To implement, expand, and establish cooperative efforts and projects between domestic violence, dating violence, and sexual assault victim service providers and legal assistance providers to provide legal assistance for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault.
2. To implement, expand, and establish efforts and projects to provide legal assistance for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault by organizations with a demonstrated history of providing direct legal or advocacy services on behalf of these victims.
3. To implement, expand, and establish efforts and projects to provide competent, supervised pro bono legal assistance for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, except not more than 10 percent of grant funds awarded may be used for this purpose. **(The 10 percent limit is on the funds OVW awards under this program overall and is not specific to a project.)**

Expanding Legal Services Initiative (ELSI)

ELSI is a special initiative under the LAV Grant Program. The purpose is to expand legal representation available to victims by funding victim service providers (including Tribal governments with victim services divisions or components) that do not currently offer in-house legal representation for victims. The ELSI award helps organizations create a legal department. Continuation funds support the new legal department in providing direct legal services to victims. For more information on this initiative, go [here](#).

Expected outcomes: OVW will measure success by reviewing a recipient's submission of performance reports and data and the extent to which project implementation reflects progress toward the goals and objectives of this NOFO. See the [VAWA Measuring Effectiveness Initiative](#) for more information.

Unallowable activities: For information on program-specific unallowable activities and costs to help you develop your application and budget consistent with program requirements, see the [Application Companion Guide](#) and [Budget](#) section in this NOFO.

Statutory Funding Priorities

1. Per 34 U.S.C. § 20121(f)(2)(C), not less than 25% of LAV Program funds must be used to support projects focused solely or primarily on providing legal assistance to victims of sexual assault. To meet this requirement, OVW will prioritize applications proposing to focus primarily on such assistance. In addition, applications proposing to focus all their activities in this area may receive larger

awards of longer duration and may be eligible for an additional 24 months of non-competitive continuation funding. To be considered for this priority, the applicant or a project partner must be a nonprofit, nongovernmental or Tribal organization with the mission or purpose to provide direct services to victims of sexual assault, or it must be a Tribal government with a division or component with such a mission or purpose.

Applicants with FY 2023 LAV awards under this priority, and with a project period end date of September 30, 2026, may apply for noncompetitive continuation funding in FY 2026. **OVW will contact such applicants directly.**

2. Per 34 U.S.C. § 20121(f)(2)(A), not less than 3% of funds made available for the LAV Grant Program must be used for projects that assist victims of domestic/dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault on lands within the jurisdiction of an Indian tribe (this includes Alaska Native Villages). To be considered for this priority, an application must include the percentage of proposed activities that will support services to victims on Tribal lands. If the applicant is not a Tribal government or organization, the application should include a Tribal government or organization as a project partner.

Agency Funding Priorities

OVW may give priority consideration to applicants that propose projects designed to advance the following public-safety priorities (as applicable within the scope of this NOFO):

1. Combatting human trafficking and transnational crime, particularly crimes linked to illegal immigration, transnational criminal organizations, and cartel operations, including projects that strengthen law enforcement investigation and prosecution while supporting safety and justice for trafficking victims who have also suffered domestic/dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking.
2. Projects dedicated to direct victim services—particularly in small towns and rural, remote, and Tribal communities.

Note: Addressing these priorities is one of many factors that OVW considers in making funding decisions. Receiving priority consideration does not guarantee funding.

4. APPLICATION CONTENTS AND FORMAT

Application Contents List

OVW will only consider applications that contain parts marked ***REQUIRED*** below. Refer to the [DOJ Grant Application Submission Checklist](#) for application instructions. All supporting documents and resources for this program are on the [OVW website](#).

Application Item	Submission Type
Step 1: Grants.gov	
Application for Federal Assistance: SF-424 *REQUIRED*	Online Form
Step 2: JustGrants	
Standard Applicant Information *REQUIRED*	Online Form
Proposal Abstract	Text Box
Data Requested with Application • Pre-award Risk Assessment	Online Form
Proposal Narrative *REQUIRED*	Attachment
Budget *REQUIRED*	Attachment
Budget/Financial Attachments • Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) • Applicant Financial Capability Questionnaire (if applicable) • Executive Compensation Disclosure (if applicable)	Attachment
Memorandum of Understanding or Memorandum of Exemption *REQUIRED*	Attachment
Additional Application Components • Delivery of Legal Assistance Certification *REQUIRED* • Certification regarding out-of-scope activities • Summary Data Sheet • Confidentiality Notice Form	Attachment

Standard Applicant Information ***REQUIRED***

Review and edit as needed the information imported from the [SF-424 submitted in Grants.gov](#) and add ZIP codes for areas affected by the project.

Proposal Abstract

In JustGrants, enter a proposal abstract (limited to 2,000 characters) summarizing the proposed project. See example [here](#). As abstracts for funded projects are public, do not include any personally identifying information (e.g., staff names).

Data Requested with Application: Pre-award Risk Assessment

Complete this questionnaire in JustGrants. The questions are available [here](#).

Proposal Narrative ***REQUIRED***

Format of the Proposal Narrative

Use the [Proposal Narrative Template](#) on the OVW website. It must be:

- No longer than 10 pages, single-spaced
- In a font no smaller than 11-point
- On correctly numbered pages with one-inch margins
- In a file format openable in Microsoft Word or Adobe Reader
- In a table format or use headings and subheadings that correspond to the sections listed below
- Written in plain language

If you do not follow this format, OVW may reduce the score/ranking of the application.

Sections of the Proposal Narrative

The Proposal Narrative must include the three sections listed below. If you want priority consideration, the Proposal Narrative must state which priority(ies) your project will advance and describe how it will do so. If you are applying to receive ELSI funds, you must state that you currently do not provide in-house legal representation for victims and describe the in-house legal program that will be developed with the award.

For NOFOs that require a memorandum of understanding (MOU), memorandum of experience (MOE), or letters of support from project partners, they are reviewed in conjunction with the Proposal Narrative.

1. Purpose of the Project (weighted at 30%)

- Say why you are applying for the grant.
- Identify the project's goals/objectives. Summarize why the goals/objectives were selected, e.g., how the project complements other services, improves services, fills service gaps, and/or responds to a need.
- Describe the communities that will be served.

2. What Will Be Done (weighted at 35%)

- For each project goal, describe:
 - Activities and who is responsible for them;
 - How the applicant will ensure victim safety and/or offender accountability; and
 - Outcomes for knowing the goal was achieved, and how these outcomes will be tracked.
- Include a supervision and mentoring plan for grant-funded attorneys.⁶
- Describe how services, products, etc. will be accessible to anyone who may need them.

⁶ Go [here](#) for more information.

3. Who Will Implement the Project (weighted at 20%)

- Identify the people who will implement the project. Provide for each person their name, agency/organization, position/title, their role and responsibilities on the proposed project, and a description of how they are equipped to fulfill their role/responsibility on the project.
- Identify the attorney(s) who will provide legal assistance to victims under the project (proposals to represent victims exclusively in Tribal courts may include lay legal advocates rather than an attorney). Initial ELSI projects may not be able to identify the attorney(s) but do need to include an attorney in the budget.
- Describe anticipated coordination and collaboration among project partners and/or others and how working together will advance the project's goals.

Budget and Associated Documentation

Budget ***REQUIRED*** (weighted at 15%)

Use the [Sample Budget Narrative](#) (attach file in JustGrants) to submit the budget and refer to [Budget Information](#) and the [Creating a Budget](#) webinar for more information:

- List each cost needed to implement the project under the appropriate cost category. **Total funding requested for 36 months must be no more than \$750,000. Applicants solely addressing the sexual assault-focused priority may request up to \$900,000 for 36 months. New ELSI applicants may request up to \$400,000 for 24 months of funding.**
- Clearly name and describe each cost.
- Show the computation of each cost (e.g., cost per unit, number of units, and total cost).
- Enter narrative, as needed, to explain the cost calculations and connection to your project goals, objectives, and activities.
- Include only costs that are reasonable, allocable, and necessary for the project. They must be allowable under the funding statute and agency requirements.⁷
- Fairly and reasonably compensate project partners, unless a reason not to is explained in a memorandum of understanding or letter of support.
- Distinguish clearly between subawards and contracts in allocating any grant funds to other entities.⁸
- Set aside a minimum of \$5,000 on the Travel line to participate in training and technical assistance.

Budget/Financial Attachments

- **Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable):** If the budget includes indirect costs, upload your current, federally approved indirect cost rate agreement.

⁷ See [2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart E](#) and the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#). Read information on unallowable costs [here](#).

⁸ More information on this is [here](#).

- [Applicant Financial Capability Questionnaire](#) (if applicable): Nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations that have not previously (or within the last three years) received funding from OVW must complete and upload this form.
- [Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation](#) (nonprofits only): Nonprofit organizations that use the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) Safe Harbor Procedure must submit a special disclosure to OVW.⁹

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Memorandum of Exemption (MOE) ***REQUIRED***

If more than one entity is part of the proposed project, attach a memorandum of understanding (MOU) among the applicant and project partners or letter(s) of support. OVW's [website](#) has instructions for MOUs and letters.

Applications from lead applicants that, as their mission (or designated subdivision's mission), serve domestic/dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking victims may submit an MOE instead of an MOU **if they demonstrate that they have the required expertise in providing legal representation for victims**. See [Required Partnerships](#).

Additional Application Components

Attach these in JustGrants:

- [Delivery of Legal Assistance Certification](#), signed by the Authorized Representative if the application proposes to provide legal assistance to victims. ***REQUIRED***
- [Certification regarding out-of-scope activities](#) letter signed by the Authorized Representative.
 - Note: This certification is the subject of federal litigation. For the most up-to-date information about the certification requirement, see the notice on OVW's [funding opportunities page](#).
- [Summary Data Sheet](#), one to four pages.
- [Confidentiality Notice Form](#), signed by the Authorized Representative, acknowledging the confidentiality requirements of 34 U.S.C. § 12291(b)(2).

Disclosures and Assurances

Complete the [disclosures](#), [assurances](#), and [certifications](#) in JustGrants.

5. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

The [DOJ Grant Application Submission Checklist](#) provides instructions for how to submit by the [deadlines](#). [Executive Order \(E.O.\) 12372](#) (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) applies to this funding opportunity. OVW's [How to Apply](#) page has a policy

⁹ See 34 U.S.C. § 12291(b)(15)(B)(iii). More information is [here](#).

for applicants to request late submission due to technical difficulties, severe weather, or natural or manmade disaster.

6. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

OVW's [Discretionary Grant Application Review Process](#) page explains the responsiveness review, review criteria, review and selection process, including risk review, and deciding official.

7. AWARD NOTICES

Read about the award notification process on OVW's [website](#).

8. POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS & ADMINISTRATION

Read the [Application Companion Guide](#) for more information about [standard award terms and conditions](#), administrative and national policy requirements, and post-award reporting requirements.

9. QUESTIONS?

NOFO Contact	Phone: 202-307-6026 Email: OVW.LAV@usdoj.gov
SAM.gov Help Desk	Website: https://sam.gov/content/help Hours: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET Monday – Friday
Grants.gov Help Desk	Phone: 800-518-4726 Email: support@grants.gov Website: https://www.grants.gov/support Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (closed federal holidays)
JustGrants Help Desk	Phone: 866-655-4482 Email: OVW.JustGrantsSupport@usdoj.gov Hours: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday – Friday