

FY 2020 Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program

Pre-Application Information Session

Slide 1: WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Welcome to the Pre-Application Information Session for the Fiscal Year 2020 Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program (also referred to as the “LAV Program”). The Office on Violence Against Women (also referred to as “OVW”) is convening this pre-application session to go over the FY 2020 solicitation for the LAV Program.

Slide 2: The purpose of this session is to provide information regarding the LAV solicitation. We will highlight a few key points in this solicitation, however it is not the intent, nor is there sufficient time, to go over every aspect of the solicitation. All applicants are responsible for reading the FY 2020 LAV Solicitation and the OVW Solicitation Companion Guide and ensuring that a complete application is submitted. LAV Program staff cannot provide any feedback to applicants about the quality of an applicant’s proposal or provide any information outside of what is presented in the solicitation. However, LAV Program staff will be available throughout the period that the solicitation is open to respond to any questions about application requirements. Please feel free to send questions about the LAV Solicitation to the LAV Program email mailbox at ovw.lav@usdoj.gov or call the main line at 202.307.6026.

It will be helpful to have the LAV Solicitation in front of you for a point of reference during this information session.

Slide 3: ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is mentioned on the cover of the solicitation, as well as on pages 5-6. Eligible applicants include private nonprofit entities, publicly funded organizations not acting in a governmental capacity (such as law schools); territorial organizations; Indian tribal governments, including Indian tribal consortia; and tribal organizations.

Both new and continuation applications are being accepted. However, grantees that received LAV funding for 36 months in in FY 2018 and 2019 are not eligible to apply.

Slide 4: DEADLINES

Also on the cover of the solicitation please note that applications are due by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on Wednesday, January 29, 2020.

Please refer to pages 21-22 of the solicitation for more information on submission and deadlines.

Please note that OVW will not accept late applications, so applicants are strongly encouraged to begin submitting their applications 24 – 48 hours prior to the application deadline and carefully review the OVW Policy on Late Submissions on pages 22-24 of the solicitation.

OVW anticipates notifying all applicants of funding decisions by October 1, 2020.

Slide 5: REGISTRATION

You will also note on the cover of the solicitation that you must “register” by January 14, 2020. Registration includes several steps: 1) obtaining a DUNS number, 2) registering with the SAM system, and 3) registering on Grants.gov.

Every applicant must obtain a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) Number and register online with System for Award Management (SAM) well before the grant deadline. There is a reason that we set a deadline of January 14th, as the process to register for a DUNS number and SAM can be lengthy. If you do not have a DUNS number and/or are not current in the SAM system, you should begin this process as soon as possible.

The registration process is not one that can be completed quickly, it can take days and you should begin this process as soon as possible. Every year we have a handful of applicants that did not make the deadline because they were delinquent with their SAM and/or Grants.Gov registrations.

If you are considering applying, a Letter of Intent should be submitted to OVW by January 14, 2020. A letter of Intent is not mandatory; however, they are very helpful to us internally in attempting to identify the potential volume of applications that we can expect and to plan accordingly for the peer review process. Page ii of the solicitation includes a link to a sample of this letter.

SUBMISSION AND NOTIFICATION INFORMATION

LAV applications will be submitted through Grants.gov. If you have questions about the registration or submission process through Grants.Gov, please contact Grants.gov customer support at 1-800-518-4726 (this phone number can also be found on page ii of the solicitation and on the Grants.gov website). Grants.Gov customer service is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with the exception of federal holidays.

Slide 6: SECTION A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Page 1 of the solicitation provides background on the history and goals for the LAV Program.

The LAV Grant Program is intended to increase the availability of civil and criminal legal assistance needed to effectively aid adult and youth (ages 11 and older) victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking by providing funds for comprehensive direct legal services to victims in legal matters relating to or arising out of that abuse or violence. Comprehensive legal services should address the broad spectrum of legal issues that victims encounter and help promote economic independence for victims. In addition to representation in emergency and non-emergency protection order hearings, this includes representation in family

matters (divorce, child custody, or child support), consumer or housing matters, and credit restoration.

Any services unrelated to the provision of legal assistance or legal advocacy are unallowable under the LAV Grant Program. Examples of activities beyond direct legal services that may be supported with LAV funds include:

- Advocacy, as long as the advocate is providing services related to the legal assistance, e.g., safety planning, court accompaniment, and preparation for court appearances.;
- Translation services, if related to the legal services;
- Child care directly related to legal assistance, e.g. child care to enable the victim to meet with his/her attorney or go to court; and
- Transportation related to the legal assistance, e.g., travel to meet with the lawyer or to court.

Please note that LAV Grant Program funds may not be used to provide criminal defense services.

Slide 7: Purpose Areas

Funds under this program must be used for one or more of the statutory purpose areas listed on this slide. The FY 2020 LAV Grant Program has 3 Purpose Areas. You will find this information on page 2 of the solicitation. Please review the purpose areas carefully as project activities funded through the LAV Grant Program must fall under one or more of these purpose areas.

You will note that Purpose Area #3 states, “not more than 10 percent of the funds awarded may be used for this purpose” - of pro bono legal assistance. This requirement applies to the entire amount of LAV funding appropriated for the year. This is something that OVW monitors internally. Applicants are not required to limit their proposals to 10% pro bono legal assistance.

Slide 8: OVW Priority Areas

Information regarding the three OVW Priority Areas under the Program can be found on page 2 of the solicitation. In FY 2020, OVW is interested in supporting the priority areas identified on this slide. Applications proposing activities under these priority areas will be given special consideration.

Slide 9: LAV Statutory Priorities – Sexual Assault

OVW recognizes the need to place increased focus on sexual assault in order to address the lack of available direct legal services for survivors of sexual assault and the unique aspects of sexual assault trauma from which survivors must heal. Applicants proposing to focus 50 percent or more of their grant-funded activities on intimate and non-intimate partner sexual assault legal services will be given special consideration. In addition, applications that are submitted by sexual assault victim service providers or sexual assault coalitions that propose to focus 80

percent or more of their grant-funded activities on non-intimate partner sexual assault legal services can apply for larger awards and may be eligible for an additional 24 months of non-competitive funding.

In order to be eligible to receive \$800,000 to provide 80% or more of non-intimate partner sexual assault legal services, must be sexual assault victim service providers as the lead applicant. The definition of a victim service provider can be found on page 3 of the solicitation.

Applicants proposing to focus 50 percent or more grant-funded activities toward sexual assault will receive priority consideration.

These applicants should articulate the specific legal needs of sexual assault survivors within their communities and how project activities would meet those needs. Applications should also reflect the applicant's specialized training and experience in legal matters specific to sexual assault. Those applying to focus on sexual assault should demonstrate a commitment to addressing sexual assault and should clearly show that the applicant has the capacity to address the priority effectively. Applicants who state an intent to address sexual assault without a clear demonstration of commitment, capacity and/or expertise to provide sexual assault legal services will not be considered.

Slide 10: LAV Statutory Priorities – Tribal Programs

Pursuant to the LAV statute, not less than three percent of funds made available for the LAV Program must be used for projects that assist adult and youth victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault on lands within the jurisdiction of an Indian tribe. Applications proposing to assist such victims will receive special consideration in order to meet this requirement, but they must include the percentage of proposed activities that will support services to victims on tribal lands.

Slide 11: Activities that Compromise Victim Safety and Recovery

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. Please refer to the OVW Solicitation Companion Guide for additional details.

Please note, applications that propose any activities that compromise victim safety and recovery or undermine offender accountability may receive a deduction in points during the review process or may be eliminated from consideration entirely.

Slide 12: LAV Specific Out-Of-Scope Activities

The LAV Program has specific out-of-scope activities that will not be supported by this program. We have highlighted a few of these activities in this slide, but a complete list of those activities can be found on pages 3 of the solicitation. It is important to review this list thoroughly as applications that propose activities deemed to be substantially out-of-scope may receive a deduction in points during the review process or may be eliminated from consideration.

Slide 13: FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

- Section B of the solicitation provides details on the federal award information. All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law. There is no guarantee that funds will be available in the future. However, OVW may elect to make awards in a future fiscal year for applications submitted under this solicitation but not selected for FY 2020 funding, depending on the merits of the applications and the availability of funding.
- The grant award period is for 36 months, generally beginning on October 1, 2020.
- Award Amounts will vary. This program typically makes awards for \$600,000, or \$800,000 for certain sexual assault-focused projects, which I will discuss in a moment. OVW estimates that it will make up to 54 awards for an estimated \$34,000,000.
 1. New and Continuation LAV Grant Program applications that are proposing to provide legal services primarily to victims of domestic violence or to provide less than 80% of the project's legal services to victims of sexual assault may request up to \$600,000 for the entire 36-month project period.
 2. Please note for FY 2020: New and Continuation LAV Grant Program applications submitted by sexual assault victim service providers or sexual assault coalitions and that are proposing to focus 80 percent or more of the project's activities on legal services for victims of non-intimate partner sexual assault, may request up to \$800,000 for the entire 36-month project period. Note: if funded, at the end of the 36-month award period, these grantees may be eligible to receive 24 months of additional non-competitive funding to continue their projects.
- Awards will be made as grants.

Slide 14: Eligibility

- Section C of the solicitation provides additional details on eligibility. Please refer to pages 5-6 on program eligibility requirements. The solicitation provides definitions of eligible entities in the footnotes on these pages.
- This slide highlights the other program eligibility requirements such as delivery of legal assistance certification and required partnerships.
- Please note that an applicant must include a nonprofit, nongovernmental or tribal organization with demonstrated expertise on domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking either as a lead applicant or a partner. The organization serving as the required expert on these crimes may be a larger, multi-service organization that does not solely address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking but has a distinct or designated division or program that focuses on serving victims of these crimes. An example of this could be a YWCA that has a distinct domestic violence shelter.
- An applicant without the required partnership will be removed from consideration.
- Please review this section of the solicitation carefully as it provides extensive details.

Slide 15: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

- Section D of the solicitation on submission and information begins page 8.

- The complete application package is available on Grants.gov or at the OVW website at <http://www.justice.gov/ovw>. Applicants wishing to request a paper copy of the application materials should contact ovw.lav@usdoj.gov or 202.307.6026.
- Applicants should anticipate that failure to submit an application that contains all of the specified elements will negatively affect the review of the application and may result in the application not being considered for funding. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that a complete application is submitted by the deadline. OVW will not contact applicants for missing items. Applicants should refer to the chart on page 21 of the solicitation to ensure that all required steps and deadlines are met.
- Applicants should not submit documents that were not specifically asked for in the solicitation. Providing information that was not requested (such as letters of support from other organizations in your community or service area) will not increase the likelihood that an application will be selected for funding. So, when in doubt, leave it out.

Slide 16: Formatting and Technical Requirements

Please carefully review the formatting and technical requirements on pages 8-9. Points may be deducted for applications that do not adhere to the formatting and technical requirements. Please read the entire list of requirements.

Slide 17: Application Requirements

Applications must include all of the required documents: 1) Project Narrative: This section must include the purpose of the application, what will be done, and who will implement the project. Please refer to pages 9-16 of the solicitation for complete details. 2) Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative: This section must include a budget and narrative that displays a clear link to the specific project activities and the proposed budget items. The budget should NOT contain items that are unsupported by the project narrative. A sample budget detail worksheet is available on the OVW website. A link is provided in the solicitation on page 13. 3) Memorandum of Understanding or Memorandum of Exemption: Please carefully review the distinction between the two and identify which is required for your organization. Please note there are additional questions in the Project Narrative and MOU/Memorandum of Exemption if an application is addressing sexual assault or stalking.

Applications that do not include all of the three required components will be considered substantially incomplete and will not be considered for funding.

In addition to the application being scored on the three components, the Summary Data Sheet and the Certification Letter will also be scored.

Slide 18: Proposal Abstract

Although this section will not be scored, your application should include an abstract that does not exceed two pages, double-spaced. This section should not be a summary of past accomplishments.

Slide 19: Project Narrative

This section should not exceed 20 pages double spaced, and must include the required three sections (purpose of application, what will be done, and who will implement the project). If your application is not double spaced, reviewers will only read the equivalent of 20 pages double spaced, the remainder of the project narrative will not be scored.

Make sure that you respond to every question within each of the sections.

Slide 20: The Budget

A budget and budget narrative are required. The narrative can be a separate document or included in the budget together. It must reflect 36 months of project activity. It must include funds to attend OVW-sponsored training and technical assistance in the amount of \$10,000 for proposals from organizations located within the 48 contiguous states and \$15,000 for organizations located within the territories, Hawaii, or Alaska. Please note this amount is for the entire 36 months and NOT per year. Applicants may budget expenses in excess of the required training and technical assistance amount if they are aware of relevant non-OVW sponsored conferences or training for which they would like permission to use grant funds to support staff/project partner attendance.

The budget and the budget narrative will be reviewed separately from the proposed project narrative. The budget narrative must describe each line item requested in the budget and explain all costs included in the budget, including how the costs of goods and services are determined and how they will fulfill the objectives of the project.

Slide 21: Grants Financial Management Division

The next few slides will focus on aspects of your application that relate to the documents that our financial team, the Grants Financial Management Division (GFMD), reviews. More specifically, we'll discuss some items that GFMD has identified from prior year applications that could help with expediting our review process.

So for today, we're going to highlight certain aspects of the pre-award risk assessment and provide you a link to a detailed webinar on how to develop the budget that will be included in your application.

The first things we'll highlight are the items identified in the summary data sheet, which is completed by all applicants.

Specifically, two items 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 this information, and leave out whether or not they have met the threshold, or the end date of the last Fiscal year is not included. Please ensure this question is answered in its entirety on the Summary Data Sheet.

So another item we'd 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 must reference the additional information section that provides the required disclosure letter. We'd like to highlight that there are 4 parts of this disclosure letter that must be provided to OVW in order to comply with this requirement. The sample letter that outlines all 4 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 we'd like to discuss are the financial accounting practices, which assists GFMD during their pre award risk assessment review for all applications. Each applicant must prepare a response to ALL TEN QUESTIONS, and each question has MULTIPLE PARTS.

We've noticed from prior years that applicants do not always fully answer all parts of the questions, which in turn, requires GFMD to reach out to the applicant which may delay recommendations. Some of the most common issues that we've (we have)encountered have been, for example, question #2, where the applicant indicates that they do indeed have internal policies, but they don't provide a brief list of topics covered in the policies and procedures. Another example of incomplete responses include question#3, where the applicant does not provide a brief summary of the organization's process for tracking expenditures, and more specifically whether or not it tracks budgeted versus actual expenditures.

So these are just a few examples, but basically, please make sure you read each piece of each question and provide a full and comprehensive response.

Slide 22: Resources

This next slide will quickly highlight some resources that are available that should be used as you're creating the budget to be submitted with the application.

Over the last year GFMD has worked to develop a detailed webinar presentation on how to assist applicants in developing a budget to be submitted with their OVW applications. They want to help reduce any challenges you may face with the budget and make it clear what they look for when they review your budget, this webinar provides some insight as to what OVW financial

staff considers during their review. Use the following link:
<https://www.justice.gov/ovw/resources-applicants> . The webinar can be found under the Budget information section on this page.

Next up is the uniform guidance which can be found at 2 CFR 200, then another resource is the DOJ Financial Guide, as well as the program specific solicitation. If you need assistance finding these resources, please contact the GFMD helpdesk.

Slide 23: Contact Information

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 888-514-8556 or by email at OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov.

Slide 24: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) vs Memorandum of Exemption (MOE)

The MOU section can be found beginning on page 15 – 16 of the solicitation.

- For the purposes of this solicitation, the MOU is a document containing the terms of the partnership and the roles and responsibilities between two or more parties. The MOU must be a single document and must be signed and dated by the Authorized Representative of each proposed partner organization during the development of the application.
- An applicant must include a nonprofit, nongovernmental or tribal organization with demonstrated expertise on domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking either as a lead applicant or a partner.
- Please note that there are additional requirements for applications addressing the sexual assault and stalking priority areas.

The MOE section can be found on page 16 of the solicitation.

- This is a new section for FY 20. This applies to applications from lead applicants that, as their mission (or designated subdivision's mission), provide services to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking victims. They may submit an MOE in lieu of an MOU if they demonstrate that they have the required expertise in providing services and/or legal representation for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking.
- If an MOE is submitted in lieu of an MOU, and the applicant does not meet the criteria to submit an MOE, the application may be removed from consideration.
- Please note that there are additional requirements for applications addressing the sexual assault and stalking priority areas.

- The applicant should carefully review the requirements for both the MOU and MOE and decide how best to proceed. The applicant should not submit both documents in their application. Only one will be scored.

Slide 25: Certification Letter

To be eligible for an award under the LAV Grant Program, applicants must certify in writing that they are in compliance with statutory requirements outlined in “Other Program Eligibility Requirements- Delivery of Legal Assistance Certification section.

- This certification must be in the form of a letter on agency letterhead and signed (electronic or typed signatures do not satisfy this requirement) and dated by the authorizing official.
- The signed Certification Letter must be uploaded as a separate attachment in Grants.gov.

Slide 26: Additional Required Information

Pages 17-20 provide information about additional documents that will not be scored during the review process but they should be included with your application. Failure to include any of the information may result in your application being removed from consideration from funding. Please review this section carefully.

Slide 27: Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due by 11:59 pm Eastern time on Thursday, January 29, 2020.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to begin the application submission process at least 48 hours but no later than 24 hours before the deadline.

As a reminder, **all** applicants must obtain a DUNS Number, register online with the SAM system and Grants.gov. Letters of Intent are optional, but should be submitted no later than January 14th.

Slide 28: OVW Policy on Duplicate Applications

Please note applicants should only submit one application per program. If an applicant submits multiple versions of an application, OVW will review the most recent version submitted.

Slide 29: OVW Policy on Late Submissions

OVW offers several options for an applicant to provide advance notice of a delayed application. Applicants should thoroughly familiarize themselves with OVW's policy on late submissions on pages 22-24. Only in rare circumstances are extensions granted. Failure to begin the registration or application submission process in sufficient time is not an acceptable reason for a late application submission.

Slide 30: SECTION E: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Eligible and qualifying applications will be subject to a peer review and a programmatic review. Applications will be scored based on the degree to which the application responds to each section and addresses each element in the section. Furthermore, applications will be scored based upon the quality of the response 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 even if it is included elsewhere within the application. Each section will be reviewed as a separate document and will be scored as such.

Information regarding the Review and Selection Process begins on page 26.

Slide 31: SECTION F: FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Federal Award Notices

Successful applications will receive OVW award notifications electronically from the OJP Grants Management System (GMS) (not grants.gov). This award notification will be sent to the individuals listed as the Authorized Representative and the Point of Contact on the SF-424 for the application that was selected for funding and will include instructions on accepting the award. Recipients will be required to login; accept any outstanding assurances and certifications on the award; designate financial points of contact; and review, sign, and accept the award. The award acceptance process involves physical signature of the award document and terms and conditions by the Authorized Representative and the scanning of the fully executed award document to OVW.

Slide 32: Administrative and National Policy Requirements

There are a number of Administrative and National Policy Requirements listed on pages 28-29 of the solicitation. You should review these carefully.

Slide 33: OVW – Determination of Suitability to Interact with Participating Minors

DOJ has implemented a new policy related to grantees that will potentially have staff and volunteers interacting with any participating minor in the course of activities under the award. This requirement will be applied to all OVW award recipients as a special condition. The recipient (and any subrecipient at any tier) may not permit any covered individual to interact with any participating minor in the course of activities under the award, unless the recipient or subrecipient first has made a written determination of the suitability of that individual to interact with participating minors, based on current and appropriate information.

More information about this award condition can be found on the website included in this presentation.

Slide 34: Checklist

Please use the Application Checklist on page 30 of the solicitation. This checklist will help you ensure that all required documents are included in your application. Ensure that you included

all required documents. Please make sure your Point of Contact (POC) listed in Grants.gov is responsive to emails and alerts.

Slide 35: Helpful Tips Checklist Lastly we have some tips that may improve your chances on becoming an LAV grant recipient. Please note that following list is not a guarantee that you will be funded, but it is included as a guide to navigate you through the OVW application process.

- Please read the solicitation in its entirety. It is important to make sure you do not miss out on any important information by just skimming through the solicitation and just focusing on the “How to Apply” section. Read the solicitation and contact LAV staff or submit your inquiry in the LAV mailbox if you have any questions.
- Allow plenty of time to gather required information and submit well before the deadline. Although this is not required, more time will allow for any unforeseen obstacles such as power outages and natural disasters.
- A missing or incorrect DUNS number or an expired SAM registration are some of the reasons an application may get rejected. Applications can also be rejected if files are saved inappropriately, e.g., files with names that exceed the Grants.gov 50 character limit or that include special characters. Please ensure you are following the requirements with Grants.gov. If you have any technical questions, please reach out to Grants.gov directly for troubleshooting or feedback.
- It is important to keep your audience in mind and make it easy for them to read and review your application. Use the heading and sub-heading titles that are in the solicitation. This will help the reviewer more easily follow the application.
- Please keep in mind the reviewers will only review the information contained in the application. Be sure the application and responses to the program requirements and expectations are complete and clearly written. Do not assume that reviewers are familiar with your organization, service area or barriers to legal needs in your community. Keep the reviewer in mind when writing the application.
- Organization. Organization. Organization. I cannot stress this enough. Many applications fail to receive a high score because the reviewers cannot follow the thought process of the applicant or because parts of the application do not fit together. Treat it like a puzzle. Let the pieces properly fall into place.
- What are the issues in your community that you are trying to address? Is it in line with the purpose area or OVW priority area? Make your points understandable. Provide accurate and honest information, including candid accounts of problems and realistic plans to address them. If any required information or data is omitted, explain why. Your budget should also reflect back to the proposed activities.
- Print out the final application before submitting it to ensure appropriate formatting and adherence to page limit requirements. Check to ensure that you included all attachments before submitting the application. Also, number your pages in your application. This will also help the reviewer track and insure you are following the solicitation formatting and instructions. Do not risk deduction in points for something as simple as formatting.
- Be sure to include all of the necessary attachments and label them appropriately when uploading them to the system. Cross check and double check. Points will be taken off for those items missing that are required.

- Use acronyms judiciously, if at all. Remember that the reviewers are not familiar with your community and will not be familiar with the acronyms that your organization and project partners may use.
- If your name and contact information is listed as the POC, please monitor your inbox. There are times that the system may reject your application and you will need to make sure you are getting those alerts.

Slide 35: Good Luck! If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office. Now we will take questions.