

NI'CORRA GRAY: Welcome to the Office on Violence Against Women, also referred to as OVW, Pre-Application Information Session for the Fiscal Year 2021, Rural Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking Program Solicitation. This information session is being presented by OVW Rural Team Members Ni'Corra Gray, Charlotte Turpin, and Sue Pugliese, and is meant to serve as a source of information regarding the rural application. It is strongly recommended that you read the full solicitation prior to listening to this information session. Although I will not review every page of this section and section of the solicitation, I will highlight the Rural Program and Grant and application requirements. Deadlines, application, submission, and times. Application submissions and times are mentioned on the cover of the rural solicitation and also on pages 18 through 22. Applications are due by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on March 16th, 2021. All applications are submitted through Grants.gov and JustGrants. Program description. The Rural Program was authorized in the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, VAWA, of 2013. The Rural Program supports efforts to enhance the safety of rural victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. And supports projects uniquely designed to address and prevent these crimes in rural areas. Purpose areas. The Rural Program has three purpose areas. I won't read the purpose areas to you verbatim. However, in a nutshell, all projects funded through the Rural Program must fall under one or more of the purpose--of these purpose areas. One, to identify, assess, and appropriately respond to child, youth, and adult victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking in rural communities by encouraging collaboration among sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking victim service providers, law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, courts, other criminal justice service providers, human and community service providers, educational institutions and health care providers including sexual assault forensic examiners. Two, to establish and expand nonprofit, nongovernmental, state, tribal, territorial, and local government victim services in rural communities to child, youth, and adult victims. And three, to increase the safety and well-being of women and children in rural communities by, A. dealing directly and immediately with domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking occurring in rural communities. And, B. creating and implementing strategies to increase awareness and prevent domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. Strategies. In addition to the three purpose areas, Rural Program grantees must implement one or more of the five strategies as outlined in the authorized statute. This information can be found on page six through seven of the solicitation. Number one -- implementing, expanding, and establishing cooperative efforts and projects among law enforcement officers, prosecutors, victim service providers, and other related parties to investigate and prosecute incidents of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, including developing multidisciplinary teams focusing on high-risk cases with the goal of preventing domestic violence and dating violence homicides. Two -- providing treatment, counseling, advocacy, legal assistance, and other long-term and short-term victim and population specific services to adult and minor victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking in rural communities, including assistance in immigration matters. Three -- working in cooperation with the community to develop education and prevention strategies directed towards such issues. Four -- developing,

enlarging, or strengthening programs addressing sexual assault, including sexual assault forensic examiner programs, Sexual Assault Response Teams, law enforcement training, and programs addressing rape kit backlogs. And five -- developing programs and strategies that focus on the specific needs of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking who reside in remote, rural, and geographically isolated areas, including addressing the challenges posed by the lack of access to shelters and victim services, and limited law enforcement resources and training, and providing training and resources to Community Health Aides involved in the delivery of Indian Health Service programs. OVV Priority Areas. In FY 2021, OVV is interested in supporting the four priority areas identified below. Applications proposing activities in the following areas will be given special consideration. Information on how to address the OVV priority areas can be found on page three of the solicitation. One -- reduce violent crimes against women and promote victim safety through investing in law enforcement and increasing prosecution. Two -- empower victims to become survivors by focusing on long-term safety and sustainable economic independence. Three -- increase resources for court and Tribes to register protection orders in NCIC and give access to Tribes to crime information system. Four -- increase efforts to combat stalking. Applicants are not required to address the four OVV priority areas. Statutory Priorities. VAWA requires that OVV award 25% of appropriated Rural Program funds to meaningfully address sexual assault in rural communities. Applicants are not required to address sexual assault within their individual applications. However, interested applicants will be asked to identify the percentage of their project that addresses sexual assault. OVV will give priority to projects that meet the needs of underserved populations. CHARLOTTE TURPIN: Activities that Compromise Safety and Recovery or Undermine Offender Accountability. OVV 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 entirely. Information on activities that compromise victim safety and recovery can be found on page 18 in the Solicitation Companion Guide located on the OVV website under Resources for Applicants. Out-of-Scope Activities. Applications including out-of-scope or unallowable activities may receive a deduction in points during the review process or may be removed from consideration. The solicitation lists specific activities that are out of the scope of the Rural Program on page 10 of the solicitation. These activities will not be supported by Rural Program funds. Budgets and Award Period. The Rural grant award period is 36 months. The award period will start on October 1st, 2021. Continuation applications are limited to \$750,000 for the entire 36 months. New applications are limited to \$500,000 for the entire 36 months. I will note here that OVV has the discretion to make awards for greater or lesser amounts than requested and to negotiate the scope of work and budget with applicants prior to making an award. Types of Applications. In FY '21, OVV will accept applications for this program from the following: New applicants are those that have never received funding under the Rural Program or whose previous funding expired on or before February 17th, 2020. Continuation applicants are those that have an existing or recently closed award under this program and/or an applicant that received funding

under this program in FY 2017 or earlier that does not qualify as a new applicant as defined above. Additionally, current grants--grantees with 50% or more of the previous award remaining as of March 31st, 2021, without adequate justification, may not be considered for funding or may receive a reduced amount if selected for funding in FY 2021.

**Eligibility.** Eligible applicants for the Rural Grant are limited to states and territories, Indian tribes, local governments, nonprofit, public or private entities, including state and local government, Indian tribes, tribal nonprofit organizations, faith-based and community organizations, and safe policing for safe communities, which includes state, local, university, or college law enforcement agencies. For definitions of these entities, please refer to page 14 of the solicitation. I did want to note here that we oftentimes receive lots of questions from potential hospital and university applicants on whether or not they are eligible to apply for the Rural Grant, and the answer is yes, as long as you meet all the qualifying requirements.

**Other Program Eligibility Requirements.** Delivery of legal assistance certification. In previous years, legal assistance was limited to legal assistance and seeking protection orders and limited immigration matters. With the implementation of VAWA 2013, legal services have been expanded to include comprehensive legal services such as divorce, custody, and child support. Applicants proposing to provide legal assistance with funds under the FY '21 Rural Program must certify in writing regarding their expertise and providing legal assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking in the targeted population -- or is partnered with an entity or person that has demonstrated the same expertise and-- has completed, or will complete, training in connection with domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and related legal issues, including training on evidence-based risk factors of domestic violence and dating violence homicide. Any training program conducted in satisfaction of the above requirements has been or will be developed with input from and in collaboration with a tribal, state, territorial, or local domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking victim service provider or coalition -- as well as appropriate tribal, state, territory, and local law enforcement officials. The grantee's organizational policies do not require mediation or counseling involving offenders and victims physically together in cases where sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or child sexual abuse is an issue. The certification should be made in the form of a letter, one letterhead, and signed by and dated by the authorized representative. A sample Certification Letter can be found on the OVW website via a link on page 15 of the Rural Solicitation under this section. An application missing the required certification letter will be required to submit a Certification Letter upon receiving an award.

**Other Rural Program Eligibility Requirements continued.** Eligible Service Area. Applicants must demonstrate that they propose to serve a rural area or a rural community. As stated previously, the rural statute with the Violence Against Women Act requires that Rural Funds are directed to victims residing within areas and communities that are rural eligible. To determine that the area that your agency is proposing targeting services to are rural eligible, every application other than those submitted by federally recognized Indian tribes, which are territorially defined as rural, must include the proper printed documentation demonstrating that the purpose service--the proposed service area -- meets this eligibility requirement. Instructions to complete the documentation process can be found via the link provided in the Rural

Solicitation on page 16. Regardless of whether an application is submitted by an entity from a rural state or a non-rural state, all applicants must target services in a rural area or community. I want to note here that due to the delayed release of the 2020 Census Data, Eligibility documentation requirements for the FY 2021 Rural Program will be based on the 2010 Census Data information. At the end of this presentation, I'm going to give a quick overview of the instructions for the rural documentation process.

**Requirement Partnerships.** Applications must include at least one partner and must include a victim service provider as a formal project partner and/or the lead applicant as demonstrated through a required Memorandum of Understanding or MOU. All required partnerships must be demonstrated through a required MOU. Additionally, eligible applications, including those submitted by a victim service provider, must include at least one project partner and must include agencies and organizations necessary to implement the proposed project.

**Application and Submission Information.** Letter of Intent. Applicants intending to apply for FY 2021 funding under this program are strongly encouraged to submit a Letter of Intent by February 9th, 2021. The letter should be submitted to [ovw.rural@usdoj.gov](mailto:ovw.rural@usdoj.gov). That's [ovw.rural@usdoj.gov](mailto:ovw.rural@usdoj.gov). The letter should state that the applicant is registered and current with SAM and Grants.gov. The letter would not obligate the applicant to submit an application.

**Formatting and Technical Requirements.** Applications must follow the formatting and technical requirements outlined in the solicitation. Points may be deducted for applications that do not adhere to the formatting and technical requirements. A complete list of these requirements can be found on page 18 of the solicitation.

**Application Content.** Applications must include the following required documents and demonstrate that the program eligibility requirements have been met. These documents are Project Narrative, Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative, Data Request with Application, MOU/Letters of Support. All applicants are required to submit a Memorandum of Understanding with their applications. Only state courts, tribal courts, territory courts, and local court applicants may submit Letters of Support in lieu of the MOU. And the last one is Eligible Service Area Documentation. OVW will not contact applications for these missing items. Applications that do not include all of these documents will be considered substantially incomplete and will not be considered for funding. In addition, the proposal abstract is required, and failure to submit it will not result in removal from consideration but may result in loss of points.

**Accessibility.** Applicants must include funds or describe other resources available to the applicant to support activities to ensure access for individuals with disabilities, deaf/hard of hearing individuals, and persons with limited English proficiency. More information can be found on page 39 of the solicitation and the Solicitation Companion Guide under Civil Rights.

**NI'CORA GRAY: Grants Financial Management Division Presentation.** The next couple of slides, we are going to focus on aspects of your application that relate to 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 the review process. So far today, we're going to highlight certain aspects on 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 data requested with application sheet, which is completed for all applications. 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 extended \$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 data requested with the application sheet. So, another item we'd like to highlight from the solicitation is specifically for nonprofit organizations. If you use the IRS three-step Safe-Harbor Procedure to determine your executive's compensation, you must reference the additional information section that provides the requested disclosure letter. We'd like to highlight that there are four parts of this disclosure letter that must be provided in order to comply with the requirements. The sample letter 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 we'd like to discuss are the financial accounting practices, which assist 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'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 encountered have been, for example, question two, where the applicant indicates that they do indeed have internal policies, or they do not provide a brief list of the topics covered in the policies and procedures. Another example of incomplete responses include question three, 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 question and provide a full and comprehensive response. 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.com/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. Contact Information slide next. We know this can be a lot of information to process, so if you have any questions about the GFMD information to discuss, please feel free to contact the GFMD Helpdesk at 888-514-8556 or by email [@OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov](mailto:@OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov).

SUZANNE PUGLIESE: Now, we're going to briefly discuss the Memorandum of Understanding or MOU/Letters of Support. The MOU is a document containing the terms of the partnership and the roles and responsibilities between two or more parties, and it must be included as an attachment to the application in JustGrants. 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. OVW will accept electronic signatures. MOUs that are missing signatures may result in a point deduction or removal from consideration, particularly if the MOU is missing the signature of a required partner. An MOU can include multiple signature pages so long as each page includes the names and titles of all signatories to the MOU. All applicants are required to submit a Memorandum of Understanding with their applications. If you are a state court, a tribal court, a territory court, or a local court applicant, you may submit Letters of Support in lieu of the MOU. Let me repeat this. If you are a state court, a tribal court, a territory court, or a local court applicant, you may submit Letters of Support in lieu of the MOU. Additional Application Components. The following forms will be generated and completed during the application submission process. The Letter of Nonsupplanting. Confidentiality Notice Form. Disclosure of Lobbying and Activities, or the SF-LLL Form. The DOJ Certified Standard Assurances. Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items. DOJ Certifications Regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters, and Drug-Free Workplace Requirement Forms. Registration and Submission. Every applicant must obtain a Data Universal Number, or DUNS number, and register online with System for Award Management, or SAM, and register online with Grants.gov well before the Grant deadline. It is important that you complete the registration process by Tuesday, February 9th, 2021. There's a reason that we set a deadline of Tuesday, February 9th of 2021, as the process to register for DUNS and SAM is extremely lengthy. If you do not have a DUNS Number and/or not current in the SAM System, you should be getting this process as soon as possible. Register with Grants.gov as soon as possible if you haven't already done so. The registration process is not one that could be completed quickly. It takes time, days, and you should begin this process as soon as possible. Every year, we have a handful of applicants that didn't make the deadline because they were delinquent with their DUNS, SAM, and/or Grants.gov registration. All applications will be submitted through a new two-step process. Submission of the SF-424 and the SF-LLL will be submitted in Grants.gov. Submission of the full application, including the attachments, will be submitted in the Justice Grant System or JustGrants. Applicants experiencing technical issues with JustGrants should contact the OVW JustGrants Support line as soon as possible. Also, OVW will take the necessary steps to ensure that applicants are able to submit their applications on time. Applicants experiencing JustGrants technical issues should ensure that they are developing their proposals while they are

working to address any issues. Applicants should follow the Solicitation Guidance regarding technical difficulties. This will enable you to submit a full proposal by the deadline using an alternate method if necessary. We will update our submission guidance as necessary and as the due date nears. Submission Deadlines. Applications are due by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on Tuesday, March 16th, 2021. Applicants are strongly encouraged to begin the application submission process at least 48 hours before the application deadline. And as a reminder, applicants must obtain a DUNS Number and register online with the SAM System and Grants.gov no later than Tuesday, February 9th, 2021. Letters of intent are optional, but they should also be submitted no later than Tuesday, February 9th, 2021. The OVW Policy on Duplicate Applications. 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. The OVW Policy on Late Submissions. OVW offers several options for an applicant to provide advance notice of a delayed application. An applicant's request to submit an application after the deadline will be considered by OVW if all of the steps are followed. And these steps are listed on pages 34 through 36 of the solicitation. Only in limited circumstances are extensions granted. Failure to begin the registration or application submission process in sufficient time is not--I repeat, is not an acceptable reason for a late application submission. Application Review Information. Applications will be subject to a peer review and a programmatic review. Applications will be scored based on the degree to which the application response to each section and addresses each element in 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. Let me repeat. 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. So, please pay special attention to that. Each section will be reviewed as a separate document and will be scored as such. Federal Award Administration Information Federal Award Notices. Successful applications will receive OVW award notifications electronically from JustGrants, not Grants.gov. This award notification will include instructions on enrolling in Automated Standard Application for Payments, or ASAP, and accepting the award. This award notification will be sent to the individuals listed as the Authorized Representative and the point of contact on the SF-424 and will include instructions on accepting 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 a fully executed award document to OVW. The Application Checklist. Did you address all of the criteria that will be rated? Please use the Application Checklist on page 41 of the solicitation. Did you include each of the required documents such as the Project Narrative, the Budget

Detail Worksheet and Narrative, the Data Requested with Application, which is formally, the Summary Datasheet, the Memorandum of Understanding, Letters of Support, and remember, for state courts, travel courts, territory courts, or local court applicants, you may submit Letters of Support in lieu of the MOU. The delivery of Legal Assistance Certification letter, only if applicable, and the Rural Eligibility Documentation, did you include all this in your application packet? Please be sure that you do. Did you review the deadline of March 16th, 2021, 11:59 PM, Eastern Time? And did you submit your application on time? Please make sure your Point of Contact, or the POC, listed in Grants.gov is responsive to emails and alerts. Here are some helpful hints to help you improve your chances of becoming a Rural Program grant recipient. Please read the solicitation and its entirety. It's extremely important that you do that. There have been some changes that have occurred during the solicitation year, and we want to make sure that you're informed about all the required information. You want to start preparing your application early. Please pay special attention to technical details. Use headings and dark bold print to identify each section. Please keep your audience in mind. Be organized and logical, identifying the problems to be addressed. Print out your financial documents and carefully proofread and review your application to ensure accuracy and completion. Be careful in the use of attachments. Please limit the use of acronyms, and the Point of Contacts must monitor their inbox for messages from Grants.gov and JustGrants. Contact information. If you have any questions or concerns about the Rural Solicitation, please get ahold of Ni'Cora Gray from the Rural Unit at the email and phone number listed on this slide. If you need technical assistance with Grants.gov, please contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at the email and phone number listed on this slide. If you need technical assistance with JustGrants, please contact OVW JustGrants Support listed on this slide. Thank you so much for viewing the OVW FY 2021 Rural Program Pre-Application webinar. Good luck to each and every one of you during your application process. Thank you.

NI'CORA GRAY: Documenting Rural Eligibility. The following is a step-by-step guide to determine and document whether the proposed service area or areas are rural. The first thing you're going to do is click on the HRSA data link to find out whether or not the county you're proposing to serve is rural. You're going to plug in your state. You're going to plug in the county. And I'm using Stark County, Ohio because that's where I'm from and that's where I grew up. So, I'm going to use this as a sample. And you click "Search." And there you'll get a message that will say either say, "Yes, all locations in this county are eligible." Or, "Some parts of this county are eligible." Or, "No locations in this county are eligible." For Stark County, we got "Some parts of this county are eligible." So, that will mean we'll have to go to the Census Data to look up the census tracts, but before we do that, if you receive a message that says, "All locations in this county are eligible," then you don't need to go any further. You'll just download that page to your desktop and submit that with your application as proof of

Rural Eligibility for that county. You'll need to do this process for each county that you are planning to serve. So, you'll have the document for each county. Now, moving on to "Some parts of the county", which was the case for Stark County, you're going to move on to step two, where you click on the Census Data link, and it will take you to a page to explore Census Data. On that page, the first thing you'll do is click on "Advanced Search" at the top of the page. And then you click on "Geography," then "Tract", then the state, "Ohio." Then the county, "Stark County." And then "All Census Tracts within Stark County, Ohio." You'll then go up to the "Advanced Search" and type in "urban and rural." And at the bottom of the page, you click "Search." And that'll take you to a Tables page where you want to select the table "P2." "Urban and Rural, P2." And that takes you to the census tract data for Stark County. And once you get to that page, you then want to print, or you want to download this to your desktop. And to do that, you have to "Ctrl Print," and this document box will come up, and you'll export the file to Excel. And once you click that at the bottom of the page, the Excel document will present itself, and you'll save that document to your desktop. At this point, unless you have other counties or other census tract data to look up, you can close out of this website. But if you have more, just keep it open to the side. Now, on your Excel Sheet, it will open up on an information page, but you would then click on the data page, and all of your census tract data will be shown on that page. What you want to do is highlight all of the census tracts that are eligible to be served in Stark County. And the way you do that is to look for the urban number and the rural number. When the urban number is larger than the rural number, then that tract is not eligible. When the rural number is larger than the urban number, then it is eligible, and you will highlight that tract. And go through the rest of the file to find all of the eligible rural census tracts. I've highlighted all the eligible census tracts for Stark County on this file as an example. And you will save this file to your desktop and it will be one of the documents you upload with your application for census tract or for Stark County, Ohio, if that is an area that you plan to serve. So, if you have other counties to search, you go through that same process and keep those files ready to add to your materials for uploading to the application file. One thing I will say about states or coalitions that plan to serve a large number of counties or census tracts; the file may be too large to attach. So, you should screenshot just the areas that are eligible and add those pages, save those pages to your desktop to upload as your proof for service area documentation. If you have any questions or if you don't find this to be an easy process, give us a call, and we'll be happy to walk you through it. And good luck with your application process. Thank you, everyone.