

Memo to the Commissioners

March 11, 2024

From: Jennifer Annis, Violence Intervention Partnership Program Manager

Subject: Office on Violence Against Women 2024 Grants to Improve Criminal Justice Response Application

The U.S Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) recently released a solicitation for the Grant to Improve Criminal Justice Response (ICJR) for 2024. This program assists state, local, and tribal governments, and courts to improve the criminal justice response to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking as serious violation of criminal law, and seek safety and autonomy for victims. The Violence Intervention Partnership (VIP) currently manages an OVW ICJR grant from 2021, and is seeking to apply for a continuation of the project.

OVW funding has provided resources to support the efforts of VIP's Coordinated Community Response to domestic and sexual abuse for over 25 years. Under the FY24 ICJR Solicitation, local governments that have a service area population up to 400,000 may apply for \$500,000 in funding for 36 months. The funding for this grant would begin on 10/1/2024. The Cumberland County Public Health Department's VIP currently manages the 2021 ICJR grant in collaboration with Through These Doors, Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine, Maine Pretrial Services, and the Portland Police Department, along with the support of many criminal and civil legal partners, community-based organizations, survivors, and healthcare partners that support survivors in a variety of ways. The current ICJR grant is scheduled to end 9/30/2024.

In an effort to continue the important work of supporting people who are experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking, the VIP is working on a proposal in response to the ICJR RFP. The proposed ICJR project will continue to work with various community partners to enhance victim safety and improve offender accountability by utilizing the foundation that has already been established, and look to improve access and support to historically marginalized and underserved communities.

OVW grant funded staff and other MOU partners will work to enhance victim safety and improve offender accountability while focusing on advancing equity through the following initiatives: 1) Collaborating with local and national subject matter experts with expertise in working with historically marginalized communities; 2) Working on improving policies and procedures that increase accessibility for people with limited English proficiency and/or are Deaf or Hard of Hearing; 3) Focus on offender accountability utilizing Maine Pretrial Services DV Specialist, Risk Assessment, Electronic Monitoring, High Risk Response Teams, and creating best practices and policies for DV/SA offenders who are referred to specialty courts; 4) Improve victim safety by utilizing high risk response teams for offenders, creating a high risk team for criminalized survivors, funding interpretation and translation services for victim service agencies, providing an emergency fund for survivors to assist with immediate safety needs, and by utilizing an Inclusive Specialist Sexual Assault advocate; 5) Provide training for law enforcement, criminal and civil legal partners, advocates, and other MOU partners on culturally specific response, and best practices and policies for domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. The use of funds proposed include funding for the following:

- 1 FTE for TTD to do systems advocacy, training, and lead the high-risk response team and high risk criminalized survivor team
- .5-1 FTE for SARSSM to do outreach to marginalized and underserved communities and provide support to survivors of sexual assault, systems advocacy and training

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- .5 FTE at Maine Pretrial Services to provide specialized case management to domestic violence offenders, oversee the electronic monitoring program and provide training on the program, and lead best practices in specialty courts
- Contract with subject matter experts to provide expertise and culturally relevant training
- Contract with multi-disciplinary trainers who are not otherwise funded
- Interpretation and translation to support survivors who need language access to include ASL services
- Provide financial support for advisors with lived experience

No matching funding is required for this grant and no additional funding will be needed from the County in order to complete the requirements of this grant.