



# Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office Criminal Justice Division Funding Announcement: *Violence Against Women Justice and Training Program, FY2024*

## Purpose

The purpose of this announcement is to solicit applications for projects that promote a coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach to improve the justice system's response to violent crimes against women, including domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking.

## Available Funding

Federal funding is authorized for these projects under the Violence Against Women Act of 2013 Pub. L. No. 113-4 (VAWA 2013). VAWA funds are made available through a Congressional appropriation to the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women. All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated federal funds and any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

## Eligible Organizations

Applications may be submitted by state agencies, public and private non-profit institutions of higher education, independent school districts, Native American tribes, councils of governments, non-profit corporations (including hospitals and faith-based organizations) and units of local government, which are defined as a non-statewide governmental body with the authority to establish a budget and impose taxes (includes hospital districts). Other local governmental agencies should apply through an associated unit of local government.

Non-profit applicants seeking to provide direct services to victims of crime are not eligible under this solicitation and should apply under the General Victim Assistance Program Funding Announcement.

## Application Process

Applicants must access the PSO's eGrants grant management website at <https://eGrants.gov.texas.gov> to register and apply for funding. For more instructions and information, see the OOG's *eGrants User Guide to Creating an Application*, available [here](#).

Applicants are required to submit fully developed and detailed grant budgets at the time of application, PSO will not accept placeholder applications in lieu of a well written and detailed grant application.

1. For eligible local and regional projects:
  - a. Applicants must contact their applicable regional council of governments (COG) regarding their application.
  - b. Each of Texas' 24 COGs holds its own application planning workshops, workgroups, and/or subcommittees and facilitates application prioritization for certain programs within its region. Failure to comply with regional requirements imposed by the COG may render an application ineligible.

2. State agencies, and other organizations proposing projects with a statewide impact, may submit applications directly to PSO.

## Key Dates

Action	Date
Funding Announcement Release	12/12/2022
Online System Opening Date	12/12/2022
Final Date to Submit and Certify an Application	2/09/2023 at 5:00pm CST
Earliest Project Start Date	09/01/2023

## Project Period

Projects may not exceed 12 months and must start on 9/01/2023 and end on 08/31/2024.

## Funding Levels

Minimum: \$5,000

Maximum: No Maximum

Match Requirement: 30% of the total project (Note: Victim service providers and Native American tribes are exempt from the match requirement.)

## Standards

Grantees must comply with standards applicable to this fund source cited in the Texas Grant Management Standards ([TxGMS](#)), [Federal Uniform Grant Guidance](#), and all statutes, requirements, and guidelines applicable to this funding.

## Eligible Activities and Costs

The following list of eligible activities and costs apply generally to all projects under this announcement:

1. Training law enforcement officers, judges, other court personnel, and prosecutors to more effectively identify and respond to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking;
2. Developing, training, or expanding units of law enforcement officers, judges, other court personnel, and prosecutors specifically targeting violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking;
3. Developing and implementing more effective police, court, and prosecution policies, protocols, orders, and services specifically devoted to preventing, identifying, and responding to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, as well as the appropriate treatment of victims;
4. Developing, installing, or expanding data collection and communication systems, including computerized systems, linking police, prosecutors, and courts or for the purpose of identifying, classifying, and tracking arrests, protection orders, violations of protection orders, prosecutions, and convictions for violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking;
5. Supporting formal and informal statewide, multidisciplinary efforts, to the extent not supported by state funds, to coordinate the response of state law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, courts, victim services agencies, and other state agencies and departments, to

violent crimes against women, including the crimes of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking;

6. Training of sexual assault forensic medical personnel examiners in the collection and preservation of evidence, analysis, prevention, and providing expert testimony and treatment of trauma related to sexual assault;
7. Developing, enlarging, or strengthening programs to assist law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, and others to address the needs and circumstances of older and disabled women who are victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, including recognizing, investigating, and prosecuting instances of such violence or assault and targeting outreach and support, counseling, and other victim services to such older and disabled individuals;
8. Developing and promoting state or local policies that enhance best practices for responding to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking;
9. Developing, implementing, or enhancing Sexual Assault Response Teams, or other similar coordinated community responses to sexual assault as defined in Chapter 351 of Local Government Code, subchapter J;
10. Developing and strengthening policies, protocols, best practices, and training for law enforcement agencies and prosecutors relating to the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault cases and the appropriate treatment of victims; and
11. Identifying and conducting inventories of backlogs of sexual assault evidence collection kits and developing protocols and policies for responding to and addressing such backlogs, including protocols and policies for notifying and involving victims;

## **Program-Specific Requirements**

### **Legal Assistance for Victims (LAV) Certification:**

All VAWA applicants must certify that they meet the following federal statutory requirements regarding the provision of legal advocacy:

- (1) Any person providing legal assistance through a program funded under this VAWA Program
  - (a) has demonstrated expertise in providing legal assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking in the targeted population; or
  - (b) is partnered with an entity or person that has demonstrated expertise described in subparagraph (A) 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 for domestic and dating violence homicide.
- (2) Any training program conducted in satisfaction of the requirement of paragraph (1) has been or will be developed with input from and in collaboration with a state, local, territorial, or tribal domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking victim service provider or coalition, as well as appropriate tribal, State, territorial, and local law enforcement officials.
- (3) Any person or organization providing legal assistance through a program funded under this Program has informed and will continue to inform state, local, or tribal domestic violence, dating violence or

sexual assault programs and coalitions, as well as appropriate State and local law enforcement officials of their work.

(4) 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.

#### **State Priority Areas:**

All projects funded under this announcement must address one or more of the State Priority Areas listed in the application.

## **Eligibility Requirements**

1. Local units of governments must comply with the Cybersecurity Training requirements described in Section 772.012 and Section 2054.5191 of the Texas Government Code. Local governments determined to not be in compliance with the cybersecurity requirements required by Section 2054.5191 of the Texas Government Code are ineligible for OOG grant funds until the second anniversary of the date the local government is determined ineligible. Government entities must annually certify their compliance with the training requirements using the [Cybersecurity Training Certification for State and Local Governments](#). A copy of the Training Certification must be uploaded to your eGrants application. For more information or to access available training programs, visit the Texas Department of Information Resources [Statewide Cybersecurity Awareness Training](#) page.

2. Entities receiving funds from PSO must be located in a county that has an average of 90% or above on both adult and juvenile dispositions entered into the computerized criminal history database maintained by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) as directed in the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Chapter 66. This disposition completeness percentage is defined as the percentage of arrest charges a county reports to DPS for which a disposition has been subsequently reported and entered into the computerized criminal history system.

Counties applying for grant awards from the Office of the Governor must commit that the county will report at least 90% of convictions within five business days to the Criminal Justice Information System at the Department of Public Safety.

3. Eligible applicants operating a law enforcement agency must be current on reporting complete UCR data and the Texas specific reporting mandated by 411.042 TGC, to the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) for inclusion in the annual Crime in Texas (CIT) publication. To be considered eligible for funding, applicants must have submitted a full twelve months of accurate data to DPS for the most recent calendar year by the deadline(s) established by DPS. Due to the importance of timely reporting, applicants are required to submit complete and accurate UCR data, as well as the Texas-mandated reporting, on a no less than monthly basis and respond promptly to requests from DPS related to the data submitted.

4. Local units of government, including cities, counties and other general purpose political subdivisions, as appropriate, and institutions of higher education that operate a law enforcement agency, must comply with all aspects of the programs and procedures utilized by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security ("DHS") to: (1) notify DHS of all information requested by DHS related to illegal aliens in Agency's custody; and (2) detain such illegal aliens in accordance with requests by DHS. Additionally, counties and municipalities may NOT have in effect, purport to have in effect, or make themselves subject to or bound by, any law, rule, policy, or practice (written or unwritten) that would: (1) require or authorize the public disclosure of federal law enforcement information in

order to conceal, harbor, or shield from detection fugitives from justice or aliens illegally in the United States; or (2) impede federal officers from exercising authority under 8 U.S.C. § 1226(a), § 1226(c), § 1231(a), § 1357(a), § 1366(1), or § 1366(3). Lastly, eligible applicants must comply with all provisions, policies, and penalties found in Chapter 752, Subchapter C of the Texas Government Code.

Each local unit of government, and institution of higher education that operates a law enforcement agency, must download, complete and then upload into eGrants the [CEO/Law Enforcement Certifications and Assurances Form](#) certifying compliance with federal and state immigration enforcement requirements. This Form is required for each application submitted to OOG and is active until August 31, 2022 or the end of the grant period, whichever is later.

5. In accordance with Texas Government Code, Section 420.034, any facility or entity that collects evidence for sexual assault or other sex offenses or investigates or prosecutes a sexual assault or other sex offense for which evidence has been collected, must participate in the statewide electronic tracking system developed and implemented by the Texas Department of Public Safety. Visit DPS's [Sexual Assault Evidence Tracking Program](#) website for more information or to set up an account to begin participating.
6. Eligible applicants must be registered in the federal System for Award Management (SAM) database and have an UEI (Unique Entity ID) number assigned to its agency (to get registered in the SAM database and request an UEI number, go to <https://sam.gov/>).

Failure to comply with program or eligibility requirements may cause funds to be withheld and/or suspension or termination of grant funds.

## Prohibitions

Grant funds may not be used to support the unallowable costs listed in the [Guide to Grants](#) or any of the following unallowable costs:

1. Construction, renovation, or remodeling;
2. Research or evaluation activities;
3. Medical services other than forensic medical examinations and prophylaxis;
4. Law enforcement equipment that is standard department issue;
5. Processing DNA evidence;
6. Victim-offender meetings that serve to replace (or as a part of) criminal justice proceedings;
7. Services to incarcerated individuals, including re-entry rehabilitative services related to the crime for which they are incarcerated;
8. Medical training;
9. Cash payments to victims, gift cards, or fuel vouchers;
10. Creation of a voucher program where victims are directly given vouchers for such services as housing or counseling;
11. Leasing or purchasing vehicles;
12. Legal defense services for perpetrators of violence against women;
13. Criminal defense work, including for women who assault, kill, or otherwise injure their abusers;

14. Liability insurance on buildings;
15. Nonessential maintenance on buildings, lawn care, and landscaping;
16. Reimbursement to crime victims for expenses incurred as a result of a crime, such as insurance deductibles, replacement of stolen property, funeral expenses, lost wages, and medical bills;
17. Services for programs that primarily focus on children and/or men;
18. Activities exclusively related to violence prevention, such as media campaigns to educate the general public about violence against women, public awareness, and community education campaigns are also prohibited;
19. Prosecution of child sexual abuse when the victim is now an adult;
20. Relocation expenses for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking such as moving household goods to a new location in another state or acquiring furniture or housing in a new location;
21. Development or presentation of a domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking curriculum for primary or secondary schools (educating students from an existing curriculum would also be prohibited);
22. Activities that may compromise victim safety; and
23. Any other prohibition imposed by federal, state or local law or regulation.

## Selection Process

PSO will screen all applications to ensure that they meet the requirements included in the funding announcement.

1. For eligible local and regional projects:
  - a. Applications will be forwarded by PSO to the appropriate regional council of governments (COG).
  - b. The COG's criminal justice advisory committee will prioritize all eligible applications based on State priorities, identified community priorities, cost and program effectiveness.
  - c. PSO will accept priority listings that are approved by the COG's executive committee.
  - d. PSO will make all final funding decisions based upon eligibility, approved COG priorities, reasonableness of the project, availability of funding, and cost-effectiveness.
2. For state discretionary projects, applications will be reviewed by PSO staff members or a review group selected by the executive director. PSO will make all final funding decisions based on eligibility, reasonableness, availability of funding, and cost-effectiveness.

PSO may not fund all applications or may only award part of the amount requested. In the event that funding requests exceed available funds, PSO may revise projects to address a more limited focus.

## Contact Information

For more information, contact the eGrants help desk at [egrants@gov.texas.gov](mailto:egrants@gov.texas.gov) or (512) 463-1919.