

The Impact of VAWA Funding

Office on Violence Against Women, May 2025

VAWA DISCRETIONARY GRANT PROGRAMS'
PRELIMINARY KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
JULY-DECEMBER 2024

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA) GRANTS SUPPORT EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, AND STALKING NATIONWIDE.

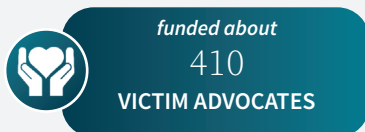
VAWA funding is administered by the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and is distributed nationwide through discretionary and formula grant programs. VAWA grantees use this funding to serve victims and to improve the criminal justice response to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking using evidence-based interventions.

Data presented here reflect VAWA-funded activities and accomplishments reported to OVW by a subset of discretionary program grantees from July to December 2024, but do not include STOP or SASP Formula subgrantee data. The data are preliminary and have not gone through final review and processing; a report with final, comprehensive discretionary, Tribal Coalitions, State Coalitions, and Technical Assistance award data is forthcoming.

VICTIM ADVOCACY HELPS TO IMPROVE VICTIMS' WELL BEING AND REDUCE THEIR FEAR.

Victims supported by **advocates** may suffer less fear, less psychological distress, and fewer physical health problems, and endure less self-blame, guilt, and depression.¹

In July-December 2024, discretionary program grants:



Victim services staff across discretionary grant programs:



VICTIMS WHO USE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING ARE BETTER PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE.

Victims who use **transitional housing** report having a greater ability to plan for their safety, are aware of more resources in their community, have more hope for the future, and feel better able to achieve their goals.²

In July-December 2024, discretionary program grantees:



VICTIM-CENTERED PROSECUTION IMPROVES VICTIMS' SATISFACTION WITH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM.

Victim-centered prosecution is associated with a lower incidence of re-abuse. Victims who feel empowered in the justice process suffer less depression and report better quality of life, and they are more satisfied with the system and more likely to seek its help, if needed, in the future.³

In July-December 2024, discretionary program grants:



VAWA FUNDING EMBEDS BEST PRACTICES INTO LAW ENFORCEMENT'S RESPONSE TO VAWA CRIMES.

Law enforcement officers who are trained in and use best practices may be more likely to arrest domestic abusers. Taking an offender into custody and documenting evidence of injury increases the odds that a domestic violence case will be prosecuted. A swift police response to sexual assault and a thorough investigation may make it more likely that a case will be referred to a prosecutor, accepted for prosecution, and result in a conviction.⁴

In July-December 2024, discretionary program grants:



PROTECTION ORDERS CAN HELP VICTIMS FEEL SAFER AND PREVENT FUTURE ABUSE.

Protection orders can deter further abuse and increase victims' perceptions of their own safety, reduce victims' post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms, and have shown a cost-benefit of tens of millions of dollars in one state.⁵

In July-December 2024, discretionary program-funded advocates, legal professionals, law enforcement officers, and prosecutors assisted victims with:



Endnotes

- 1 DePrince, A. P., Belknap, J., Labus, J. S., Buckingham, S. E., & Gover, A. R. (2012). The impact of victim-focused outreach on criminal legal system outcomes following police-reported intimate partner abuse. *Violence Against Women*, 18(8), 861-881. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1077801212456523>; Patterson, D., & Campbell, R. (2010). Why rape survivors participate in the criminal justice system. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 38(2), 191-205. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20359>; Patterson, D., & Tringali, B. (2015). Understanding how advocates can affect sexual assault victim engagement in the criminal justice process. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 30(12), 1987-1997. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0886260514552273>; Sullivan, C. M. (2018). Understanding how domestic violence support services promote survivor well-being: A conceptual model. *Journal of Family Violence*, 33(2), 123-131. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-017-9931-6>; Sullivan, C. M., Bybee, D. I., & Allen, N. E. (2002). Findings from a community-based program for battered women and their children. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 17(9), 915-936. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260502017009001>; and Sullivan, C. M., & Goodman, L. A. (2019). Advocacy with survivors of intimate partner violence: What it is, what it isn't, and why it's critically important. *Violence Against Women*, 25(16), 2007-2023. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1077801219875826>.
- 2 Grossman, S. F., & Lundy, M. (2011). Characteristics of women who do and do not receive onsite shelter services from domestic violence programs. *Violence Against Women*, 17(8), 1024-1045. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1077801211414169>; Lyon, E., Lane, S., & Menard, A. (2008). *Meeting survivors' needs: A multi-state study of domestic violence shelter experiences*. (NCJ 225025). National Resource Center on Domestic Violence. <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/225025.pdf>; Sullivan, C. M., & Virden, T. (2017). An eight state study on the relationships among domestic violence shelter services and residents' self-efficacy and hopefulness. *Journal of Family Violence*, 32(8), 741-750. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-017-9930-7>; and Sullivan, C. M., & Virden, T. (2017b). Interrelationships among length of stay in a domestic violence shelter, help received, and outcomes achieved. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 87(4), 434-442. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ort0000267>.
- 3 Belknap, J., & Sullivan, C. M. (2003). *Longitudinal study of battered women in the system: The victims' and decisionmakers' perceptions. Final report*. (NCJ 202946). U.S. Department of Justice; National Institute of Justice. <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/202946.pdf>; Cattaneo, L. B., & Goodman, L. A. (2010). Through the lens of therapeutic jurisprudence: The relationship between empowerment in the court system and well-being for intimate partner violence victims. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 25(3), 481-502. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0886260509334282>; DePrince, A. P., Belknap, J., Labus, J. S., Buckingham, S. E., & Gover, A. R. (2012). The impact of victim-focused outreach on criminal legal system outcomes following police-reported intimate partner abuse. *Violence Against Women*, 18(8), 861-881. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1077801212456523>; Finn, M. A. (2013). Evidence-based and victim-centered prosecutorial policies: Examination of deterrent and therapeutic jurisprudence effects on domestic violence. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 12(3), 441-442. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12049>; Gerwirth, A., Weidner, R. R., Miller, H., & Zehm, K. (2006). Domestic violence cases involving children: Effects of an evidence-based prosecution approach. *Violence & Victims*, 21(2), 213-229. <https://doi.org/10.1891/vivi.21.2.213>; and Smith, B., & Davis, R. (2004). *An evaluation of efforts to implement no-drop policies: Two central values in conflict*. (NCJ 199719). U.S. Department of Justice; National Institute of Justice. <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/199719.pdf>.
- 4 Hamby, S., Finkelhor, D., & Turner, H. (2015). Intervention following family violence: Best practices and helpseeking obstacles in a nationally representative sample of families with children. *Psychology of Violence*, 5(3), 325-336. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0036224>; Messing, J. T. (2014). Evidence-based prosecution of intimate partner violence in the post-Crawford era: a single-city study of the factors leading to prosecution. *Crime & Delinquency*, 60(2), 238-260. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011128710362056>; and Rosay, A. B., Wood, D., Rivera, M., Postle, G., & TePas, K. (2010). *Investigation and prosecution of sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking*. (JC #0601). U.S. Department of Justice; National Institute of Justice; University of Alaska Anchorage; Justice Center. https://scholarworks.alaska.edu/bitstream/handle/11122/3723/0601.06.final_report.pdf?sequence=1.
- 5 Cattaneo, L. B., Grossmann, J., & Chapman, A. R. (2016). The goals of IPV survivors receiving orders of protection: An application of the empowerment process model. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 31(17), 2889-2911. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0886260515581905>; Logan, T. K., & Walker, R. (2009). Civil protective order outcomes: Violations and perceptions of effectiveness. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 24(4), 675-692. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0886260508317186>; Logan, T. K., Walker, R., Hoyt, W., & Faragher, T. (2009). *The Kentucky Civil Protective Order Study: A rural and urban multiple perspective study of protective order violation consequences, responses and costs*. (NCJ 228350). U.S. Department of Justice; National Institute of Justice. www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/228350.pdf; Messing, J. T., O'Sullivan, C. S., Cavanaugh, C. E., Webster, D. W., & Campbell, J. (2017). Are abused women's protective actions associated with reduced threats, stalking, and violence perpetrated by their male intimate partners? *Violence Against Women*, 23(3), 263-286. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1077801216640381>; and Wright, C. V., & Johnson, D. M. (2012). Encouraging legal help seeking for victims of intimate partner violence: The therapeutic effects of the civil protection order. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 25(6), 675-681. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.21754>.