



NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS)
FY2020 STOP VAWA Formula Award
Request for Proposals – Questions 52 to 100 Received through
Wednesday, September 23, 2020

Proposals Due Friday, October 23, 2020

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION IN ANSWER TO QUESTION #52 FOR ALL APPLICANTS
PROPOSING A SAFE PROGRAM**

Question #52: *In the Application Checklist on page 24 of the RFP, it states: "If applicable - Attached Letter(s) of Support, Memoranda of Understanding, etc. as indicated." When are letters of support and/or MOU required? I do not see that indicated in the RFP.*

Answer: This answer provides important clarification to the answer provided in Question #12. **Other than in the case of a SAFE program proposal (see paragraph below), letters demonstrating programmatic partnership and support are not required for this RFP.** A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is required when a grant recipient within a particular category is not the type of agency referred to in the category. Federal STOP VAWA guidelines require that states must require demonstration from the entity to be benefitted in the form of a memorandum of understanding signed by the chief executive of both the entity and the grant recipient stating that the entity supports the proposed project and agrees that it is to the entity's benefit. Please read the following additional information:

Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner (SAFE) Programs – Such applicants must submit a letter from the President or CEO of the hospital in which they are providing services stating that the hospital is aware and supportive of the program. In addition, they must also submit a letter from the District Attorney's Office stating that they will work together in the potential prosecution of cases.

Legal Assistance – Pursuant to 34 U.S.C. § 12291(b)(12), any recipient or subrecipient providing legal assistance with funds awarded under this program must certify in writing that:

1. any person providing legal assistance with funds through this 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) i. is partnered with an entity or person that has demonstrated expertise described in subparagraph (A); and ii. 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 tribal, state, territorial, or local 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;



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3. any person or organization providing legal assistance with funds through 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; and
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.

This certification must take the form of a letter, on letterhead, signed and dated by an authorized official of the organization delivering legal services.

Question #53: *With regard to the standardized workplans discussed on pages 12-13 of the RFP, are applicants to create workplans that ONLY include these standardized project goal, objectives, tasks and performance measures? Are applicants to refrain from creating any goals, objectives, tasks and performance measures other than these provided (standardized) ones? Does this mean the applicant is not actually developing a full workplan during the application phase? Will development of a workplan instead be part of the contract development phase? Does the applicant simply include the standardized goal, and indicate the function areas -- is that the total of what applications are required to do for the Work Plan section of the application?*

Answer: All workplans will be standardized as indicated in the RFP. Individualized workplans will not be allowed. The applicable workplan(s) will be included in contracts during contract development if applicant is selected for an award. For this section of the application, applicants select the function areas. Nothing else is required in this section.

Question #54: *Are prevention funds available other than those set aside for NYSCADV and NYSCASA for the statewide prevention activities?*

Answer: No. As stated under *Section III. (A). #18 STOP Program Purpose Areas* in the RFP, only category 5 applicants may address the Prevention purpose area.

Question #55: *Is an MOU required for a project that includes Coordinated Community Response activities? I do not see this requested in the RFP; however, it has been required in the past.*



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Answer: A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is required when a grant recipient within a particular category is not the type of agency referred to in the category. Federal STOP VAWA guidelines require that states must require demonstration from the entity to be benefitted in the form of a memorandum of understanding signed by the chief executive of both the entity and the grant recipient stating that the entity supports the proposed project and agrees that it is to the entity's benefit. Please refer to the answer for Question #52 for additional information.

Question #56: *The RFP on page 4 states that \$50,000 will be awarded for "all other projects, regardless of jurisdiction". Does this mean that applicants will receive \$50,000 annually over the 5-year contract term (\$250,000 total)? Or does this mean that applicants will receive \$10,000 annually over the 5-year contract term (\$50,000 total)?*

Answer: The funding caps provided in the RFP are annual award amounts. Successful local applicants will receive up to \$50,000 each year of the 5-year award. Per *Section II. (C)* in the RFP, "Funding after the first year of the contract is contingent upon the availability of state and federal budget appropriations, satisfactory program performance, and adherence to contractual terms and conditions. Proposals should include a budget that covers the initial 12-month period of the agreement."

Question #57: *The RFP lists allocation categories (page 4) and Funding priorities and Set asides (page 5). If an applicant is awarded within the 30% victim services allocation category, will 6 of these awards then be set aside for the culturally specific community-based set-aside? OR will 10% of the Victim Services allocation category fund Culturally Specific Community Based Organizations.*

Answer: Federal STOP VAWA guidelines require that at least ten percent (10%) of the Victim Services category allocation be set aside for Culturally Specific Community-Based Organizations. DCJS has elected to set-aside up to six (6) awards for these organizations, which represents approximately 14% of the overall Victim Services allocation. Once the set-aside is satisfied by the highest scoring proposals from Culturally Specific Community-Based Organizations, the remaining Victim Services allocation will be used to fund other qualified victim service organizations.

Question #58: *While the RFP lists eligible services that a hospital or emergency medical facility can provide, the RFP does not discuss health-related services specifically (integrated physical and or mental health services) provided by a hospital or mental health clinic. In reading the*



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STOP Program purpose areas (pages 7-9) #11 states "Maintaining core victim services and criminal justice initiatives, while supporting complementary new initiatives and emergency services for victims and their families". Can this purpose area (in the underlined segment) be interpreted to include integrated physical and or mental health services provided by a hospital or mental health clinic?

Answer: No. Such costs are not allowable with this RFP.

Question #59: *It looks like the maximum an award this time around is only \$50,000 unless it is a statewide application. Is this cap correct? (p. 4). Are there specific things this RFP will not fund that the previous one would fund?*

Answer: The funding caps are correct. In order to maximize support of local programs, maximum annual award amounts (or "funding caps") will be imposed by program type as follows:

- \$100,000 – Statewide Initiatives and Programs
- \$50,000 – All other projects, regardless of jurisdiction. Note: Applicants are encouraged to submit proposed budgets that reflect the minimum level of funding required to accomplish identified goals and objectives.

Federal STOP VAWA program guidelines for eligible expenses are constantly being updated by the US Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women. Applicants should thoroughly review the RFP and all resources that are included to determine currently eligible activities.

Question #60: *If we oversee services for victims of domestic violence for 3 counties, will we be completing 3 separate applications? Or one application for our entire program?*

Answer: There is no restriction on the number of proposals that eligible entities may submit. Applicants that submit multiple proposals are reminded to plan for and consider the possibility that all, one, or none of the projects may be funded.

Question #61: *Can funds from an annual budget be split, for example, into spending in the first 6 months on training or new equipment and then the next 6 months for an actual salary?*



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Answer: Yes. In this RFP, applicants are required to submit a budget with total projected costs for a 12-month initial budget period which must be limited to eligible costs. The RFP does not prescribe how the budget should be set-up.

Question #62: *Is there a list of allowable and non-allowable expenses?*

Answer: Federal STOP VAWA program guidelines for eligible expenses are constantly being updated by the US Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women. Applicants should thoroughly review the RFP and all resources that are included to determine currently eligible activities. For additional information about allowable costs, please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About STOP Formula Grants at <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/page/file/1008816/download>.

Question #63: *We noticed the grant name includes the word "Formula" but within the grant there is a scoring process involved. Is this grant competitive or non-competitive?*

Answer: This is a competitive solicitation. The term "Formula Award" refers to the federal allocation process for determining the amount of STOP VAWA program funds made available to New York State.

Question #64: *Approximately how many applications do you anticipate receiving?*

Answer: DCJS is unable to estimate the number of proposals that will be submitted in response to this RFP. We received over 170 applications in response to the previous STOP RFP, which was issued in 2014.

Question #65: *Approximately how many awards you anticipate making?*

Answer: DCJS anticipates making approximately 120-130 awards.

Question #66: *With regard to the Native American Set-aside of \$50,000, is this amount per year?*

Answer: Yes. The funding caps provided in the RFP are annual award amounts. Successful local applicants will receive up to \$50,000 each year of the 5-year award. Per Section II. (C). in the RFP, "Funding after the first year of the contract is contingent upon the availability of state



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and federal budget appropriations, satisfactory program performance, and adherence to contractual terms and conditions.

Question #67: *We consider the Native American traditional teachings a community-based model. We will use that along with the White Bison, and other Native American curricula that were combined to create our own unique curriculum. Is this acceptable?*

Answer: Yes, this would be an allowable activity.

Question #68: *For Native American specific services, do the clients have to be federally recognized? In our territories there are many people who are not on the roll but are of Native American descent.*

Answer: Clients for Native American specific services do not have to be federally recognized to be eligible to receive services.

Question #69: *We do not have a federal approved indirect rate, can we still budget for the 10% indirect rate?*

Answer: Yes. Programs without any current or prior federally approved indirect cost rates are entitled to use a “*de minimus* indirect cost rate” of 10 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR §200.414 Indirect - Facilities and Administration Costs).

Question #70: *Are there current grantees of the STOP program? If so, please provide a list of the organizations currently participating in the program.*

Answer: Yes. To access a listing of DCJS grant recipients of STOP VAWA awards, please visit the *Open Book New York* website: <https://www.openbooknewyork.com/> maintained by NYS Office of the State Comptroller.

Question #71: *May organizations submit multiple applications as long as they are in different counties?*

Answer: There is no restriction on the number of proposals that eligible entities may submit. There is no stipulation with regard to applications pertaining to different counties. Applicants



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that submit multiple proposals are reminded to plan for and consider the possibility that all, one, or none of the projects may be funded.

Question #72: *Will applicants that submit letters of support or MOUs receive any additional points during the review process for proposals?*

Answer: No. Additional points will not be awarded for letters of support or MOUs. Letters demonstrating programmatic partnership and support are only required for SAFE proposals. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is required only when a grant recipient within a particular category is not the type of agency referred to in the category. See the answer to Question #52 for additional information regarding MOUs.

Question #73: *Is the statewide level competitive as well, or is that already earmarked by the formula grant?*

Answer: Applications for statewide projects are competitive.

Question #74: *In the last RFP, victim service providers could include work with incarcerated individuals around PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act) as a part of the work plan. I didn't see this specifically mentioned in this RFP. Is it still allowable?*

Answer: Yes. Please refer to *Section III. (A). STOP Program Purpose Areas #15*, which includes, "Developing, enlarging or strengthening programs addressing sexual assault against men, women, and youth in correctional or detention settings" as a defined STOP program purpose area for grantees.

Question #75: *Is the FFY 2020 STOP VAWA Formula Grant Program RFP a new grant that is in addition to funding currently being provided under the FY 2015 Formula Grant award, or has the 2015 grant funding ended and this is a new RFP for funding under the parameters set forth therein?*

Answer: All current STOP VAWA contracts with DCJS end on December 31, 2020. This solicitation is an open competitive request for proposals to establish a new portfolio of programs funded by the federal STOP Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Formula Grants Program across New York State for the next 5 years. This RFP is not to be considered an extension or continuation of funding for current STOP VAWA program contracts. There is no guarantee that



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current STOP VAWA grantees will receive awards under this new funding opportunity, nor will they have any scoring advantage over other eligible applicants.

Question #76: *My jurisdiction will be submitting a proposal at a local level and would fall under the \$50,000.00 “program type”. However, the cost of our program would exceed that figure. Should we submit for what we need and since it would be over what is allowed will it not be counted against us?*

Answer: Applicants should submit proposals that include costs up to the amounts listed under Section II. (A) *Funding Caps in the RFP*. Proposals submitted with budgets above the designated funding caps will receive a lower score.

Question #77: *Can multiple departments of a county applicant submit individual applications to collaborate on a project? Is a county limited to submitting one application which is driven by multiple departments in collaboration?*

Answer: There is no restriction on the number of proposals that eligible entities may submit. Applicants that submit multiple proposals are reminded to plan for and consider the possibility that all, one, or none of the projects may be funded.

Question #78: *We are interested in submitting an application as a grantee for our institution, as well as be part of another application as a collaborator. Is that allowed/encouraged?*

Answer: Yes, this would be allowable. Subcontractor status of an eligible organization on one proposal does not impact the ability of that same organization to also submit an independent proposal.

Question #79: *Are state agencies qualified to apply for this funding? Our agency provides victim advocacy and support to individuals with disabilities who are victims of abuse and neglect (administrative cases primarily but also some criminal cases).*

Answer: State agencies are not eligible to apply for this funding.

Question #80: *Is there a start-up period in Year One? When are we expected to fully implement STOP activities?*



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Answer: Programs are expected to engage in STOP-funded activities during the entire term of the award.

Question #81: *We are a large health care organization that does not currently have a SAFE program and plan to implement one in the future with a combination of funding support. Can this STOP program funding be used to implement aspects of a SAFE program?*

Answer: Yes. This is an allowable program and expense. SAFE programs are listed in the RFP under *Section III. (C). Potential Initiatives and Activities* as one of the types of programs and projects which may be supported with STOP funds.

Question #82: *Can you please provide a definition of “emergency services” found in #11 under A. STOP Program Purpose Areas.*

Answer: The term “emergency services” can be broadly interpreted and can include legal services such as assistance with petitions for emergency orders of protection. Please see Question and Answer #18 for additional information.

Question #83: *Do proposed needs assessment activities belong under the Data Collection function area, or System Improvement, or something else? I imagine it could also go under Coordinated Community Response when the needs assessment is in regard to an interdisciplinary response?*

Answer: Applicants should review the Appendix “*Standard Work Plans and Reporting Information for Function Area(s)*” and select the function areas that best meet their project needs.

Question #84: *Do proposed activities for providing assistance and working together with other organizations and systems to bring about improved system and community services/response to domestic violence, go under System Improvement function area, the Coordinated Community Response function area, or something else? I see that the objective for Coordinated Community Response (in the Standard Work Plans Appendix) is stated as “To indicate the agencies or organizations that were provided sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and/or stalking victims/survivor referrals to, receive referrals from, engaged in consultation with, provided technical assistance to, and/or attended meetings with.” The task and performance measure do not mention technical assistance, they only mention referrals to/from, and meeting*



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with. Meanwhile, the System Improvement objective describes activities "...that improve services/response to victims/survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and/or stalking." Where do activities belong that assist agencies/systems (that sounds like technical assistance) to improve their services and responses (that sounds like System Improvement)?

Answer: Applicants should review the Appendix "Standard Work Plans and Reporting Information for Function Area(s)" and select the function areas that best meet their project needs.

Question #85: *In general, there is some overlap in the function areas of Coordinated Community Response, System Improvement, and in some cases Data Collection. Is there more clarification available?*

Answer: Additional reporting information is detailed in the *2019 STOP Formula Subgrantee Reporting Form Instructions* which includes program-specific reporting form instructions for more in-depth guidance on how to report grant-funded activities on the progress report. Please visit: https://www.vawamei.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/STOPSubgrantee_Instructions2019.pdf

Question #86: *The Work Plan appears standardized. Is this correct, or do you want applicants to develop an individualized work plan?*

Answer: All workplans will be standardized as indicated in the RFP. Individualized workplans will not be allowed. The applicable workplan(s) will be included in contracts during contract development if applicant is selected for an award. For this section of the application, applicants should select the function areas. Nothing else is required in this section.

Question #87: *Can any clarification be provided regarding the case load expectation, or number of individuals to be served, should the applicant choose to propose a legal assistance program to assist individuals who have been victims of domestic violence with orders of protection, or immigration cases.*

Answer: There is no caseload expectation or required minimum number of individuals to be served under this RFP.

Question #88: *What is the age range of the population that can be served (minors)?*



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Answer: STOP funds cannot be used to provide services for victims under the age of 11.

Question #89: *Who can be used (Mayor's Office, Subcontractors, Collaborators (non-financially bonded) for letters of support?*

Answer: Other than in the case of a SAFE program, letters demonstrating programmatic partnership and support are not required for this RFP. Please refer to the answer for Question #52 for additional information.

Question #90: *Page 1 of the revised RFP indicates that the Application Deadline is 12:00 noon on Friday, October 23, 2020. Page 23/24 of the RFA indicates "All final grant proposals must be received in the New York State Grants Gateway System by 12:00 PM EST, on Friday, October 16, 2020". Are we correct in assuming that the Page 1 deadline (10/23/20) is the correct deadline?*

Answer: The deadline for submitting applications is 12:00 noon on Friday, October 23, 2020.

Question #91: *Page 13 of the RFP, item 5B, sub-item (b) indicates "Education" as one of the 13 possible Function Areas that the Applicant proposes to address. Likewise, pages 31-32 of the RFP describe "Function Area—Education" including, "Objective: Education to provide general information to increase public awareness of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and/or stalking." Are local community applicants that do not plan to apply under the 'statewide' coalition Category 5 (referenced on pages 7 and 9 of the RFP) eligible to mark 'yes' as one of the function areas in item 5B on the workplan? Or are local (non-Statewide) applicants prohibited from choosing "Education" as one of the function areas the Applicant proposes to address?*

Answer: Local programs are allowed to select the Education Function Area and engage in related activities.

Question #92: *Section V(8)(E) - If a 25% match is imposed after the initial year, will victim service providers still be exempted by 34 U.S.C. § 12291(b)(1) [formerly 42 U.S.C. § 13925(b)(1)]?*

Answer: Yes, victim service providers will be exempt from match requirements for the entirety of the contract period. Please refer to the answer for Question #9 for additional information.



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Question #93: *Page 16, Section V(8)(F) states: Note: Indirect Cost Rate capped at 10%. If we are a not-for-profit with a federally approved indirect cost rate above 10%, and we provide documentation of that, can we charge our full indirect cost rate?*

Answer: Yes, the full federally approved indirect cost rate is allowed with appropriate documentation. Programs without any current or prior federally approved indirect cost rates are entitled to use a “*de minimus* indirect cost rate” of 10 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR §200.414 Indirect - Facilities and Administration Costs).

Question #94: *Page 8, Section III(A)(9) - Under purpose area #9, it specifically states "older" and disabled "women" - Can programs only address the needs of those assigned women at birth, or can programs address the needs of all domestic violence victims, including all sexes and genders? Also, can you provide a date range for what is considered older, i.e. 50+, 60+?*

Answer: Programs can address the needs of all domestic violence victims, including all sexes and genders who are 11 years old and older. There is no maximum age limit for victims who may be served.

Question #95: *Starting on Page 11, Section V (Request for Proposal Questions) - Multiple questions have specific character limits. In Grants Gateway, are we allowed to exceed the character limits, if we attach an additional document in the Grantee Documents Folder?*

Answer: Applicants are required to answer all questions within the designated space provided in the Grants Gateway and adhere to the character limits provided. **Important Note** – Additional information provided by applicants as attachments in the Grants Gateway system will NOT be evaluated or considered for scoring purposes.

Question #96: *Would a multi-county effort designed to be a pilot for possible implementation statewide fall under the cap for a single county or be considered a statewide initiative?*

Answer: This project would be considered local and fall under the funding cap provided for a local applicant.

Question #97: *I would like to inquire about the \$50,000 funding cap for individual programs/projects. If an individual program provides services to multiple institutions, serving*



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multiple local communities, as well as incarcerated individuals, would this be a consideration for an increased award?

Answer: Individual annual award amounts are limited as detailed in *Section II. (A) Funding Caps* in the RFP.

Question #98: *Are the maximum funding caps listed on Page 4 of the RFP for the entire grant period, or are they caps for annual payout?*

Answer: The funding caps provided in the RFP apply to annual award amounts. Successful local applicants will receive up to \$50,000 each year of the 5-year award.

Question #99: *Since only the first year of the budget is required in the application, will the total five-year grant amount be set at five times of the awarded first year amount?*

Answer: Yes.

Question #100: *Will a new budget be required each year of the contract, and can the annual amount be adjusted up or down each year?*

Answer: A new 12-month budget will be required each year. As stated in Section II. (A) of the RFP, "Funding is not guaranteed. Modifications or additional requirements may be imposed during the award and/or contract period. The primary source of STOP funding is federal Violence Against Women Act appropriations, which may vary from year to year. DCJS is committed however to sustaining grant award levels, contingent upon adequate federal budget appropriations."

End of Questions and Answers