

OVW Sexual Assault Services Formula Grant Program

OVERVIEW¹

About the OVW SASP Formula Grant Program

The Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) was created by the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 (VAWA 2005), 42 U.S.C. §14043g, and is the first Federal funding stream solely dedicated to the provision of direct intervention and related assistance for victims of sexual assault. The SASP encompasses four different funding streams for 1) States and Territories, 2) Tribes, 3) State and Tribal sexual assault coalitions, and 4) culturally specific organizations. Overall, the purpose of SASP is to provide intervention, advocacy, accompaniment (e.g., accompanying victims to court, medical facilities, police departments, etc.), support services, and related assistance for adult, youth, and child victims of sexual assault, family and household members of victims, and those collaterally affected by the sexual assault.

Congress, OVW, and victim advocates recognized the need to place increased focus on sexual assault in order to address the lack of available direct intervention and related assistance services and the unique aspects of sexual assault trauma from which victims must heal. Women and men of all ages, as well as children, can be victims of sexual assault. The perpetrator can be a relative, acquaintance (e.g., boyfriend/girlfriend, friend, coworker, neighbor), or a stranger. Nationally, one in six women and one in thirty-three men will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime.²

For many victims it may take years to recover from the physical and psychological trauma caused by rape and other forms of sexual violence. In order to heal from the trauma, survivors often need support from family and friends, as well as critical direct intervention and related assistance from victim-centered social service organizations such as rape crisis centers, through 24-hour sexual assault hotlines, crisis intervention, and medical and criminal justice accompaniment. The SASP will support these services by assisting the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of rape crisis centers and other relevant programs dedicated to assisting those victimized by sexual assault.

The Sexual Assault Services Formula Grant Program (SASP Formula Grant Program) directs grant dollars to States and Territories to assist them in supporting rape crisis centers and other nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations that provide core services, direct intervention, and related assistance to victims of sexual assault. Funds provided through the SASP Formula Grant Program are designed to **supplement** other funding sources directed at addressing sexual assault on the State and Territorial level. Rape crisis centers and other nonprofit organizations such as dual programs providing both domestic violence and sexual violence intervention services play a vital role in assisting sexual assault victims through the healing process, as well as assisting victims through the medical, criminal justice, and other social support systems. In order to provide comprehensive services to victims of sexual assault, the SASP Formula Grant Program will assist States and Territories in supporting rape crisis centers and other nonprofit organizations in the provision of **direct intervention and related assistance**.

Award Amounts

SASP Formula Grant Program funds are based on the following guidelines:

- By statute, OVW will award a base amount to each State and Territory. Funds remaining after the allocated base amount will be distributed among the States and Territories based on

¹ Excerpts from Federal OMB document 1122-0020; Expiration Date: 5/31/2010.

² Tjaden, P, Thoennes N. *Full Report of the Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*, Washington (DC): National Institute of Justice; 2000. report NCJ 183781.

population, including Tribal populations. The most accurate and complete data compiled by the United States Bureau of the Census is used to determine the populations.

Program Scope

Overall, the purpose of the SASP, and therefore the SASP Formula Grant Program, is to provide intervention, advocacy, accompaniment (e.g., accompanying victims to court, medical facilities, police departments, etc.), support services, and related assistance to

- Adult, youth and child victims of sexual assault;
- Family and household members of such victims, and
- Those collaterally affected by the victimization (e.g., friends, coworkers, classmates), **except** for the perpetrator of such victimization

Statutory Program Purposes

By statute, funds under the SASP Formula Grant Program may be used for the following purposes:

- To support the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of rape crisis centers and other programs and projects to assist those victimized by sexual assault.

SASP Formula grants shall be used by States and Territories to provide grants to rape crisis centers and other non-profit, nongovernmental organizations, including faith-based, other community organizations, and Tribal non-profit organizations for programs and activities that provide direct intervention and related assistance. Intervention and related assistance may include:

- 24-hour hotline services providing crisis intervention services and referral;
- Accompaniment and advocacy through medical, criminal justice, and social support systems, including medical facilities, police, and court proceedings;
- Crisis intervention, short-term individual and group support services, and comprehensive service coordination and supervision to assist sexual assault victims and family or household members;
- Information and referral to assist the sexual assault victim and family or household members;
- Community-based, linguistically and culturally specific services and support mechanisms, including outreach activities for underserved communities; and
- The development and distribution of materials on issues related to the services described in the previous bullets.

NOTE: The SASP Formula Grant Program emphasizes the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of rape crisis centers and other nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations, such as dual programs addressing domestic violence and sexual assault, for the provision of direct intervention, core services, and related assistance to adult, youth, and child victims of sexual assault. **Under the SASP Formula Grant Program grant funds cannot be used to support sexual assault forensic examiner projects or criminal justice activities (e.g., law enforcement, prosecution, courts, or forensic interviews).**

Activities That May Compromised Victim Safety and Recovery

The following is a list of activities that have been found to decrease victim safety, deter or prevent physical and emotional healing for victims, or allow offenders to escape responsibilities for their actions. OVW strongly encourages you **not** to include these activities in your application for funding:

- Crafting policies that deny individuals access to services based on their relationship to the perpetrator;
- Developing materials that are not tailored to the dynamics of sexual assault or the culturally specific population to be served;

- Crafting policies or engaging in practices that impose restrictive conditions to be met by the victims in order to receive services (e.g., counseling, seeking an order of protection);
- Sharing confidential victim information with outside organizations and/or individuals without the documented consent of the victim; and
- Crafting policies that require the victim to report the sexual assault to law enforcement.

Unallowable Activities

Grant funds under SASP Formula Grant Program may not be used for any unauthorized purposes, including but not limited to the following activities:

- Lobbying;
- Fundraising;
- Research projects;
- Physical modifications to building, including minor renovations;
- Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner projects;
- Activities focused on prevention efforts (e.g., bystander intervention, social norm campaigns, presentations on health relationships, etc.)
- Criminal justice-related projects, including law enforcement, prosecution, courts and forensic interviews; and
- Providing domestic violence services that do not relate to sexual violence.