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5. Developing, enlarging, or strengthening programs addressing 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 domestic violence or sexual assault, 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; and
8. Providing assistance to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in immigration matters.

Pennsylvania will continue to meet the mandated allocation percentages of 25% for law enforcement, 25% for prosecution, 30% for victim services with 10% of that funding for underserved populations, 15% discretionary and 5% for judicial training.

The PCCD OVS engaged in numerous efforts to make the field aware of the availability of STOP funding. This included notices in the OVS's biweekly newsletter, which has a mailing list of over 800 individuals throughout Pennsylvania. An email was sent to all currently funded victim service agencies, letting them know that STOP funding was available. PCCD's website features a prominent "What's New at PCCD?" section on its landing page, and information about the availability of STOP Funding was featured there during the entire time the solicitation was open. PCCD's Egrants System also automatically generates notices of funding announcements to all subscribers, so potential applicants on the Egrants registration list were informed of the availability of STOP funding. We also worked with our collaborative partners such as PCADV,

PCAR, PCPA and VSAC members to “get the word out” about the availability of the STOP funding.

While the majority of the funding is awarded to county teams, there are three projects that will be awarded to statewide organizations to meet needs identified through Pennsylvania’s collaborative planning process. First, grants will be awarded to both PCADV and PCAR to provide a variety of training and technical assistance across Pennsylvania to improve the response to violence against women crimes. This includes technical assistance to both STOP funded and non-STOP funded counties on issues including, but not limited to: Full Faith and Credit for Protection Orders, human trafficking, Sexual Assault Response Teams, protocol development, dating violence, and stalking. Each coalition also has the responsibility to provide information and technical assistance to Pennsylvania counties so that they can be in compliance with the federal STOP certifications. Finally, as was mentioned in the Description of Planning Process Section, the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts has agreed to provide its 5% allocation to the coalitions to provide training to the major and minor judiciary. As a result, the grants to each coalition contain funding to achieve that purpose.

PCCD will again award STOP Funding to the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association (PCPA) to continue its collaborative work with PCADV and PCAR to develop, design and implement virtual training modules for law enforcement officers across Pennsylvania to enhance their response to violence against women victims and crimes. During the previous planning cycle, PCCD OVS awarded a grant to PCPA to work in collaboration with PCADV and PCAR to develop and launch four web-based modules:

- Responding to a Domestic Violence Call
- Investigating Sexual Assault
- Investigating Stalking
- Investigating Strangulation

The response of law enforcement officers to these modules has been overwhelmingly positive. PCCD, PCPA, PCADV and PCAR want to harness the momentum of that response and add at least three more violence against women-related modules to Pennsylvania’s Virtual Training

Network for Law Enforcement over the next three years

[http://www.google.com/search?q=PAVTN&rls=com.microsoft:\\*&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&startIndex=&startPage=1](http://www.google.com/search?q=PAVTN&rls=com.microsoft:*&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&startIndex=&startPage=1).

Finally, PCCD will continue to afford STOP Grantees an opportunity to gather together to learn and network at least twice during the next planning cycle. We will hold two Statewide STOP Grantee meetings at a central location in the state, bringing a variety of national and state experts to train on issues relevant to the work of stopping violence against women.

### **C. Grant-making Strategy**

Recognizing that the vast majority of the work to end violence against women occurs at the local level, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency has engaged in a competitive grant making process open to all 67 counties in Pennsylvania. In order to accomplish this, the following steps are already complete or will occur:

1. The funding announcement was released to the field on August 23, 2012 with applications due by October 1, 2012 (Attachment C).
2. A “STOP Resource Account” was established on PCCD’s website to coincide with the release of the STOP Funding Announcement. The purpose of the resource account was to take questions from prospective grantees. The resource account was checked on a daily basis, with questions forwarded to OVS staff for research and response. Responses were posted to the PCCD website as questions were answered. The questions and answers were then posted for all prospective applicants to see. Resource account established August 22, 2012.
3. Three Web-Ex informational sessions for prospective grantees were held on August 30th, September 5<sup>th</sup> and September 7, 2012.
4. Staff from the Office of Victims’ Services recruited independent reviewers to read and score the applications received. Tasks associated with this include:
  - Identify potential reviewers.
  - ✓ *Completed mid September 2012*

- Assess potential reviewer interest and commitment to the review process.
- ✓ *Completed late September 2012*
- Reviewer training.
- ✓ *Completed October 4, 2012*
- Collection of Scores and Identification of successful applications.
- ✓ *To be completed by November 2, 2012*
- Approval of Applications by the Statewide Victims' Services Advisory Committee.
- ✓ *To be completed November 13, 2012*
- Full approval by the Commission.
- ✓ *To be completed December 11, 2012*
- Start date of funding for successful STOP applications.
- ✓ *January 1, 2013*

Pennsylvania anticipates awarding STOP funding to up to 29 out of its 67 counties. These projects will be eligible for up to \$375,000 in STOP funding over a three-year period (January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2014). Pennsylvania does not require match on its county STOP Projects because it was granted permission from OVW to use the state's budgetary allocations to domestic violence and sexual assault services to meet the match requirement at the state level.

It is important to note that PCCD utilizes an electronic grants management system, "Egrants" for all of its applications. All the competitive STOP applications had to be submitted via the Egrants System by midnight October 1, 2012.

As noted above, OVS has recruited a team of independent reviewers for the competitive STOP applications. These reviewers are drawn from national organizations, state coalitions, state and local law enforcement, state agencies, VSAC members and OVS staff. As per PCCD policy, all reviewers were required to read the agency's Conflict of Interest Policy and sign a reviewer responsibility form. Additionally, all reviewers participated in a training conducted by PCCD staff to ensure consistency in the evaluation of the merit of the STOP applications as well as ability to use PCCD's Egrants System. Review Team members have the month of October to

review the STOP applications. All scores from review team members must be in PCCD's Egrants system by midnight October 31, 2012.

Staff will assess the scoring of the competitive STOP applications. This includes holding a score reconciliation call to discuss applications for which there are divergent scores. Those applications emerging from this process with the highest scores will be recommended to the VSAC. Applications approved by VSAC will be forwarded to the Commission for approval at its December 11, 2012 meeting. Grants approved by the Commission will have a start date of January 1, 2013. Every effort will be made to ensure equitable distribution on a geographic basis and make sure that the 10% requirement for services to underserved populations is met.

#### **E. Addressing the Needs of Underserved Victims**

The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency is committed to cultural competency in the delivery of services by funding projects that improve meaningful access to services for communities of color and underserved populations. The VSAC has identified the following groups as being "underserved populations" in Pennsylvania:

- Latinas
- High School and College Students
- Elderly
- Victims of Trafficking
- Non-English speaking victims
- Victims with disabilities

The OVS encouraged applicants under the competitive STOP solicitation to review 2010 census data for their counties. We are hopeful that applicants will include services to underserved populations in their STOP applications.

During the past STOP grant funding cycle, PCCD awarded STOP Funding to both state and local organizations that used it to help serve underserved populations. The AOPC's Court Interpreter Program used STOP funding to translate forms associated with Protection From Abuse Orders into the nine most commonly requested languages in Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence used STOP Funding to research, write and conduct training on

dating violence to law enforcement and criminal and juvenile justice system personnel across Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape used STOP Funding to provide training, resources and technical assistance to several Pennsylvania counties in forming Human Trafficking Response Teams.

There are also some fine efforts being made by our county STOP Coordinating Teams to serve underserved victims:

In Chester County, the STOP Coordinating Team assisted a victim of sexual assault and stalking who had emigrated from a country in West Africa. After the victim decided to report the abuse and participate in the criminal justice system, she was rejected by her community. In fact, her faith-based community was pressuring her to marry her offender. During the trial, a large number of people from the West African community showed up to support the offender. The STOP team was the victim's sole support throughout the trial. After the trial, the STOP team continued to work with the victim including finding her a safe place to live, gathering donated furniture for her new residence and assisting her in obtaining U.S. citizenship.

In Fulton County, a Latina victim of domestic violence and her children were assisted through the efforts of the STOP Coordinating Team. The victim and her abusive husband were undocumented farm workers. The victim was fearful of being deported and separated from her children. Despite intense pressure from others in her community not to participate in the criminal justice system, the victim decided to pursue charges against her husband. He was convicted and deported. She and her children were assisted in a variety of ways by the STOP Coordinating Team and are now United States Citizens. The victim now is a symbol of hope and safety to the Latina community as she speaks to them about the abuse and the services she received to help her escape.

In Berks County, a young woman was sexually assaulted by a male member of her household several years ago. At that time, the victim received medical treatment, supportive services from the local sexual assault center, and assistance in obtaining a Protection From Abuse Order. The offender fled to Mexico after the preliminary hearing. As a result, the case was turned over to the U.S. Marshall's Service in order to attempt to locate the accused in Mexico and extradite him

back to the United States for trial. Several years passed, the victim moved across the country, but always maintained contact with the US Marshall assigned to the case. Eventually, the US Marshall located her offender in Mexico and returned him to Berks County to stand trial. When the case was reactivated at the Berks County District Attorney's Office, the STOP funded ADA tried to contact the law enforcement officers who had originally investigated the case. The investigating detective had retired and the patrol officer was uncooperative. The DA requested that the county's current STOP-funded detective reinvestigate the case. The follow-up investigation was completed quickly and the case went to trial. The victim requested and received supportive services from the STOP Team that made it possible for her to assist with prosecution of the case. The STOP-funded ADA obtained a guilty conviction and the offender is awaiting sentencing after nearly a decade of being on the lam.

In Beaver County, the STOP Coordinator from the Women's Center met with staff from Neighborhood Legal Services and Adult Protective Services (APS) to initiate a partnership to meet the needs of older victims. Shortly after the partnership began, a victim walked into the APS's office, which is located in the Beaver County Mall, and asked for help to escape her abusive husband of 35 years. The woman told the APS worker that her spouse constantly monitored her and only allowed her to be without him during her trips to the mall. The APS worker contacted the Women's Center and the victim agreed to call the Women's Center's hotline on her next visit to the mall to request an on-call victim advocate be dispatched to the mall. During the victim's next mall visit, the victim called the hotline and a Women's Center advocate met her at the mall and helped her develop a safety plan. Ultimately, with STOP Team support and collaboration, the victim was able to leave her abuser and begin her healing process from her husband's long-term physical and emotional abuse.

It is also worth mentioning that PCCD has supported projects serving underserved victims, but with funding other than STOP. For example, PCCD has utilized a competitive process to award grants under the federal Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program to start projects that place victim advocates dedicated to working with elder victims in local programs. A critical feature of this initiative is that cross training and collaboration must occur between victim services and adult protective services.

## **F. Barriers to Implementation**

As discussed in the Needs and Context section of this document, the recession has negatively impacted the capacity of victim service providers at the local level. Pennsylvania's decision to focus on preservation of core services under STOP further underscores the difficult environment in which community- and system-based victim service agencies must operate. The VSAC's current work to implement its strategic plan by conducting a statewide needs assessment and examining the current funding and resource allocation methods used to fund victim services in Pennsylvania should help the state allocate its limited resources in a way most beneficial to victims and the programs that serve them.

A continuing barrier for implementation of STOP originates in the requirement for collaboration among systems. As OVS conducted its planning process, certain themes emerged. A major theme was the need for team members to not only understand their roles and the limits of those roles in response to violence against women crimes, but also understand trauma reactions of victims. For example, a recurrent frustration for law enforcement is delayed reporting by victims and lack of follow-through in investigation and prosecution of violence against women crimes. Conversely, victim advocates become frustrated with law enforcement's perceived victim insensitivity. Some prosecutors voice frustration with victims of violence against women crimes who refuse to testify in court because they lack a basic understanding of the dynamics behind the crimes. OVS, in collaboration with its partners PCADV and PCAR, will continue to offer training and resources on effective collaboration, STOP Coordinating Team meetings, victim response to trauma, and compliance with federal certifications under the STOP Program. These efforts help to build the cohesiveness of county STOP Coordinating Teams and raise awareness of the complex issues victims face, thus encouraging a more sensitive response.

A review of narratives submitted with Annual STOP Reports identified that there is still a lack of awareness of sexual assault, domestic violence and stalking crimes among the general public. Many jurors still cling to stereotypes reinforced by the dominant culture, and that issue has tragic ramifications for victims of violence against women crimes. This issue becomes exacerbated when the victim has substance abuse issues or is psychologically or intellectually challenged. While changing the attitudes of the general public is neither eligible nor realistic under the STOP Program, the OVS believes that the real power to transform communities lies with the

membership of the county collaborative STOP teams that Pennsylvania supports. It is largely through their efforts at education and outreach, investigation, prosecution and delivery of victim services that victims can find the courage to face the court and jurors can be provided with expert testimony and comprehensive evidence showing that a crime occurred.

### **G. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Over the next three years, the OVS staff will conduct an on-site monitoring visit to each of the counties funded through the competitive solicitation process. Monitoring consists of meeting with the team as well as meeting with each component of the project to ensure compliance with grant requirements and fidelity to the goals and objectives in the county's STOP application. In between onsite monitoring visits, OVS staff will conduct telephone interviews with STOP Coordinating Team Leaders to assess progress, offer technical assistance or help problem solve. Annual Reports will be reviewed as will quarterly fiscal reports. Additionally, the OVS will meet on a quarterly basis with PCADV and PCAR to assess progress on implementation of STOP in Pennsylvania and identify any trends in technical assistance needs. Both PCADV and PCAR distribute state funding for domestic violence and rape crisis services and have their own monitoring requirements. They are well-positioned to assist PCCD with identifying and assisting struggling STOP grantees. The quarterly meetings between PCCD and PCADV and PCAR will also serve as opportunities to revisit this implementation plan and make modifications if needed.

### **V. CONCLUSION**

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania appreciates the resources it receives from the federal government through the STOP Violence Against Women Program. Over the past 15 years, STOP funds have made it possible for Pennsylvania to foster systemic collaboration at the state and local levels, develop policies and protocols that have institutionalized a victim-centered response to violence against women crimes in communities across the Commonwealth, and provide a variety of trainings and resources to law enforcement, prosecutors, court personnel, judges and victim service providers across the Commonwealth.

During this plan cycle, we will continue to build on our previous efforts by awarding STOP funding to counties through a competitive application process. County projects must focus on

maintaining core services as described in the Needs and Context Section of this plan. These projects, once awarded, will receive technical assistance from PCADV, PCAR and OVS staff on a continual basis through trainings, webinars, on-site visits and monitoring. Over the next year and a half, Pennsylvania's VSAC will be gathering data on underserved populations, the needs of victims, and the overall funding structure for victim services in Pennsylvania. The information gathered from these endeavors will become part of our continuous assessment and planning process for STOP funding and will strengthen our efforts to meet PCCD's strategic goals.

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