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**County of El Paso
Agenda Item Details**

Item Title:	DRO - Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)/ FY25 Justice for Families Program /Grant Application (2024-1094)
Submitted By:	Brian Stanley, Executive Director
Department:	Domestic Relations Office
Department Phone Number:	915-834-8200
Subject:	GRANT APPLICATION – Approve and authorize the Domestic Relations Office to apply for the FY25 Office on Violence Against Women grant opportunity from the US Department of Justice in the amount of \$360,000. There is no County match required. (Contract No. 2024-1094)
Background:	The Justice for Families program aims to educate adult victims and the professionals working with them, on the importance of maintaining safe, nurturing relationships with both parents. DRO's vision is to improve childhood outcomes by working with parents facing family violence issues. DRO's goal is to show that there is a third option, where children can have positive outcomes with both parents.
Fiscal Impact:	Fiscal Impact Historical None Fiscal Impact Projected Application Amount: \$360,000 Long Account Number: Amount: Long Account Number: Amount:
Budget or Unbudgeted Match:	N/A
Recommendation:	GRANT APPLICATION – Approve and authorize the Domestic Relations Office to apply for the FY25 Office on Violence Against Women grant opportunity from the US Department of Justice in the amount of \$360,000. There is no County match required. (Contract No. 2024-1094)
Prior Action:	

Strategic Plan:

Goal:

1. Lead Justice Reform

Objective:

Strategic Plan Information:

**Estimated Time Needed
For This Item:**



El Paso County

January 13, 2025

Director Rosie Hidalgo
Office on Violence Against Women
145 N Street, NE
Suite 10 W. 100
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Director Hidalgo:

This letter serves to certify that, in fulfillment of the statutory applicant requirement, El Paso County will:

Demonstrate that adequate security measures, including adequate facilities, procedures, and personnel capable of preventing violence, and adequate standards are, or will be, in place (including the development of protocols or policies to ensure that confidential information is not shared with courts, law enforcement agencies, or child welfare agencies unless necessary to ensure the safety of any child or adult using the services of a program funded by OVW), the County proposes to operate supervised visitation programs and services or safe visitation exchange.

Sincerely,

Ricardo A. Samaniego
County Judge





El Paso County

January 13, 2025

Director Rosie Hidalgo
Office on Violence Against Women
145 N Street, NE
Suite 10 W. 100
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Director Hidalgo:

This letter serves to certify that, in fulfillment of the statutory applicant requirement, El Paso County will:

Ensure that the organizational policies of the applicant do not require mediation or counseling involving offenders and victims being physically present in the same place, in cases where sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking is alleged.

Sincerely,

Ricardo A. Samaniego
County Judge





El Paso County

January 13, 2025

Director Rosie Hidalgo
Office on Violence Against Women
145 N Street, NE
Suite 10 W. 100
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Director Hidalgo:

This letter serves to certify that El Paso County is in compliance with the following statutory requirements:

(1) Any person providing legal assistance through a program funded under the EL Paso County Justice for Families Program

(A) (i) is a licensed attorney or is working under the direct supervision of a licensed attorney; (ii) in immigration proceedings, is a Board of Immigration Appeals accredited representative; (iii) in Veterans' Administration claims, is an accredited representative; or (iv) is a person who functions as an attorney or lay advocate in Tribal court; and

(B) (i) has demonstrated expertise in providing legal assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking in the targeted population; or (ii)(I) is partnered with an entity or person that has demonstrated expertise described in clause (i); and (II) has completed, or will complete, training in connection with domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or sexual assault 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, local, or culturally specific 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 the El Paso County Justice for Families 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 applicant's organizational policies do not require mediation or counseling involving offenders and victims physically together, in cases where sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or child sexual abuse is an issue.





El Paso County

(5) Any person providing legal assistance through a program funded under the Justice for Families Program has completed or will complete training on domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, including child sexual abuse, and related legal issues.

Sincerely,

Ricardo A. Samaniego
County Judge





Acknowledgement of Notice of Statutory Requirement to Comply with the Confidentiality and Privacy Provisions of the Violence Against Women Act, as Amended

Under section 40002(b)(2) of the Violence Against Women Act, as amended (34 U.S.C. 12291(b)(2)), grantees and subgrantees with funding from the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) are required to meet the following terms with regard to nondisclosure of confidential or private information and to document their compliance. By signature on this form, applicants for grants from OVW are acknowledging that that they have notice that, if awarded funds, they will be required to comply with this provision, and will mandate that subgrantees, if any, comply with this provision, and will create and maintain documentation of compliance, such as policies and procedures for release of victim information, and will mandate that subgrantees, if any, will do so as well.

(A) In general

In order to ensure the safety of adult, youth, and child victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and their families, grantees and subgrantees under this subchapter shall protect the confidentiality and privacy of persons receiving services.

(B) Nondisclosure

Subject to subparagraphs (C) and (D), grantees and subgrantees shall not—

- (i) disclose, reveal, or release any personally identifying information or individual information collected in connection with services requested, utilized, or denied through grantees' and subgrantees' programs, regardless of whether the information has been encoded, encrypted, hashed, or otherwise protected; or
- (ii) disclose, reveal, or release individual client information without the informed, written, reasonably time-limited consent of the person (or in the case of an unemancipated minor, the minor and the parent or guardian or in the case of legal incapacity, a court-appointed guardian) about whom information is sought, whether for this program or any other Federal, State, tribal, or territorial grant program, except that consent for release may not be given by the abuser of the minor, incapacitated person, or the abuser of the other parent of the minor.

If a minor or a person with a legally appointed guardian is permitted by law to receive services without the parent's or guardian's consent, the minor or person with a guardian may release information without additional consent.

(C) Release

If release of information described in subparagraph (B) is compelled by statutory or court mandate—

- (i) grantees and subgrantees shall make reasonable attempts to provide notice to victims affected by the disclosure of information; and
- (ii) grantees and subgrantees shall take steps necessary to protect the privacy and safety of the persons affected by the release of the information.

(D) Information sharing

(i) Grantees and subgrantees may share—

- (I) nonpersonally identifying data in the aggregate regarding services to their clients and nonpersonally identifying demographic information in order to comply with Federal, State, tribal, or territorial reporting, evaluation, or data collection requirements;
- (II) court-generated information and law enforcement-generated information contained in secure, governmental registries for protection order enforcement purposes; and
- (III) law enforcement-generated and prosecution-generated information necessary for law enforcement and prosecution purposes.

(ii) In no circumstances may—

- (I) an adult, youth, or child victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking be required to provide a consent to release his or her personally identifying information as a condition of eligibility for the services provided by the grantee or subgrantee;
- (II) any personally identifying information be shared in order to comply with Federal, tribal, or State reporting, evaluation, or data collection requirements, whether for this program or any other Federal, tribal, or State grant program.

(E) Statutorily mandated reports of abuse or neglect

Nothing in this section prohibits a grantee or subgrantee from reporting suspected abuse or neglect, as those terms are defined and specifically mandated by the State or tribe involved.

(F) Oversight

Nothing in this paragraph shall prevent the Attorney General from disclosing grant activities authorized in this Act to the chairman and ranking members of the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate exercising Congressional oversight authority. All disclosures shall protect confidentiality and omit personally identifying information, including location information about individuals.

(G) Confidentiality assessment and assurances

Grantees and subgrantees must document their compliance with the confidentiality and privacy provisions required under this section.

(H) Death of the party whose privacy had been protected

In the event of the death of any victim whose confidentiality and privacy is required to be protected under this subsection, grantees and subgrantees may share personally identifying

information or individual information that is collected about deceased victims being sought for a fatality review to the extent permitted by their jurisdiction's law and only if the following conditions are met:

(i) The underlying objectives of the fatality review are to prevent future deaths, enhance victim safety, and increase offender accountability.

(ii) The fatality review includes policies and protocols to protect identifying information, including identifying information about the victim's children, from further release outside the fatality review team.

(iii) The grantee or subgrantee makes a reasonable effort to get a release from the victim's personal representative (if one has been appointed) and from any surviving minor children or the guardian of such children (but not if the guardian is the abuser of the deceased parent), if the children are not capable of knowingly consenting.

(iv) The information released is limited to that which is necessary for the purposes of the fatality review.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby acknowledge that the applicant has received notice that if awarded funding they will comply with the above statutory requirements. This acknowledgement shall be treated as a material representation of fact upon which the Department of Justice will rely if it determines to award the covered transaction, grant, or cooperative agreement.

Ricardo Samaniego

Typed Name of Authorized Representative

County Judge

Title

Telephone Number 915-546-2098

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date Signed

El Paso County

Agency Name



El Paso County

December 16, 2024

Director Rosie Hidalgo
Office on Violence Against Women
145 N Street, NE
Suite 10 W. 100
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Director Hidalgo:

This letter serves to notify the Office on Violence Against Women that El Paso County intends to apply for OVW FY25 Justice for Families Program.

Thank you for this opportunity and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ricardo A. Samaniego
County Judge





El Paso County

January 13, 2025

Director Rosie Hidalgo
Office on Violence Against Women
145 N Street, NE
Suite 10 W. 100
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Director Hidalgo:

El Paso County certifies that any funds received through the OVW Fiscal Year 2025 Justice for Families Program will be used to supplement, not supplant, existing non-federal funds that otherwise would be available for activities under the award. El Paso County understands that supplanting violations can result in a range of penalties, including suspension of future funds under this program, suspension or debarment from federal grants, recoupment of monies provided under this grant, and civil and/or criminal penalties.

Sincerely,

Ricardo A. Samaniego
County Judge





El Paso County

Memorandum of Understanding

WHEREAS, **El Paso County**, and **Center Against Sexual & Family Violence** have come together to collaborate and to make an application for the 2025 Justice for Families grant; and

WHEREAS, the partner listed below have agreed to enter into a collaborative agreement in which El Paso County will be the lead agency and named applicant and the other agencies will be partners in this application; and

WHEREAS, the partners herein desire to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding setting forth the services to be provided by the collaborative; and

WHEREAS, the application prepared and approved by the collaborative through its partners is to be submitted to the Office on Violence Against Women on or before January 22, 2025.

I) Description of Partner Agency

Since 1977, the Center Against Sexual and Family Violence has been a vital resource for the El Paso Community. Originally established as a hotline, the organization expanded in 1983 with the opening of the CASFV Center. Since then, CASFV started the Bettering Intervention & Prevention Program, established a transitional living center, and participates in community outreach and fundraisers to further assist individuals impacted by domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking. Through comprehensive guidance and essential resources, CASFV empowers survivors on their journey to recovery and a healthier future.

II) History of Relationship

The collaboration between our organization and the partners has been ongoing for over 15 years, grounded in a shared commitment to supporting victims of domestic violence and fostering community safety.

The relationship began through our joint efforts with the Protective Orders Unit, where we worked closely to provide essential services and resources to victims. Over time, this collaboration expanded to include:

- Providing trainings to various county staff members to enhance their understanding of domestic violence and the needs of survivors.*
- Working with the District Attorney's Office as part of the 24-hour victim contact initiative, ensuring timely support and communication for individuals in crisis.*
- Making referrals to the Domestic Relations Department to connect survivors with necessary legal and support services.*





El Paso County

III) Development of Application

- The development of this application began in response to a gap in service in providing safe, supervised visitation for domestic violence victims. Recognizing the increasing demand for supervised visitation for families impacted by domestic violence, El Paso County sought to address this issue through a strengthened community partnership with CASFV.
- Recent collaboration played an essential role in creating the Justice for Families application. By working closely with CASFV, we will now be able to expand and create a coordinated, community-wide approach to addressing domestic violence cases.

IV) Roles and Responsibilities

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby agreed by and between the partners as follows:

- 1) El Paso County will provide supportive supervised visits to victims of domestic violence.
- 2) Center Against Sexual & Family Violence agrees to conduct quarterly training sessions (please confirm if this frequency is appropriate), with each session lasting 4.5 hours.

The training sessions will cover a comprehensive range of topics, designed to equip participants with the necessary understanding and strategies to support survivors. These topics include, but are not limited to:

Trauma-Informed Care (1 hour): Understanding the principles and practices of trauma-informed care, with a focus on providing sensitive services and support for survivors.

Interviewing vs. Integration (1 hour) : Exploring the nuances between interviewing techniques and integration strategies when interacting with survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence.

Neurobiology of the Brain (1 hour): Examining the neurobiological impacts of trauma on the brain and how this knowledge can inform approaches to supporting survivors and promoting healing.

Dynamics of Domestic Violence (45 minutes): Analyzing the complex dynamics of domestic violence, including power imbalances, the cycle of abuse, and societal factors that influence these behaviors.

Dynamics of Sexual Assault (45 minutes): Analyzing the complex dynamics of sexual assault, including power imbalances, the cycle of abuse, and societal factors that influence these behaviors.

Sessions: 5 total (\$125 per session = \$625) capped at 20 individuals per session.





El Paso County

- 3) El Paso County and CASFV will collaborate in this project by providing staff time and ensuring a secure environment for victims and their children.
- 4) CASFV will collaborate by allocating staff time specifically for delivering comprehensive training, leveraging their expertise to enhance the effectiveness of the program.
- 5) DRO and CASFV will actively explore alternative funding opportunities, leverage community partnerships, and streamline operations to secure the project's sustainability. DRO is committed to maintaining a strong partnership with CASFV to ensure the project's continuation beyond the availability of grant funds. CASFV is committed to working with the County by offering expertise, resources, and support to help the project achieve long-term success.

V) Timeline

The roles and responsibilities described above are contingent on El Paso County receiving funds requested for the project described in the OVW grant application. Responsibilities under this Memorandum of Understanding would coincide with the grant period, anticipated to be October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2027.

VI) Commitment to Partnership

- 1) The collaboration service area includes El Paso County Texas
- 2) The partners agree to collaborate and provide supportive supervised visits to victims of domestic violence pursuant to the program narrative of the grant application attached to this agreement.
- 3) Compensation for Center Against Sexual & Family Violence partners' contribution to this project will be provided as outlined in the attached OVW budget detail worksheet.
- 4) We, the undersigned have read and agree with this MOU. Further, we have reviewed the proposed project and approve it.

By _____
Ricardo A. Samaniego
County Judge

By *Sandra N. Garcia*
Sandra N. Garcia,
Center Against Sexual & Family Violence

Date _____

Date 1/4/25

