

State of Louisiana  
Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement  
And  
Administration of Criminal Justice

Implementation Plan for FY 2007 - 2009  
Violence Against Women Act

The Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Criminal Justice (LCLE) is the federal cognizant agency for Violence Against Women funds and the agency that distributes and administers those funds within the state. For purposes of the VAWA grant funds that the Commission administers, the state is divided into nine districts. There are eight law enforcement-planning districts and one district reserved for statewide coalitions and state-level projects. The districts serve as the local point of contact for assessing local needs and soliciting projects. This is according to the guidelines established by the Victim Services Advisory Board and the Commission's policies. Legal notices are run in local and regional newspapers announcing the availability of these monies. Potential applicants and/or programs are provided with appropriate application forms, meeting dates and times. The District Program Directors help local agencies in preparing material to submit to the LCLE State Administrator of the VAWA Program. The VAWA staff reviews the applications before presenting them to the Victim Services Advisory Board and Commission on Law Enforcement, which is a 50 plus member body appointed by the Governor. The Commission membership either approves or denies the application.

The Victim Services Advisory Board includes two statewide victim coalition executive directors who are involved in the development of the VAWA State Implementation Plan. Also serving on this Board are representatives from law enforcement, prosecution, and the judiciary; a member of the Crime Victims Reparations Board (the state compensation program); victim service programs; and a representative of the Governor's Office of Women's Policy. The statewide coalitions, the Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the Louisiana Foundation Against Sexual Assault, represent most of the non-profit, non-governmental victim services programs in the state. Letters confirming their participation in the development of our State Implementation Plan are part of the required fax items for this application.

Major shifts in the direction of needs have not occurred; however, a change in the acknowledgement of the problems associated with violence has. Through domestic violence and sexual assault training conferences, community outreach efforts and program evaluations that address specific needs, awareness of the prevalence of the problems has risen and programs have adjusted to meet the needs identified. Training will continue to be provided throughout the state. The reauthorization of VAWA will serve as the catalyst for the development of policies and statutory revisions to legislation to comply with the requirements of the STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant

Program as amended by the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 to ensure a continuity of efforts and fulfillment of our responsibility to the VAWA guidelines. Louisiana is currently in compliance with the requirements concerning costs for criminal charges and protective orders, forensic medical examination payment for victims of sexual assault and judicial notification. As of this writing a policy has been drafted to address the requirement concerning polygraph testing and legislation is being introduced in the 2008 legislative session to satisfy the HIV testing requirement.

The intended use of grant funds will be for continuation projects that build upon the resources of previous applications, expanding existing services and/or enhancing existing projects. Programs are usually funded for one year. The statewide protective order registry program has continued and is likely to be expanded using the required 5% funding for courts, as the program is under the auspices of the State Supreme Court. Furthermore, monies will continue to be used to support the Statewide Conference on Violence Against Women, now going into its twelfth year. To further ensure a continuity of efforts and fulfillment of our responsibility to the VAWA guidelines, the FY 2007 allocation submitted by the planning districts will be compared to the funding priorities for the FY 2006 allocations, and this comparison will be repeated through 2009.

The Implementation Plan will give priority to areas varying in geographic and population size showing the greatest need based on the identified needs of victims served and **the** availability of new and existing domestic violence and sexual assault programs while ensuring no area goes without service. Using the 2000 and 2006 U. S. Census Bureau data as a reference, 12.2% of Louisiana's population is elderly, while 880,047 are disabled and 2.9% is of Hispanic origin (attached). The Louisiana Coalition of Domestic Violence reports that 30,617 victims were served in residential and non-residential services in the 2002–2003 fiscal year. The distribution of funds to the districts is determined by a formula based on population, criminal justice expenditures and criminal justice statistics. Funds will be distributed on the following basis: 30% for law enforcement, 30% for prosecution, 30% for victim services programs, of which at least 10% will be distributed to culturally specific community-based organizations, 5% to the courts and 5% for discretionary programs. Recognizing the need for underserved populations continues to be a major focus of the efforts of these programs and funds have been used and are planned for programs to reach out to and serve known underserved populations. Tribes have not demonstrated an interest in receiving VAWA funds.

The success of grant-funded activities has been evaluated by using quarterly progress reports that effectively track goals, objectives and outcomes. An on-site monitoring report has been developed to provide a thorough overview of grant-funded activities. The STOP VAWA Annual Report continues to provide a comprehensive and accurate measure of data collection.

The expected results from the use of grant funds will include plans for judiciary education on domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking, greater enforcement of laws and court orders, increase services and delivery to victims, specialized training for

professionals whose work brings them into contact with victims, and the development of cooperative working relationships with law enforcement, courts, medical services, social services and other professional communities. This will be accomplished through the various training and funding opportunities presented throughout the year, each year. Information on the new program initiatives such as Crystal Judson and Jessica Gonzales has also been made available.

The state plan for VAWA funds was developed using two techniques. The first was a series of face-to-face interviews with the directors of the state sexual assault and domestic violence coalitions with the thought of gathering input on existing services, such as services to diverse populations as well as collecting ideas and needs assessment to prioritize objectives. The second tool continues to come from the guidance of the Victim Services Advisory Board to the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement. This board reviews information and makes recommendations to the Commission staff as to the best course of action in allocating and awarding of funds. A listing of the current Victim Services Advisory Board members is attached. The Board is subject to change with the election of the new Governor.

The FY 2007 - 2009 state plan also seeks to build on the previous efforts and augment the work of earlier fiscal years. Each funding cycle brings with it the experience of the past twelve months. A main function of the state plan is to draw on previous experience, and the knowledge it brings, to direct present and future activities toward meeting the needs identified in the past and to direct resources to those areas where they will do the most good. The plan must also take into account that sheer volume or numbers are not the sole criteria for allocating funds. While it is good to seek to benefit as many victims as possible, small or smaller victim segments cannot be ignored. Thus, the 2007 - 2009 plan will build on previous efforts by providing continued funding for programs that have a demonstrated need and the ability to fill that need as well as programs that will bridge gaps in service or provide service to victim segments that have recently been identified.

Several populations have been identified as underserved. The populations included are rural victims of all types, the lesbian and bisexual population, domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking victims in need of protective orders and culturally specific victims. Rural victims are served by a progression of services. Outreach efforts have been funded to increase awareness and provide a base level of services. Twenty-four hour, 1-800 hotlines are utilized to facilitate on-demand support and information. Finally, satellite offices continue to be established in rural settings for facilitated access to local, face-to-face services. The efforts are at various stages of completion throughout the state, depending on the program, implementing agency and geographic area. For domestic violence and stalking victims, a statewide protective order registry is operational and is available to most courts in the state. Efforts will also be made to expand services to linguistically and culturally specific community based organizations.

Enhancements to existing programs take the form and occur more because of the evolution of a program rather than for the sake of change. Subgrantees are well aware

there are unrecognized clients and gaps in service. This exists primarily because there are insufficient resources for outreach services and a lack of awareness and community education programs. Over time, there has been an incremental increase in programs as each year the most pressing needs are met. The addition of new purpose areas authorized by VAWA 2005 should provide for further program development by expanding the possibilities for assisting victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault. The Protective Order Registry will receive on-going enhancements and refinements to add new users and collect and collate court generated data. In Louisiana these include education and training for all VAWA responders. To that extent, the state co-sponsors an annual VAWA Conference to train and update providers. The Conference also builds cooperation and collaboration among service providers and the criminal justice system.

Another important initiative is the implementation of the Louisiana Victim Notification System (LAVNS). This program is proving to be instrumental to the collaborative efforts of the criminal justice system and service providers. LAVNS is an automated victim notification system that monitors the custody status of offenders in parish jails, state prisons and current court cases. Two important features provided by LAVNS to victims are information and notification. The information is available to callers (victims) 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. LAVNS is available in English, Spanish, French and Vietnamese. The collaborative efforts of the criminal justice system and service providers focus on the dissemination of LAVNS information to the victims of domestic violence. A statewide public service campaign is being launched to promote awareness of this project.

VAWA funds in the state are used to support a variety of programs, all with the common denominator of serving female victims of violent crime. The programs can be classified into five main groups: Law Enforcement, Prosecution, Courts, Domestic Violence Service Providers and Sexual Assault Service Providers. Law Enforcement programs are typically concerned with investigation of violent crimes perpetrated against women and referral to services. Prosecution programs are concerned with the swift and vigorous prosecution of these cases. Our court program provides support for a statewide protective order registry. VAWA funds targeted for domestic violence are allocated to our statewide domestic violence coalition and are further subdivided by the organization based on their intimate knowledge of particular needs. The same is true of sexual assault funds, which go to the statewide sexual assault coalition. A wide range of programs are funded with the non-profit service provider segment, with the type and amount determined by local need, other funding and resource availability and constraints, service radius population, target client population and other mitigating factors.

The VAWA funds distribution mechanism in Louisiana is meant to provide an equitable distribution of funds statewide while allowing placement of funds in a local/regional basis to meet the most pressing needs. Specifically, the state is divided into eight local planning districts, each with a local advisory board to oversee the distribution of funds and recommend approval of grants. Each planning district receives an amount of law enforcement and prosecution VAWA funds based on their *pro rata* share of the state's allocation formula. Additionally, the state level-planning district allocates funds to the

two state coalitions, the courts, previously underserved and the statewide VAWA training conference. A minimum funding level is incorporated into the rural area's allocation to ensure a basic working level of funding is provided. The districts then allocate funds based on responses received from the public notice response, project solicitation response, known and identified needs and other relevant variables. This process assures that those who make local funding decisions are familiar with local needs and not some centralized mechanism. The VAWA funds dedicated to the service providers are allocated in a different manner. The monies are allocated to the state domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions, who have negotiated and agreed upon among themselves on a split (currently 60/40 for DV/SA with 10% allocated to linguistically and culturally specific community based organizations). The Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement will advertise the availability of funds for the linguistically and culturally specific community based organizations. Each coalition then allocates their share among their programs based on the coalition's determination of needs. Determination of needs include consideration of the program's service and general population demographics, other funding and resources available to the program, financial and programmatic administration integrity and a subjective evaluation of the situation. The logic is that those who are best informed of the needs and requirements are making the allocation decision. The Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement, through the proper use and distribution of these funds to all key providers, will ensure that victims are provided with services needed to the best of our ability as we continue in our endeavor to fight violence against women. Service providers submit applications to the LCLE State Administrator of the VAWA Program. The VAWA staff reviews the applications before presenting them to the Victim Services Advisory Board and Commission on Law Enforcement, which is a 50 plus member body appointed by the Governor. The Commission membership either approves or denies the application. LCLE monitors program activity through progress reports and monitoring/site visits.