

Supporting Statement for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission

Semi-annual Progress Report for the Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program

A. Justification

1. Statutorily-Mandated Need for Information

The Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program (LAV Program) was authorized through the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 1994 and reauthorized and amended by the VAWA 2000 and by the VAWA of 2005. The LAV Program is designed to strengthen civil and criminal legal assistance for victims of sexual assault, stalking, domestic violence, and dating violence through innovative, collaborative programs. These programs provide victims with representation and legal advocacy in family, immigration, administrative agency, or housing matters, protection or stay-away order proceedings, and other similar matters. The LAV Program is intended to increase the availability of civil and criminal legal assistance in order to provide effective aid to victims who are seeking relief in legal matters arising as a consequence of abuse or violence.

In addition to VAWA, other statutory requirements require that LAV Program grantees collect and maintain data that measures the effectiveness of the grant-funded projects. VAWA 2000 requires all grant recipients to report on the effectiveness of their programs, and the Attorney General must report to Congress on the effectiveness of each project. Section 1003 of VAWA 2000 states that:

(a) REPORT BY GRANT RECIPIENTS.- The Attorney General or Secretary of Health and Human Services, as applicable, shall require grantees under any program authorized or reauthorized by this division or an amendment made by this division to report on the effectiveness of the activities carried out with amounts made available to carry out that program, including number of persons served, if applicable, numbers of persons seeking services who could not be served and such other information as the Attorney General or Secretary may prescribe.

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.- The Attorney General or Secretary of Health and Human Services, as applicable, shall report biennially to the Committees on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Senate on the grant programs described in subsection (a), including the information contained in any report under that subsection.

42 U.S.C. 3789.

OVW must also comply with the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) (Pub. L. 103-62) which was enacted to increase Congressional and Administrative focus on the

results from government programs and activities. Information collected on the semi-annual progress report regarding performance measures that OVW has developed for the different types of LAV Program grantees will enable OVW to meet its reporting obligations under GPRA.

2. Use of Information

OVW needs to collect information on the effectiveness of LAV Program grantees' activities. In particular, OVW is seeking data that includes baseline information to illustrate the effectiveness of any grant-supported activities, including any "before and after" implementation information, i.e. an increase in the number of victims receiving legal services, an increase in the number of trainings. In addition, VAWA 2000 requires the submission of information on the number of victims who could not be served. The information that will be collected through the semi-annual progress reports will be used by OVW to fulfill, on behalf of the Attorney General, the statutorily mandated reporting requirements of VAWA and VAWA 2000 and provide OVW with data that will enable it to meet its reporting obligations under GPRA.

3. Use of Information Technology

The collection of information will involve the use of automated, electronic, mechanical or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

4. Duplication of Information Request

There is no other mechanism by which OVW collects information about number of victims served, victims seeking services who could not be served, or the effectiveness of funded activities.

5. Impact on Small Businesses

There is no impact on small businesses.

6. Consequences to Federal Programs or Policy

Through VAWA 2000, Congress mandated that all OVW grantees report to the Attorney General on the effectiveness of their activities funded under VAWA including the number of victims served and the number of victims who could not be served. If OVW was not able to collect the information necessary to complete these reports on behalf of the Attorney General, not only would it be failing to meet a statutorily required reporting mandate, but also the existence of this important and necessary grant program could be jeopardized. The LAV Program provides an opportunity for communities to examine how the legal needs of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking are met. By statute, funds may be used to implement, expand, and establish cooperative efforts and projects between domestic violence and sexual assault victim services organizations and legal assistance providers to provide legal assistance for victims of sexual assault, stalking, domestic violence, and dating

violence; to implement, expand, and establish efforts and projects to provide legal assistance for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault by organizations with a demonstrated history of providing direct legal or advocacy services on behalf of these victims; and to provide training, technical assistance, and data collection to improve the capacity of grantees and other entities to offer legal assistance to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and sexual assault.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances as identified in the specific instructions for a supporting statement for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.

8. Federal Register Publication

OVW has consulted with persons outside the agency who have advised that the data proposed to be collected is available, the annual collection of such data is not burdensome, the form is clear, and that the information is routinely kept by most grantees receiving funds under the LAV Program. OVW has solicited public comment on this form in accordance with the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act. A 60 day notice was published in the Federal Register on March 18, 2008 (Federal Register, Volume 73, page 14487) and a 30-day notice was published in the Federal Register on May 23, 2008 (Federal Register, Volume 73, 30164).

9. Payment or Gift to Respondents

There will no payment or gift to respondents.

10. Confidentiality

Although this information is needed for a public report to Congress, it will not involve any personal information about victims that could identify them as specific individuals. However, anecdotal, non-identifying information about the effectiveness of individual programs may be included in the report.

11. Specific Questions

The semi-annual progress report does not contain any questions of a personal, sensitive nature such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

12. Hour Burden of the Collection of Information

This semi-annual progress report is not overly burdensome. The data collection tool will be completed by approximately 200 LAV Program grantees twice a year as there are two

reporting periods- January 1 through June 30 and July 1 through December 31. There will be 400 annual responses and it is estimated that it will take grantees no more than 1 hour to complete the semi-annual progress report form. Thus, the annual reporting and recordkeeping hour burden is 400. LAV Program grantees are informed about the reporting requirements during the grant solicitation process and during the grant award process. Because the semi-annual progress report covers a six month period, grantees are not in a position to complete the form until the end of each reporting period.

OVW is seeking basic information that is routinely kept by the LAV Program grantees in the normal course of their operations. Thus, the requirement that grantees complete this semi-annual progress report within a period of less than 30 days after receipt of it is not overly burdensome. OVW estimates that it will take approximately one hour for a grantee to complete the form. OVW developed this estimate based on the fact that information of this nature is already kept by grantees receiving funds under the LAV Program and that the grantees have been apprized of these reporting requirements during the solicitation process and reminded throughout the grant award process. The semi-annual progress report is divided into sections that pertain to the different types of activities that grantees may engage in, i.e. training, making a safety plan, providing legal services to obtain a protection order. Grantees will only have to complete the sections of the form that relate to their specific activities.

13. Cost Burden of the Collection of Information

OVW does not believe that there is any annual cost burden on respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of this information.

14. Annualized Costs to the Federal Government

OVW does not believe that there are any annualized costs to the Federal Government resulting from the collection of this information beyond those costs associated with the routine management, monitoring, and oversight of the LAV Program.

15. Program Changes or Adjustments

There are no program changes or adjustments for the estimates identified in Section 13 and in Section 14. This is a information collection that is necessary for OVW and its LAV Program grantees to comply with the statutory reporting requirements of 42 U.S.C. 3789 and the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (Pub. L. 103-62).

16. Published Results of Information Collections

There will be no complex analytical techniques used in connection with the publication of information collected under the request. Information will be gathered twice a year at the end of the reporting periods, January 1 through June 30 and July 1 through December 31. OVW is

statutorily required to submit a report on the effectiveness of grant-funded activities on a biennial basis.

17. Display of the Expiration Date of OMB Approval

OVW will display the Expiration Date of OMB Approval in the upper right hand corner of the semi-annual progress report.

18. Exception to the Certification Statement

OVW is not seeking any exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19, Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions, of OMB Form 83-I.