

Supporting Statement for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission

Office on Violence Against Women: Domestic Violence and Housing Technical Assistance

Consortium Safe Housing Needs Assessment

A. Justification

1. Statutorily-Mandated Need for Information

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) administers financial support and technical assistance to communities around the country that are creating programs, policies, and practices aimed at ending domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. Its mission is to provide national leadership to improve the response to these crimes through the implementation of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (VAWA), the Violence Against Women Act of 2000, the Violence Against Women Act of 2005 and the Violence Against Women Act of 2013. OVW pursues this mission by supporting community efforts, enhancing education and training, disseminating best practices, launching special initiatives, and leading the Nation's efforts to end violence against women. Currently, OVW administers 4 formula grant programs and 20 discretionary grant programs, all of which were established under VAWA and subsequent legislation and are designed to develop the nation's capacity to reduce domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking by strengthening services to victims and holding offenders accountable for their action. Specifically, OVW administers the Transitional Housing Assistance Program Grant for Victims of Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, or Sexual Assault Program (Transitional Housing Assistance Program) which supports programs that provide assistance to individuals who are homeless or in need of transitional housing or other housing assistance as a result of fleeing a situation of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking; and for whom emergency shelter services or other crisis intervention services are unavailable or insufficient. 42 U.S.C. § 13975

In order to enhance the effectiveness of VAWA –funded activities, OVW has made awards to organizations under the Training and Technical Assistance (TA) Program to provide direct assistance to grantees and their subgrantees to enhance the success of local projects they are implementing with VAWA grant funds. One of these projects, the Domestic Violence and Housing Technical Assistance Consortium (the Consortium), launched in 2015, provides training, technical assistance, and resource development at the critical intersection between domestic violence/sexual assault services and homeless services/housing. Funded and supported by a partnership between the U.S. Department of Justice, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), this multi-year Consortium¹ also brings together four national organizations, the District Alliance for Safe Housing (which coordinates the National Alliance for Safe Housing (NASH) project), the

¹ The Domestic Violence and Housing Technical Assistance Consortium is funded by three federal agencies, the Department of Justice (Office on Violence Against Women and Office for Victims of Crime), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs) and the Department of Health and Human Services (Family Violence Prevention and Services program).

National Network to End Domestic Violence, the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, and Collaborative Solutions, Inc., to build and strengthen technical assistance to both housing/homelessness providers and domestic violence/sexual assault service providers. The Consortium aims to improve policies, identify promising practices and strengthen collaborations necessary to enhance safe and supportive housing options for sexual and domestic violence survivors and their children.

NASH, in collaboration with the Consortium members, and other local, state and national stakeholders² developed the Safe Housing Needs Assessment to gather input from community service providers, coalitions and continuums of care. This assessment is the first of its kind aimed at simultaneously reaching the domestic and sexual violence field, as well as the homeless and housing field.

2. Use of Information

The assessment seeks to gather information on topics ranging from the extent to which both fields coordinate to provide safety and access to services for domestic and sexual violence survivors within the homeless system, to ways in which programs are implementing innovative models to promote long-term housing stability for survivors and their families. Additionally, this assessment seeks to identify specific barriers preventing collaboration across these fields, as well as promising practices. The results will help the Consortium provide organizations and communities with the tools, strategies and support necessary to improve coordination between domestic violence/sexual assault service providers and homeless and housing service providers, so that survivors and their children can ultimately avoid homelessness and live free from abuse.

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

OVW nor its partners are not aware of any other type of data collection that gathers similar information on such a national scale.

5. Impact on Small Entities

There is no impact on small entities as the collection is voluntary and the time burden is

² Local, state and national stakeholders include the Needs Assessment Working Group members: Collaborative Solutions, Inc., National Network to End Domestic Violence, National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, Michigan State University Research Consortium on Gender-based Violence, Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the National Alliance to End Homelessness. Safe Housing Advisory Committee Members include: **National Organization of Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault**, The Northwest Network National LGBTQ DV Capacity Building Learning Center, API on Gender-based Violence, National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, National Housing Law Project, ACLU Women's Rights Project, National Domestic Violence Hotline, National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities, Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community at the University of Minnesota and the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty. Non listed stakeholders include staff from local domestic and sexual violence as well as homeless programs.

minimal.

6. Consequences to Federal Programs or Policy

Domestic violence is a major cause of homelessness, particularly for families with children. Among those families currently experiencing homelessness, more than 80 percent had previously experienced domestic violence. According to the U.S. Conference of Mayors, in 2008, 28% of families were homeless because of domestic violence and domestic violence is often cited as the primary cause of homelessness. There is a significant need for housing programs that offer supportive services and resources to victims of domestic violence and their children in ways that are trauma-informed and culturally relevant. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Family and Youth Services Bureau, Division of Family Violence Prevention and Services (DFVPS), the US Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs Office for Victims of Crime (OJP/OVC), OVW, and the Department of HUD have established a federal technical assistance consortium that will provide national domestic violence and housing training, technical assistance, and resource development. The Domestic Violence and Housing Technical Assistance Consortium will implement a federally coordinated approach to providing resources, program guidance, training, and technical assistance to domestic violence, homeless, and housing service providers. The Safe Housing Needs Assessment will be used to determine the training and technical assistance needs of organizations providing safe housing for domestic violence victims and their families.

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 one-time collection of such data is not burdensome, the assessment is clear, and that the information is routinely kept and it is not burdensome for organizations to provide. 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 November 8, 2016 (Federal Register, Volume 81, page 78635) and a 30-day notice was published in the Federal Register on January 30, 2017 (Federal Register, Volume 82, page 8761). OVW received public comments and appreciates the concerns raised regarding the very real and significant barriers that survivors and their pets face to accessing housing. OVW and its partners will modify the assessment design to determine if domestic violence and sexual assault advocates on the local and state level are aware of barriers survivors face in accessing housing systems because they lack co-sheltering or other safe options for their pets. In the assessment design, OVW and its partners included a question to determine if domestic violence and sexual violence advocates on the local and state level are aware of barriers survivors face in accessing housing systems because they lack co-sheltering or other safe options for their pets.

Specifically, the goal is to identify barriers that exist for survivors with pets in domestic and/or sexual violence survivor specific shelter and/or housing; homeless specific shelter and/or housing; private housing; and public housing.

OVW and its partners modified the Homeless Shelter/Housing Provider survey, question #20, under the Housing First, Rapid Re-housing topic area, to include "Lack of availability of pet-friendly housing or emergency/crisis pet sheltering" as an answer option to the question: Our biggest challenges in implementing RRH that works quickly and sustains people in their housing are: (Select all that apply). We also modified the Domestic and Sexual Violence Organizations assessment, under the Housing First, Rapid Re-housing, Flexible Funding topic area, question #1b4, to include "Pets allowed in RRH housing or separate pet housing is offered" as an answer option to the question: What elements of your program contribute to the relatively high retention rate? (Select all that apply).

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. There is no assurance to confidentiality.

11. Specific Questions

The assessment will 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

The assessment is not overly burdensome. The data collection tool will be completed by approximately 78,660 organizations (housing/homelessness providers and domestic violence/sexual assault service providers) once on a volunteer basis. OVW anticipates that there will be ~~180~~78,660 one-time responses and it is estimated that it will take respondents no more than fifteen minutes to complete the assessment. Thus, the annual hour burden is 19,665 ~~180~~ hours.

OVW is seeking basic information that is routinely kept by the respondents in the normal course of their operations. Thus, the request that respondents complete this voluntary online assessment is not overly burdensome. OVW estimates that it will take approximately fifteen

minutes for a respondent to complete the online assessment. OVW developed this estimate because information of this nature is already kept by housing/homelessness providers and domestic violence/sexual assault providers). The assessment is divided into sections that pertain to different types of activities that respondents may engage in, i.e. supportive services, advocacy, etc. Respondents will only have to complete the sections of the assessment that relate to their specific activities.

13. Cost Burden of the Collection of Information

OVW does not believe that there is any cost burden on respondents resulting from the collection of this information other than the staff time devoted to completing the online assessment.

14. Annualized Costs to the Federal Government

The annualized costs to the Federal Government resulting from the assessment are \$72,000 estimated to be minimal.

15. Program Changes or Adjustments

There are no program changes or adjustments for the estimates identified in Section 13 and in Section 14.

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 once and will help the Consortium provide organizations and communities with the tools, strategies and support necessary to improve coordination between domestic violence/sexual assault service providers and homeless and housing service providers, so that survivors and their children can ultimately avoid homelessness and live free from abuse.

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 assessment.

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.

