

 KeyCite Yellow Flag  
Proposed Legislation

United States Code Annotated  
Title 34. Crime Control and Law Enforcement (Refs & Annos)  
Subtitle I. Comprehensive Acts  
Chapter 121. Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement  
Subchapter III. Violence Against Women

34 U.S.C.A. § 12291  
Formerly cited as 42 USCA § 13925

§ 12291. Definitions and grant provisions

Effective: December 28, 2022

[Currentness](#)

**(a) Definitions**

In this subchapter, for the purpose of grants authorized under this subchapter:

**(1) Abuse in later life**

The term “abuse in later life”--

**(A)** means--

**(i)** neglect, abandonment, economic abuse, or willful harm of an adult aged 50 or older by an individual in an ongoing relationship of trust with the victim; or

**(ii)** domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking of an adult aged 50 or older by any individual; and

**(B)** does not include self-neglect.

**(2) Alaska Native village**

The term “Alaska Native village” has the same meaning given such term in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act ([43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.](#)).

**(3) Child abuse and neglect**

The term “child abuse and neglect” means any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caregiver with intent to cause death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation, or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm to an unemancipated minor. This definition shall not be construed to mean that failure to leave an abusive relationship, in the absence of other action constituting abuse or neglect, is itself abuse or neglect.

**(4) Child maltreatment**

The term “child maltreatment” means the physical or psychological abuse or neglect of a child or youth, including sexual assault and abuse.

**(5) Community-based organization**

The term “community-based organization” means a nonprofit, nongovernmental, or tribal organization that serves a specific geographic community that--

- (A) focuses primarily on domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking;
- (B) has established a specialized culturally specific program that addresses domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking;
- (C) has a primary focus on underserved populations (and includes representatives of these populations) and domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking; or
- (D) obtains expertise, or shows demonstrated capacity to work effectively, on domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking through collaboration.

**(6) Court-based personnel; court-related personnel**

The terms “court-based personnel” and “court-related personnel” mean individuals working in the court, whether paid or volunteer, including--

- (A) clerks, special masters, domestic relations officers, administrators, mediators, custody evaluators, guardians ad litem, lawyers, negotiators, probation, parole, interpreters, victim assistants, victim advocates, and judicial, administrative, or any other professionals or personnel similarly involved in the legal process;
- (B) court security personnel;
- (C) personnel working in related supplementary offices or programs (such as child support enforcement); and
- (D) any other court-based or community-based personnel having responsibilities or authority to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking in the court system.

**(7) Courts**

The term “courts” means any civil or criminal, tribal, and Alaska Native Village, Federal, State, local or territorial court having jurisdiction to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking, including immigration, family, juvenile, and dependency courts, and the judicial officers serving in those courts, including judges, magistrate judges, commissioners, justices of the peace, or any other person with decisionmaking authority.

**(8) Culturally specific**

The term “culturally specific” means primarily directed toward racial and ethnic minority groups (as defined in section 1707(g) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300u-6(g)).<sup>1</sup>

**(9) Culturally specific services**

The term “culturally specific services” means community-based services that include culturally relevant and linguistically specific services and resources to culturally specific communities.

**(10) Dating partner**

The term “dating partner” refers to a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the abuser, and where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of--

- (A) the length of the relationship;
- (B) the type of relationship; and
- (C) the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

**(11) Dating violence**

The term “dating violence” means violence committed by a person--

- (A) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and
- (B) where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
  - (i) The length of the relationship.
  - (ii) The type of relationship.

(iii) The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

#### **(12) Domestic violence**

The term “domestic violence” includes felony or misdemeanor crimes committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant funding and, in the case of victim services, includes the use or attempted use of physical abuse or sexual abuse, or a pattern of any other coercive behavior committed, enabled, or solicited to gain or maintain power and control over a victim, including verbal, psychological, economic, or technological abuse that may or may not constitute criminal behavior, by a person who--

(A) is a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, or person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim;

(B) is cohabitating, or has cohabitated, with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner;

(C) shares a child in common with the victim; or

(D) commits acts against a youth or adult victim who is protected from those acts under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction.

#### **(13) Economic abuse**

The term “economic abuse”, in the context of domestic violence, dating violence, and abuse in later life, means behavior that is coercive, deceptive, or unreasonably controls or restrains a person's ability to acquire, use, or maintain economic resources to which they are entitled, including using coercion, fraud, or manipulation to--

(A) restrict a person's access to money, assets, credit, or financial information;

(B) unfairly use a person's personal economic resources, including money, assets, and credit, for one's own advantage; or

(C) exert undue influence over a person's financial and economic behavior or decisions, including forcing default on joint or other financial obligations, exploiting powers of attorney, guardianship, or conservatorship, or failing or neglecting to act in the best interests of a person to whom one has a fiduciary duty.

#### **(14) Elder abuse**

The term “elder abuse” means any action against a person who is 50 years of age or older that constitutes the willful--

(A) infliction of injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation, or cruel punishment with resulting physical harm, pain, or mental anguish; or

(B) deprivation by a person, including a caregiver, of goods or services with intent to cause physical harm, mental anguish, or mental illness.

**(15) Female genital mutilation or cutting**

The term “female genital mutilation or cutting” has the meaning given such term in [section 116 of Title 18](#).

**(16) Forced marriage**

The term “forced marriage” means a marriage to which 1 or both parties do not or cannot consent, and in which 1 or more elements of force, fraud, or coercion is present. Forced marriage can be both a cause and a consequence of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking.

**(17) Homeless**

The term “homeless” has the meaning given such term in [section 12473](#) of this title.

**(18) Indian**

The term “Indian” means a member of an Indian tribe.

**(19) Indian country**

The term “Indian country” has the same meaning given such term in [section 1151 of Title 18](#).

**(20) Indian housing**

The term “Indian housing” means housing assistance described in the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 ([25 U.S.C. 4101 et seq.](#), as amended).

**(21) Indian law enforcement**

The term “Indian law enforcement” means the departments or individuals under the direction of the Indian tribe that maintain public order.

**(22) Indian tribe; Indian Tribe**

The terms “Indian tribe” and “Indian Tribe” mean a tribe, band, pueblo, nation, or other organized group or community of Indians, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation (as defined in, or established pursuant to, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act ([43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.](#))), that is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

**(23) Law enforcement**

The term “law enforcement” means a public agency charged with policing functions, including any of its component bureaus (such as governmental victim services programs or Village Public Safety Officers), including those referred to in [section 2802 of Title 25](#).

**(24) Legal assistance**

**(A) Definition**

The term “legal assistance” means assistance provided by or under the direct supervision of a person described in subparagraph (B) to an adult, youth, or child victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking relating to a matter described in subparagraph (C).

**(B) Person described**

A person described in this subparagraph is--

- (i) a licensed attorney;
- (ii) in immigration proceedings, a Board of Immigration Appeals accredited representative;
- (iii) in claims of the Department of Veterans Affairs, a representative authorized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; or
- (iv) any person who functions as an attorney or lay advocate in tribal court.

**(C) Matter described**

A matter described in this subparagraph is a matter relating to--

- (i) divorce, parental rights, child support, Tribal, territorial, immigration, employment, administrative agency, housing, campus, education, healthcare, privacy, contract, consumer, civil rights, protection or other injunctive proceedings, related enforcement proceedings, and other similar matters;
- (ii) criminal justice investigations, prosecutions, and post-conviction matters (including sentencing, parole, and probation) that impact the victim's safety, privacy, or other interests as a victim;
- (iii) alternative dispute resolution, restorative practices, or other processes intended to promote victim safety, privacy, and autonomy, and offender accountability, regardless of court involvement; or

(iv) with respect to a conviction of a victim relating to or arising from domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or sex trafficking victimization of the victim, post-conviction relief proceedings in State, local, Tribal, or territorial court.

**(D) Intake or referral**

For purposes of this paragraph, intake or referral, by itself, does not constitute legal assistance.

**(25) Personally identifying information or personal information**

The term “personally identifying information” or “personal information” means individually identifying information for or about an individual including information likely to disclose the location of a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, regardless of whether the information is encoded, encrypted, hashed, or otherwise protected, including--

(A) a first and last name;

(B) a home or other physical address;

(C) contact information (including a postal, e-mail or Internet protocol address, or telephone or facsimile number);

(D) a social security number, driver license number, passport number, or student identification number; and

(E) any other information, including date of birth, racial or ethnic background, or religious affiliation, that would serve to identify any individual.

**(26) Population specific organization**

The term “population specific organization” means a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization that primarily serves members of a specific underserved population and has demonstrated experience and expertise providing targeted services to members of that specific underserved population.

**(27) Population specific services**

The term “population specific services” means victim-centered services that address the safety, health, economic, legal, housing, workplace, immigration, confidentiality, or other needs of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and that are designed primarily for and are targeted to a specific underserved population.

**(28) Prosecution**

The term “prosecution” means any public agency charged with direct responsibility for prosecuting criminal offenders, including such agency's component bureaus (such as governmental victim assistance programs).

**(29) Protection order or restraining order**

The term “protection order” or “restraining order” includes--

(A) any injunction, restraining order, or any other order issued by a civil or criminal court for the purpose of preventing violent or threatening acts or harassment against, sexual violence or contact or communication with or physical proximity to, another person, including any temporary or final orders issued by civil or criminal courts whether obtained by filing an independent action or as a pendente lite order in another proceeding so long as any civil order was issued in response to a complaint, petition, or motion filed by or on behalf of a person seeking protection; and

(B) any support, child custody or visitation provisions, orders, remedies, or relief issued as part of a protection order, restraining order, or stay away injunction pursuant to State, tribal, territorial, or local law authorizing the issuance of protection orders, restraining orders, or injunctions for the protection of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

**(30) Rape crisis center**

The term “rape crisis center” means a nonprofit, nongovernmental, or tribal organization, or governmental entity in a State other than a Territory that provides intervention and related assistance, as specified in [section 12511\(b\)\(2\)\(C\)](#) of this title, to victims of sexual assault without regard to their age. In the case of a governmental entity, the entity may not be part of the criminal justice system (such as a law enforcement agency) and must be able to offer a comparable level of confidentiality as a nonprofit entity that provides similar victim services.

**(31) Restorative practice**

The term “restorative practice” means a practice relating to a specific harm that--

(A) is community-based and unaffiliated with any civil or criminal legal process;

(B) is initiated by a victim of the harm;

(C) involves, on a voluntary basis and without any evidence of coercion or intimidation of any victim of the harm by any individual who committed the harm or anyone associated with any such individual--

(i) 1 or more individuals who committed the harm;

(ii) 1 or more victims of the harm; and

(iii) the community affected by the harm through 1 or more representatives of the community;

(D) shall include and has the goal of--

(i) collectively seeking accountability from 1 or more individuals who committed the harm;

(ii) developing a written process whereby 1 or more individuals who committed the harm will take responsibility for the actions that caused harm to 1 or more victims of the harm; and

(iii) developing a written course of action plan--

(I) that is responsive to the needs of 1 or more victims of the harm; and

(II) upon which 1 or more victims, 1 or more individuals who committed the harm, and the community can agree; and

(E) is conducted in a victim services framework that protects the safety and supports the autonomy of 1 or more victims of the harm and the community.

**(32) Rural area and rural community**

The term “rural area” and “rural community” mean--

(A) any area or community, respectively, no part of which is within an area designated as a standard metropolitan statistical area by the Office of Management and Budget;

(B) any area or community, respectively, that is--

(i) within an area designated as a metropolitan statistical area or considered as part of a metropolitan statistical area; and

(ii) located in a rural census tract; or

(C) any federally recognized Indian tribe.

**(33) Rural State**

The term “rural State” means a State that has a population density of 57 or fewer persons per square mile or a State in which the largest county has fewer than 250,000 people, based on the most recent decennial census.

**(34) Sex trafficking**

The term “sex trafficking” means any conduct proscribed by [section 1591 of Title 18](#), whether or not the conduct occurs in interstate or foreign commerce or within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States.

**(35) Sexual assault**

The term “sexual assault” means any nonconsensual sexual act proscribed by Federal, tribal, or State law, including when the victim lacks capacity to consent.

**(36) Stalking**

The term “stalking” means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to--

(A) fear for his or her safety or the safety of others; or

(B) suffer substantial emotional distress.

**(37) State**

The term “State” means each of the several States and the District of Columbia, and except as otherwise provided, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

**(38) State domestic violence coalition**

The term “State domestic violence coalition” means a program determined by the Administration for Children and Families under [sections 10402 and 10411 of Title 42](#).

**(39) State sexual assault coalition**

The term “State sexual assault coalition” means a program determined by the Center for Injury Prevention and Control of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention under the Public Health Service Act ([42 U.S.C. 280b et seq.](#)).

**(40) Technological abuse**

The term “technological abuse” means an act or pattern of behavior that occurs within domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence or stalking and is intended to harm, threaten, intimidate, control, stalk, harass, impersonate, exploit, extort, or monitor, except as otherwise permitted by law, another person, that occurs using any form of technology, including but not limited to: internet enabled devices, online spaces and platforms, computers, mobile devices, cameras and imaging programs, apps, location tracking devices, or communication technologies, or any other emerging technologies.

**(41) Territorial domestic violence or sexual assault coalition**

The term “territorial domestic violence or sexual assault coalition” means a program addressing domestic or sexual violence that is--

(A) an established nonprofit, nongovernmental territorial coalition addressing domestic violence or sexual assault within the territory; or

(B) a nongovernmental organization with a demonstrated history of addressing domestic violence or sexual assault within the territory that proposes to incorporate as a nonprofit, nongovernmental territorial coalition.

**(42) Tribal coalition**

The term “tribal coalition” means an established nonprofit, nongovernmental Indian organization, Alaska Native organization, or a Native Hawaiian organization that--

(A) provides education, support, and technical assistance to member Indian service providers, Native Hawaiian organizations, or the Native Hawaiian community in a manner that enables those member providers, organizations, or communities to establish and maintain culturally appropriate services, including shelter and rape crisis services, designed to assist Indian or Native Hawaiian women and the dependents of those women who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking; and

(B) is comprised of board and general members that are representative of--

(i) the member service providers, organizations, or communities described in subparagraph (A); and

(ii) the tribal communities or Native Hawaiian communities in which the services are being provided.

**(43) Tribal government**

The term “tribal government” means--

(A) the governing body of an Indian tribe; or

(B) a tribe, band, pueblo, nation, or other organized group or community of Indians, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation (as defined in, or established pursuant to, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.)), that is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

**(44) Tribal nonprofit organization**

The term “tribal nonprofit organization” means--

(A) a victim services provider that has as its primary purpose to assist Native victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking; and

(B) staff and leadership of the organization must include persons with a demonstrated history of assisting American Indian or Alaska Native victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

**(45) Tribal organization**

The term “tribal organization” means--

(A) the governing body of any Indian tribe;

(B) any legally established organization of Indians which is controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by such governing body of a tribe or tribes to be served, or which is democratically elected by the adult members of the Indian community to be served by such organization and which includes the maximum participation of Indians in all phases of its activities; or

(C) any tribal nonprofit organization.

**(46) Underserved populations**

The term “underserved populations” means populations who face barriers in accessing and using victim services, and includes populations underserved because of geographic location, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, underserved racial and ethnic populations, populations underserved because of special needs (such as language barriers, disabilities, alienage status, or age), and any other population determined to be underserved by the Attorney General or by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, as appropriate.

**(47) Unit of local government**

The term “unit of local government” means any city, county, township, town, borough, parish, village, or other general purpose political subdivision of a State.

**(48) Victim advocate**

The term “victim advocate” means a person, whether paid or serving as a volunteer, who provides services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or dating violence under the auspices or supervision of a victim services program.

**(49) Victim assistant**

The term “victim assistant” means a person, whether paid or serving as a volunteer, who provides services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or dating violence under the auspices or supervision of a court or a law enforcement or prosecution agency.

**(50) Victim service provider**

The term “victim service provider” means a nonprofit, nongovernmental or tribal organization or rape crisis center, including a State or tribal coalition, that assists or advocates for domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking victims, including domestic violence shelters, faith-based organizations, and other organizations, with a documented history of effective work concerning domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

**(51) Victim services or services**

The terms “victim services” and “services” mean services provided to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, including telephonic or web-based hotlines, legal assistance and legal advocacy, economic advocacy, emergency and transitional shelter, accompaniment and advocacy through medical, civil or criminal justice, immigration, and social support systems, crisis intervention, short-term individual and group support services, information and referrals, culturally specific services, population specific services, and other related supportive services.

**(52) Youth**

The term “youth” means a person who is 11 to 24 years old.

**(b) Grant conditions**

**(1) Match**

No matching funds shall be required for any grant or subgrant made under this Act for--

(A) any tribe, territory, or victim service provider; or

(B) any other entity, including a State, that--

(i) petitions for a waiver of any match condition imposed by the Attorney General or the Secretaries of Health and Human Services or Housing and Urban Development; and

(ii) whose petition for waiver is determined by the Attorney General or the Secretaries of Health and Human Services or Housing and Urban Development to have adequately demonstrated the financial need of the petitioning entity.

**(2) Nondisclosure of confidential or private information**

**(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.

### **(3) Approved activities**

In carrying out the activities under this subchapter, grantees and subgrantees may collaborate with or provide information to Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial public officials and agencies to develop and implement policies and develop and promote State, local, or tribal legislation or model codes designed to reduce or eliminate domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking if--

(A) the confidentiality and privacy requirements of this subchapter are maintained; and

(B) personally identifying information about adult, youth, and child victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking is not requested or included in any such collaboration or information-sharing.

### **(4) Non-supplantation**

Any Federal funds received under this subchapter shall be used to supplement, not supplant, non-Federal funds that would otherwise be available for activities under this subchapter.

### **(5) Use of funds**

Funds authorized and appropriated under this subchapter may be used only for the specific purposes described in this subchapter and shall remain available until expended.

### **(6) Reports**

An entity receiving a grant under this subchapter shall submit to the disbursing agency a report detailing the activities undertaken with the grant funds, including and providing additional information as the agency shall require.

### **(7) Evaluation**

Federal agencies disbursing funds under this subchapter shall set aside up to 3 percent of such funds in order to conduct--

(A) evaluations of specific programs or projects funded by the disbursing agency under this subchapter or related research; or

(B) evaluations of promising practices or problems emerging in the field or related research, in order to inform the agency or agencies as to which programs or projects are likely to be effective or responsive to needs in the field.

Final reports of such evaluations shall be made available to the public via the agency's website.

**(8) Nonexclusivity**

Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to prohibit male victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking from receiving benefits and services under this subchapter.

**(9) Prohibition on tort litigation**

Funds appropriated for the grant program under this subchapter may not be used to fund civil representation in a lawsuit based on a tort claim. This paragraph should not be construed as a prohibition on providing assistance to obtain restitution in a protection order or criminal case.

**(10) Prohibition on lobbying**

Any funds appropriated for the grant program shall be subject to the prohibition in [section 1913 of Title 18](#), relating to lobbying with appropriated moneys.

**(11) Technical assistance**

**(A) In general**

Of the total amounts appropriated under this subchapter, not less than 3 percent and up to 8 percent, unless otherwise noted, shall be available for providing training and technical assistance relating to the purposes of this subchapter to improve the capacity of the grantees, subgrantees, and other entities. If there is a demonstrated history that the Office on Violence Against Women has previously set aside amounts greater than 8 percent for technical assistance and training relating to grant programs authorized under this subchapter, the Office has the authority to continue setting aside amounts greater than 8 percent.

**(B) Requirement**

The Office on Violence Against Women shall make all technical assistance available as broadly as possible to any appropriate grantees, subgrantees, potential grantees, or other entities without regard to whether the entity has received funding from the Office on Violence Against Women for a particular program or project, with priority given to recipients awarded a grant before March 15, 2022.

**(12) Delivery of legal assistance**

Any grantee or subgrantee providing legal assistance with funds awarded under this subchapter shall comply with the eligibility requirements in [section 20121\(d\)](#) of this title.

### **(13) Civil rights**

#### **(A) Nondiscrimination**

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity (as defined in paragraph 249(c)(4) of Title 18), sexual orientation, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity funded in whole or in part with funds made available under the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (title IV of [Public Law 103-322](#); 108 Stat. 1902), the Violence Against Women Act of 2000 (division B of [Public Law 106-386](#); 114 Stat. 1491), the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 (title IX of [Public Law 109-162](#); 119 Stat. 3080),<sup>2</sup> the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, and any other program or activity funded in whole or in part with funds appropriated for grants, cooperative agreements, and other assistance administered by the Office on Violence Against Women.

#### **(B) Exception**

If sex segregation or sex-specific programming is necessary to the essential operation of a program, nothing in this paragraph shall prevent any such program or activity from consideration of an individual's sex. In such circumstances, grantees may meet the requirements of this paragraph by providing comparable services to individuals who cannot be provided with the sex-segregated or sex-specific programming.

#### **(C) Discrimination**

The authority of the Attorney General and the Office of Justice Programs to enforce this paragraph shall be the same as it is under [section 10228](#) of this title.

#### **(D) Construction**

Nothing contained in this paragraph shall be construed, interpreted, or applied to supplant, displace, preempt, or otherwise diminish the responsibilities and liabilities under other State or Federal civil rights law, whether statutory or common.

### **(14) Clarification of victim services and legal assistance**

Victim services and legal assistance under this subchapter also include services and assistance to--

**(A)** victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking who are also victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons as defined by [section 7102 of Title 22](#);

**(B)** adult survivors of child sexual abuse; and

(C) victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking who are also victims of female genital mutilation or cutting, or forced marriage.

**(15) Accountability**

All grants awarded by the Attorney General under this Act shall be subject to the following accountability provisions:

**(A) Audit requirement**

**(i) In general**

Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act,<sup>2</sup> and in each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall conduct audits of recipients of grants under this Act to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

**(ii) Definition**

In this paragraph, the term “unresolved audit finding” means a finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General of the Department of Justice that the audited grantee has utilized grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within 12 months from the date when the final audit report is issued.

**(iii) Technical assistance**

A recipient of grant funds under this Act that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall be eligible to receive prompt, individualized technical assistance to resolve the audit finding and to prevent future findings, for a period not to exceed the following 2 fiscal years.

**(iv) Priority**

In awarding grants under this Act, the Attorney General shall give priority to eligible entities that did not have an unresolved audit finding during the 3 fiscal years prior to submitting an application for a grant under this Act.

**(v) Reimbursement**

If an entity is awarded grant funds under this Act during the 2-fiscal-year period in which the entity is barred from receiving grants under paragraph (2), the Attorney General shall--

(I) deposit an amount equal to the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

(II) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

**(B) Nonprofit organization requirements**

**(i) Definition**

For purposes of this paragraph and the grant programs described in this Act, the term “nonprofit organization” means an organization that is described in [section 501\(c\)\(3\) of Title 26](#) and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such title.

**(ii) Prohibition**

The Attorney General may not award a grant under any grant program described in this Act to a nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding paying the tax described in [section 511\(a\) of Title 26](#).

**(iii) Disclosure**

Each nonprofit organization that is awarded a grant under a grant program described in this Act and uses the procedures prescribed in regulations to create a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees and key employees, shall disclose to the Attorney General, in the application for the grant, the process for determining such compensation, including the independent persons involved in reviewing and approving such compensation, the comparability data used, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision. Upon request, the Attorney General shall make the information disclosed under this subsection available for public inspection.

**(C) Conference expenditures**

**(i) Limitation**

No amounts authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Justice under this Act may be used by the Attorney General, or by any individual or organization awarded discretionary funds through a cooperative agreement under this Act, to host or support any expenditure for conferences that uses more than \$100,000 in Department funds, unless the Director or Principal Deputy Director of the Office on Violence Against Women or the Deputy Attorney General or such Assistant Attorney Generals, Directors, or principal deputies as the Deputy Attorney General may designate, provides prior written authorization that the funds may be expended to host a conference.

**(ii) Written approval**

Written approval under clause (i) shall include a written estimate of all costs associated with the conference, including the cost of all food and beverages, audiovisual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and any entertainment.

**(iii) Report**

The Deputy Attorney General shall submit an annual report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives on all approved conference expenditures referenced in this paragraph.

**(D) Annual certification**

Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act,<sup>2</sup> the Attorney General shall submit, to the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, an annual certification that--

(i) all audits issued by the Office of the Inspector General under paragraph (1) have been completed and reviewed by the appropriate Assistant Attorney General or Director;

(ii) all mandatory exclusions required under subparagraph (A)(iii) have been issued;

(iii) all reimbursements required under subparagraph (A)(v) have been made; and

(iv) includes a list of any grant recipients excluded under subparagraph (A) from the previous year.

**(16) Innovation fund**

Of the amounts appropriated to carry out this subchapter, not more than 1 percent shall be made available for pilot projects, demonstration projects, and special initiatives designed to improve Federal, State, local, Tribal, and other community responses to gender-based violence.

**CREDIT(S)**

(Pub.L. 103-322, Title IV, § 40002, as added Pub.L. 109-162, § 3(a), Jan. 5, 2006, 119 Stat. 2964; amended Pub.L. 109-271, §§ 1(d) to (f), 2(e), Aug. 12, 2006, 120 Stat. 751, 752; Pub.L. 111-320, Title II, § 202(d), Dec. 20, 2010, 124 Stat. 3509; Pub.L. 113-4, § 3, Mar. 7, 2013, 127 Stat. 56; Pub.L. 117-103, Div. W, § 2(a), Mar. 15, 2022, 136 Stat. 840; Pub.L. 117-315, § 2(b), Dec. 27, 2022, 136 Stat. 4405.)

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**Footnotes**

1 So in original. The period probably should be preceded by another closing parenthesis.

2 See References in Text note set out under this section.

34 U.S.C.A. § 12291, 34 USCA § 12291

Current through P.L. 119-80. Some statute sections may be more current, see credits for details.

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