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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Administration for Children and Families

[Program Announcement No. OCS 03-01]

Family Violence Prevention and Services Program

AGENCY: Office of Community Services (OCS), Administration for Children and Family (ACF), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

ACTION: Notice of the availability of funds to State domestic violence coalitions for grants to carry out family violence intervention and prevention activities.

SUMMARY: This instruction governs the proposed award of fiscal year (FY) 2003 formula grants under the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) to private non-profit State domestic violence coalitions. The purpose of these grants is to assist in the conduct of activities to promote domestic violence intervention and prevention and to increase public awareness of domestic violence issues.

This instruction sets forth the application requirements, the application process, and other administrative and fiscal requirements for grants in FY 2003.

Closing Dates and Applications

The closing time and date for receipt of applications is 4:30 p.m. (Eastern Time Zone) on May 15, 2003.

Deadline: Mailed applications shall be considered as meeting an announced deadline if they are received on or before the deadline time and date at the Office of Community Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Attention: Catherine L. Beck, 5th Floor-West Wing, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW., Washington, DC 20447.

ADDRESSES: Applications should be sent to the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Community Services, Administration for Children and Families, Attention: Catherine L. Beck, Fifth Floor—West Wing, 370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW., Washington, DC 20447.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: William D. Riley (202) 401-5529, Catherine L. Beck (202) 401-9352, Sunni Knight (202) 401-5319, or James Gray (202) 401-5705, Joseph Longergan, Director, Division of Mandatory Grants.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Confidentiality

Family Violence Prevention and Services Act programs must establish or implement policies and protocols that maintain the safety and confidentiality of adult victims of domestic violence and their dependents. It is essential that the confidentiality of individuals receiving FVPSA services be protected. Thus, when providing statistical data on program services and activities, individual identifiers of client records will not be used (section 303G).

I. Introduction

This notice announcing the availability of grants to State Domestic Violence Coalitions carries out several requirements in the FVPSA.

- The Department must use 10 percent of funds under the FVPSA for grants to State Domestic Violence Coalitions; and
- An application for a State coalition grant must meet the specific requirements in the statute covering eligibility and program activities.

In addition, grantees must meet other requirements, such as annual program and financial reporting and fiscal expenditure period requirements.

This notice provides information on all application requirements.

II. Background

As context for this FY 2003 notice, we wish to emphasize the importance of the work of the State Domestic Violence Coalitions and their activities and efforts leading to improved (more comprehensive and integrated) service delivery systems for victims of domestic violence and their dependents. Reducing domestic violence through coordinated prevention and services strategies is the primary goal of national efforts under the statute.

A. The Importance of Coordination of Services

The impact of domestic violence includes physical and psychological trauma, isolation from family and friends, harm to children witnessing or experiencing violence in homes in which the violence occurs, increased fear, reduced mobility and employability, homelessness, substance abuse, and a host of other health and related mental health consequences.

When programs that seek to address these issues operate independently of each other, a fragmented, and consequently less effective, prevention and service delivery system is the result. Coordination and collaboration among the police, prosecutors, the courts,

victim services providers, child welfare and family preservation services, and medical and mental health service providers is needed to provide more responsive and effective services to victims of domestic violence and their families. Faith and community based organizations should be included in the coordination and collaborative efforts. It is essential that all interested parties be involved in the design and improvement of intervention and prevention activities.

The significant correlation between domestic violence, child abuse and the use of welfare by battered women as an "economic escape route" also suggests the need to coordinate domestic violence intervention activities with programs that address child abuse, and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Federal welfare program, at the State and local levels.

B. Strengthening Prevention and Intervention Programs

Domestic violence prevention and services programs need to be inclusive in their efforts to address the needs of majority, as well as underserved, populations. Ethnic and rural communities face unique barriers in seeking services. Culture, language, and isolation can limit these populations from seeking assistance or communicating their needs. People with disabilities require special considerations regarding safety planning, transportation, and/or decreasing the risk of future violence.

Crisis intervention is essential in responding to domestic violence. Assessing the victim's safety, assessing the level of risk, and attending to the psychological and physical effects of trauma requires a coordinated effort among counselors, law enforcement, and medical personnel. Once these immediate needs are addressed, there is a need to continue comprehensive efforts throughout intervention, treatment, and future preventive services, for survivors, families, and perpetrators. These collective efforts could include: transitional housing assistance; child care; job skills training; mental health and substance abuse services to survivors and perpetrators; long-term support for survivors; coordination with adult and child protective services; and safe enforcement of child support for TANF and non-TANF families.

Domestic violence prevention programs may also extend to adolescents. The increasing incidence of date rape and violent adolescent relationships indicate the need to provide educational programs and