



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands



Four Year State Implementation Plan STOP VAWA 2022 – 2025

Services, Training, Officers, Prosecutors (STOP) Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)
Formula Grant Program

U.S. Department of Justice
Office on Violence Against Women

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' (CNMI), in this plan referred to as the "Commonwealth" Implementation Plan for the years 2022 to 2025 STOP Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Formula Grant Program, follows the model of the STOP State Implementation Plan Tool. Our STOP (Services, Trainings, Officers, and Prosecutors) Implementation Plan will outline the program gaps, needs and goals of the Commonwealth, and how we arrived at our plan. We will highlight the Commonwealth's plans to utilize STOP grant funding in the allocated program areas. The CNMI's geographic isolation and limited access to resources makes this funding stream critical for victims. Funds will be used to support personnel costs, personnel training, evaluation, data collection, and equipment costs to enhance the apprehension, prosecution, and adjudication of persons committing violent crimes against women; and to improve services to victims.

The Commonwealth's STOP Implementation Plan will reflect our intention to address STOP VAWA statutory purposes, while focusing on the following areas: improving responses to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence; enhancing victim services (long and short term); training; reducing gaps in communication within the justice system, and increasing offender accountability.

II. PLANNING PROCESS

As a result of Executive Order (EO) #16, the Criminal Justice Planning Agency (CJPA) is the CNMI designated State Administering Agency for all the United States Department of Justice grants. CJPA is directed through the EO to hold sub-grantees responsible and assure that the implementation plan meets all the service needs and supports the goals and usage of funds for the four calendar years.

The consultation and coordination of the implementation plan was done in conjunction with the Family Violence Task Force (FVTF) to discuss, review, and draft the implementation plan for the Commonwealth. Members of the FVTF include stakeholders that represent victim services, courts, prosecution, law enforcement, the CNMI Public School System, the Division of Youth Services, the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, and the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (NMCADSV). The FVTF was established to improve the relationships between agencies within in the criminal justice system, as well as to improve the response to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence (a brief history and an explanation of the FVTF role will be discussed later in this plan).

For the 2022 – 2025 STOP Implementation Plan, the Program Manager individually met with all STOP VAWA sub-grantees to address their needs and the needs of the Commonwealth on April 25th, 2022, and June 6th, 2022. All parties mentioned in the implementation plan discussed the effectiveness of the plan and if it truly represented the Commonwealth's needs and gaps concerning victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence. With STOP VAWA mandates and requirements in mind, ideas were generated to improve the overall effectiveness of service delivery in all areas. All the discussions, suggestions, recommendations, and ideas were compiled and forwarded to the CJPA, who used them to revise the implementation plan. A revised plan was presented to the group for revisions and final review. The Commonwealth Implementation Plan was finalized and approved by the acting chair, Mrs. Celina Romolor-Route, on June 9th, 2022.

III. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

There are 14 islands in the Northern Marianas archipelago, although only four of them are inhabited. According to the 2020 U.S. Census Bureau report, there was a 12.2% decrease in the CNMI's population from 2010 to 2020. The total population for each island is as follows: 43,385 for Saipan; 2,044 for Tinian; and 1,893 for Rota. The largest island, Saipan, is the seat of the CNMI government. The islands attract visitors from Asia to Russia with the beautiful scenery and our rich history, which makes tourism the CNMI's largest economy. The diversity is tremendous, with people from all ethnicities and faiths living and working together. While the population data from the 2020 Census count was published, the Ethnic Origin and Race data was not. With that being said, according to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau Report, the indigenous population of the CNMI, Chamorros and Carolinians, represent 28.51 percent of the total population, or about 15,363. The CNMI is also home to other groups and includes 19,017 Filipinos, 3,659 Chinese, 3,169 Micronesians (Chuukese, Palauan, Pohnpeian, Marshallese, Yapese, and Kosraean); 795 Japanese, 2,253 Koreans, among others living and working in the Commonwealth. The median age in the Commonwealth is 30 years; this is primarily due to the large population of "guest workers," many of whom hold blue-collar jobs, such as carpenters, waiters/waitresses, house cleaners, and electricians. Our rich and diverse population is one of our greatest assets and one of our most significant challenges.

Language barriers, cultural expectations of silence, the stigma of being labeled, and the lack of familial/social support are a few of the factors that continue to make reporting difficult in a diverse community like ours. For some victims, immigration issues play a significant role in their choice to report. Many victims who are not US citizens find it difficult to engage with a system where there is still a lot of uncertainty.

Therefore, the job of law enforcement and victim service providers, who are primarily from the indigenous populations, becomes a unique one when trying to address the needs of victims from the various ethnic groups, while at the same time respecting the victims' culture and working with interpreters/translators.

| <u>ETHNIC ORIGIN AND RACE</u> | Population | Percentage |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| TOTAL POPULATION (as of 2010) | 53,883 | 100.00 |
| One Ethnic Origin or Race | 47,051 | 87.32 |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander | 18,800 | 39.96 |
| Carolinian | 2,461 | 4.57 |
| Chamorro | 12,902 | 23.94 |
| Chuukese | 1,242 | 2.30 |
| Kosraean | 37 | 0.07 |
| Marshallese | 68 | 0.13 |
| Palauan | 1,169 | 2.17 |
| Pohnpeian | 425 | 0.79 |
| Yapese | 228 | 0.42 |
| Other Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | 268 | 0.50 |
| Asian | 26,908 | 49.94 |
| Bangladeshi | 501 | 0.93 |
| Chinese (except Taiwanese) | 3,659 | 6.79 |
| Filipino | 19,017 | 35.29 |
| Japanese | 795 | 1.48 |
| Korean | 2,253 | 4.18 |
| Nepalese | 227 | 0.42 |
| Thai | 266 | 0.49 |
| Other Asian | 190 | 0.35 |
| Black or African American | 55 | 0.10 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 54 | 0.10 |
| White | 1,117 | 2.07 |
| Other origin or race | 117 | 0.22 |
| Two or more races or ethnic groups | 6,832 | 12.68 |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander and other groups | 6,091 | 11.30 |
| Chamorro and other group(s) | 4,608 | 8.55 |
| Asian and other group(s) | 3,235 | 6.88 |

Source: Northern Marianas Islands 2010: Census Summary Report

While the main population base remains on Saipan, the need for services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence on the smaller islands are just as great. Like many rural areas in the United States, the level of training for law enforcement and service providers in the area of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence is minimal. Safety issues for victims often become paramount as frequently there is nowhere to hide, nor any professional intervention available at the time of the crisis on these more isolated islands. Another significant challenge for the CNMI is ensuring that services on the islands of Tinian and Rota are available for victims. While sub-grantees continue to serve victims and survivors as much as they can, services on Rota and Tinian are limited because there is a lack of providers and the funding to recruit and retain providers from other areas. It has proven most difficult on these islands as most of them would need to travel to Saipan to receive additional support services that are not available in their respective islands.

In 2018, a Category 5 Typhoon, more commonly known as “Super Typhoon Yutu,” rampaged through the CNMI. Utility infrastructure on all three islands were severely impacted to include power lines, transformers, and poles. Many homes went without power for as long as 3 months. As a result of the typhoon, many factors such as, stressors of recovery, job loss, and financial strain made daily living more dangerous for victims/survivors.

In March 2020, Guam, USA, discovered its first case of COVID-19. As a safety precautionary measure, the CNMI went into lock down in March – May 2020. Mask mandates, protocols, curfew hours, the limit of in-person services, and many more safety measures were imposed in the CNMI. In the early months of COVID, victims/survivors lost access to services when residents were advised to “stay safe at home.” Many programs had to adapt to the “new normal,” or find other ways to provide services to individuals, which resulted in services being provided virtually. Some examples included court hearings and counseling services being held via Zoom.

IV. STOP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN HISTORY

In 1995, an Executive Order was issued to create a task force to address the increasing numbers of domestic violence cases in the CNMI. As a result, the Department of Public Safety, Office of the Attorney General, Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation, and the Karidat Social Services signed the Memorandum of Understanding for the Introduction and Development of the CNMI Interagency Domestic Abuse Task Force (DATF). The Family Violence Task Force (formerly named DATF), was established by the *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Act of 2000*, Public Law 12-19. The sole purpose of the task force was to improve interagency communications and to address the issues of domestic violence (primarily) and sexual assault, as well as to provide a centralized, coordinated, and multi-disciplinary response to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence.

The FVTF is comprised of representatives from: Ayuda Network, Inc., Community Guidance Center – Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation, Criminal Justice Planning Agency, Division of Youth Services – Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, Family Court Division, Office of the Adult Probation, Commonwealth Superior Court, Office of the Attorney General - Criminal Division (Victim Witness Advocacy Unit), Office of the Attorney General, Karidat Social Services, Department of Public Safety – Criminal Investigation Division, Victims Input Services, CNMI Board of Parole, Family Protection Project – Tinian Health Center, and the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence.

Following the establishment of the FVTF, the Domestic Violence Intervention Center also known as DVIC, was created. DVIC was created out of the need for coordinated victim services. It initially had victim advocates and law enforcement officers in the same location to provide services for victims and their families of domestic violence through the criminal justice system. Over the years, oversight and funding issues caused departments to withdraw their personnel from DVIC. In 2016, DVIC was dissolved and the advocates and law enforcement officers of the “One-Stop Center” returned to their respective agencies to carry out their purpose and goals within their agencies. The

center was converted to the Family Violence Task Force “Lugat Pas” office and consisted of an administrative officer and a coordinator. Their responsibilities focused primarily on carrying out the Family Violence Task Force purpose and goals as an independent program providing technical assistance for direct service providers. The center also provided the venue for the quarterly FVTF meetings – these meetings continued to provide a forum for dialogue between prosecution, law enforcement, and service providers in order to improve outcomes for victims. In 2016, members of the task force signed a Memorandum of Understanding to coordinate services as well as to outline each member’s responsibilities.

As a result of the FVTF’s efforts, a criminal domestic violence bill was passed in the 14th Northern Mariana Islands Legislature on May 24, 2004 and became Public Law 14-09, or “Rosalia’s Law” as it is more commonly known. A first of its kind, Rosalia’s Law strengthens penalties for domestic violence crimes and included the crime of stalking as a felony. In addition, Rosalia’s Law acknowledges that children in abusive homes are likely to suffer secondary effects from having witnessed or experienced abuse within their home and allows sentencing aggravators when domestic violence is perpetrated with children in the home. The bill also created penalties for violations of orders of protection; ensures notification to victims of domestic violence, including information about rights to orders of protection and medical treatment, securing essential personal belongings, and obtaining an order of protection. Finally, Rosalia’s Law formalized mandatory arrests for crimes involving domestic violence, violations of protective orders, and violations of conditions of release. This was just one of the task force’s efforts to ensure safety for victims as well as services.

In 2020, the rise of COVID-19 cases dramatically impacted the economy leading to a major dip in local funding, which resulted in the implementation of austerity measures throughout the CNMI government. As one of the measures, many government employees, including two of the FVTF personnel, were furloughed. As a result of these austerity measures, the FVTF was forced to shut down and has yet to be in operation. However, despite the unfortunate nature of the loss of the two

FVTF staff, the remaining members continue to provide services to the community for their respective agencies.

A short timeline below presents the significant steps taken to stop domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence:

- The CNMI began addressing violence against women in the late 80's with programs like the Victim Hotline and training for nurses who were seeing victims of sexual assault with funds from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA).
- The Commonwealth Family Protection Act of 1986, Public Law 5-20, declared family abuse a crime. It was enacted to complement Public Law 3-18, Child Abuse Act.
- Systematic changes, such as the establishment of the Family Violence Task Force and training for law enforcement, prosecutors and judges, began taking place in the mid-90's with funding from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.
- In 2000, the 12th CNMI Legislature passed P.L. 12-19, or the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Act of 2000, which formalized procedures for obtaining temporary restraining orders and orders of protection. P.L. 12-19 also requires the Office of the Attorney General to employ a victim advocate and mandated the creation of a plan to address domestic violence by the Department of Public Health. In addition, Public Law 12-19 promulgates regulations that require continuing education for law enforcement officers, judges and court personnel, concerning domestic violence or family violence, as well as Commonwealth employees who work with domestic or family violence and those who are required to report abuse and neglect of children. STOP VAWA funds for the Commonwealth will address these training needs.
- In 2004, the 14th CNMI Legislature passed Public Law 14-9, the Domestic Violence Criminal Act of 2004 or “Rosalia’s Law,” to increase protections for victims and strengthen penalties for perpetrators, including the addition of the crime of stalking.
- In 2005, talks were initiated to critically explore the way domestic violence and sexual assault were being addressed in the CNMI. Service providers and community organizations came together to discuss next steps in the movement to end violence against

women. With the help of the Family Violence Prevention Fund and funding from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence was created to be the community voice and to work side-by-side with the more government-based Family Violence Task Force.

- In 2017, the 20th CNMI Legislature passed H.B. No. 20-14, “An Act to Improve the Justice System’s Response to Domestic Violence, and for Other Purposes,” now currently enacted as *Public Law No. 20-28*. The provisions of PL 20-28 summarize the findings of the Legislature that touch base on addressing the severity of three serious forms of Domestic Violence (Strangulation, Threatening and Intimidation Against Testifying Victims, and Stalking), along with the proposed legislative actions.

Incorporated in 2007, the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (NMCADSV) is an anti-violence, non-profit organization that aims to “promote, nourish and sustain a collective movement against violence in the CNMI.” The NMCADSV works toward a violence-free CNMI by being a voice for victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault; engaging in dialogue with its community to learn and to educate about these issues to increase understanding and the ability of victims and survivors to seek help; providing training and resources to enhance the capacity of those who directly serve victims and survivors; and by nurturing meaningful partnerships with government, private sector – for profit and nonprofit, and community-based groups to ensure that all voices are being heard and considered. Ultimately, it is the vision of NMCADSV that all citizens – regardless of age, gender, gender identify, ethnicity, sexual orientation, faith, or education – can live and thrive in safety.

V. GAPS AND NEEDS OF THE UNDERSERVED POPULATION

Previous implementation plans submitted to the Office on Violence Against Women have focused on the responsiveness to victims of domestic violence, primarily after years of establishing a strong foundation with the FVTF and the creation of DVIC. Our coordinated community response to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence sexual assault has significantly improved over the years. While there is still much work to be done, the CNMI has made some great strides. The Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence continues to diligently work towards building awareness against sexual violence, working with providers to improve responses, and has committed to maintaining the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). The NMCADSV received OVW's Rural Funding in 2019 and 2021 to fund the Sexual Assault Response Team. The SART was active from 2012 – 2015 and from 2017 – present. Through OVW's Rural Grant, the Coalition is able to support the continuing education for SANEs, stipends for SANEs, training for the SART members, policy-making, counseling, travel for SART members, education and outreach efforts, and more. STOP VAWA sub-grantees, who are also active members of the FVTF and NMCADSV, have been participating in this active movement. SART members and NMCADSV have come together to continue to voice a strong need to build a service infrastructure for victims of sexual assault.

Improving the Response to Sexual Assault Victims:

- ✓ To continue the coordinated community response to victims of sexual assault, improve investigation and prosecution skills for sexual assault cases, improve outcomes for victims of sexual assault, and hold offenders accountable.
- ✓ Increase and /or maintain the number of professionals who are able to assist victims of sexual assault.
 1. There is currently a robust SANE program on Saipan, and the NMCADSV and various agencies are currently working to support the building of a robust SANE program on the islands of Tinian and Rota.

Improve the delivery of services to victims, most especially increase services for the underserved victims to our neighboring islands:

Like many rural states and territories, the Commonwealth has geographical challenges. As stated earlier, the Commonwealth is comprised of 14 islands. The three most populated islands are Saipan, Rota, and Tinian. Services to victims are not always available on Rota and Tinian; as a result, we have identified the residents of Rota and Tinian as our underserved population. Additionally, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, services were significantly affected for the Commonwealth. During the timeframe of this implementation plan, STOP VAWA sub-grantees will work to improve and increase services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence. This list also includes other objectives that will include all victims.

- ✓ Conduct a needs assessment identifying cultural barriers and other obstacles inaccessible to victim services;
- ✓ Identify ethnic groups that need access to services;
- ✓ Provide adequate translation and interpretation services for all ethnic groups in a variety of formats;
- ✓ Identify community leaders of different ethnic groups to facilitate outreach to members of their communities;
- ✓ Provide continuity on training certified translators and interpreters on the importance of being objective and accurate when translating or interpreting for victims;
- ✓ Provide information about immigration-related relief services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence;
- ✓ Increase visitations to Rota and Tinian to conduct assessments of community and victims served – to include training on victim safety assessments;
- ✓ Support and continue all operating services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence; and
- ✓ Educate and raise awareness about available services for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence.

Improve and/or continue essential victim services – crisis intervention and long-term services:

- ✓ The Commonwealth needs to address additional permanent counseling services (individual and group settings) for victims for the purpose of crisis intervention/brief intervention and long-term treatment.
 - Currently, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation – Community Guidance Center’s Wellness Clinic provides all adult general counseling services, and counseling services to victims of crime from the ages 6 and above. Services provided focus particularly on the emotional and physical needs of victims of crime, including helping people to stabilize their lives after a traumatic event, assisting survivors in understanding and participating in the criminal justice system, and providing victims of crime with a measure of safety and security.

Continue important training aspect of professionals who serve victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence:

- ✓ Increase requests for the technical assistance associated and approved by OVW to conduct trainings for victim services, law enforcement, and prosecutors;
- ✓ Allocate STOP funding to VAWA sub-grantees in order to attend related trainings, webinars, and conferences on a national level. Participation for all VAWA sub-grantees are highly encouraged. The training and information obtained from such events is vital for the Commonwealth;
- ✓ Encourage judges from the Superior Court to attend trainings directly addressing domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence issues to increase offender accountability in the Commonwealth;
- ✓ Provide on-site training, webinars, and purchase materials/subscriptions that will demonstrate to victim service providers, judges, prosecution, and other government agencies the importance of trauma informed services and cultural sensitivity; and
- ✓ Provide continuous workshops, trainings and meetings, with partnering agencies and STOP VAWA sub-grantees, to include the FVTF and SART teams on the current laws that the Commonwealth currently has.

Strengthen victim safety by addressing communication gaps between victims and the criminal justice system in the Commonwealth:

Some of the concerns that need to be addressed to increase communication and ensure victim safety are as follows:

- ✓ Establish a communication protocol or procedure for victims;
- ✓ To strengthen victim services and response in the Department of Public Safety, it is vital that the agency continues to fund the Jessica Gonzales Victim Assistant position. The person who will fill this position will be responsible for the following:
 1. Collaborate with prosecutors, courts, and victim service providers to develop standardized responses and policies for wraparound services; and
 2. Refer victims seeking enforcement of protection orders and to supplementary services, such as shelter programs and counseling services.
- ✓ Build the Parole Office's capacity to provide swift and compassionate notification to victims who may choose to testify at parole hearings for perpetrators of domestic violence and sexual assault;
- ✓ Strengthen the collaboration efforts between the Board of Parole, Office of Adult Probation, and the Department of Public Safety. In doing so, important information can be shared about offenders, and to increase victim safety;
- ✓ Address and re-visit the current laws of victim rights and/or create policies to protect privacy of the victims of violent crimes, and to include victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence; and
- ✓ Collaborate with the CNMI Bar Association on developing a program that would offer pro-bono representation to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence.

Continue informative campaigns on domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence:

- ✓ Raise general awareness with presentations to various groups. For example, faith-based organizations, workplaces, and/or minority/cultural groups.
 1. Increase public and community outreach for services available for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence through various forms of media including television, radio, newspaper, etc.;
 2. Print and distribute culturally and language specific informational materials regarding domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence; and
 3. Work with the media as well as other public information personnel on preventing the re-victimization of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence in the media.
- ✓ Reinforce partnerships with community organizations to act as another means of communicating the availability of services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence.

Increase Offender Accountability in the Commonwealth to decrease recidivism and re-victimization of survivors:

- ✓ Educate legislators about the deficiencies in the law, including the identification of unintended consequences, and include harsher punishments for repeat offenders.
- ✓ Establish a domestic violence homicide review team and identify policies and protocols regarding victim safety in relation to offender accountability.
 - From 2000 till present, there have been 4 cases of domestic violence-related homicides.
 - Similar to the CNMI Family Violence Task Force, members would include stakeholders representing law enforcement, victim services, prosecution, health professionals, criminal justice professionals, emergency services personnel, social workers, and victim advocates.

- By establishing a Domestic Violence Homicide Review Team, they would play a key role in creating efforts to prevent domestic violence homicides and to improve service responses for victims by developing a coordinated multi-agency approach to ensure that abuse is identified and responded to effectively at the earliest opportunity.
- Review teams will offer the opportunity for systemic and structural changes, as well as increased public awareness.

VI. USAGE OF VAWA FUNDS

The STOP VAWA program funds will be used to support and address efforts on domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence. The Commonwealth will use the STOP VAWA program funds to address the needs and gaps identified in this plan, and as outlined by the statutory purpose areas. STOP VAWA Program funds will be specifically used for the following:

1. *Personnel for Victim Services*: The CNMI will allocate funds for the salaries, wages and benefits of social workers/case workers, shelter/center personnel, victim/witness advocacy and/or managers/assistants, domestic violence/sexual assault prosecutor(s) and/or counselor(s). Additionally, within the next four years, we anticipate the continued renewal of the Jessica Gonzales Victim Assistant for Saipan. All personnel funded under the STOP VAWA funding will help to increase response to victims in need;
2. *Training and Technical Assistance*: As established through Public Law 12-19 and as stated in the STOP VAWA statutory purpose areas, a percentage of the funding will be used for training law enforcement officers, judges, court personnel, prosecutors, and victim service providers in the areas of violent crimes against women, including crimes of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence. Also, due to the Commonwealth's distance, it is costly to join such trainings, conferences, and workshops. If possible and we are able to find trainers from all disciplines such as law enforcement and health care who are willing to visit the Commonwealth, STOP VAWA

funding will be used to pay for the consulting/training fees (if any and upon prior approval by OVW), airfare, fees, and venue to hold the training – in order to train as many people at one time;

3. *Administrative and Operational Costs:* The CNMI will allocate funds for the operational costs of the STOP VAWA sub-grantees. Programs will purchase items that are essential to programs for operations including, but not limited to: equipment, printing, office supplies, communication services, and books and library materials.

VII. PLAN THE FOUR-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

Grant Award Process

The Criminal Justice Planning Agency operates under the advisement and supervision of the Northern Marianas Council for the improvement of the Criminal Justice System, commonly known as the “Supervisory Advisory Council (SAC).” The SAC is comprised of sixteen (16) members, who are all appointed by the Governor through an Executive Order (EO). Directed through the EO, the Supervisory Council is responsible and tasked to review, approve, and maintain general oversight of the state plan and its implementation for the CNMI. Therefore, they are the authority to assure STOP VAWA funds are awarded according to the purpose areas set forth by OVW.

The awarding process starts when CJPA initiates the “Announcement of Availability of Funds” upon receiving approval and confirmation from OVW of the award. Announcements are made through local newspapers, the CJPA website, phone calls, emailing, and other formal communication means. This process is done to allow three (3) to four (4) weeks before the application deadline. The CJPA then receives all applications and compiles them for certification to assure applicants are qualified based on the purpose areas of the VAWA program or other requirements set forth. CJPA will then initiate a SAC meeting through a “public notice” (also required by local statute). Applications are then given to the SAC members to review a week before the scheduled meeting as part of their preparation. On the day of the meeting and in addition to the application packages, the council listens to the presentations from the applicants, and ask any

question that may have about their goals and objectives, including achievements and success of their programs in relation to the program purpose areas.

Although STOP VAWA funds allocates percentages for each category (to include the sexual assault set-aside), the council wants to assure that the funds will be allocated and spent appropriately according to and for allowable costs required through the financial guidelines and conditions of awards and to fully support the purposes areas set forth. The SAC, along with programmatic advice from the CJPA Program Coordinator and the Executive Director, will decide which programs to fund with the discretionary portion of the grant, as long as it addresses the statutory program purposes.

Timeline for the STOP Grant Cycle

Each year, the Criminal Justice Planning Agency (CJPA) releases a solicitation for interested applicants. The solicitation includes the set amounts for all allocations (Victim Services, Law Enforcement, Courts, Prosecution, Discretionary, and the Sexual Assault set-aside). Interested applicants are generally given 3 to 4 weeks between January - June to submit their application(s).

Within 2 weeks after the application submissions, the application is reviewed and if approved by the CJPA, the agency sets up a meeting with the Supervisory Advisory Council (SAC). As listed in Executive Order #16, in order to set a meeting with the SAC, a total of at least nine (9) members present is needed for quorum. The CJPA must first confirm with the Chairman and Vice Chairman on their availability and once confirmed, a letter is sent out to the other council members informing them of the meeting. If at least 9 out of the 16 have confirmed their attendance, a notice is published at three public locations 72 hours before the set meeting date (i.e. Office of the Governor, Legislature, NMI Superior Court). If quorum is not met, then the SAC is unable to proceed with the meeting. At the meeting, applicants are given the opportunity to present their application and answer any question the SAC members may have in regards to their application(s). After all the interviews are completed, the SAC members deliberate on the awarding of funds for all the applicants. Within 2 weeks after the SAC interviews, the CJPA

sends out an “Award Letter” to all applicants, regardless of whether they were awarded funds or not. If there is no special condition set by the council, an opportunity to submit a revised budget is given to the approved applicants. This generally takes subgrantees about 2-3 weeks to submit after the grant is awarded.

After all revised budgets have been submitted, the CJPA works on setting up the accounts. This process typically takes about 3-4 weeks. The establishment of accounts must be routed to the following agencies:

- Criminal Justice Planning Agency (CJPA)
- Office of Grants Management (OGM)
- Dept. of Finance: Division of Financial Services - Federal Grants Section (DOF)
- Office of Management and Budget

Between the periods of July – December, a subgrantee work shop will be provided by the CJPA. Attendance will be mandatory for project coordinators to ensure that fiscal and program reporting requirements are met, and the subgrantee understands their responsibilities including but not limited to, working within budget and scope, reprogramming procedures, record keeping, and being responsive when the project is not progressing as planned. The training will also provide an opportunity for subgrantees to ask questions.

Consultation with Victim Service Providers

During the course of the law enforcement, prosecution, and courts developing their subgrant application, the interested applicants must ensure that the proposed activities are designed to promote the safety, confidentiality, and economic independence of victims. As part of their application, interested applicants for the law enforcement, prosecution, and courts allocations are required to provide to the CJPA, a completed and signed Certificate of Collaboration between a criminal justice agency and a local victim service organization (i.e. Karidat).

STOP Subgrant Project Periods

STOP subgrant award periods are typically funded on a single-year basis. The reason for this is because the STOP project period is 24 months. In addition, due to the timeline of the pre-award and post-award procedures, by the time subgrantees are able to utilize funding, one year has passed since the grant was awarded. Prior to the project period end date, in the event that there are still unobligated funds, the subgrant project award period may be extended, as needed by the subgrantee. This can be done by the subgrantee(s) submitting an Extension Request to the Criminal Justice Planning Agency (CJPA).

VIII. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND STOP-VAWA FUND DISTRIBUTION

Consistent with our implementation plan and our commitment to comply with OVW program purpose areas, the STOP-VAWA funds will be distributed by setting aside ten percent (10%) for planning and administration for the CJPA and ninety percent (90%) of the remaining funds to be awarded as a “Pass Through” portion.

Ninety percent (90%) of the total STOP VAWA award amount will be sub-granted out to qualified programs listed in the implementation plan and/or those agencies that qualify under the categories set forth by the STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program. The sub-granting process is done through an “*Announcement of Availability of Funds,*” or Request for Proposals consistent with the Supervisory Council review and award duties earlier stated under the “*Grant Award Process*” title of this submission.

The general description of the program/agencies that will be supported by and with fiscal year 2022 - 2025 grant funds:

Criminal Justice Planning Agency (10%)

The Criminal Justice Planning Agency, Office of the Governor, is the designated State Administering Agency (SAA) for all the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands’ (CNMI) U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), and Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) formula grant programs. In addition, CJPA is responsible for

coordinating the final review of the STOP VAWA State Implementation Plan for the years 2022 – 2025 by local law enforcement, prosecution, victim services providers, courts, and other justice initiatives to ensure the effective implementation of STOP program funds.

The Criminal Justice Planning Agency is fully committed to continue to comply with responsibilities required under the STOP VAWA grant program. These requirements include: monitoring sub-grantees, ensuring compliance with all special conditions and provisions, providing ongoing technical assistance to sub-recipients, submitting financial and programmatic reports in a timely manner, and including performance measure data and sub-grant information as requested.

As stated under the STOP VAWA program specific information, CJPA accepts and will use up to ten percent (10%) of the state award to secure proper management and implementation of STOP VAWA funds requirements, special conditions and certifications, or any other additional requirements of the Office on Violence Against Women. In summary, the Criminal Justice Planning Agency will use the entire 10 percent to support the salary and benefits of the VAWA Program Coordinator and/or State Administrator, including planning and administration costs of all related VAWA program activities. *(See Budget Details on Appendix A)*

Law Enforcement (25%)

At least twenty-five percent (25%) of the STOP VAWA award will be allocated to law enforcement, **of which at least ten percent (10%) will be used to meet the set-aside requirement to meaningfully address sexual assault.** A brief description and a list of mandates responsibilities of our supportive law enforcement team are highlighted below:

Department of Public Safety: The CNMI Department of Public Safety (DPS) serves as the law enforcement authority for the Commonwealth. The DPS is responsible for providing public safety services to the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Within the Department there are 4 major divisions: (1) the Police Division; (2) Division of Administration; (3) Criminal Investigation

Division; and (4) Division of Motor Vehicles. The Police Division is further divided into 5 major sections: (a) Patrol Section; (b) Highway Safety Section; (c) Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP); (d) Boating Safety Unit; and (e) Community Oriented Policing Section.

As part of the Department of Public Safety's commitment to enhance their responses to domestic violence cases, the Domestic Violence (DV) Unit was created on Saipan in 1996, shortly after the establishment of the Family Violence Task Force. Today, the DPS' Domestic Violence Unit also handles Sexual Assault (SA) and Stalking cases. In a continuing effort to serve the entire CNMI, the Department of Public Safety on the neighboring islands of Rota and Tinian, also created specialized units for domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking cases. Currently, there are 5 investigators assigned to the DV/SA unit in Saipan. One investigator on both Rota and Tinian are assigned to handle the DV and SA cases. These detectives provide a variety of services such as follow-up investigations, service of temporary restraining and superseding orders, transportation, and information referral.

The Department of Public Safety needs the continued support to fund the Jessica Gonzales Victim Assistant position. The Victim Advocate continues to act as the liaison between the victim, law enforcement, and other victim service providers. STOP funds will also be used to continue to train DPS investigators assigned to the program. Along with the Victim Advocate, investigators need training on interview techniques and the documentation process. Investigators are essential to the apprehension of abusers. They require additional training in interrogation techniques, evidence findings, and proper report writing skills. These skills will allow them to carry out the investigation and its process effectively and efficiently. STOP grant funds will also be used for the procurement of equipment and supplies for the operational needs of the Department of Public Safety's Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Unit.

Office of Adult Probation (OAPS): The Office of Adult Probation Supervision is within the Superior Court. A Chief Probation Officer is head of the OAPS and serves under the direction of the Presiding Judge. The OAPS is a law enforcement agency, performing a wide array of services,

including law enforcement, social work, and community prevention-oriented services for criminal offenders, crime victims, and the community. The OAPS services consist of pre-trial services, investigations, pre-trial assessments, supervision of pre-trial release defendants, monitoring house arrests, post-sentence supervision, enforcement of court orders, and monitoring court diversion program compliance.

The OAPS' primary needs and use of VAWA funds will be to support the enforcement of its legal mandate-obligations and services to victims at pre-trial and post-sentence stages under the following Public Laws: *10-81* (Victims' Rights); *14-9* (Domestic Violence Criminal Act of 2004); *12-19* (The Domestic & Family Violence Prevention Act of 1998); *11-104*.

With VAWA funds, the OAPS will fund staff training and office resource supplies for victim orientation. These trained probation officers' primary responsibilities will entail creating victim database, monitoring, tracking and enforcement of probation court ordered conditions pertaining to victims, conducting restitution assessment, interviewing/providing victim impact statements, generating victim notifications, providing victim orientations, enforcing and monitoring stay away orders, and monitoring compliance with terms and conditions. Victims involved in domestic and sex crime offenses are predominantly women from all ethnic groups. Specifically, the OAPS stands to ensure offenders' court ordered conditions for victims are met and addressed while providing community supervision/rehabilitation services to criminal/traffic offenders.

For the past few years, the Office of Adult Probation faced many set-backs. In October of 2018, a major Category 5 Super Typhoon Yutu hit the Marianas (Saipan and Tinian). Challenges faced were the lost of homes for some Probation Officers and clients, transportation issues due to damage from said typhoon, conducting clients' whereabouts and aftermath cleanup and rebuilding. Then in March of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic hit the CNMI. There were restrictions with regard to curfew hours, mandate on wearing masks, and social distancing. The greatest challenges resulted from funding freeze, which led to a significant number of staffs being laid off and restrictions on travel. For these reasons, staff could not receive the needed training in 2021.

The Board of Parole: The CNMI Board of Parole is a quasi-judicial entity, headed by a Chairman and composed of eight board members – two (2) from the islands of Tinian and Rota. The board members are appointed by the Governor and does not require the advice and consent of the Senate. The duties of the Board are to grant parole and revoke such parole if there has been any violation. Additionally, the Board consults with the Governor regarding applications for reprieves, commutations, and pardons for criminal convictions. In addition, the Board of Parole office is managed by a Chief of Parole in order to effectively supervise and enforce Board orders and conditions of parole, as well as its administrative function. In an effort to promote good parole adaptability, it is the mission of the CNMI Board of Parole to protect safety from the criminal elements of society, assist in offender rehabilitation so that offenders become law abiding and productive members of society, and to help reduce prison and jail overcrowding by preventing and possibly reducing recidivism with the parole community.

The Board of Parole Office's primary needs and use of VAWA funds will be to support the enforcement imposed as Order by the Board legal directive condition and services to victims under Public Laws: *10-81* (Victims' Rights); *14-9* (Rosalia's Law/ Domestic Violence & Stalking Criminal Act); *12-19* (Domestic & Family Violence Prevention Act; *11-104*.

The Board of Parole's Full Time Officers (FTOs) responsibilities are: to work with victims and diligently undertake the responsibilities as victim's support officers to educate and to enforce accountability in court/board ordered conditions pertaining to victims, address victim's needs, create victims database for statistical purposes, mediate victim and parolee home visitation, issue notifications to victims and to the general public, public awareness, school/community presentations, monitor Parolee compliance with stay away orders and other general/special conditions, as ordered. In addition, the Board of Parole collaborates with other victim service provider agencies (Awareness/Outreach programs), like the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, the Family Violence Task Force, and the Sexual Assault Response Team to ensure the understanding of the current landscape pertaining to the victims.

Prosecution (25%)

At least twenty-five percent (25%) of the STOP VAWA award will be allocated to the Office of the Attorney General's – Criminal Division (Prosecution), **of which at least 10% will be used to meet the set-aside requirement to meaningfully address sexual assault.** The sexual assault set-aside funds will be utilized to provide both quality and responsive services to victims of sexual assault. A brief description and mandated responsibilities of the Office of the Attorney General and its Domestic Violence Prosecution Program is highlighted below:

Office of the Attorney General: The mission of the CNMI Office of the Attorney General (OAG) provides legal counsel and representation to the Commonwealth government and its agencies on many issues vital to the people's interest. These issues include cases that involve adult and children victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, teen dating, dating violence, stalking, and contempt charges for violations of protection order. There are additional support services extended to family members and others to reduce the inflicted trauma on primary and secondary victims as a direct result of such abuses stemming from these horrific acts.

The CNMI Office of the Attorney General (OAG) serves as the top law enforcement authority in the Commonwealth. The OAG is responsible for prosecution of criminal, juvenile, and traffic cases in the Commonwealth. The Office of the Attorney General has six divisions and three units: (1) Civil Division; (2) Criminal Division; (3) Solicitors Division; (4) Office of the Consumer Counsel; (5) Administrative Services Division; (6) Attorney General Investigative Division. The three units are: (1) Victim Witness Advocacy Unit; (2) Information Technology Unit; and (3) Child Support Enforcement Unit.

The Criminal Division is in charge of prosecuting criminal offenses pursuant to Article III, Section 11 of the Commonwealth Constitution. Ensuring that justice is served while balancing the safety and welfare of the Commonwealth are essential functions of the Criminal Division and necessary for maintaining a civilized society for victims and the community at-large. The Criminal Division is headed by a Chief Prosecutor and currently staffed by 3 Assistant Attorney Generals. Currently,

at least 2 prosecutors and the Chief Prosecutor are assigned to sex crimes. All prosecutors, along with the Chief Prosecutor, are assigned to domestic violence cases, teen dating violence, dating violence, stalking, and contempt charges for violations of protection orders. These case assignments are a result of the shortage of prosecutors and can change in the future.

The STOP VAWA funds are also and will continue to be used to fully support the OAG's specialized domestic violence and sexual assault unit within the Criminal Division, which consist of a Prosecutor, Case Worker, Victim Advocate, Victim Witness Assistant, Paralegal, and Legal Assistant. The Prosecutor is 100% solely assigned and specializes in the prosecution of cases in the CNMI involving domestic violence, sexual assault, teen dating violence, dating violence, stalking, and content charges for violations of protection orders.

The OAG allocates a portion of their VAWA sub-grant for the salary and benefits of a full-time Victim Advocate under the set-aside grant to assist victims through the criminal prosecution of sex crimes. In 2021, the Case Worker and the Victim Advocate position were converted to civil service; therefore, providing an opportunity for additional personnel, specifically, a Victim Advocate and a Victim Witness Assistant to assist the Victim Witness Advocacy Unit. Despite the civil service conversion of both positions, the Case Worker continues to provide services to primary and secondary victims of domestic violence, teen dating violence, dating violence, and stalking. The Victim Advocate continues to provide services to primary and secondary victims of sexual assault as well as other types of victimizations. Both positions also provide services to victims of violations of protection order.

The core advocacy duties and responsibilities of the Victim Advocate and the Case Worker include the following for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault/abuse, dating violence, teen dating violence, stalking, and contempt charges for violations of protection order:

- Provide information about the criminal justice system and a temporary restraining order;
- Inform victims of their rights under the Victim Bill of Rights (CNMI Public Law 10-81);
- Conduct informational meetings;

- Provide information about available victim support services;
- Conduct referrals to other service providers for additional services;
- Conduct safety planning and check-ins;
- Provide emotional support; crisis/brief intervention, and options;
- Provide case updates;
- Assist victims with criminal restitution;
- Assist victims with the preparation of a victim impact statement;
- Coordinate, accompany, and provide victims with transportation services to the emergency shelter, for emergency food and clothing, court proceedings, case-related meetings, other direct service providers, welfare programs, law enforcement, and case-related medical appointments or to obtain medical assistance;
- Coordinate the removal of the victim's personal belongings from a respondent or defendant with law enforcement escort;
- Assistance with court appearances;
- Coordinate and refer victims to available child care assistance services;
- Assistance with filing Temporary Restraining Orders and the preparation of victim statements;
- Collaborate services and provide technical assistance to victims on the island of Rota and Tinian as needed;
- Notify victims of respective scheduled parole hearings and assist with the preparation of oral and/or written statements;
- Appear and accompany victims at the scheduled Board of Parole hearings as needed;
- Collaborate with the CNMI Board of Parole in preparation of scheduled parole hearings;
- Collaborate and provide assistance to the CNMI Office of Adult Probation as needed; and
- Record and maintain statistical data and other pertinent information regarding victims served.

The grant will support the salary and benefits of the Prosecutor, Victim Advocate, Victim Witness Assistant, and a Paralegal. With the supplemental support, the OAG's domestic violence and

sexual assault unit will be able to assist many other victims to ensure adequate and efficient services at every stage of the criminal justice system – such as providing legal advocacy at court hearings and offering information and referral to victims who do not have criminal cases, who are in need of services.

Victim Services (30%)

At least thirty percent (30%) of the STOP VAWA award will be allocated to non-profit, non-governmental victim service agencies/organizations, **of which at least ten percent (10%) will be used to meet the set-aside requirement to meaningfully address sexual assault.** As per guidance from OVW, the STOP VAWA grant awarded to the CNMI is considered culturally-specific in its entirety. With that being said, there is no need for ten percent (10%) of the victim services allocation to be catered towards a culturally-specific program only.

Highlighted below is a brief description of the CNMI’s non-governmental victim service provider. Also included are general, but direct services that Guma’ Esperansa provides to our community.

Karidat Social Services – Guma’ Esperansa: One of the CNMI’s non-profit, non-governmental organizations, Karidat Social Services, an affiliate of Catholic Charities, operates several programs for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence. STOP VAWA funding awarded to Karidat primarily goes to operate Guma’ Esperansa (House of Hope), the shelter for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, and human trafficking. Guma’ Esperansa provides shelter, sanctuary, counseling, and advocacy to meet the needs of victims. All services are free, confidential, and are available to victims and their children regardless of citizenship, ethnicity, gender identity, or immigration status.

The shelter provides a peaceful environment in which victims can start to rebuild their lives. Separate bedrooms, cooking, and laundry facilities are available as well as a spacious playroom for the children. It continues to operate as the only shelter for victims and their children and operates on twenty-four hours, seven days a week (24/7) basis.

Guma' Esperansa currently employs eight (8) full-time staff and one part-time including the Shelter Supervisor, In-House Counselor, and shelter workers. The In-House Counselor works flexible hours to meet the mental health needs of the victims and their children in shelter care. The Shelter Supervisor tracks the client's goals/plans to help achieve their next steps. The shelter workers divide their time among three shifts to provide direct services around the clock.

Guma' Esperansa's goal is to empower victims with the knowledge that they can survive outside of an abusive situation. Each client is different and each individual deserves an assurance that they will be treated with dedication, care, and concern, as well as being treated fairly and justly by all they come in contact with.

Guma' Esperana continually strives to live up to its mission of providing sanctuary, counseling, and advocacy to meet the needs of victims seeking assistance and help them plan for their future.

Including but not limited to:

- Temporary and long-term shelter in a safe, warm, and healing environment for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking and their children;
- Support and resources to the residents as they plan for their future;
- Information and referrals of available victim support services, especially for Orders of Protection and immigration relief for battered immigrants;
- Translation and interpreter services;
- Mental health, counseling, and safety planning to victims;
- Inform victims of their rights, in their own language, as victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking;
- Education for victims on the dynamics of the violence in their lives; and
- Records and maintains statistical data and information regarding all victims served through the shelter.

Karidat utilizes STOP VAWA Sexual Assault Services Program funding to provide specialized services to victims/survivors and secondary victims of sexual assault on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Karidat has developed services to meet the needs of the survivors of sexual assault whether it is rental assistance because a victim needs to relocate, ongoing counseling services, case management or helping them with tools to heal and improve the quality of their life. The Karidat counselor travels to Rota and Tinian to offer services and meet with survivors and secondary victims.

In addition, Karidat operates the Victim Advocacy Program and the Victim Hotline. The Victim Hotline provides direct services to victims on the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. The program is a 24-hour crisis line, that is manned by one paid staff and the Guma' Esperansa staff evenings and weekends. The Victim Hotline provides a way for victims of crime to have ready access to the justice system, victim advocacy, to social service agencies in the community, and most especially, shelter services. The Victim Advocacy Program aids with filing temporary restraining orders towards an Orders of Protection, court accompaniment, and counseling services.

Courts (5%)

At least five percent (5%) of the STOP VAWA award will be allocated to the state-local court, **of which at least ten percent (10%) will be used to meet the set-aside requirement to meaningfully address sexual assault.** A brief description of the Superior Court and its Victim Program is highlighted below:

Superior Court: The CNMI Superior Court is the Commonwealth's trial court division. The Superior Court has general jurisdiction over all civil, criminal, and juvenile matters, including all levels of trial court proceedings and serves the entire CNMI. In September 1995, Public Law 9-51 mandated the Judiciary to establish the Family Court Division (FCD) within the CNMI Superior Court. The Judiciary Administration includes the Office of the Presiding Judge, Office of the Clerk of Court, Family Court Division, Commonwealth's Recorder's Office, Accounting Services Unit, and the Office of Adult Probation. The Superior Court is headed by the Presiding Judge and staffed

by four Associate Judges. Each respective island has an assigned Associate Judge who hears all Family Court cases.

The FCD has primary jurisdiction over family legal matters, including but not limited to adoption proceedings, child support, divorce, paternity, domestic violence (temporary restraining orders), and child abuse cases. The FCD staff assists clients from the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Saipan FCD includes a Family Court Manager and a Family Court Services Specialist. In previous years, STOP VAWA funds were utilized to fund the Saipan FCD STOP VAWA Project Assistant position. Now, STOP VAWA funds will be used primarily for continuing education and training for judges and Family Court staff who handle domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence cases. It will also be used to cover office supplies and operational costs associated with administering the Superior Court and Family Court Division.

The FCD is tasked to ensure that the Superior Court is in compliance with the CNMI's Domestic and Family Prevention Act of 2000 and the STOP VAWA formula grant guidelines and conditions of award. In doing so, FCD provides forms, assistance in filling Temporary Restraining Orders ("TRO"), and makes referrals to other victim service providers. FCD staff forwards the TRO to the Family Court Judge for review. Once approved, the TRO is assigned a case number under the Family Protection docket and calendared. Then, FCD staff coordinate cases between the Clerk or Court and victim service providers. FCD staff also coordinate with law enforcement to have respondents served with their copy of the TRO filed against them and a proof of service is filed with the Clerk of Court. FCD staff keeps in contact with victim advocates, patrol units, detectives, and other entities involved in these types of cases.

Moreover, the FCD maintains an open communication with victim advocates from the Office of the Attorney General, Karidat Social Services, Rota Resource Coordinator, and Tinian Health Care Center. The FCD has also been a member of the Family Violence Task Force and has been supportive of the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence efforts to inform the public of domestic violence and sexual assault issues. Therefore, these collaborative

efforts continue to reinforce the enhancement of victim services in the criminal justice system. Overall, the STOP VAWA program is a critical funding source for the continuing education and training of judges and court personnel on the challenges in handling domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence.

Discretionary (15%)

Funds not directly allocated will be awarded to program(s) that meet the requirements and address the statutory purpose areas of the STOP VAWA grant program solicitations. These program(s) will assist the other sub-grantees in ensuring victim safety, as well as developing, enlarging, and strengthening victim service programs, and increasing offender accountability. As a discretionary component of the STOP VAWA program, and based on the implementation plan committee's assessment, the CJPA and/or along with the Supervisory Council will prioritize funding to the three agencies described. Programs funds will be distributed appropriately based on the three program needs. Other programs may be funded if funding is still available.

If for some unknown reasons that the remaining discretionary funds are not awarded, CJPA will use the discretionary funds throughout the life of the grant program to support all STOP VAWA statutory program activities in the Commonwealth. These activities will include, but not limited to support:

- A.) Technical Assistance (TA), especially and specifically to those highly recommended by OVW with priority focus training and tactics for improvement of program mission;
- B) Support direct service providers, coalitions, and task force in their fiduciary duties or advanced their knowledge and skills in their capacities;
- C) To assist local programs with the purchase of equipment, supplies, and other related needs that will help to enhanced the mission and set goals of their projects.

Community Guidance Center: The Community Guidance Center (CGC) under the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC), is the single state agency for behavioral health services. One of the programs under the Community Guidance Center in collaboration with the CNMI Family Court, Superior Court and the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence have been in efforts to implement the Ti' Che'chu' Lalâhi Program. Ti' Che'chu' Lalâhi Program addresses the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands' (CNMI) needs to have access to evidence-based treatment services which will hold men who batter accountable and initiate behavior change within the CNMI.

The CGC is in efforts to ensure that battered women or women survivors of violent relationships are empowered to maintain their recovery of healing. The CGC has made plans to implement a batterers' intervention program to reduce the pervasive, harmful, and costly health impact of violence and trauma by integrating trauma-informed approaches throughout health, behavioral health, and related systems, and addressing the behavioral health needs of people involved or at risk of involvement in the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

In September 2011, CGC coordinated a training workshop with the Domestic Abuse Intervention Program, to have local workforce participants undergo formal training to be able to facilitate the "Creating a Process of Change for Men Who Batter." The Creating a Process for Men Who Batter curriculum with cultural adaptations was responsible for providing direct counseling and case management services to offenders of domestic violence in the CNMI, as well as providing direct consultation, counseling assistance, outreach, psycho-education, and presentations to all related social services agencies. If approved, these funds will be utilized to secure a professional clinician to facilitate Ti' Che'chu' Lalâhi Program, and dispense motivational incentives for programming to decrease recidivism and reduce participant drop out.

Ti' Che'Chu' La'lâhi pilot Program Overview: 26 Weeks Total

Part I - 1st Stage Group (6 weeks) – Educational

Part II - 2nd Stage Group (week 7-26) – Group Activities

Goals:

- Immediately stop physical abuse and intimidation
- Recognize and describe how you have been harmful towards your partner and family
- Understand the harm this behavior has caused
- Develop an understanding of how you have been benefited from your behavior in the past and how you can benefit from changing your behavior now
- Work to be open and honest with group leaders and fellow group members
- Be able to identify ongoing harmful behavior
- Be able to stop comparing your current behavior to past behavior that was more harmful
- Examine what you need to do to become respectful and non-abusive
- Participate during group discussions
- Give feedback to fellow group members
- Identify what is the most helpful feedback for you to hear from others
- Work to develop empathy for your partner and make amends for harm you've caused

Since FY 2010, the CGC Substance Abuse Treatment Program clinicians have been responsible for the facilitation of the Anger Management Groups. The Anger Management Program utilized the public domain 12-week Anger Management curriculum released by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (Dr. Riley, Dr. Shopshire; 2002). The anger management curriculum which CGC is presently using is specifically designed for anger management to supplement the Drug and Alcohol Program, and not to work with people who batter. The CGC is in need of providing services for individuals who have history being violent, aggressive, battering and controlling women.

CGC, in collaboration with partnering agencies, are working together to ensure that services throughout the CNMI maintain continuity by leveraging resources and coordinate funding partnerships. CGC will continue to hold offenders/perpetrators accountable and facilitate transition towards rehabilitation of living a healthy lifestyle without violence.

Micronesian Legal Services Corporation: Micronesian Legal Services (MLSC) is a private, non-profit organization that provides free legal assistance to low income people. MLSC has been an OVW grant recipient, providing direct legal assistance under our Legal Assistance to Victims (LAV) grants. MLSC will be applying for OVW grant assistance related to family and other violence prevention projects in the future. MLSC has offices through Micronesia and has been in operation since 1971.

The Marianas Office of MLSC provides assistance for the people of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. The organization represents victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence. Services include: safety planning with victims and survivors both when they are living with abuse and after they have left or ended the relationship. The organization provides direct legal help (including counsel and advice, investigation, handling administrative cases, and representation in court matters), in a variety of civil cases, including:

- Family matters such as divorce, custody, and child support;
- Consumer matters such as debt collection defense;
- Employment such as discrimination cases and protecting against termination or disciplinary sanctions (especially when those relate to time missed for domestic violence matters);
- Immigration cases such as filing for self-petitioning VAWA spouses and children, and filing for T and U Visas;
- Housing matters, including eviction defense, and representing homeowners in mortgage foreclosure and mortgage restructuring cases; and
- Handling miscellaneous matters including helping with affidavits for benefits, preparing general or limited powers of attorney, advising about veteran's rights, and other civil legal matters.

The MLSC's focus in helping victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence is to provide holistic assistance to help the victims/survivors maintain or regain economic and familial stability. The organization tries to look at all of a

client's legal issues and offer them integrated assistance. In addition, they offer a client-centered approach that assures confidentiality and client decision-making at all stages of the process.

VIII. PROGRAM MONITORING AND EVALUATION

According to CJPA's *Notification to Sub-Grant Award*, after the program has received funding, it is their responsibility to report quarterly to their respective program managers. For STOP VAWA programs, CJPA has revised and re-evaluated the Quarterly Progress Report (QPR). All programs are required to submit the QPRs on a timely basis. The QPR includes a statistics portions and a data sheet to account for the number of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence. The statistical worksheets capture the nature of the victimization; demographic information such as age, gender, ethnicity, as well as the relationship of the victim to the offender. All programs are required to attach all purchase requisitions, receipts, and inventory with the submission of the QPR. This will allow CJPA to assure that all programs are spending the funds appropriately based on the Office of Chief Financial Officer, Financial Guidelines, and the STOP VAWA statutory purpose areas.

In addition, it is CJPA's protocol to visit all programs, to account for the entire inventory that was provided from the programs. Also, CJPA will investigate that all files containing program outcomes and financial documents are kept in a safe and secure area. During the monitoring visit, CJPA will also ensure that funds are being spent in a timely manner and that the activities that have taken place are related to the STOP VAWA statutory program purposes, as well as their goals and objectives the programs have written in their application submitted to the Supervisory Council members.