

We want to call to your attention two major programs, recently enacted by Congress, that provide new funds to expand services and which require the involvement of State agencies, Indian tribes, State Domestic Violence Coalitions, and others interested in prevention and services for victims of domestic violence. These programs are: Law Enforcement and Prosecution Grants to Reduce Violent Crimes Against Women, administered by the Department of Justice, and the Family Preservation and Support Services program, administered by DHHS. Both programs (described in detail below) require State agencies and Indian tribes administering them to conduct an inclusive, broad-based, comprehensive planning process at the State and community level.

We urge States and Indian tribes to participate in these service planning and decision-making processes; we believe the expertise and perspective of the family violence prevention and services field will be invaluable as decisions are made on how best to use these funds and design service delivery improvements.

(a) *Law Enforcement and Prosecution Grants to Reduce Violent Crimes Against Women (DoJ)*. The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), provides an opportunity to respond to violence against women in a comprehensive manner. It emphasizes the development of Federal, State and local partnerships to assure that offenders are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, that crime victims receive the services they need and the dignity they deserve, and that all parts of the criminal justice system have training and funds to respond effectively to both offenders and crime victims.

The Department of Justice is implementing a new formula grant program, which makes available \$26 million to States in FY 1995, to develop and strengthen effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies. A smaller amount of discretionary dollars are also available for grants to Indian tribes. At least 25 percent of State grant funds must be dedicated to strengthening victim services.

Of particular importance are the law enforcement and prosecution strategies that must be coordinated with strong victim services activities. This grant program, will require the development of a coordinated, comprehensive approach to bring about changes in the way the justice system responds to domestic violence and sexual assault. Such a coordinated approach will require a partnership and collaboration among the police, prosecutors, the

courts, shelter and victim service providers, and medical and mental health professionals.

In order to be eligible for funds, States must develop a plan for implementation. As a part of the planning process, they must consult with nonprofit, nongovernmental victims' services programs including sexual assault and domestic violence victim services programs. DOJ expects that States will draw into the planning process the experience of existing family violence task forces and coordinating councils such as the State Domestic Violence Coalitions.

(b) *Family Preservation and Family Support Services Program (DHHS)*. In August 1993, Congress created a new program entitled "Family Preservation and Support Services" (Title IV-B of the Social Security Act).

Family preservation services include intensive services assisting families at-risk or in crisis, particularly in cases where children are at risk of being placed out of the home. Victims of family violence and their dependents are considered at-risk or in crisis.

Family support services include community-based preventive activities designed to strengthen parents' ability to create safe, stable, and nurturing home environments that promote healthy child development. These services also include assistance to parents themselves through home visiting and activities such as drop-in center programs and parent support groups.

In FY 1994, 100 percent Federal funds were available to State child welfare agencies and Indian Tribes to develop a comprehensive five-year Child and Family Services Plan for FYs 1995-1999 (due by June 30, 1995).

To develop the service plans, most States currently are in the process of consulting with a wide range of public agencies and nonprofit private and community-based organizations that have expertise in administering services for children and families, including those with experience and expertise in family violence.

Part II. Family Violence Prevention and Services Grant Requirements

This section includes application requirements for family violence prevention and services grants for States and Indian Tribes, and is organized as follows:

Part II—Application Requirements

- A. Legislative Authority
- B. Definitions
- C. Eligibility: States
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- E. Funds Available
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A. Legislative Authority

Title III of the Child Abuse Amendments of 1984 (Pub. L. 98-457, 42 U.S.C. 10401 *et seq.*) is entitled the "Family Violence Prevention and Services Act" (the Act). The Act was first implemented in FY 1986, was reauthorized and amended in 1992 by Pub. L. 102-295, and was reauthorized and amended for fiscal years 1995 through 2000 by (Pub. L. 103-322, the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (the Crime Bill), signed into law on September 13, 1994.

The purpose of this legislation is to assist States in supporting the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of programs and projects to prevent incidents of family violence and provide immediate shelter and related assistance for victims of family violence and their dependents.

Both State and Native American Tribal grantees are required to use not less than 70 percent of the distributed funds for the purpose of providing immediate shelter and related assistance; not less than 25 percent of the distributed funds are to be used for the purpose of providing related assistance as defined in section 309(5)(A) of the Act.

B. Background

During FY 1994, 132 family violence prevention grants were made to States, Territories, and Native American Tribes; the Department also made 52 family violence prevention grant awards to nonprofit State domestic violence coalitions.

In addition, the Department has established the National Resource Center for Domestic Violence (NRC) and three Special Issue Resource Centers (SIRCs). The SIRCs are the Battered Women's Justice Project; the Resource Center on Child Custody and Protection; and the Health Resource Center on Domestic Violence. The purpose of the NRC and the SIRCs is to provide resource information, training, and technical assistance to Federal, State, and Native American agencies, local domestic violence prevention programs, and other professionals who provide services to victims of domestic violence.