

OVW Fiscal Year 2024 Electronic Service Protection Order Court Pilot Pre-Application Information Session Transcript

HANNAH PUFFER: Good afternoon, everybody. Thank you again for joining us for the Electronic Service Protection Order Court Pilot or ESPOC Pre-Application Information Session. This information session is for the FY 2024 solicitation that was posted on April 24th. Again, my name is Hannah Puffer, Grants Management Specialist with the Office on Violence Against Women. My colleagues, Moe Monagle and Hannah Katz, are also joining us. Before we begin to review the solicitation and application process, and we recommend that you follow along this solicitation as we go through today's webinar.

Application submissions for this program are due by 8:59 PM Eastern Time on June 12th and will be submitted through a two-step process. Applicants will submit the SF-424 and SF-LLL in grants.gov by June 10th, 2024, and submit a full application in the JustGrants system by June 12th, 2024. We'll be providing more information on that process later in the presentation. We recommend that everyone thoroughly read the solicitation before applying. At the end of the presentation, we will open it up to questions. However, please enter your questions in the Q&A box as they come up.

The Electronic Service Protection Order Court Pilot Program or ESPOC was authorized in the Violence Against Women Act of 2022. The program supports efforts to develop and implement programs for properly and legally serving production orders through electronic communication methods. This program is intended to modernize the service process, make the process more effective and efficient, provide for improved safety for victims, and to make protection orders enforceable as quickly as possible. Eligible applicants are limited to state or Tribal courts but are a part of a multidisciplinary partnership. We'll discuss the required partner shortly. Please note that the term "state" when referring to state courts is inclusive of the District of Columbia, Washington DC, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands and the Northern Mariana Islands. The length of this award is sixty months or five years, which includes a planning period of up to twenty-four months.

At the time of the application, the applicant that is the state or Tribal court is required to have formal partnerships with all of the following. One, a state, Tribal, or local law enforcement agency, two, a victim service provider or state or Tribal Domestic Violence Coalition, three, at least one state or Tribal court judge with expertise in domestic violence and issuing protective orders. And four, a department which has at least two individuals and is responsible for purchasing, designing and/or court case management technology and integration infrastructure. These partnerships must be demonstrated

through letters of commitment, which we will discuss in more detail later in the presentation. In the first year of the award, grantees will be required to make substantial efforts when possible, expand or develop additional partnerships. These are in addition to the four that are initially required at the time of the application.

Additional partners may include a state, Tribal, or local prosecutor's office, a provider of culturally specific services, a nonprofit or government agency with experienced providing legal assistance or legal advice to victims of domestic violence and sexual assaults, a bar association of the applicable state or Tribe. The state or Tribal association of court clerks, a state Tribal or local association of criminal defense attorneys, a judge assigned to the criminal docket of the state or Tribal court, and an additional state or Tribal court judge with expertise in domestic violence and issuing protective orders. In the first year of the award, grantees will be required to demonstrate any additional partnerships by submitting letters of commitment as deliverables.

The Office on Violence Against Women has identified four priority areas that the office will be addressing during FY 2024. The Electronic Service Protection Order Court Pilot Program will only be addressing one of these priority areas, which is the advanced equity and Tribal Sovereignty priority area. Tribal courts and courts that primarily serve a culturally specific and underserved population are encouraged to apply under this solicitation. As we discussed, this program supports efforts to develop and implement programs for properly and legally serving protection orders through electronic communication methods. The specific activities that will be funded include developing and implementing a program to serve protection orders through electronic means, in order to, one, modernize the service process and make the process more effective and efficient, two, provide improved safety for victims, and three, make protection orders as enforceable as quickly as possible. Additionally, funds should be used to develop best practices related to electronic service and protection orders, ensure that the program complies with due process requirements, and other required procedures and implement any technology needed to carry out the program.

As part of the pilot project, grantees will be required to engage in various collaborative activities. This includes working closely with OVW sponsored TA providers for a planning period of up to 24 months, meeting regularly with multidisciplinary partnership members to discuss the project, making substantial efforts to expand partnerships, submitting semiannual performance reports, and attending new grantee orientation. Grantees will also be required to collaborate with TA providers to develop two initial reports. The first report will be submitted within the first two years of the award and should detail the grantees implementation plan. The second report will be submitted after the first two years. This report should include reflections on the overall project and

document the viability, cost, service statistics, challenges, analysis of the technology used, analysis of any legal or due process issues resulting from electronic services and best practices for implementing a program and similar committees. The solicitation lists specific activities that are outside of the scope of ESPOC and should not be supported by the program's funding. These activities include research projects, direct victim assistance, the development of a program for electronic service of orders other than orders and protection. The development or improvement of a process to serve orders of protection that is not relevant to electronic service. And activities solely related to compliance, monitoring, and the enforcement of production orders that are not served electronically.

Applications that are proposed activities that are deemed to be substantially out of scope may receive a reduction in points during the review process or maybe eliminated from consideration entirely. The grant award period is sixty months or five years. Budget must reflect 60 months of project activity and the total estimated funding on the SF-424 must reflect 60 months. We anticipate the award period will start on October 1st, 2024. Awards under this program will be made for up to \$1,500,000. Budgets may be submitted as a Word document or Excel. However, all required information and budget categories must be provided. You can find a sample budget starting on page 32 of the solicitation.

As a reminder, only eligible applicants for ESPOC are state or Tribal courts that are a part of a multidisciplinary partnership with the four required partners. And as we discussed those required partners, our law enforcement and victim service provider, a judge with expertise in domestic violence and issuing protective orders, and the department responsible for court case management technology. Pursuant to statute funding may be awarded to a diverse group of applicants when possible. This includes a state court that serves a population of at least one million individuals, a state court that serves a state that is among the seven states with the lowest population density. And according to the US Census Bureau, these states are Alaska, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, New Mexico, and Idaho. A state court that serves a state that is among the seven states with the highest population density. And again, according to the US Census Bureau, these states are the District of Columbia, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Puerto Rico, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Maryland, a court that uses an integrated statewide case management system, a court that uses a standalone case management system, a Tribal Court, and a court that primarily serves a culturally specific and underserved population. These factors will be taken into consideration during the application review process. And I will now turn it over to my colleague Moe Monagle.

MOE MONAGLE: Thanks, Hannah. So, I'm going to go over the application requirements. As stated in the solicitation, applicants will be required to submit multiple items as part of the application. The Proposal Narrative, which has a 20-page limit, should respond to the prompts outlined in the solicitation. The Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative should include expenses that reflect the activities outlined in the Proposal Narrative. Additionally, budgets must include funds to attend the OVW-sponsored training and technical assistance in the amount of \$30,000 or \$35,000 for applicants located in the territories, Hawaii, or the State of Alaska.

Letters of commitment from the required partners described earlier should also be included as attachments with the application in JustGrants. The proposal abstract will be entered in a text box in JustGrants and should not be more than the equivalent of two pages double spaced. Applicants are strongly encouraged, but not required, to use the template provided in the solicitation for the abstract. This template can be found on page 14 of the solicitation. Following items are required components that must be completed and submitted in JustGrants. Each applicant must respond to the 11 questions in the Pre-Award Risk Assessment by completing it directly in JustGrants. The questions may be found on page 42 in the solicitation. Additionally, applicants are required to complete the applicant questionnaire in JustGrants. Those questions may be found on page 45 in the solicitation. Applicants should provide accurate answers to all the questions listed. And finally, the Summary Data Sheet is also required to be completed directly in JustGrants. These questions may be found at the end of the solicitation on page 47.

The Proposal Narrative includes several questions and should be responded to unless clearly marked if applicable. Applicants will upload the proposal narrative as an attachment in JustGrants. Please note the proposal narrative should include three sections, the Purpose of the Proposal, What Will Be Done, and Who Will Implement the proposal. Each section of the proposal narrative should include a header and responses to the specific criteria listed in each section. Please read the specific requirements of the Proposal Narrative on page 15 of the solicitation. The Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative will be submitted as attachments in JustGrants. Please see the sample budget located on page 32 of the solicitation.

A few things to consider when developing your budgets. Unless otherwise stated in a Letter of Commitment, are all of your project partners compensated? Do you have adequate funds to address accessibility? This may include funds to support access for individuals with disabilities and individuals who are Deaf and hard of hearing, as well as funds to support language access, for individuals with limited English proficiency. If you are not requesting funds for accessibility, you are required to include a statement in the

budget of other resources you have available to ensure meaningful access for persons with disabilities, those who are Deaf and hard of hearing, or those with limited English proficiency. The budget should be for the entire 60-month period, not divided by year. Applicants are required to submit a letter of commitment from each of your required partners. The Letters of Commitments must be signed and dated by the authorized representative of the proposed partner organizations. LOCs missing signatures may result in point deduction or removal of consideration. The solicitation provides detailed guidance on what a Letter of Commitment should include. Please see page 19 in the solicitation for more information. And if you have questions about Letters of Commitment, you may contact OVW staff at the email listed which is ovw.electronicsservice@usdoj.gov.

OVW's Grants Financial Management Division, or GFMD, is involved in reviewing applications. GFMD reviews the following information required with all applications. In the Pre-Award Risk Assessment, which is submitted directly in JustGrants, there are 11 questions with multiple parts to each question. The common issues, or information not provided in the Risk Assessment include: a brief list of policies and procedures that were not provided, the budget versus actual process were not provided, the applicant's record retention policy not provided, or the individual primarily responsible for fiscal and administrative oversight, knowledgeable and regulations. The Applicant Questionnaire which can be found on page 45 of the solicitation is also submitted online by JustGrants. We would ask applicants to provide basic information about the organization applying for funding.

A Summary Data Sheet, which requests information related to applicants' single audit, the Summary Audit Sheet, and number six, request a statement related to the IRS three-step safe-harbor procedure, and disclosure process related to executive compensation. Applicants must load the required documents as budget financial attachments in JustGrants. There is a sample disclosure letter available in the solicitation. Please review all questions for the Pre-Award Risk Assessment, Applicant Questionnaire, and summary data to ensure you have provided the requested information.

We want to be sure to highlight some available resources that should be used as you're creating a budget to be submitted with the application. The links are provided in the PowerPoint. GFMD has worked to develop detailed webinar presentation on how to assist applicants in developing a budget to be submitted with their OVW applications. You want to help reduce any challenges that you may face with the budget, and make it clear what they look for when they review your budget. This webinar provides some insight as to what OVW financial staff considers during their review. The webinar may

be found under the budget information section and the OVW Resources for Applicants page.

Next is the uniform guidance which may be found at CRF 200. Organizations should work directly with their finance staff, your accountant, or an auditor to ensure compliance with the requirements in 2 CFR Part 200. Another resource is the Department of Justice Financial Guide, as well as the Program Specific Solicitation.

We know this can be a lot of information to process. If you have any questions about the GFMD information discussed, please feel free to contact to GFMD help desk directly at 1-888-514-8556, or by email at ovw.gfmd@usdoj.gov. And now, I'm going to turn it over to my colleague, Hannah Katz, who's going to go over the application process.

HANNAH KATZ: Thanks, Moe. When you are ready to apply, applicants may find this funding opportunity on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by using the assistance listing number, which is 16.062. The [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) opportunity number, which is listed on your screen, O-OVW-2024-172055. Or the title of the solicitation. All of these can be found on the cover page of the solicitation.

The FY 2024 application submission process is a two-step process. Application materials will be submitted in [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and in JustGrants. We recommend starting the application process even just the registration process for [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and JustGrants as soon as possible, especially if you're unfamiliar with the JustGrants system. Please read the solicitation carefully to understand all steps required to submit an application, and the time to--the time required to complete those steps. Some steps such as obtaining a Unique Entity Identifier, or UEI number, or registering with the System for Award Management, or SAM for short, or [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) may take several days to complete. We recommend applicants begin these processes as soon as possible, but no later than the dates suggested in the solicitation. Applicants must complete the Application for Federal Assistance or SF-424 in [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). The specific information required for this step is included in the Application for Federal Assistance section of the solicitation. This information is found on page 13 of the solicitation. Applicants must also complete and submit the disclosure of lobbying activities or SF-LLL in [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). After submitting these forms, the applicant will receive an email notification from JustGrants to complete the rest of the application in JustGrants. If the applicant is a new user in JustGrants, the email will include instructions on registering. Applicants will submit the full application including attachments in JustGrants. Applicants will enter some application information directly into text boxes in the system, fill out web-based forms, and upload some documents as attachments.

We've included the following major elements of the application as examples of what applicants will submit in JustGrants. They include the Proposal Abstract, which will be entered in a text box in JustGrants. The Summary Data Sheet, which is completed as a survey in JustGrants. The Applicant Questionnaire, which is also completed as a survey in JustGrants. The Proposal Narrative, Budget Worksheet, and Narrative, and Letters of Commitment will all be uploaded as attachments in JustGrants. In addition to these major elements, other documentation will be required for all applications or when applicable.

Please read the solicitation carefully for a full description of all items required. The application checklist can be found on page 27 of the solicitation. In JustGrants, each applying entity will have an assigned Entity Administrator who is responsible for managing entity-level information and assigning roles in the system. The Entity Administrator is also the E-Biz Point of Contact or POC designated in SAM.gov. Within 24 hours of JustGrants receiving your application from grants.gov, the user submitting the application in Grants.gov and the SAM E-Biz POC will receive an email to register for a JustGrants account. The email is from DOJ's secure user management system or DIAMD, D-I-A-M-D, and will include instructions on how to create an account. To ensure that these emails are not flagged as spam, we recommend adding the email address, diamd-noreply@usdoj.gov to your trusted sender list in your email settings. The E-Biz POC at the applicant organization serves as the Entity Administrator and must log in to JustGrants to confirm the entity's profile and add users. The user submitting the application in Grants.gov serves as the application submitter. Within minutes of completing your JustGrants account registration, the application submitter, and the E-Biz POC or Entity Administrator users will receive an email from JustGrants with a link to the application started in Grants.gov.

Alternatively, the Applicant Submitter can log in to JustGrants and locate your pending application's numeric digits, excluding grant of the grants.gov tracking number in your task list on the home or landing page of JustGrants. The Entity Administrator will need to log in to JustGrants to review the authorized representatives associated with the Entity. If an authorized representative needs to be invited, the Entity Administrator will need to invite the individual to receive a JustGrants account. Note that an organization can have more than one authorized representative, as long as those individuals have documented authority to sign an agreement with the federal government. These actions are required before an application can be submitted.

Within minutes of being invited to be an authorized representative, the individual will receive an email from diamd-noreply@usdoj.gov with instructions on how to create an account in DOJ's secure user management system. Once the authorized representative

receives the email and completes the steps to create an account, that authorized representative will be available in JustGrants. The Application Submitter will need to complete the application by entering data into web-based forms, uploading attachments, and accepting assurances and certifications. The Application Submitter will also need to select the authorized representative or representatives for your organization. Once all sections are completed, the Application Submitter will submit the application. Upon successful submission of an application, the Application Submitter, Entity Administrator, and Authorized Representative will all receive an email from JustGrants confirming submission of the application.

We strongly encourage all applicants to begin the application submission process at least 48 hours before each deadline. That is Grants.gov or JustGrants deadline as applicable. Failure to do so may result in missing the deadline and therefore not being considered for funding. The Department of Justice has made a collection of self-guided training resources, including training and a Virtual Q&A session on Application Submission. These resource--these resources are available at the website displayed on this slide, that is justicegrants.usdoj/training-resources/justgrants-training/grants-management-lifecycle.

Recipients of OVW funds must comply with applicable federal civil rights laws, which among other things prohibit recipients from discriminating on the basis of national origin and disability. This includes taking reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to grantees programs and activities for individuals with disabilities, deaf individuals, and persons with limited English proficiency. Applicants must include funds or other resources in their budget to support activities to ensure access for individuals with disabilities, Deaf or hard of hearing individuals, and persons with limited English proficiency.

Again, applications are due on June 12th, 2024, and must be submitted by 8:59 PM Eastern Time. Applications submitted after this time, after 8:59 PM Eastern Time on June 12th, 2024, will not be considered for funding. Please carefully review the "How to Apply" and submission dates and time section for applicant actions with required deadlines and for OVW's policy on late submissions. This important information starts on page 21 of the solicitation. As a reminder, we encourage submission of all application components at least 48 hours before each deadline. This will enable applicants to receive notice of a failed submission and provide an opportunity to correct the error before the applicable deadline.

If you have any programmatic questions after reviewing the solicitation in full, you may contact OVW staff by emailing ovw.electronicsservice@usdoj.gov or by calling OVW at

202-307-6026. If you have financial questions, please contact the OVW Grants Financial Management Division by emailing ovw.gfmd@usdoj.gov or by calling OVW at 202-307-6026. If you need technical assistance with Grants.gov, please contact the grants.gov Applicant Support line by emailing support@grants.gov or by calling 800-518-4726. Finally, if you need technical assistance with JustGrants, please contact OVW JustGrants Support by emailing ovw.justgrantssupport@usdoj.gov or by calling 866-655-4482.