

## 2024 STATE OF ARKANSAS SAS PROGRAM FORMULA GRANT APPLICATION

### PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

#### General Information

**1) An overview of the sexual assault services currently available to victims of sexual assault, including women, men, and children throughout the state or territory.**

The following sexual assault services are currently available to adult, youth, and child victims of sexual assault in Arkansas –

- 24-hour hotline services providing crisis intervention, direct services, and referrals.
- Accompaniment and advocacy through the medical, criminal justice, and social support systems.
- Crisis intervention, short-term individual and/or group support services, and comprehensive service coordination and supervision to assist sexual assault survivors and their families or household members.
- Information and referral to services that will assist the survivor and family or household member.
- Community-based and culturally specific services and support mechanisms for underserved communities.
- Information sharing and outreach to communities about available services.
- Collaboration among centers across the state to ensure that victims can receive services within their communities.

**2) An overview of the current state or territory efforts in place to address sexual assault.**

- a. Stand-alone rape crisis centers – 6
- b. Dual domestic violence and sexual assault programs – 13
- c. Multi-service programs that include sexual assault services – 9

DFA-IGS continues its efforts to identify additional sexual assault services providers within the state who are not currently receiving funding through DFA-IGS to discuss funding options and to identify those service providers working with underserved populations.

**3) A brief description of the process the state or territory uses to make its subgrant awards (e.g., formula-based or competitive awards).**

DFA-IGS passes SAS Formula Program funds through to the Arkansas Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ACASA). ACASA utilizes a competitive process that issues awards based on the merit of the application, past performance, and a commitment to serving sexual assault survivors. ACASA issues a request for proposals to its membership with a set maximum amount of funds per application that is identified in the Notice of Available Funds.

Proposals are submitted and reviewed by a review committee established by ACASA. The applications are scored using a rubric, with higher-scoring applications being given funding preference. The review committee also makes recommendations for funding based on the need for services within the applicant's service delivery area.

**4) An explanation of how funding under the SAS Formula Program complements the state/territory STOP Implementation Plan.**

After the State of Arkansas's 2022-2025 STOP Implementation Plan was approved, the DFA-IGS Grant Advisory Board approved the STOP Implementation Plan as the State of Arkansas' Victim Services Plan. By adopting the STOP Implementation Plan as the state's Victim Services Plan, the advisory board ensured that all other victim centered (VOCA, SAS, & FVPSA) funding received by the state would be leveraged to work with STOP funding to address the goals outlined in the STOP Implementation Plan. As a member of the Implementation Planning Committee, ACASA was instrumental in helping develop the plan and ensure that the needs of sexual assault survivors were included in the plan.

SAS funding will be leveraged with VOCA, STOP, and FVPSA funding to address the needs of survivors across the state as well as the goals of the State of Arkansas' Victim Services Plan. Each goal is focused on ensuring that victims across the state have access to needed services and support that will allow them to overcome their victimization. Below are the goals of the STOP Implementation/Victim Services Plan and how SAS Formula Program funding will be utilized to help meet each goal.

**Goal 1.1 – Increase awareness of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Dating Violence and those organizations that provide services to assist survivors within Arkansas.**

SAS funding is utilized to support a Sexual Assault Advocate within the funded organizations. Along with providing advocacy services on behalf of sexual assault survivors, the advocate is also out within their community informing the public about the impact of sexual assault on survivors and the community. Along with increasing awareness during these meetings, the advocate can share information about the services provided by their organization and help identify victims that might not have known about the available services for victims of sexual assault.

**Goal 1.2 – Continue to expand services for culturally specific and underserved populations across the State of Arkansas.**

SAS funding continues to be utilized to provide services to underserved communities across the state. Underserved communities currently served by SAS-funded programs include rural populations, Latino populations, Asian populations, African American populations, Marshallese populations, LGBTQI+ populations, persons with disabilities, and the elderly.

**Goal 1.3 – To improve access to Mental Health Services and/or supports for victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Dating Violence within the State of Arkansas.**

SAS funding will be leveraged with VOCA, FVPSA, and STOP funding to provide survivors of sexual assault with the mental health services needed to overcome their victimization. SAS-funded advocates lead support groups or group counseling sessions for survivors to provide them with the tools needed to allow them to get their life back to normal as possible. Funded agencies can also make referrals to mental health professionals if needed.

**5) A detailed description of procedures to be used by the state or territory to ensure equitable distribution of grants and grant funds within the state or territory and between urban and rural areas.**

Before the release of the Request for Applications (RFA), DFA-IGS reviews ACASA's RFA application process. The process is reviewed for the following:

- The audience that is expected to respond to the RFA.
- The process appears to be fair and equitable for the intended applicant populations.
- The processes are clear and understandable for the applicant population.

If there are any questions or concerns, DFA-IGS works with ACASA to resolve all questions and matters of concern.

**Meaningful Involvement in Developing the Application**

**1) The process and communication method used by the state or territory to involve the sexual assault coalition and representatives from underserved communities.**

The DFA-IGS Grant Advisory Board is a group of stakeholders that meets to advise DFA-IGS on the needs of the various communities represented by members of the board. The DFA-IGS Grant Advisory Board includes representatives from ACASA and other organizations that serve various underserved communities across the state, including victims with disabilities, African Americans, and rural communities. The DFA-IGS Grant Advisory Board meets

quarterly to discuss the needs of survivors across Arkansas and review applications and assist in making funding decisions.

Along with being involved with the DFA-IGS Grant Advisory Board, ACASA is in constant communication with DFA-IGS throughout the year. Leaders from ACASA and DFA-IGS regularly attend conferences together and work together to develop plans that will build the capacity of victim service providers in Arkansas, including those that receive SAS funding. This working relationship leads to constant communication about the needs of sexual assault victims in Arkansas.

**2) The specific underserved communities the state or territory included in the application process and methods used to reach out to and communicate with these communities.**

Specific underserved communities in Arkansas which were included in the application process include victims from minority populations, particularly the African American and Latino communities, victims from rural communities, and victims from the D/deaf and disabled community.

Representatives from programs serving these underserved communities actively serve on the DFA-IGS Grant Advisory Board and provide needed insight into the needs of sexual assault survivors within these communities. ACASA also passes along information it has learned from its meetings with underserved populations to DFA-IGS to ensure that the needs of those communities are being addressed in the decision-making process. Methods used to reach out to these entities include quarterly Advisory Board meetings and other meetings and discussions that are deemed appropriate.

**3) The number of times the state or territory has met with its coalition and representatives from underserved communities to discuss and develop this application, and a brief description of those meetings.**

DFA-IGS met with ACASA and representatives from underserved communities multiple times to develop this application and to address other questions concerning victim services. Those

meetings included significant discussions about the gaps in services, and where and how it is more appropriate to subgrant SAS funding.

- 4) Whether the coalition and representatives from underserved communities were provided an opportunity to review this application and provide comment, before its submission.**

A draft of this application was sent to the coalition and representatives for review and comment prior to submission.

- 5) How the state or territory has incorporated feedback and input from the coalition and representatives from underserved communities into this application.**

Since DFA-IGS, ACASA, and representatives from underserved populations meet on a regular basis, their comments and preferences are incorporated into this document. Feedback that was provided includes experiences of underserved communities, and feedback about identified barriers that were experienced while delivering services to survivors, as well as barriers for survivors in accessing services.

### **Meaningful Involvement in Implementing the Plans**

- 1) How the state or territory will work with the coalition and representatives for underserved communities to design a plan for distributing the subgrant funds.**

Arkansas is a rural state that is comprised of 75 counties. In 45 counties there is an average of 32 persons per square mile. Providing adequate service to rural populations continues to be a challenge due to the extended distances in many service areas. To ensure equitable SAS formula funding, ACASA has set a maximum amount of funding for each applicant. This opens the door to fund more service providers at an equitable rate, especially in the rural isolated areas of the state.

As Arkansas is a vastly rural state, most SAS-funded programs serve remote areas of the state. Programs funded with SAS funding currently have a service area of at least three

counties, with most programs serving a five-county area. Programs that identify SAS priority areas in their application as areas of focus are scored higher than those that do not. Over the past several years, those priority areas have been to:

- Support rape crisis centers by providing direct intervention and related assistance.
- Support dual programs that provide sexual assault and domestic violence services to enhance their provision of direct intervention and related assistance tailored for victims of sexual assault.
- Retain core services for victims of sexual assault.
- Increase support for underserved populations.

**2) The specific underserved communities the state or territory anticipates including in the implementation process.**

The underserved communities that are included in the victim services plan process are survivors from rural communities, survivors with disabilities, African Americans, Marshallese, and Latino survivors. During the grant period, additional efforts will be made to expand services to the previously identified communities while adding the LGBTQI+, elderly, and other underserved communities.

**3) The methods that will be used to reach out to the underserved communities to ensure their active participation in the implementation of the plans to administer the SAS Formula Program funds.**

Methods that will be utilized to reach out to underserved communities include:

- Continued coordination with SAS providers which are members of the coalition.
- Continued coordination with known providers of SAS services to under-served victims.
- Information sharing between service providers to help identify the needs of underserved communities.
- Increased coordination with law enforcement.

**4) The role of the state coalition and representatives from underserved communities in the implementation of the plans to administer the program, such as review of solicitations, outreach to potential applicants, and assistance with peer review.**

DFA-IGS continues to utilize the expertise of ACASA and other organizations representing underserved populations in the implementation of service provision to victims of sexual assault. ACASA continues to play a vital role in the decision-making and delivery of services to victims of sexual assault in the State of Arkansas.

ACASA's role in implementing the plan presented in this application includes:

- Developing and releasing the Request for Applications (RFA) for SAS funds.
- Developing a scoring rubric for application review and gathering a committee to review received applications.
- Awarding SAS funding to subgrant recipients.
- Reviewing and processing monthly payments for SAS reimbursement requests from subrecipients.
- Providing technical assistance and compliance oversight of SAS subrecipients.
- Gathering quarterly and annual performance reports from SAS subrecipients.

DFA-IGS will continue to look to representatives from underserved communities to provide information concerning the needs of the community. The representatives will also be encouraged to identify service providers that are serving their communities across the state. The identification of these service providers will allow DFA-IGS an opportunity to further expand SAS funding in underserved communities.





STATE OF ARKANSAS  
**Department of Finance  
and Administration**

**Office of Intergovernmental Services**

1515 West Seventh Street, Suite 400

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Little Rock, Arkansas, 72203-8031

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<https://www.dfa.arkansas.gov/intergovernmental-services>

May 31, 2024

Director Rosie Hidalgo  
Office on Violence Against Women  
U.S. Department of Justice  
145 N Street, NE  
Suite 10 W  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Director Hidalgo:

This letter serves to provide assurance that the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration will meaningfully engage with and include participation from the state's sexual assault coalition and representatives from underserved communities in the implementation of the state's plans to administer the Sexual Assault Services Formula Program.

Specifically, the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration assures that:

It actively meets with and solicits input from the state's sexual assault coalition and the following representatives from underserved communities to assist with implementing the state's plans for SAS Formula Program funds.

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| - Arkansas Coalition Against Sexual Assault   | Sexual Assault Victims            |
| - U of A – Partners for Inclusive Communities | Survivors with Disabilities       |
| - Women's Council on African American Affairs | African American & Latino Victims |

Sincerely,

Doris Smith  
Administrator

Cc: Debbie Bousquet, Assistant Administrator  
Brian Lawson, Grants Manager



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**INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT**

The Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) does not have a federally approved indirect cost rate agreement. As such, DFA does not intend to use the de minimis indirect cost rate for this application.



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May 31, 2024

Director Rosie Hidalgo  
Office on Violence Against Women  
U.S. Department of Justice  
145 N Street, NE  
Suite 10 W  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Director Hidalgo:

The Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration certifies that any funds received through the Sexual Assault Services Formula Program will be used to supplement, not supplant, existing non-federal funds that otherwise would be available for activities under the award. The Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration understands that supplanting violations can result in a range of penalties, including suspension of future funds under this program, suspension or debarment from federal grants, recoupment of monies provided under this grant, and civil and/or criminal penalties.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Doris Smith'.

Doris Smith  
Administrator

Cc: Debbie Bousquet, Assistant Administrator  
Brian Lawson, Grants Manager



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## **Acknowledgement of Notice of Statutory Requirement to Comply with the Confidentiality and Privacy Provisions of the Violence Against Women Act, as Amended**

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Under section 40002(b)(2) of the Violence Against Women Act, as amended (34 U.S.C. 12291(b)(2)), grantees and subgrantees with funding from the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) are required to meet the following terms with regard to nondisclosure of confidential or private information and to document their compliance. By signature on this form, applicants for grants from OVW are acknowledging that that they have notice that, if awarded funds, they will be required to comply with this provision, and will mandate that subgrantees, if any, comply with this provision, and will create and maintain documentation of compliance, such as policies and procedures for release of victim information, and will mandate that subgrantees, if any, will do so as well.

### **(A) In general**

In order to ensure the safety of adult, youth, and child victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, and their families, grantees and subgrantees under this subchapter shall protect the confidentiality and privacy of persons receiving services.

### **(B) Nondisclosure**

Subject to subparagraphs (C) and (D), grantees and subgrantees shall not—

(i) disclose, reveal, or release any personally identifying information or individual information collected in connection with services requested, utilized, or denied through grantees' and subgrantees' programs, regardless of whether the information has been encoded, encrypted, hashed, or otherwise protected; or

(ii) disclose, reveal, or release individual client information without the informed, written, reasonably time-limited consent of the person (or in the case of an unemancipated minor, the minor and the parent or guardian or in the case of legal incapacity, a court-appointed guardian) about whom information is sought, whether for this program or any other Federal, State, tribal, or territorial grant program, except that consent for release may not be given by the abuser of the minor, incapacitated person, or the abuser of the other parent of the minor.

If a minor or a person with a legally appointed guardian is permitted by law to receive services without the parent's or guardian's consent, the minor or person with a guardian may release information without additional consent.

**(C) Release**

If release of information described in subparagraph (B) is compelled by statutory or court mandate—

(i) grantees and subgrantees shall make reasonable attempts to provide notice to victims affected by the disclosure of information; and

(ii) grantees and subgrantees shall take steps necessary to protect the privacy and safety of the persons affected by the release of the information.

**(D) Information sharing**

(i) Grantees and subgrantees may share—

(I) nonpersonally identifying data in the aggregate regarding services to their clients and nonpersonally identifying demographic information in order to comply with Federal, State, tribal, or territorial reporting, evaluation, or data collection requirements;

(II) court-generated information and law enforcement-generated information contained in secure, governmental registries for protection order enforcement purposes; and

(III) law enforcement-generated and prosecution-generated information necessary for law enforcement and prosecution purposes.

(ii) In no circumstances may—

(I) an adult, youth, or child victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking be required to provide a consent to release his or her personally identifying information as a condition of eligibility for the services provided by the grantee or subgrantee;

(II) any personally identifying information be shared in order to comply with Federal, tribal, or State reporting, evaluation, or data collection requirements, whether for this program or any other Federal, tribal, or State grant program.

**(E) Statutorily mandated reports of abuse or neglect**

Nothing in this section prohibits a grantee or subgrantee from reporting suspected abuse or neglect, as those terms are defined and specifically mandated by the State or tribe involved.

**(F) Oversight**

Nothing in this paragraph shall prevent the Attorney General from disclosing grant activities authorized in this Act to the chairman and ranking members of the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate exercising Congressional oversight authority. All disclosures shall protect confidentiality and omit personally identifying information, including location information about individuals.

**(G) Confidentiality assessment and assurances**

Grantees and subgrantees must document their compliance with the confidentiality and privacy provisions required under this section.

**(H) Death of the party whose privacy had been protected**

In the event of the death of any victim whose confidentiality and privacy is required to be protected under this subsection, grantees and subgrantees may share personally identifying

information or individual information that is collected about deceased victims being sought for a fatality review to the extent permitted by their jurisdiction's law and only if the following conditions are met:

(i) The underlying objectives of the fatality review are to prevent future deaths, enhance victim safety, and increase offender accountability.

(ii) The fatality review includes policies and protocols to protect identifying information, including identifying information about the victim's children, from further release outside the fatality review team.

(iii) The grantee or subgrantee makes a reasonable effort to get a release from the victim's personal representative (if one has been appointed) and from any surviving minor children or the guardian of such children (but not if the guardian is the abuser of the deceased parent), if the children are not capable of knowingly consenting.

(iv) The information released is limited to that which is necessary for the purposes of the fatality review.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby acknowledge that the applicant has received notice that if awarded funding they will comply with the above statutory requirements. This acknowledgement shall be treated as a material representation of fact upon which the Department of Justice will rely if it determines to award the covered transaction, grant, or cooperative agreement.

Doris Smith

Administrator

Typed Name of Authorized Representative

Title

Telephone Number (501) 682-5242



6/4/24

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date Signed

Arkansas Department of Finance & Administration

Agency Name