Family Violence Prevention Services Act (FVPSA)

FVPSA

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Family Violence Prevention and Services Act funds (FVPSA) support programs that prevent incidents of family violence, domestic violence and dating violence. FVPSA Programs provide immediate shelter, supportive services and access to community-based programs for victims of family violence, domestic violence, or dating violence as well as for their dependents. States must provide specialized services to underserved populations and victims who are members of racial and ethnic minority populations. Special emphasis is given to the support of community-based projects with demonstrated effectiveness.

Shelter Programs must provide the following nine (9) core components:

- Safe confidential shelter
- 24-hour crisis-line
- Counseling
- Advocacy and supportive services
- Transportation
- Community education
- Referral
- Follow-up
- Specialized services to children and to underserved populations

See FVPSA Legislative Authority

Eligibility

Agencies must be operated by a public or nonprofit agency, or a combination of such agencies. FVPSA funds are granted to programs to increase public awareness about domestic violence and its impact on families and support programs for the prevention of family violence, provide immediate shelter and related assistance to victims of family violence and their dependents, and provide training and technical assistance to family violence personnel in states, local public agencies (including law enforcement agencies, courts, social service agencies, and health care professionals), and non-profit private organizations.

These programs include, but are not limited to:

- domestic abuse programs
- domestic abuse shelters
- other community-based victim coalitions.

Confidential Location Federal guidelines require that the address or location of the shelter will not be made public except with written authorization of the person(s) responsible for operation of the shelter.

Purpose

The purpose of FVPSA funding is:

1. to assist nonprofit organizations, local public agencies, approved partnerships, and faith-based organizations in supporting the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of programs and projects to prevent incidents of family violence, domestic violence, and dating violence;
2. to provide immediate shelter, supportive services, and access to community-based programs for adult and youth victims of family violence, domestic violence, or dating violence, and their dependents; and
3. to provide specialized services for children exposed to family violence, domestic violence or dating violence, underserved populations, and victims who are members of racial and ethnic minority populations.

Family Violence and Protection Act Definitions

The following definitions are from the Family Violence and Prevention Act, P.L. 98-457, 42 USC 10401 sec. 309, as amended in 1992 by P.L. 102-295, and as amended in 1994 by P.L. 103-322 and as outlined in the FVPSA Final Rule that became effective January 3, 2017.

Dating violence means violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim and where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors: The length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. This part of the definition reflects the definition also found in Section 40002(a) of VAWA (as amended), 42 U.S.C. 13925(a), as required by FVPSA.

Dating violence also includes but is not limited to the physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional violence within a dating relationship, including stalking. It can happen in person or electronically, and may involve financial abuse or other forms of manipulation which may occur between a current or former dating partner regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

Domestic violence means felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction. This definition also reflects the statutory definition of ''domestic violence'' found in Section 40002(a) of VAWA (as amended), 42 U.S.C. 13925(a). This definition also includes but is not limited to criminal or non-criminal acts constituting intimidation, control, coercion and coercive control, emotional and psychological abuse and behavior, expressive and psychological aggression, financial abuse, harassment, tormenting behavior, disturbing or alarming behavior, and additional acts recognized in other Federal, Tribal State, and local laws as well as acts in other Federal regulatory or sub- regulatory guidance. This definition is not intended to be interpreted more restrictively than FVPSA and VAWA but rather to be inclusive of other, more expansive definitions. The definition applies to individuals and relationships regardless of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

Family violence means any act or threatened act of violence, including any forceful detention of an individual, that results or threatens to result in physical injury and is committed by a person against another individual, to or with whom such person is related by blood or marriage, or is or was otherwise legally related, or is or was lawfully residing.

Personally identifying information (PII) or personal information is individually identifying information for or about an individual including information likely to disclose the location of a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, regardless of whether the information is encoded, encrypted, hashed, or otherwise protected, including, a first and last name; a home or other physical address; contact

information (including a postal, email or Internet protocol address, or telephone or facsimile number); a social security number, driver license number, passport number, or student identification number; and any other information, including date of birth, racial or ethnic background, or religious affiliation, that would serve to identify any individual.

Primary prevention means strategies, policies, and programs to stop both first- time perpetration and first-time victimization. Primary prevention is stopping domestic and dating violence before they occur. Primary prevention includes, but is not limited to: School- based violence prevention curricula, programs aimed at mitigating the effects on children of witnessing domestic or dating violence, community campaigns designed to alter norms and values conducive to domestic or dating violence, worksite prevention programs, and training and education in parenting skills and self-esteem enhancement.

Primary-purpose domestic violence service provider, for the term only as it appears in the definition of State Domestic Violence Coalition, means an entity that operates a project of demonstrated effectiveness carried out by a nonprofit, nongovernmental, private entity, Tribe, or Tribal organization, that has as its project's primary-purpose the operation of shelters and supportive services for victims of domestic violence and their dependents; or has as its project's primary purpose counseling, advocacy, or self-help services to victims of domestic violence.

Territorial Domestic Violence Coalitions may include government-operated domestic violence projects as primary-purpose domestic violence service providers for complying with the membership requirement, provided that Territorial Coalitions can document providing training, technical assistance, and capacity-building of community-based and privately operated projects to provide shelter and supportive services to victims of family, domestic, or dating violence, with the intention of recruiting such projects as members once they are sustainable as primary- purpose domestic violence service providers. Secondary prevention is identifying risk factors or problems that may lead to future family, domestic, or dating violence, and taking the necessary actions to eliminate the risk factors and the potential problem, and may include, but are not limited to, healing services for children and youth who have been exposed to domestic or dating violence, home visiting programs for high-risk families, and screening programs in health care settings.

Shelter means the provision of temporary refuge in conjunction with supportive services in compliance with applicable State or Tribal law or regulations governing the provision, on a regular basis, of shelter, safe homes, meals, and supportive services to victims of family violence, domestic violence, or dating violence, and their dependents.

State and Tribal law governing the provision of shelter and supportive services on a regular basis is interpreted by ACF to mean, for example, the laws and regulations applicable to zoning, fire safety, and other regular safety, and operational requirements, including State, Tribal, or local regulatory standards for certifying domestic violence advocates who work in shelter. This definition also includes emergency shelter and immediate shelter, which may include housing provision, rental subsidies, temporary refuge, or lodging in properties that could be individual units for families and individuals (such as apartments) in multiple locations around a local jurisdiction, Tribe/reservation, or State; such properties are not required to be owned, operated, or leased by the program.

Temporary refuge includes a residential service, including shelter and off-site services such as hotel or motel vouchers or individual dwellings, which is not transitional or permanent housing, but must also provide comprehensive supportive services. The mere act of making a referral to shelter or housing shall not itself be considered provision of shelter. Should other jurisdictional laws conflict with this definition of temporary refuge, the definition which provides more expansive housing accessibility governs.

State Domestic Violence Coalition means a Statewide, nongovernmental, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization whose membership includes a majority of the primary-purpose domestic violence service providers in the State; whose board membership is representative of these primary-purpose domestic violence service providers and which may include representatives of the communities in which the services are being provided in the State; that has as its purpose to provide education, support, and technical assistance to such service providers to enable the providers to establish and maintain supportive services and to provide shelter to victims of domestic violence and their children; and that serves as an information clearinghouse, primary point of contact, and resource center on domestic violence for the State and supports the development of policies, protocols and procedures to enhance domestic violence intervention and prevention in the State/Territory.

Supportive services means services for adult and youth victims of family violence, domestic violence, or

dating violence, and their dependents that are designed to meet the needs of such victims and their dependents for short- term, transitional, or long-term safety and recovery. Supportive services include, but are not limited to: Direct and/or referral-based advocacy on behalf of victims and their dependents, counseling, case management, employment services, referrals, transportation services, legal advocacy or assistance, child care services, health, behavioral health and preventive health services, culturally and linguistically appropriate services, and other services that assist victims or their dependents in recovering from the effects of the violence.

To the extent not already described in this definition, supportive services also include but are not limited to other services identified in FVPSA at 42 U.S.C. 10408(b)(1)(A)–(H). Supportive services may be directly provided by grantees and/or by providing advocacy or referrals to assist victims in accessing such services.

Underserved populations means populations who face barriers in accessing and using victim services, and includes populations underserved because of geographic location, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, underserved racial and ethnic populations, and populations underserved because of special needs including language barriers, disabilities, immigration status, and age.

Individuals with criminal histories due to victimization and individuals with substance use disorders and mental health issues are also included in this definition. The reference to racial and ethnic populations is primarily directed toward racial and ethnic minority groups (as defined in section 1707(g) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300(u–6)(g)), which means American Indians (including Alaska Natives, Eskimos, and Aleuts); Asian American; Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders; Blacks and Hispanics. The term ‘‘Hispanic’’ or ‘‘Latino’’ means individuals whose origin is Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or any other Spanish- speaking country. This underserved populations’ definition also includes other population categories determined by the Secretary or the Secretary’s designee to be underserved.

Allowable and Unallowable Services-Related Assistance

Related assistance is the provision of direct assistance to victims of family violence and their dependents for the purpose of preventing further violence, helping such victims to gain access to civil and criminal court and other community services, facilitating the efforts of such victims to make decisions concerning their lives in the interest of safety, and assisting such victims in healing from effects of the violence.

Allowable Services, Activities, and Costs:

- Assistance in developing safety plans, and supporting efforts of victims of family violence, domestic violence, or dating violence to make decisions related to their ongoing safety and well-being
- Provision of individual and group counseling, peer support groups, and referral to community-based services to assist family violence, domestic violence, and dating violence victims, and their dependents, in recovering from the effects of the violence
- Provision of services, training, technical assistance, and outreach to increase awareness of family violence, domestic violence, and dating violence, and increase the accessibility of family violence, domestic violence, and dating violence services
- Provision of culturally and linguistically appropriate services
- Provision of services for children exposed to family violence, domestic violence, or dating violence, including age-appropriate counseling, supportive services, and services for the non-abusing parent that support that parent’s role as a caregiver, which may, as appropriate, include services that work with the non-abusing parent and child together
- Provision of advocacy, case management services, and information and referral services, concerning issues related to family violence, domestic violence, or dating violence intervention and prevention, including:
    1. Assistance in accessing related federal and state financial assistance programs;
    2. Legal advocacy to assist victims and their dependents;
    3. Medical advocacy, including provision of referrals for appropriate health care services (including mental health, alcohol, and drug abuse treatment), which does not include reimbursement for any health care services; This attachment provides more detail on medical advocacy. This attachment provides information on reimbursable health care services.
    4. Assistance locating and securing safe and affordable permanent housing and homelessness prevention services;
    5. Transportation, childcare, respite care, job training and employment services, financial literacy

services and education, financial planning, and related economic empowerment services;
6. Parenting and other educational services for victims and their dependents; and
7. Provision of prevention services, including outreach to underserved populations

Unallowable Services/Costs

Cash given directly to clients is unallowed. However, providing specific assistance to individuals that may include making payments on behalf of shelter residents for emergency items while they are in shelter, is allowable. If a client moves from the shelter into an apartment or house, but later requests direct assistance with rent, utilities or other expenses, FVPSA funds may not be used for this purpose. However, providing specific assistance to individuals who are in the process of moving out of the shelter facility, including the payment of rent, utilities or other expenses on behalf of the shelter resident, is allowable.

FVPSA funds may not be used for fundraising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred solely to raise capital or obtain contributions.

Reporting Requirements

Performance reports are due annually on or before November 15th in the grants management system. See this page for more information on performance report requirements.

Grantees are required to gather and maintain relevant programmatic and financial data. During desk audits, on-site monitoring and any other time you can be asked to provide supporting documentation.

Match Requirements

Match is required for all agencies, except tribal government organizations. The match amount is 25% of the FVPSA grant. See chapter 3 for information on match.

Certified Assurances

To download a copy of the subgrantee's certified assurances for Family Violence Prevention & Services Act (FVPSA) formula funds click **here**.

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