

NYSCADV'S 2022-2023 Budgetary Priorities

FY'23 Executive Budget: Aid to Localities (S.8003/A.9003)

1) **OVS: Earmark funding to address massive cuts to New York's essential victim services.**

Due to significant decreases in New York's federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant, the state Office of Victim Services (OVS) is slashing funding for more than 300 victim assistance providers throughout New York. Existing contracts with crime victims' legal services providers have already been cancelled one year early. Without immediate intervention, a variety of victim services will be impacted, including domestic violence services, rape crisis centers, child advocacy centers, hospitals, homelessness and housing responses, mental health services and child and adult protective services.

This is not expected to be a long-term problem facing New York State. The federal Crime Victims Fund (CVF), which fuels state VOCA grants, is expected to be replenished in the next two to three years as a result of the VOCA fix legislation signed into law by President Biden last summer. States like California, Washington State, Alaska, West Virginia and Missouri have already appropriated state general revenues or pandemic relief funding to ensure the stability of victim services during this period. New York needs to do the same. **We ask the Legislature to include a sufficient amount of funding in this budget bill for OVS to extend current contracts with service providers for two years, until the federal funding is restored to prior levels.***

2) **OTDA: Increase TANF set aside for non-residential domestic violence services to \$6 million**

New York's non-residential DV services include telephone hotlines, information and referral services, counseling, legal advocacy and financial empowerment. These services are funded with a dedicated stream of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding. This year's Executive Budget appropriates only \$3 million for these critical services. This funding is the same as it was when first proposed more than 20 years ago in the FY'00-'01 budget. If the funding had kept up with inflation, it would have grown to \$4.58 million. **NYSCADV urges the State to increase the TANF set aside to \$6 million to account for the current heightened demand and inflation.**

New York State has additional TANF funds that it can draw upon to assist New Yorkers experiencing domestic violence. As of 2020, New York has not spent \$897 million of its grant, equal to 37% of the overall annual allocation.¹

2) **OCFS: Maintain Governor's \$5 million appropriation to pilot a new flexible funding model aimed at transforming New York's domestic violence service delivery system**

The Governor has allocated \$5 million for the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) to pilot a new flexible funding model that reduces current barriers and challenges for domestic violence service providers assisting survivors. Transforming New York's antiquated domestic violence service delivery system is critical to ensuring victims and their families receive the support they need immediately and without conditions.

* NYSCADV and other victim assistance providers have asked OVS to confirm the level of funding needed to extend current contracts for two years. OVS has not replied to our request for information. We estimate \$20-\$25 million is needed to cover the annual shortfall.

(Revised: 1/31/22)

¹ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 'State Fact Sheets: How States Spend Funds Under the TANF Block Grant', https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/tanf_spending_ny.pdf, (accessed January 21, 2022).