

Independence House, Local Police Receive Part of \$3 Million of Violence Against Women Grant Fund

\$3 million awarded between 37 different organizations...

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Governor Charlie Baker

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LAWRENCE – The Baker-Polito Administration today announced that it has awarded grants totaling more than \$3 million to 37 community-based organizations, police departments and state agencies as part of the Violence Against Women Act, Services Training Officers Prosecutors (VAWA STOP) Grant Program. This program is administered by the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security's Office of Grants and Research (OGR).

"Sexual assault, domestic violence and any form of violence against women have no place in our society," said **Governor Charlie Baker**. "These grants reflect our strong commitment to ending gender-based violence and supporting the organizations that work every day to help women and girls live in safety and peace."

"Each one of these awardees has an essential role in protecting the lives and welfare of at-risk women and girls, and we are very pleased to be able to support the important work they do every day," said **Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**, Chair of the Governor's Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence.

"The strong partnerships that exist between law enforcement agencies and these community organizations provide that key network of support that helps us to prevent, identify, and respond to violent crimes against women," said **Secretary of Public Safety and Security Thomas Turco**.

"Vital funding received through a VAWA grant allows RESPOND to bring its resources to those in need," said **Victoria Helberg**, **Law Enforcement Partnership Coordinator of Respond Inc.** "As part of our Law Enforcement Partnership program, a domestic violence advocate is able to be on-site at the Malden District Court one day, each week to provide support for survivors. We recently heard from a former client who said, 'If it wasn't for you getting my attention that day at court and giving me your card, I would have never known this program existed. I felt so hopeless then.'"

"Our Homelessness Response Program addresses the overwhelming challenges of homelessness, housing instability and poverty faced by survivors working to escape and recover from violence. Because of VAWA funding, we are able to provide services to address immediate and short-term needs, individual and group transitional follow-up, and long-term financial stability," said **Janis Broderick**, **Executive Director of the Elizabeth Freeman Center**.



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"The VAWA STOP Grant Award has had a profound impact on the amount of services that the Yarmouth Police Department has been able to offer through our full-time Victim Advocate, who has reached out to more 1,000 victims over the past two years," said **Annie Catalano, Victim Services Specialist/Advocate for the Yarmouth Police Department**. "The funding has also allowed our Special Victims Unit to receive and host trauma informed training that would never been possible otherwise."

"VAWA STOP Grant program funding has enabled the Boston Police Department to reach some of the most vulnerable victims of domestic violence in Boston by directly supporting a Spanish-speaking civilian advocate who serves the East Boston and Jamaica Plain districts— two neighborhoods with high concentrations of Spanish-speaking and immigrant populations," said **Jenna Savage, Deputy Director of the Boston Police Department's Office of Research & Development**. "In 2019 alone, that advocate provided safety planning and advocacy within the criminal justice system to nearly 300 DV survivors – nearly half of whom identified as Hispanic/Latino – regardless of their immigration status, sexual orientation, or willingness to prosecute their batterer."

The Violence Against Women Act was passed by Congress in 1994 and marked a turning point in the federal recognition of the extent and seriousness of violence against women, and solidified a commitment by the government to address the problem by providing federal resources for the issue.

Over the last four years, nearly \$10 million in VAWA funds have been granted statewide to support domestic and sexual assault victims and their families.

The VAWA STOP grant is a vital resource that supports a variety of specialized and innovative projects throughout the Commonwealth. Some initiatives supported by these grant funds include:

- Services specifically devoted to preventing, identifying, and responding to violent crimes against women;
- Training opportunities for judiciary, court, and probation personnel, in addition to law enforcement and victim service providers;
- Partnerships between law enforcement and victim service providers, to provide compassionate outreach to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking; and
- Supporting prosecutors working closely with victim witness advocates, probation, law enforcement, and state agencies, to target high-risk cases and increase offender accountability.

Below is the list of 2019–2020 VAWA STOP recipients. Each organization received an increase total award amount for year three:

Funding Category	Grantee	Recommended Award	Project Description
Courts	Administrative Office of the Trial Court	\$146,455.27	Training for judges, clerks of court, probation officers, and all other appropriate court personnel
Courts	Category Total	\$146,455.27	
Discretionary	Adams PD	\$28,380.16	Partnership between PD and Elizabeth Freeman Center advocate
	Asian Task Force	\$83,200.74	Legal and community-based advocacy services to LEP Pan-Asian immigrants and refugees
	Bedford Police Department	\$35,759.86	Partnership between PD and Domestic Violence Services Network advocate
	Behavioral Health	\$43,666.68	Civilian police advocate
	DOVE, Inc.	\$76,348.18	Civilian police advocates
	Jewish Family & Children's Services	\$35,759.87	Advocacy for Russian-speaking victims while conducting trainings for community partners and law enforcement
	Martha's Vineyard Community Services	\$30,488.65	Domestic violence victim response enhancement program
	Northeast Legal Aid, Inc.	\$48,410.76	Legal services
	Our Deaf Survivors Center	\$46,302.28	Direct advocacy services to Deaf survivors



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	The Network/La Red	\$46,302.28	Outreach, education and training to improve systems and community responses to LGBTQ/T survivors
Discretionary	Category Total	\$474,619.45	
Law Enforcement	Assumption College PD	\$33,651.69	Partnership between PD and Pathways for Change sexual assault advocate
	Boston PD	\$125,370.40	Civilian police advocate
	Cambridge PD	\$46,302.29	Civilian police advocate
	Fitchburg PD	\$62,115.92	Civilian police advocate
	Hampden County Sheriff	\$46,302.29	Direct services for incarcerated victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking
	MA Department of Corrections	\$88,471.97	Direct services for incarcerated victims of sexual assault
	MA Department of Public Health	\$120,099.23	SANE forensic nursing services
	Mashpee PD	\$54,209.11	Civilian police advocate
	Pittsfield PD	\$56,317.59	Partnership between PD and Elizabeth Freeman Center advocate
	Worcester PD	\$62,115.92	Partnership between PD and YWCA
	Yarmouth PD	\$62,115.92	Partnership between PD and Independence House advocate
Law Enforcement	Category Total	\$757,072.05	
Prosecution	Bristol County DA	\$109,556.81	Domestic violence victim witness advocates
	MA District Attorney's Association	\$127,478.91	Statewide prosecutor training
	Norfolk County DA	\$232,903.10	Specialized domestic violence/sexual assault prosecutors
	Northwestern DA	\$131,695.88	Immediate law enforcement and advocacy response for victims
	Worcester County DA	\$130,641.65	Specialized domestic violence prosecutor and victim witness advocate team
	Category Total	\$732,276.35	
Victim Services	Boston Area Rape Crisis Center	\$48,938.44	Increase survivors' access to accurate forensic information: hotline/website
	Boston Medical Center Domestic Violence Program	\$122,207.71	Multi-lingual direct advocacy services
	De Novo	\$68,441.36	Legal services
	Elizabeth Freeman Center, Inc.	\$67,387.13	Trauma informed services for homeless/battered victims
	Independence House, Inc.	\$125,370.44	Crisis intervention, safety planning, advocacy, group and individual counseling

Pathways for Change, Inc.	\$130,641.65	Direct services to survivors of sexual violence who are deaf, hard of hearing, late deafened, and deaf/blind
RESPOND, Inc.	\$48,410.77	High-risk team coordinator
RIA House, Inc.	\$88,471.97	Services for sexually trafficked victims
Safe Passage, Inc.	\$141,184.09	Counseling, advocacy, and legal assistance for Latina/immigrant survivors
Womanshelter/Compañeras	\$48,937.90	Direct services to survivors of domestic violence who traditionally face barriers to receiving services
Victim Services Category Total	\$889,991.46	

All Categories Total Amount to be Awarded \$3,000,414.57

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