

**Nebraska State Implementation Plan  
STOP Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)  
2014 - 2016**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
I. Introduction	3
A. Date Approved by State	3
B. Plan’s Time Frame	3
II. Description of Planning Process	4
A. Process	4
B. Participation	5
C. Coordination	5
D. Ongoing Efforts	6
III. Needs and Context	6
A. Demographics and Geographical Information	8
B. Underserved Populations	10
C. Crime Rates	14
IV. Plan Priorities and Approaches	17
A. Identified Goals	17
B. Priority Areas	18
C. Grant-making Strategy	25
D. Addressing the Needs of Underserved Victims	28

Attachment 1 – STOP Formula Program, Implementation Plan Checklist

Attachment 2 – Planning Member Participation Forms

Attachment 3 – Letters Regarding Grant Funds

Attachment 4 – Letters of Consultation

## I. Introduction

The STOP Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) State Implementation Plan was prepared by the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice with the assistance of the Consortium for Crime and Justice Research at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The Crime Commission serves as the State Administating Agency for the STOP Formula Grant Program funds and as such is charged with funding projects throughout the state which effectively address one or more of the twenty (20) program purpose areas under the 2013 VAWA Reauthorization.

The STOP Formula Grant Program is Nebraska’s primary source of federal funds addressing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. Funds are distributed according to federal statute mandating support for prosecution, law enforcement and victim services and to the courts. As in years past, the mission of Nebraska’s State Implementation plan is as follows:

*The criminal justice system in Nebraska in collaboration with victim services and other community agencies and individuals responding to all victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking in a consistent, coordinated and positive way that will make victims safer, hold offenders accountable and work to STOP the violence.*

This plan continues Nebraska efforts to improve coordinated criminal justice system response to victims of domestic violence, dating violence and stalking with a renewed emphasis on victims of sexual assault. Other areas of focus are direct services and victim safety; unserved and underserved populations; offender accountability; legislative issues; training and technical assistance needs; and public awareness and education.

Nebraska’s goals for the next three (3) years are guided by four (4) overarching themes which impact priorities and needs. These themes emphasize the development of economic security for victims and survivors; implementation of promising and evidence building practices; trauma informed care/responses; and culturally specific services.

- A. Date Approved by the State: On May 2, 2014 the plan was approved by the Nebraska Crime Commission.
- B. The plan covers the 3-year period of 2014 – 2016.
- C. This document is organized according to the STOP Formula Program Implementation Plan Checklist (Attachment 1) provided by the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW).

## II. Description of Planning Process

### A. Process

The planning process was based on prior planning efforts that organized the identification of gaps and needs around the primary areas of coordinated response; legislation issues; accountability of offenders; public awareness and education; training and technical assistance; underserved populations and victim safety and services. During the process, gaps and needs were prioritized according to those that should receive the most attention and resources. Early in the process four (4) overarching themes emerged that are Economic Security for Victims; Evidence Based and Best Practices; Trauma Informed Care and Culturally Specific Services.

The following are brief summaries of the planning committee activities that were held across the state.

**Training and Technical Assistance** - In July 2012, the process began with an on-site technical assistance provided by Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW). The objectives were: 1) to introduce local representatives from victim services, state government and the criminal justice system to WOW's Economic Security for Survivors Project; 2) for participants to begin to examine system issues that interfere with survivor ability to achieve safety and economic security; and 3) to identify methods and practices that could be supported by the VAWA STOP statewide plan. Over the two days, 45 stakeholders participated. Feedback indicated strong support for the development of systems that promote economic security for victims. As a result, Economic Security for Victims became an overachieving theme for future efforts.

**Strategic Planning Sessions** – During the spring of 2013, three (3) sessions were held in which a total of 38 stakeholders participated. Sessions took place in Lincoln, North Platte and Norfolk. The sessions in North Platte and Norfolk included call-in capacity. Dr. Ryan Spohn, Director and Laura Schoerock, Program Coordinator of the University of Nebraska at Omaha - Consortium for Crime and Justice Research facilitated all sessions. Discussions were held on gaps and needs in the contents of the seven primary areas and the four overarching themes.

**On-line Survey** - June 2013, an on-line survey was conducted. The survey was developed based on the information from the strategic planning sessions and was used to rank the identified gaps and needs. A link to the survey was emailed to 107 stakeholders with a request to forward the email to others. A total of 28 surveys were completed for a response rate of 26%. Information attained from the on-line survey was given consideration however; it was not a sole source of information used in any planning or decision making efforts.

**Consumers of Services** - In conjunction with the strategic planning sessions listening sessions were conducted with 10 consumers of services in North Platte, Ogallala and Norfolk. These discussions, with the STOP Administrator, focused on the consumer's perceptive of barriers and what is most and least helpful from the criminal justice system and service providers.

**STOP VAWA Advisory Committee** –In March, 2014 to finalize the Implementation Plan this group met to examine the STOP purpose areas and areas of focus for Nebraska's STOP Formula Grant Program.

## **B. Participation**

The planning committee comprised of various activities was offered to a wide cross section of stakeholders from both private and public sectors. The following are among those that participated:

- Dual Coalition - Nebraska Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Coalition
- Law Enforcement Entities –Nebraska State Patrol, Nebraska Crime Commission, Omaha Police Department, Lincoln County Sheriff’s Office
- Prosecution Entities - U.S. Attorney’s Office District of Nebraska, Nebraska Attorney General’s Office, Douglas County Attorney’s Office, Lincoln County Attorney’s Office
- State and Local Courts – Nebraska Administrative Offices of the Courts and Probation
- Tribal Governments - Ponca Tribe, Omaha Tribe, Santee Sioux Nation, and Winnebago Tribe (Implementation plan submitted for review to each Tribal Council member)

NOTE: Following federal level review of the plan council members from the SAC Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas and Nebraska and the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska were also contacted.

- Underserved Populations – Consumers of Victim Services, Women’s Center for Advancement, Many Nations Healing Center, U.S. Army, Voices of Hope, Ponca Tribe, Otokahe Teca Tipi, Santee Sioux Nation-Dakota Tiwabe Service Unit
- Victim Service Providers – Non-profits, Victim/Witness Units
- Population Specific Organizations – Special Olympics, Nebraska Department of Aging, Nebraska Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Others: Consumers of Services Victims, Bellevue City Mayor; University of Nebraska Center for Families, Children and the Law; Nebraska Department of Labor; Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services - Public Health Division and the Division of Children and Family Services (Protective Services Program; Nebraska Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Program and the Nebraska Homeless Assistance Program); National Guard; Community Domestic Violence Intervention Program; University of Nebraska at Omaha – University of Nebraska Medical Center

Please refer to Attachment 2 for evidence of participation.

## **C. Coordination**

Since May 2012, several state administrators responsible for various federal funding programs have coordinated state planning, training and grant monitoring efforts. These administrators came together around the common theme of effective ways for individuals and families to develop economic security. Those involved are the STOP Administrator who manages both the STOP and VAWA Sexual Assault Service Program in addition to the Victims of Crime Act Program (VOCA); the Family Violence Prevention Services Act (FVPSA) Administrator who also works with Adult Protective Services; the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Emergency Solutions Grant Administrator who also administers the Nebraska Homeless Assistance Grant Program; and the TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) Program Administrator. This coordination has extended into other areas including the STOP Administrator’s volunteer participation in the Nebraska Tribal Coalition to end Family Violence.

## **D. On-going Efforts**

In 1995, a VAWA Advisory Committee was established to develop Nebraska's initial strategy for the STOP Formula Grant Program as well as an award process. Annually thereafter, the Committee conducted the grant review process and made funding recommendations. In 2012, the group became inactive as a result of the Crime Commission's decision to align the STOP Formula Grant Program's grant review process with the agency's Operating Instructions. In February 2014, the Committee was resurrected from various stakeholders who had participated in the planning activities previously outlined on page 4. This newly formed STOP VAWA Advisory Committee with 16 members will be meeting regularly for input and direction on ongoing planning and assessment efforts, strategies and best practices, and to examine state issues relevant to the concerns of the 2013 VAWA Reauthorization.

## **III. Needs and Context**

This section provides an overview of Nebraska and describes underserved populations and crime rates in the context of intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking. To begin this section, a brief summary of needs and concerns identified from stakeholders that participated in the statewide planning efforts are outlined.

### **Strategic Planning Sessions:**

The following issues were raised by the stakeholders who participated in the three strategic planning sessions held in Lincoln, North Platte and Norfolk. This list is not all inclusive of the issues discussed however; it does reflect concerns heard across the state.

- Lack of funding to accomplish this work which has created gaps in victim services, assistance from legal aid and batterer intervention services.
- Victim services and offender accountability and training issues were common themes expressed. Concerns were voiced that victims are being held more accountable than perpetrators, and the lack of resources means programs like batterer intervention classes are not readily available or enforced during prosecution and sentencing.
- Issues in rural settings around culture and intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking. Participants indicated that rural settings do not foster environments conducive to privacy or availability of services. These settings often add complications with populations such as migrant/transient workers and large employers that perpetuate domestic violence, stalking and sexual assault behavior. Also, issues of increased drug use and human trafficking were noted.
- Victims are suffering due to narrow definitions of domestic abuse, stalking and sexual assault while offenders are learning to work the system and utilize what little resources are available to their own benefit.
- Training was consistently mentioned. A lack of competency testing and assessment for training was indicated, and training issues range from a lack of training to issues with low attendance and the need for additional training. Training is needed on all levels from advocates to law enforcement officers to judges. Among training topics mentioned were new technology that perpetrators use to commit offenses; emerging populations such as the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender community, economic security and best practices such as trauma informed care.
- Need for more coordination from organizations throughout the state and Coordinated Response Teams.

**On-line Survey:** The following are among the results from the 28 responders to the on-line survey.

**1. Victim Safety and Services ranked in order of which should receive the most attention and resources::**

- Free/reduced legal services
- Sufficient funding for crime victim reparations
- Transitional Housing
- Victim education on the self-petition process
- Availability & accessibility of trained SANE nurse
- Lack of staff trained in trauma informed care
- Limited on-call staff
- Charging victims with aiding & abetting (dual arrests)
- Limited Volunteers

**2. Underserved Victim Needs ranked in order of which should receive the most attention and resources:**

- Shortage of bilingual personnel
- Long-term/second level care
- Inadequate outreach
- Shortage of qualified interpreters
- Shortage of hearing-impaired interpreters

**3. Offender Accountability Ranked in order of which should receive the most attention and resources:**

- Consistent judicial response in dealing with offenders
- Consistent enforcement of the firearm laws (statewide)
- More approved Batterer Intervention Programs (BIPs), especially in rural areas
- Development of a statewide Batterer Intervention Program best practice model
- Qualified male facilitators for Batterer Intervention Programs in rural areas

Comment: In reference to bullet #3, Nebraska does have a BIP best practice model, and BIP programs are reviewed annually.

**4. Community Response Teams ranked in order of which should receive the most attention and resources:**

- Statewide consistent judicial response
- Statewide consistent response to sexual assault victims
- Statewide listing of trained attorneys for domestic violence/sexual assault
- Standard approach to support a victim who has violated a protection order
- Coordinated response team standards/ policies

Comment: In reference to bullet #4, petitioners cannot violate their own protection orders. Bullet point is unclear or vague as to the concern that needs to be addressed.

**5. Training and Technical Assistance ranked in order of which should receive the most attention and resources:**

- Training on trauma-informed services
- Training on cultural issues

- Training on limiting sexual assault
- Training medical staff on sexual assault
- Ongoing training for coordinated response teams (CRTs)
- Training on databases and tracking statistics
- Training on victim confidentiality in rural areas
- Training on firearm laws

**6. Summary of gaps or needs identified within Legislation (no ranking):**

- Address stalking statutes which currently make it difficult to prosecute and prove cases.
- Harsher penalties for crimes of intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking including violations of Protection Orders.
- Increase the level of supervision for offenders on parole or probation.
- Address victim blaming through education and training which targets those in decision making positions including senators, judges and CPS workers.
- Increase funds for compensation for injuries sustained by the victims.

**7. Summary of gaps or needs within Public Awareness and Education (no ranking):**

- Focus on education in schools, judicial training, education for juries, and men should step up and denounce violence against women.
- Additional training/education in dealing with trauma victims for professionals.

**Consumers of Services:**

Consumers were asked which area among prosecution, law enforcement, victim services and courts/probation should be the state's top priority for STOP funding. Of the 10 consumers interviewed, 8 indicated victim services, 1 prosecution and 1 law enforcement.

Among the barriers these consumers experienced to achieving economic security:

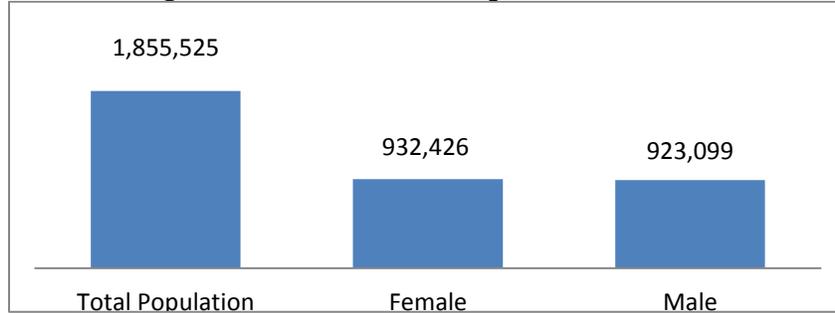
- Domestic violence cases that involve divorce where mediation requires a parenting plan.
- Lengthy processes to access disability, Medicaid, housing, child care, etc.
- Lack of tribal court support for Non-Native American women who have Native American children.
- Courts/Probation not checking whether an abuser has paid child support before allowing no jail time, because the offender needs to work. Issue raised is the waiving of jail time to allow probationer to work when the probationer hasn't been paying child support in the first place.
- Lack of funds to pay for attorneys and resources for legal help.
- Application fees required by landlords for those on low income housing.

**A. Demographics and Geographical Information**

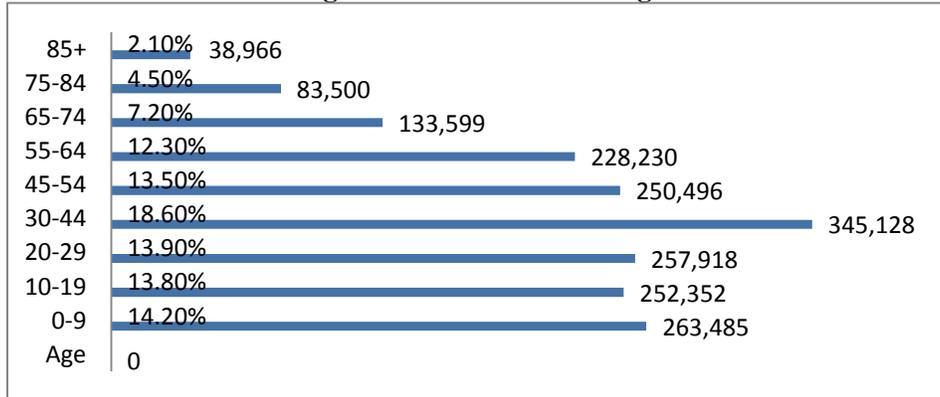
Nebraska is centrally located in what is known as the "Great Plains." Bordering Nebraska are the states of Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming and South Dakota. The Missouri River forms the eastern border that Nebraska shares with Iowa. Of the state's total population, 53% reside in the counties of Douglas, Lancaster and Sarpy; all located in the far eastern portion of the state. Located in Douglas and Lancaster counties are the two largest communities, Lincoln and Omaha; the state's Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA). Lincoln is the state capital, and located in Sarpy County is Offutt Air Force Base which is the largest wing of the United States Air Force's Air Combat Command.

As indicated in Figures 1 and 2, of Nebraska’s population (U.S. Census), females comprise 50.3% of the total and males 49.7%. Based on these numbers the female to male ratio is less than 1%. The median age for 2012 was reported at 36.3 years.

**Figure 1. 2012 Nebraska Population Estimates**



**Figure 2. 2012 Nebraska Age**



[http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_12\\_1YR\\_S0101&prodType=table](http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_12_1YR_S0101&prodType=table)

Geographically, Nebraska is considered the 16<sup>th</sup> biggest state in the country. It consists of 77,358 square miles, 93 counties varying in size from 247 square miles to 6,009 square miles. The state is primarily made up of rural areas, many sparsely populated but large geographically with 28 of the 93 counties considered frontier counties (national standard - 6 or fewer people per square mile).

Nebraska’s economy is based in the agriculture, manufacturing and service industries. The state’s unemployment rate for August 2013 was at 4.2%. As displayed in Table 1, during 2012, 28% of Nebraskans lived below 185% of the federal poverty level and the state ranked 35 for its child poverty rate.

**Table 1. 2012 Nebraska Poverty Rate**

2012 – Nebraska Poverty Rate	
Total People	1,855,525
Total People Living Below 185% of Federal Poverty Level <sup>1</sup>	520,786
*Median Household Income <sup>1</sup>	\$50,723
*Rank Among States (Highest to Lowest)	26
**Child Poverty Rate	17.9%
**Rank Among States (Highest to Lowest)	35

<http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/ne.pdf>

## B. Underserved Populations

Table 2 and 3 displays results of information gathered from planning activities specifically on underserved populations. The information provided was based on the responder’s experience in the field related to the domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. Table 2 required responders to identify populations based on the categories of unserved, underserved or inadequately served. The following definitions come from the Three –Tier Definitions for Population presented in 2013 by the Women of Color Network (WOCN), a technical assistance provider for the Office of Violence Against Women.

- Unserved - No services available, suffer severe isolation.
- Underserved - Minimal access to services and thus are in need of more outreach and support, moderate isolation.
- Inadequately Served – historically marginalized populations that may be overrepresented as they present in large numbers but remain inadequately served with specific reference to the quality of service.

Table 3 is the results of responders ranking underserved populations from those least to most in need of attention of resources. Although all victim populations were ranked at needing attention and resources those ranked most in need were identified as victims with mental health issues, limited English proficiency victims, rural victims, undocumented immigrants and Native American victims. The resources identified as most needed were bilingual personnel, long-term/second level care and outreach services.

Regarding unserved populations Table 2 indicates immigrant and refugee populations are the highest percentage of those unserved. It is likely that the STOP funds supporting projects that target these populations are inadequate to fulfill the demand or need. It is also feasible that responders to this activity that complete the annual STOP progress report may have experienced confusion by the definition of “unserved.” In the STOP annual progress report “not served” are victims who sought services and did not receive the services they were seeking (if funded by STOP funds) versus the WOCN’s definition of unserved meaning services are not available.

**Table 2. Underserved Populations as identified by 23 total responders from the 3 planning sessions**

Population	Un-Served # of responses % of responses	Underserved # of responses % of responses	Inadequately Served # of responses % of responses	None of These # of responses % of responses
Asian Pacific Islander	1 - 4%	11 - 48%	5 - 22%	6 - 26%
Black/African Am.	0	9 - 39%	9 - 39%	5 - 22%
Disabilities	0	10 - 43%	8 - 35%	5 - 22%
Immigrant/Refugee	7 - 30%	8 - 35%	7 - 30%	1 - 4%
Later Life	1 - 4%	9 - 39%	9 - 39%	4 - 17%
Latino/Hispanic	0	9 - 39%	10 - 43%	4 - 17%
Limited English Proficiency	4 - 17%	7 - 30%	10 - 43%	2 - 9%
LGBT	4 - 17%	13 - 57%	5 - 22%	1 - 4%
Multi-Ethnic	1 - 4%	14 - 61%	3 - 13%	5 - 22%
Native American	3 - 13%	12 - 52%	6 - 26%	2 - 9%
Rural	4 - 17%	13 - 57%	3 - 13%	3 - 13%
Undocumented	4 - 17%	10 - 43%	5 - 22%	4 - 17%
Youth and Teens	0	7 - 30%	12 - 52%	4 - 17%

**Table 3. Underserved ranked by those in most need of attention and resources (on-line survey)**

Underserved Populations	Least 1	Some 2	More 3	Most 4	Rating Average	Response Count
Persons with mental health issues	0	8	17	11	3.08	36
Non-English speaking	1	11	11	12	2.97	35
Rural citizens	2	9	13	10	2.91	34
Undocumented immigrants	3	10	9	12	2.88	34
Native Americans	3	9	9	11	2.88	32
Elders	0	11	18	6	2.86	35
Adolescents and teens	1	8	21	5	2.86	35
Persons with disabilities	1	9	18	6	2.85	34
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender	1	13	12	8	2.79	34
Latinos/Hispanics	2	10	14	6	2.75	32
Homeless	2	13	14	6	2.69	35
Persons substance abuse issues	2	15	13	6	2.64	36
Refugees	4	12	11	7	2.62	34
Multi-ethnic persons	2	15	10	5	2.56	32
African Americans	4	15	11	3	2.39	33
Asians/Pacific Islanders	5	15	8	4	2.34	32

**Emerging Populations** – Planning activities included the identification of emerging populations which are those victim populations not currently identified as underserved however; they are increasingly seeking or receiving services at higher rates of frequency. Those consistently identified were refugees and immigrants; human trafficking victims; victims with mental health and/or substance abuse issues; members of the LGBT community; military personnel and veterans; prison inmates and individuals with disabilities.

### Minorities

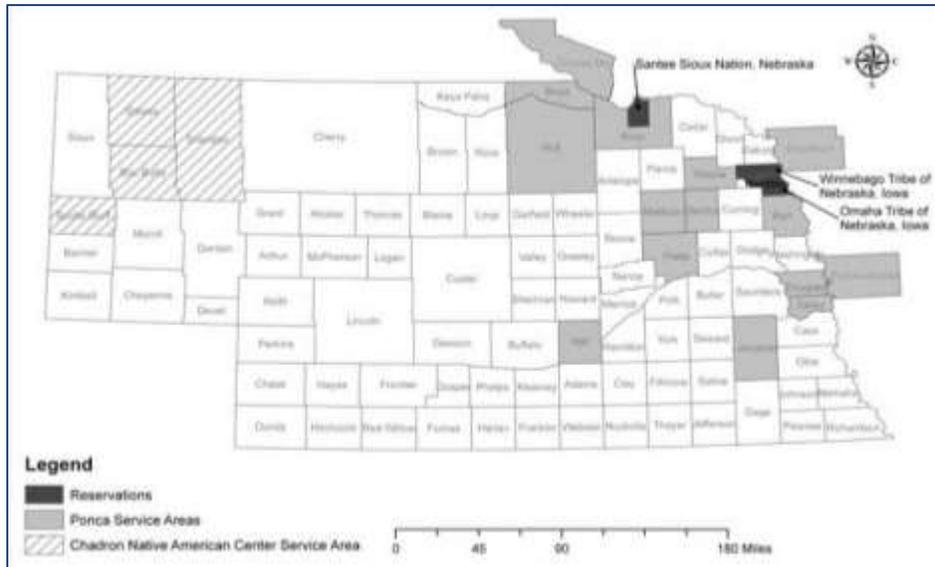
The census numbers displayed in Table 4, from 1990 to 2012, indicates Nebraska’s minority population increased overall by 65% while the total population for the state grew by 18.5%. During this same time period the African American population grew by 54.9%. Among this group are growing numbers of African immigrants particularly from Sudan and Somalia. Populations that experienced the greatest growth are Asians which increased by 209% and Hispanics which increased by 387%. These significant increases have been seen across the state in both rural and urban communities. The areas with the greatest diversity are the counties of Lancaster, Douglas and Sarpy. There, 85.5% of the state’s Black or African American population reside; 45.7% of the Hispanic population; and 65.8% of the Asian population.

**Table 4. Nebraska Population**

	1990	2000	2010	2012 Estimates
White	1,495,071	1,533,261	1,572,838 (86.1%)	1,668,117
Black or African American	57,862	68,541	82,885 (4.5%)	89,065
Native American & Alaska Native	12,855	14,896	18,427 (1.0%)	24,122
Asian and Pacific Islander	12,629	22,767	33,572 (1.9%)	38,966
Other	----	47,845	79,109 (4.3%)	
2 or more races	----	23,953	39,510 (2.2%)	35,255
<b>Total Nebraska Population</b>	<b>1,578,417</b>	<b>1,711,263</b>	<b>1,826,341</b>	<b>1,855,525</b>
Hispanic Origin, any race	36,969	94,425	167,405 (9.2%)	179,986
<b>Total Minority Population</b>	<b>120,315</b>	<b>272,427</b>	<b>420,915 (23%)</b>	<b>345,128</b>

[http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=DEC\\_10\\_DP\\_DPDP1](http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=DEC_10_DP_DPDP1)

As indicated by the population numbers in Table 4 the Native American population grew by 87.6%. Indian Country in Nebraska is comprised of three (3) reservations and four (4) federally recognized tribes all located in rural areas (please refer to map below). Nebraska’s tribes are Ponca, Omaha, Santee Sioux Nation and Winnebago. The Ponca Tribe is comprised of 2,800 enrolled members and has no land base. As indicated by the map the Ponca Tribe maintains 15 service territories with its headquarters located in the community of Niobrara in Knox County. Located in Knox County is the village of Santee which is the headquarters for the Santee Sioux Nation reservation. The Santee Sioux Nation reservation is comprised of approximately 10,000 acres of land.



<http://www.indianaffairs.state.ne.us/faqs/native-americans-in-nebraska/how-many-american-indians-reside-in-nebraska.html>

The Winnebago Indian Reservation lies in the northern half of Thurston County. It covers approximately 120,000 acres extending into Iowa with an estimated 2,600 residents. Its headquarters are located in the village of Winnebago. The Omaha Tribe reservation primarily lies in the southern part of Thurston County and northeastern Cuming County but small portion extends into the northeast corner of Burt County and across the Missouri River into Monona County, Iowa. The Omaha Tribe’s headquarters is located in Macy. The tribe has 5,000 enrolled members with 3,000 living on the reservation. Thurston County, home to both the Winnebago and Omaha reservations, is among the Country’s poorest ranked counties (U.S. Census). In 2012, 58% of Thurston County residents were Native Americans.

**Rural and Remote Areas**

Nebraska’s rural areas include the Sand Hills and the Valentine National Wildlife Refuge. These are

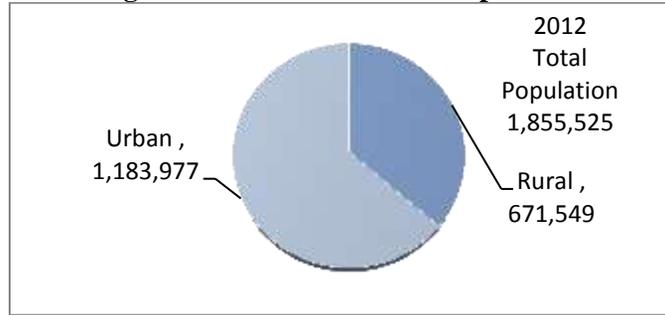
located in the north and north central part of the state that borders South Dakota’s Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and the Rose Bud Indian Reservation. It is common for Nebraska providers to serve victims from these reservations. As indicated in Figure 3 of Nebraska’s total population,

**Consumer Insight on Urban and Rural Areas**

*In discussions with 10 consumers of victims services most felt in rural areas help is easier to access and people are more personable however, they often felt judged by providers and others for being in an abusive situation. In urban areas these consumers found more options for services and people more accepting, but the waiting lists for services were very frustrating.*

43% reside in rural and remote areas. For victims in remote areas a hospital or service provider may be hours away. Many rural and remote areas in the state have no means of public transportation and often, no or little access to technology. In these areas, additional resources are often dedicated by prosecutors, courts, victim services providers and law enforcement agencies to ensure that a coordinated criminal justice system response is available for victims. While STOP funding has been used to support outreach efforts stakeholders involved in planning activities indicated the need to support expanded outreach strategies through creative social media, peer educators and the use of peer-to-peer support.

**Figure 3. Urban and Rural Populations**



<http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/state-fact-sheets/state-data.aspx?StateFIPS=31&StateName=Nebraska>

**Limited English Proficiency**

Nebraska’s growing population is compounded by significant numbers of individuals who are limited English proficient. The National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy reports that Nebraska ranks 6<sup>th</sup> among the nation’s top ten states with the highest growth rates of Limited English Proficient population. According to Center’s report the *LEP Data Brief*, from 1990 to 2010 the state’s LEP population grew from 22,000 to 76,000; a 242.2% increase. The report indicates that the top five languages spoken in Nebraska are Spanish, Vietnamese, African languages, Chinese and Arabic.

According to the U.S. Census, in 2012, among minorities at least five (5) years old living in Nebraska 11% spoke a language other than English, at home. Of those speaking a language other than English at home, 66% spoke Spanish and 34% spoke some other language; 45% reported that they did not speak English "very well." Yearly, the state Department of Education issues a report on public schools which includes demographic of students. According to the most recent 2011-2012 State of the Schools Report of the 300,821 enrolled students, 6.47% (19,463) were individuals (3 – 21 years of age) of limited English proficiency.

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community**

There is little information on Nebraska’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) population.

Table 5 indicates of the state’s adult population an estimated 4.2% identify as members of the LGBT community.

**Table 5. Nebraska Population of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community**

Nebraska – LGBT Population					
2012 State Population Estimate	2012 State LGBT Adult Population Estimate	2012 Adult % Estimate	2000 Same Sex Couples	2010 Same Sex Couples	2000 – 2010 Couple Household Growth
1,855,525	38,075	4.2%	2,332	2,356	0.01%

Based on Williams Institute review conducted in 2011. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT\\_demographics\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_demographics_of_the_United_States)

The Midlands LGBT Needs Assessment Community Report (2011) is the first known comprehensive study of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender health for those who live, work and ‘play’ in the state of Nebraska. This research was conducted by the Midlands Sexual Health Research Collaborative from the University of Nebraska Medical Center’s College of Public Health and the University of Nebraska. While the results do not reflect the entire LGBT community of Nebraska, it is based on the input of 770 participants. Given the hidden nature of the LGBT population this number of participants is significant and the findings have potential to impact service delivery efforts. For example, the study reports that most participants identified at least one LGBT-related organization which they engaged with in the past year; a good indication of the types of outreach that could be conducted to reach the LGBT community. The following are among the study’s other findings:

- Ages ranged from 19 to 79; average age was 36 years old
- Majority lived in Omaha-Metro area (68%) or in the Lincoln-Metro area (20%) with about 10% from rural areas of the state (Chadron, Valentine, O’Neill, Pierce, Fullerton, Clarks, David City, Nebraska City, Fairbury, Red Cloud, Glenvill, Hastings, Kearney, Lexington, Grand Island, York, Fremont, Blair).
- Males accounted for 59.74%, females 36.99%, intersex .39% and 2.88% identified as other
- 91 were transgender individuals
- 75.26% identified as homosexual, gay or lesbian; 15.89% as bisexual; 2.86% as heterosexual or straight and .78% as unsure/questioning
- 94.6% were White, 2.2% Black or African-American; .9% Asian and .8% American Indian/Alaska Native
- 56.5% had a Bachelor’s degree or higher
- 46.3% were dating exclusive or legally married to a same gender partner

### **Elderly and Disabled**

From October 2012 through September 2013 the 40 projects supported through federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) served 112 victims of elder abuse. In 2012, of Nebraska’s total population (see Figure 2) 13.9% were individuals 65 years of age and older; a slightly higher rate than the national rate of 13.7%. The 2011 *Disability Status Report for Nebraska* indicates that of the state’s population 10.3% are considered disabled. According to the U.S. Census Bureau the likelihood of having a disability varies by age from 4% of people under 18 years of age to 8% of people 18 to 64 years old, to 34% of those 65 and older. Often, the elderly and disabled populations are seen as fragile or less able to defend themselves, thus making them prime targets for violence, sexual assault crimes and financial abuse. Victimization may be overlooked and even attributed to medication or other medical conditions. As is often the case with underserved populations the elderly and disabled populations require special considerations from service providers, law enforcement, prosecutors and other members of coordinated community response efforts.

## **C. Crime Rates**

**Hotline Calls** – The Nebraska Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Coalition reports for the 12 month period from October 2012 through September 2013 their network of providers responded to 49,940 crisis calls. According to the National Domestic Violence Hotline, in 2012 there were 647 documented calls from Nebraska. Of the callers, 69% identified as crime victims of Intimate Partner Violence. Forty-five percent (45%) of the calls came from Omaha, 10% from Lincoln and 45% from smaller communities across the state. Victim ages were 2% as 18 and under; 13% as 18 – 24; 30% as 25 – 35; 19% as 36 – 45; 25% as 46 – 54; and 12% as 55 and over. Seventy-four percent of victims identified as White, 9% Black or African American, 10% Hispanic and 7% Other.

**Uniform Crime Report (UCR)** – The UCR is an FBI crime report produced from data submitted by states. For the purpose of the UCR states report crimes based on federal definitions. In 2012, based on Nebraska’s population of 1,853,835 the Violent Offense Rate as reported by the UCR was at 2.5 victims/ per 1,000 individuals. From 2011 to 2012 the UCR reported the state’s overall crime rate had increased by 1%; with violent crimes increasing 4%. Of the four (4) types of violent crimes tracked in the report the following was indicated from 2011 to 2012:

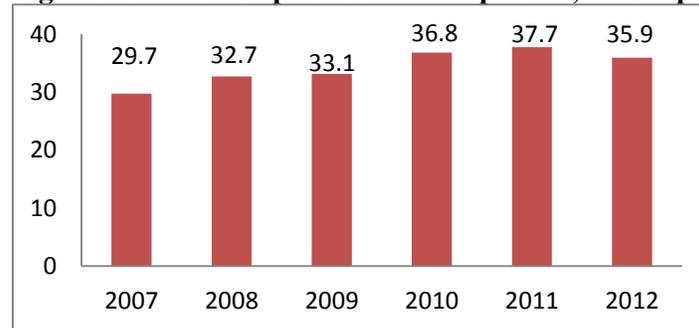
- Murder/Manslaughter -22%
- Forcible Rape -1%
- Robbery +14%
- Aggravated Assault +2%.

**Domestic Assaults and Arrests** – From October 2012 through September 2013 the 40 projects supported through federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) reported serving 18,177 victims of domestic violence. According to the Crime Commission’s *Domestic Assaults and Arrests Report* for 2012, there were 5,478 domestic assaults reported statewide. Of those, 7% (393) were classified as Aggravated Domestic Assault, and the remaining 93% (5,085) were reported as a Simple Domestic Assault. The arrest rates on the cases for Aggravated Domestic Assault were reported at 83% (327) and for Simple Domestic Assault at 52% (2,645). According to the Crime Commission, the numbers contained in the report are underreported as many law enforcement agencies are not submitting data including the City of Omaha and Douglas County, the state’s largest metropolitan area.

**Protection Orders** – For 2013, the Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation reported a total of 4,976 Domestic Abuse Protection Orders requested. Of those, 3,213 were granted. In addition, Harassment Protection Orders requested for 2013 totaled 4,025. Of those, 2,070 were granted.

**Sexual Assault** – From October 2012 through September 2013 the 40 projects supported through federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) fund reported 1,354 adult victims of sexual assault served. Figure 4 is data from the UCR that uses the federal definition of forcible rape for sexual assault which is defined as the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will. Assaults or attempts to commit rape by force or threat of force are also included; however, statutory rape (without force) and other sex offenses are excluded.

**Figure 4. Rate of Rapes in Nebraska per 100,000 People**

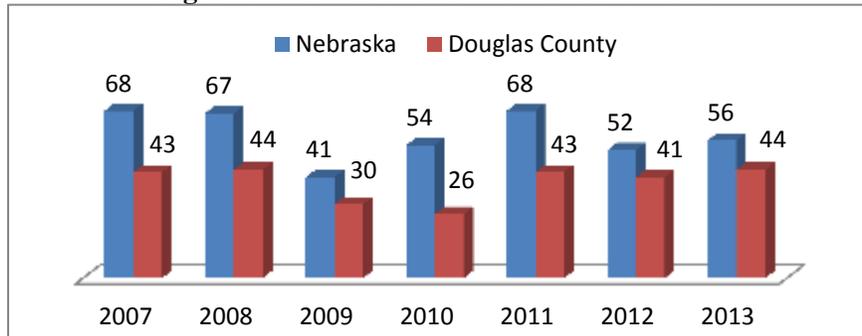


During 2012, in Nebraska there were a total of 664 forcible rapes; a 1% decrease from the 671 rapes in 2011. Omaha with a population of over 400,000 had a 15% decrease in forcible rapes from 220 (2011) to 187 (2012), and Lincoln with a population of over 250,000 had a 10% increase in reported forcible rapes from 166 (2011) to 182 (2012), the highest increase reported for the state. An increase was also seen in

cities with populations ranging from 5,000 to 99,999. There, reported rapes increased by 9%, from 185 (2011) to 201 (2012), and in cities with less than 5,000 populations a decrease by 19%, from 27 (2011) to 22 (2012) rapes. In counties, rapes from 2011 to 2012 went from 70 to 71 (+1%) and those occurring on state property from 3 to 1 (-67%).

**Homicide** – As displayed in Figure 5, in 2013, Nebraska had 56 homicides, an .08% increase from 2012. According to the UCR, of the 56 homicides 44 or 78.5% occurred in Douglas County.

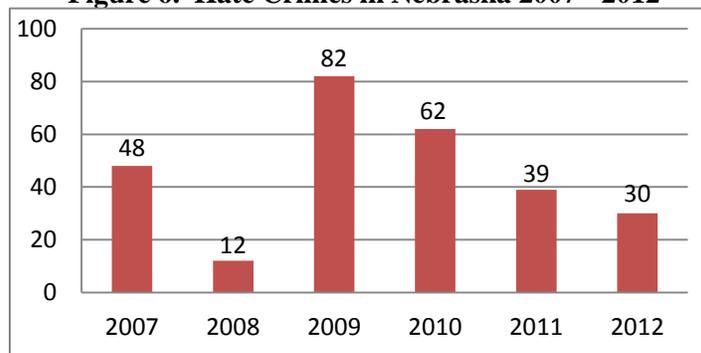
**Figure 5. Homicides in Nebraska 2007 – 2013**



**Domestic Violence Related Homicides** - In 2011, the Nebraska State Patrol (NSP) and the Statewide Coordinated Response Team (CRT) partnered to begin informally reviewing and tracking of the state’s domestic violence related homicides. A summary of cases from 2012 and 2013 reflects a total of 22 deaths attributed to domestic violence. In all, 12 men and 10 women died related to domestic violence. These numbers include four (4) suicides. In all incidences where the domestic violence offender killed someone, the offender was a male. All the direct victims (current or former partners) were female. Among the homicide victims involving domestic violence were two children. For these two years, in completed domestic violence homicides the method that was successfully used was 44% firearms, 33% stabbings, 17% strangulation and 5% blunt force trauma.

**Hate Crimes** – In 1997, with the passage of LB90 commonly known as the Hate Crime Bill, Nebraska developed a statewide system for reporting crimes motivated by hate. During 2012, of the state’s 168 law enforcement agencies 91 submit reports that indicated a total of 30 hate crimes had occurred for the year. As indicated by the numbers in Figure 6 this is a 23% decrease from the 39 reported in 2011.

**Figure 6. Hate Crimes in Nebraska 2007 - 2012**



## **IV. Plan Priorities and Approaches**

### **A. Identified Goals**

#### **1. Project Goals and Objectives**

Goal 1: Design and implement a streamlined statewide planning process that effectively addresses ongoing needs for victim safety and offender accountability and offers opportunities for change.

- a. Maintain an active and diverse STOP VAWA Advisory Committee.
- b. Coordinate STOP planning activities with other federal, state and local planning efforts.
- c. Increase activities and opportunities for stakeholder input.
- d. Partner with Consortium for Crime and Justice Research at the University of Nebraska at Omaha to compile and analysis data.

Goal 2: Build success among STOP funded projects.

- a. Conduct competitive grant award process for statewide distribution of STOP funds.
- b. Provide training and technical assistance opportunities on topics such as the 2013 VAWA Reauthorization, grant application, program development and grant and financial management (annual and on-going).
- c. Conduct monitors of funded projects; financial (annual) and program (once every three years).
- d. Implement a web-based grants management system.

Goal 3: Promote victim safety, offender accountability and system-wide changes through implementation of evidence based and best practice models.

- a. Support opportunities for training and technical assistance that will increase awareness and knowledge among STOP funded projects of trauma informed care methods (on-going).
- b. Facilitate training and technical assistance opportunity through Wider Opportunities for Women on effective strategies for developing economic security for victims (Fall 2014).
- c. Develop statewide performance measures to evaluate effectiveness of VAWA supported activities.
- d. Evaluate funded programs when/if funding is available in order to further the development of best practices, data-informed practices, and evidence-based practices.

Goal 4: Increase access to STOP supported services by underserved populations.

- a. Identify underserved and emerging populations (annually).
- b. Generate and share innovative methods of providing outreach among STOP funded projects.
- c. Ensure that culturally specific service providers are supported through STOP funds and included as members of community response teams across the state.

#### **2. Goals and objectives for reducing domestic violence-relate homicides within Nebraska.**

Since 2011, the Nebraska State Patrol partnering with the Statewide Coordinated Response Team has reviewed and tracked domestic violence related homicides. As a result, this team established criteria for case inclusion however; no formalized review team or process has been adopted. STOP funds have supported these efforts but much work remains in the on-going planning process including refining the following goals and objectives and revisiting funding priorities that address formalized fatality review activities.

Goals:

1. Nebraska will have a formalized fatality review process that can be used to inform the public about the insidious nature of domestic violence and to motivate the public to find solutions to end domestic violence.
2. Nebraska will identify systemic changes within all the organizations and agencies that work with domestic violence victims, offenders and families to learn new ways of reducing the numbers of fatalities by better identification of risk factors and improvements in the coordination of services.

Objectives:

1. Promote and collaborate on state legislation to adopt a formalized domestic violence fatality review process.
2. Investigate and identify leadership and resources necessary to support a formalized fatality review team.
3. Identify trends and patterns in domestic violence-related fatalities in Nebraska.
4. Identify high risk factors, current practices, gaps in systemic responses and barriers to safety in domestic violence situations.
5. Analyze factors that contribute to completed and attempted domestic violence homicides.
6. Educate the public, policy makers and funders about fatalities due to domestic violence and about strategies for intervention.
7. Recommend policies, practices and services that will encourage collaboration and reduce fatalities due to domestic violence.
8. Improve the sources of domestic violence data collection by developing systems to share information between agencies and offices that work with domestic violence victims.
9. Facilitate prevention of domestic violence fatalities through multi-disciplinary collaboration and local coordinated response teams.

## **B. Priority Areas**

### **1. Priorities or goals for Nebraska's use of STOP funds.**

Under STOP, projects shall provide personnel, training, technical assistance, data collection and other resources for the more widespread apprehension, prosecution, and adjudication of persons committing violent crimes against women, for the protection and safety of victims, and specifically, for the purposes of:

- 1) Maintaining core victim services and criminal justice initiatives, while supporting complementary new initiatives and emergency services for victims and their families.
  - a. **Current – High Priority**
    - i. STOP funded projects
    - ii. Most recent new initiative was One Door One Stop (Lincoln County CRT)
  - b. **Need**
    - i. Initiatives (evidence based, best practices) from CRT's that are outcome based and data driven
- 2) Developing, enlarging, or strengthening victim services and legal assistance programs, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking programs, developing or improving delivery of victim services to underserved population, providing specialized domestic

violence court advocates in courts where a significant number of protection orders are granted, and increasing reporting and reducing attrition rates for cases involving violence crimes against women, including the crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

- a. Current**
    - i. Various victim service providers (WCA (Omaha CRT, Voices of Hope (Lancaster CRT, One Door One Stop Legal Aid (Lincoln County CRT))
  - b. Need – High Priority**
    - i. Targeted outreach to underserved populations
    - ii. Access to legal services for victims
    - iii. Increase in pay for Legal Assistance Certification
    - iv. Formal Domestic Violence Fatality Review
- 3) Training law enforcement officers, judges, other court personnel, and prosecutors to more effectively identify and respond to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking, including the appropriate use of nonimmigrant status under subparagraphs (T) and (U) of section 1101(a)(15) of title 8.
  - a. Current - High Priority**
    - i. NE State Patrol (NSP)
    - ii. Administrative Offices of the Courts and Probation (AOCP)
    - iii. Attorney General’s Office (AGO)
    - iv. Lancaster County CRT
  - b. Need**
    - i. Belief Based Training for law enforcement
    - ii. Increased local & state collaboration
    - iii. Training on Sexual Assault; Economic Security
    - iv. Policy Development
    - v. Training Assessments
- 4) Developing, training, or expanding units of law enforcement officers, judges, other court personnel, and prosecutors specifically targeting violent crimes against women, including the crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking;
  - a. Current – High Priority**
    - i. Several state-wide and local entities are conducting training including the AOCP; AGO; local Coordinated Response Teams (CRT); Douglas County Investigative Unit.
- 5) Developing and implementing more effective police, court, and prosecution policies, protocols, orders, and services specifically devoted to preventing, identifying, and responding to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, as well as the appropriate treatment of victims.
  - a. Current – High Priority**
    - i. Statewide CRT and various state and local entities
    - ii. Batter Intervention Programs (BIP)
  - b. Need**
    - i. Review response to underserved populations
    - ii. BIP in rural areas especially western NE
    - iii. Sexual Assault Training including Intimate Partner Sexual Violence

- 6) Developing, implementing, or enhancing Sexual Assault Response Teams, or other similar coordinated community responses to sexual assault.
  - a. **Current**
    - i. Lancaster CRT and SART
  - b. **Need – High Priority**
    - i. Expand CRT and SART efforts to ensure meaningful sexual assault responses
  
- 7) Developing and promoting State, local or tribal legislation and policies that enhance best practices for responding to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
  - a. **Current**
    - i. Legislation in Place
  - b. **Need – High Priority**
    - i. Policy Development
    - ii. Domestic Violence Fatality Review Legislation
    - iii. Review Sexual Assault and Stalking Protection Orders
    - iv. Review Protections from Domestic Abuse Act
  
- 8) Developing and strengthening policies, protocols, best practices, and training for law enforcement agencies and prosecutors relating to the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault cases and the appropriate treatment of victims.
  - a. **Current – High Priority**
    - i. NSP
    - ii. Lincoln Police Department (Lancaster CRT)
    - iii. AGO
  - b. **Need**
    - i. Best Practice checklist
  
- 9) Supporting formal and informal statewide, multidisciplinary efforts, to the extent not supported by State funds, to coordinate the response of State law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, courts, victim services agencies, and other State agencies and departments, to violent crimes against women, including the crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
  - a. **Current – High Priority**
    - i. State-wide CRT
    - ii. AGO
  - b. **Need**
    - i. Support to ensure continued coordination of state-wide CRT
  
- 10) Providing assistance to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in immigration matters.
  - a. **Current – High Priority**
    - i. Justice for Our Neighbors Nebraska (Omaha CRT)
    - ii. Voices of Hope Victim Advocates (Lincoln CRT)
  - b. **Need**
    - i. Additional funding to provide and expand these services
  
- 11) Developing, enlarging, or strengthening programs and projects to provide services and responses targeting male and female victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or

stalking, who ability to access traditional services and responses is affected by their sexual orientation or gender identity, as defined in section 249 (c) of title 18.

- a. Current**
    - i. Some victim service providers have established policies & procedures to address these issues- including a grievance procedure
  - b. Need – High Priority**
    - i. Population specific services
    - ii. CRT growth in this area is needed
    - iii. Identify gaps in service development (research)
    - iv. Training for Law Enforcement, Prosecution & the Courts
    - v. Identification of trusted partners
  
- 12) Developing, enlarging, or strengthening programs addressing sexual assault against men, women, and youth in correctional and detention settings.
  - a. Current**
    - i. Coordination with PREA State Coordinator
  - b. Need**
    - i. Support PREA compliance efforts on both state & local level
  
- 13) Developing, installing, or expanding data collection and communication systems, including computerized systems, linking police, prosecutors, and courts or for the purpose of identifying, classifying, and tracking arrest, protection orders, violations of protection orders, prosecutions, and convictions for violent crimes against women, including the crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
  - a. Current** – No system funded through STOP
  - b. Need**
    - i. Statewide CRT Data Collection System
    - ii. Consistent state-wide data element definitions
    - iii. Consistent coding of data and variables
  
- 14) Developing, enlarging or strengthening programs addressing the needs and circumstances of Indian tribes in dealing with violent crimes against women, including the crimes of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
  - a. Current**
    - i. Ponca Tribe of NE (Omaha CRT)
  - b. Need**
    - i. Expansion of current culturally specific services efforts (based on data of underserved populations)
  
- 15) Training of sexual assault forensic medical personnel examiners in the collection and preservation of evidence, analysis, prevention, and providing expert testimony and treatment of trauma related to sexual assault.
  - a. Current**
    - i. Sexual Assault Response Team Training
    - ii. Child Advocacy Center Training
    - iii. Lincoln Family Violence Council
  - b. Need**
    - i. Additional support for current efforts- priority to CACs to serve victims 11 years and older

- 16) Developing, enlarging, or strengthening programs to assist law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, and others to address the needs and circumstance of older and disabled women who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, including recognizing, investigating, and prosecuting instances of such violence or assault and targeting outreach and support, counseling, and other victim services to such older and disabled individuals.
- a. **Need**
    - i. Funding
    - ii. Replicate the Buffalo County effort which has a separate CRT focused just on the needs of the elderly
- 17) Supporting the placement of special victim assistants (to be known as “Jessica Gonzales Victim Assistants”) in local law enforcement agencies to serve as liaisons between victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking and personnel in local law enforcement agencies in order to improve the enforcement of protection orders. Jessica Gonzales Victim Assistants shall have expertise in domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and may undertake the following activities –
- a) developing, in collaboration with prosecutors, courts, and victim service providers, standardized response polices for local law enforcement agencies, including the use of evidence-based indicators to assess the risk of domestic and dating violence homicide and prioritize dangerous or potentially lethal cases;
  - b) notifying persons seeking enforcement of protection orders as to what responses will be provided by the relevant law enforcement agency;
  - c) referring persons seeking enforcement of protection orders to supplementary services (such as emergency shelter programs, hotlines, or legal assistance services); and
  - d) taking other appropriate action to assist or secure the safety of the person seeking enforcement of a protection order.
- a. **Current** - None
  - b. **Need**
    - i. Training of Jessica Gonzales Victim Assistants
    - ii. Partner with Victim/Witness Units and the NE Coalition for Victims of Crime
- 18) Providing funding to law enforcement agencies, victim services providers, and State, tribal, territorial, and local governments (which funding stream shall be known as the Crystal Judson Domestic Violence Protocol Program) to promote -
- a) the development and implementation of training for local victim domestic violence service providers, and to fund victim services personnel, to be known as “Crystal Judson Victim Advocates,” to provide supportive services and advocacy for victims of domestic violence committed by law enforcement personnel;
  - b) the implementation of protocols within law enforcement agencies to ensure consistent and effective responses to the commission of domestic violence by personnel within such agencies (such as the model policy promulgated by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (“Domestic Violence by Police Officers: A Policy of the IACP, Police Response to Violence Against Women Project” July 20013));
  - c) the development of such protocols in collaboration with State, tribal, territorial and local victim services providers and domestic violence coalitions.

Any law enforcement, State, tribal, territorial, or local government agency receiving funding under the Crystal Judson Domestic Violence Protocol Program under paragraph (13) shall on an annual basis, receive additional training on the topic of incidents of domestic violence committed by law enforcement personnel from domestic violence and sexual assault nonprofit

organizations and, after a period of 2 years, provide a report of the adopted protocol to the Department of Justice, including a summary of progress in implementing such protocol.

- a. Current** – None. At this time, Nebraska will not be addressing this purpose area.
  - b. Need**
    - i. Specialized Training
    - ii. Officer involved training for Crystal Judson DV Protocol
- 19) Identifying and conducting inventories of backlogs of sexual assault evidence collection kits and developing protocols and policies for responding to and addressing such backlogs, including protocols and policies for notifying and involving victims.
- a. Current**
    - i. NSP Crime Lab - not funded by STOP
    - ii. Develop policies & procedures to expedite processes
  - b. Need**
    - i. Expand notification services to victims
    - ii. Decrease backlog
- 20) Developing, enhancing, or strengthening prevention and educational programming to address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, with not more than 5 percent of the amount allocated to a State to be used for this purpose.
- a. Current** – none, not supported with STOP funds
  - b. Need**
    - i. Outreach to underserved populations
    - ii. Outreach to LGBTQ community
    - iii. Sexual Assault outreach in rural areas

## **2. Types of programs and projects supported with STOP dollars.**

STOP funds support a variety of programs and services across Nebraska that coordinate effective response for victim safety and offender accountability and create opportunities for change. Among the projects supported are state agencies that focus on statewide coordinated responses. These types of projects operate out of the Nebraska Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation, the Nebraska State Patrol and the state Attorney General’s Office. At the Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation the primary purpose is the development and training of probation officers and judicial personnel including judges across the state. At the state Attorney General’s Office prosecution is targeted at 71 rural counties with only part-time County Attorneys. Because it is rare for prosecutors in these areas to have expertise in intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking this strategy has proven critical. The Nebraska State Patrol project focuses on law enforcement training, technical assistance needs and victim safety. This project handles foreign protection orders and facilitates the statewide Coordinated Response Team (CRT) which is currently facilitating Nebraska’s informal review of domestic violence fatalities.

It is expected that STOP funds will support local coordinated response team efforts. These types of projects comprise the majority of STOP funded subgrantees. Currently, 19 coordinated response teams bring together local leaders to identify needs, gaps and to provide community planning to respond to intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking. Local teams operate in each of the state’s 10 largest communities (Omaha, Lincoln, Bellevue, Grand Island, Kearney, Fremont, Norfolk, North Platte, Hastings and Columbus). These projects fund personnel such as advocates, police officers and prosecutors and services including but not limited to language supports; culturally specific services; shelter; tribal emergency services; outreach efforts and batterer intervention programs.

## **Distribution of Funds/Allocation Categories**

Categories - Nebraska distributes STOP funds across the criminal justice and victim services systems according to allocations set forth by the Violence Against Women's Act. Of the total funds granted to the state 25% will be provided to law enforcement; 25% to prosecution; 30% to victim services of which at least 10% will be distributed to culturally specific services providers; 5% to the courts and 15% for discretionary funds. Of these amounts, no more than 10% will be designated for administrating the STOP grant program. In addition, 20% of the funds will be set aside for projects that are among at least two (2) of the required allocation categories that meaningfully address sexual assault. The distribution of the 15% discretionary funds will include additional support within all the designated categories including sexual assault however, this will be determined when funding decisions are made.

PREA – Should Nebraska not be in full compliance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), 4.75% of the total STOP funds will either be directed to projects within the required categories that address needs to achieve compliance or these funds will be returned to the Office of Violence Against Women. The exception to the 4.75% will be the 5% of STOP funds designated to the Courts. In November, 2013, to begin coordinating services to prisoners who are victims of sexual assault a meeting was held with representatives from the Department of Corrections, the Crime Commission and the Nebraska Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Coalition. As a result, the group identified initial concerns and issues, advocate training needs, current gaps in coordinated response and possible solutions.

### **3. Documentation from prosecution, law enforcement, court and victims services**

See Attachment 3 – Letters Regarding Grant Funds

### **4. Sexual Assault Set Aside Plan**

To achieve the 20% allocation for sexual assault set aside steps will implemented with the grant process and distribution of fiscal year 2014 STOP funds. Since Nebraska lags a year behind in awarding STOP funds, opportunities for the sexual assault set aside will be announced in the grant solicitation issued in November, 2014 with full implementation by March 7, 2015. Nebraska will fully achieve the 20% set aside by allocating funds toward sexual assault efforts across at least two of the required categories of law enforcement, prosecution, courts and victims services.

A significant portion of Nebraska's efforts will focus on determining that meaningful sexual assault services are supported. To achieve this, the STOP application process will be revised to require the identification of strategies and practices that projects are utilizing and the percentage of funds committed to these efforts. This will then be monitored through existing systems such as quarterly reporting, on-site program visits and the annual STOP report.

To help prepare projects, prior to the initial 2014 announcement, training will be made available on the STOP requirements under the VAWA 2013 Reauthorization which will offer information and discussion on the sexual assault allocation and options for funding. In addition, all materials that apply to the grant application process will provide instructions regarding the emphasis on meaningful sexual assault services.

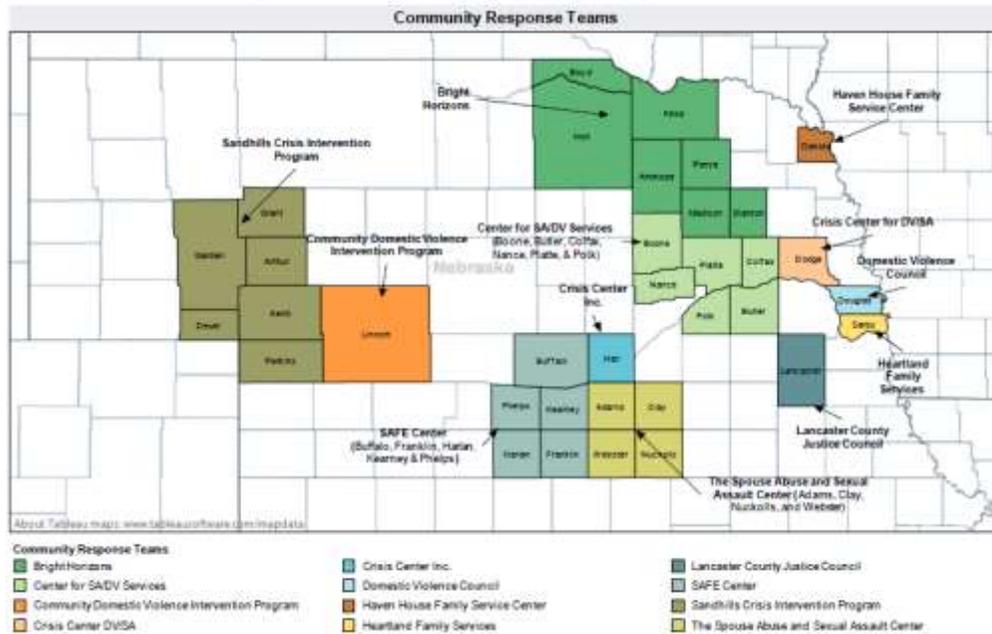
Historically, Nebraska's grant application for STOP funds has required projects to indicate a percentage of commitment to intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking crimes. During the most recent grant cycle, 100% of projects noted a commitment to sexual assault crimes. Overall, among all projects a total of 22% was committed to sexual assault crimes. Based on the annual STOP report for 2013 projects indicated 19.27% of funded services dedicated to sexual assault.

## D. Grant-making Strategy

### 1. How Nebraska will give priority to areas of varying geographic size with the greatest showing of need based on the availability of existing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking programs.

To reach the areas of greatest need among Nebraska's priorities will be STOP funding to support coordinated community responses to intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking. This strategy allows flexibility within projects to be able to meet the needs of areas of various geographic sizes. Map 3 is a display of the community-based Coordinated Response Teams funded across the state. To support these efforts the STOP grant program will use a competitive grant application process for all eligible applicants. New applicants will be encouraged to apply including local and statewide projects and those in areas lacking intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking programs. To ensure all priority areas are reached, those areas not currently served by community based projects will be addressed through statewide approaches. To avoid duplication of services only one (1) application from a community-based Coordinated Response Team will be accepted and applicants will be required to identify the community to be served by indicating the counties involved. Finally, the grant review process will ask that projects identify services that are currently available in the area along with gaps or areas of greatest need.

**Map 1. Nebraska Community Response Teams**



### 2. How Nebraska will determine the amount of subgrants based on the population and geographic area to be served.

All grant requests that meet eligibility and program requirements for STOP funds will be reviewed and considered for funding. Applicants will be required to describe the community to be served and provide population data. Subgrant amounts will be based on several mitigating factors including population, area to be served, scope of project and the requested amount and project's costs effectiveness.

**3. How Nebraska will equitably distribute monies on a geographic bases including nonurban and rural areas of various geographic sizes.**

To ensure that STOP funds are equitably distributed across the state the STOP grant program will do the following:

- The grant application will require projects to identify the areas to be served to determine whether the project will address the entire state or target rural and/or urban areas.
- The grant review process will involve representatives of nonurban and rural areas.
- The Crime Commission comprised of members across the state will make all final grant decisions.

**4. Description of methods to be used for solicitation/review proposals and selection of subgrant projects and for which sectors these methods apply.**

Solicitation for the STOP grant program will be electronically announced and the application kit and detailed instructions will be posted to the Crime Commission website. Selection of subgrant awards will be guided by the standardized process outlined in the Crime Commission Operating Instructions. Each application will be required to include the following:

- Description of the problem;
- Statistical documentation of the problem;
- Solutions;
- Goals, measurable objectives and performance indicators;
- Activities and timetable to address the problem;
- Budget and budget narratives supporting the request of funds;
- Statistics and supporting documentation showing underserved populations in the community needing services; and
- If applicant is a Coordinated Response Team, evidence of membership.

Applications for award will be considered based on the following:

- Eligibility of the applicant;
- Adherence to federal and state requirements and guidelines;
- Completeness, clarity, continuity and consistency of the written application. The application shall include all sections and information as outlined in the grant application instructions;
- Ability and capacity of the proposed program to make an impact on the identified problem;
- Other resources available to address the problem including an explanation of how the grant applicant's proposal will work with and/or coordinate with existing resources;
- Cost effectiveness of the proposed project;
- Amount of funds available; and
- If previously funded, the performance and ability of the applicant to manage a grant program, including the timely submission of required reports to the Nebraska Crime Commission.

Key to making funding determinations will be evidence of criminal justice agencies and victim service agencies, at a minimum, working together to effectively fill gaps for which funds are requested. Applications can demonstrate a commitment of non-federal funds to the project to indicate support and efforts towards sustainability.

Each application will receive four (4) levels of review. The process will begin with a technical review followed by a staff review and a committee review. Recommendations from the committee review will be presented to the Crime Commission for final funding decisions. The committee review and the Crime Commission meeting will be conducted in accordance Nebraska’s Open Meetings Act. Following the committee review applicants will be provided written notification of the recommendation that will be presented to the Crime Commission. At that point, projects denied or recommended for decreased funding may submit a written appeal.

**5. Grant Cycle Timeline**

November	Solicitation announced.
January	Applications due to Crime Commission. STOP Administrator conducts technical review.
February	Staff Review Team meets to critique applications and make initial funding recommendations. Team includes at least three members with relevant knowledge in the area.
March	Crime Commission Grant Review Committee meets to vote on funding recommendations to be forwarded to the full Commission. Applicants notified of committee recommendations.
May	Crime Commission hears all written appeals and votes on final funding determinations. Applicants notified of approval/denial.
June	Grant Awards and Special Conditions due to the Crime Commission. Grant Management Training is conducted for subgrantees.

**6. Whether Stop subgrants will be funded on a multiple or single-year basis.**

STOP awards will be on a single-year basis. Projects will be allowed to request extensions in situations where additional time is warranted.

**7. How Nebraska will ensure that any subgrantees will consult with victim service providers.**

In the course of completing a STOP grant application the applicant must complete a series of questions. Among the required questions is a certification that during the development of the application victim service providers were consulted with in order to ensure the proposed activities are designed to promote the safety, confidentiality and economic independence of victims. In addition, applicants will be required to submit letters of support to demonstrate such consultation with victim services.

See Attachment 4 – Letters of Consultation

## **E. Addressing the Needs of Underserved Victims**

### **1. How Nebraska will recognize and address the needs of underserved populations.**

A significant portion of Nebraska's ongoing statewide planning efforts will focus on the needs of underserved populations. This will include refining efforts to identify these populations and their needs as well as, trends among emerging populations. Planning efforts will continue to involve key stakeholders representing underserved populations.

Coordinated Response Teams will continue to be promoted as an effective means for providers of underserved populations to participate in the state's STOP grant program and community response efforts. Any culturally specific organization that experiences a barrier to joining a Coordinated Response Team will be allowed to directly apply to the Crime Commission for STOP funding.

To ensure that underserved populations have opportunities to be involved in policy making, community planning efforts and program development the state's STOP grant award process will require Coordinated Response Teams to include culturally specific service organizations as active members.

Outreach to underserved populations will continue to be an activity encouraged and supported through the STOP grant program. Subgrantees will be held to standards which ensure for all victims that services are easily accessible, civil rights are honored and language and cultural barriers are effectively addressed. Subgrantees will be provided opportunities for technical assistance and training on grant management and effective uses for STOP funding.

### **2. How Nebraska plans to meet the set aside for culturally specific community based organizations.**

The solicitation for STOP funding will include details regarding the state's obligation and the amount available as set aside for culturally specific community based organizations. Since 2010, when the set aside for culturally specific services was implemented, the allocation for these activities has fallen short of meeting the requested need from subgrantees.

### **3. How Nebraska will ensure that monies set aside to fund culturally specific services and activities for underserved populations are distributed equitably among those populations.**

During the grant review process all requests to support culturally specific services will be identified. These requests will be cross referenced with the required STOP funding categories. Distribution of funds will be determined based on funds available, amount requested, project's location and population to be served. Of Nebraska's Victim Services funds, distributed across the state, projects that serve underserved populations will be given priority.

### **4. Subgrantees that meet the required 10% set aside for culturally specific organization within the victim services allocation.**

Nebraska has two projects receiving the 10% set aside for culturally specific organizations, the Lancaster County Justice Council and the Domestic Violence Council of Douglas County. Under these two subgrantees that are also Coordinated Response Team are contracted partnerships with culturally specific organizations. Of the funds, Lancaster County Justice Council receives 37% and the Domestic Violence Council 63%.