

Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice

**NEBRASKA's 2007-2009
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT
STATE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**THE S.T.O.P.
(Services • Training • Officers • Prosecutors)
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT
(VAWA) GRANT FUNDS**

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**NEBRASKA'S 2007-2009
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NEBRASKA 2007-2009 STATE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Grant Funds

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Community Description

Nebraska is primarily an agricultural state with the largest portion of its population residing in the metropolitan areas located in the eastern part of the state. Nebraska consists of 77,355 square miles, 93 counties varying in size from 247 square miles to 6,009 square miles and has a population of 1.7 million. Many of the 93 counties are sparsely populated but large geographically. Agriculture and ranching are the primary industries, but in recent years there has been a significant increase in various types of industries located across the state, such as meat packing plants. There has also been a significant increase from 1990 to 2000 in minority populations residing in the state as shown below.

1990 TO 2000 U.S. CENSUS POPULATION CHANGES FOR NEBRASKA			
Nebraska	1990	2000	2004 (estimate)
White	1,495,071	1,533,261	1,506,167
African American	57,862	68,541	60,619
Asian and Pacific Islander	12,629	22,767	24,827
American Indian and Alaska Native	12,855	14,896	9,021
Other	----	47,845	61,665
2 or more races	----	23,953	34,214
Total Nebraska Population	1,578,417	1,711,263	1,696,513
Hispanic Origin, any race	36,969	94,425	118,227
Total Minority Population	120,315	272,427	-----

Source: Nebraska Databook and U.S. Census Bureau

B. Problem Description

The problem VAWA funds will address is domestic violence and sexual assault. The identified problems will be addressed by improving the criminal justice system's response to women who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Law enforcement, prosecutors, probation, courts, other criminal justice representatives, and victim service providers statewide must work together to identify needs, gaps and solutions for their community to create comprehensive, positive changes in the way the criminal justice system responds to these victims.

C. Development of 2007-2009 VAWA State Implementation Plan

Section II explains how community meetings were held across the state to gather input for the VAWA State Implementation Plan. The VAWA Advisory Subcommittee met to focus and enhance the information received during the community meetings. Following the meetings, a draft Plan was presented to the VAWA Advisory Committee for any additional feedback and was approved to be presented to the Crime Commission Committee for finalization. The State Plan was then presented to the Crime Commission Committee and was approved.

Due to the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act changes were made to some of the process and requirements for the State Implementation Plan. Nebraska became aware of these changes after the main core of the State Implementation Plan was developed and approved. Focus meetings were held to update the plan to meet the new funding purpose which is the cultural specific set-aside that focuses on underserved victims. The Focus meetings were held across the state to gather input on underserved populations and gather input on how the cultural specific set-aside funds would best be utilized in Nebraska.

D. Use of 2007-2009 VAWA Funds

The gaps and needs identified statewide and reflected in this Plan represent the voice and ideas of the state. During the meetings positive feedback and ideas were generated. Communities applying for 2007-2009 funds will need to identify and prioritize their needs and request funds accordingly and within the "framework" of this Plan and the Request for Proposals (RFP).

Based on input received statewide, 2007-2009 VAWA funds will continue to be used for:

- √ Coordinated Response Efforts and Coordinated State Response
- √ Needs of Unserved and Underserved Victims
- √ Offender Accountability
- √ Public Awareness and Education
- √ Training and Technical Assistance
- √ Victim Services and Safety

The priorities for 2007-2009 VAWA funding are improved services to unserved and under served victims through coordinated efforts locally and/or statewide, and a statewide coordinated response to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault to promote and ensure victim centered services and system accountability.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PLANNING PROCESS

A. VAWA Advisory Committee

In 1995, Governor Nelson designated the Crime Commission as the state agency responsible for the administration of the federal Stop Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Formula Block Grant Program. A VAWA Advisory Committee was established later that year to develop Nebraska's initial strategy for this program as well as an award process for the federal grant funds. The Strategy includes a plan of action to address issues (gaps/needs) relating to the criminal justice system's response to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as identifying the most effective and efficient use of VAWA grant funds. The VAWA Advisory Committee has continued to be involved with the development of the State Implementation Plan and grant review process. The VAWA Advisory Committee and Crime Commission Grant Review Committee review all the grant applications and makes funding recommendations to the Crime Commission Committee. The 27 member multi-disciplinary VAWA Advisory Committee, appointed by the Crime Commission Committee, includes representatives from state and local law enforcement, minority organizations, prosecution, courts, probation and victim service providers from rural and urban areas across the state. (See Attachment B and D for membership listing).

B. Development of 2007-2009 VAWA State Plan

October, 2005 – Community meetings were held in various locations through out the state to gather input on accomplishments, gaps/needs and solutions from community members. At the end of every community meeting the attendees were asked to prioritize the ideas that were discussed during the meeting. These

areas were then specified on the toolkit for the VAWA Advisory subcommittee to use. (See Section C)

January, 2006 - VAWA Advisory subcommittee (see Attachment C) met to review and focus the feedback that was an outcome of the community meetings. The VAWA Advisory subcommittee received a toolkit prior to the meeting, which compiled all the feedback provided at the community meetings. The toolkit allowed for the subcommittee members to know which gaps/needs were viewed as a priority in the community meetings. The toolkit was used as a focus point during the VAWA Advisory subcommittee meeting to help develop the 2007-2009 State Plan. The VAWA Advisory subcommittee focused primarily on the development of prioritized gaps/needs and detailed solutions that would be used in the State Plan. The following is a sample of the toolkit which, was used to breakdown the community feedback and allow subcommittee members to expand on the identified priorities.

2007-2009 State Plan Development Toolkit					
<u>Accomplishments</u>	<u>Gaps/Needs</u>	<u>Solutions</u>	<u>Resources Available</u>	<u>What Does the Solution Involve?</u>	<u>Who is Responsible for the Solution?</u>
Consider the accomplishments since VAWA funds became available.	What gaps/needs remain to be addressed in relation to domestic violence and sexual assault in your community.	What are the solutions to the gaps?	What resources are already available? What resources can be utilized to help with the solution?	List what would be involved to implement the solution.	List who would be responsible for oversight, implementation, etc.?

** NOTE: The toolkit was used for the input regarding domestic violence and sexual assault.*

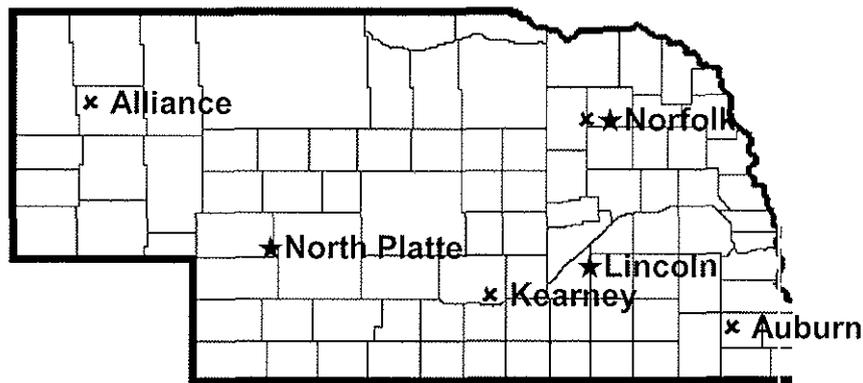
September, 2007 – Community meetings were held in various locations through out the state to gather input on accomplishments, gaps/needs and solutions from community members specifically on underserved victims. At every meeting the attendees were asked to prioritize the underserved population in their area and gaps/needs. These ideas were compiled and provided to the VAWA Advisory Committee and Grant Review Committee (see Attachment D) for further input. (See Section C)

C. October, 2005 - Community Meetings and September, 2007 Focus Meetings

October, 2005 Community Meetings -The Crime Commission staff invited representatives from law enforcement, prosecution, probation, courts and non-profit victim service agencies from across the state to attend a meeting in their area to assist in the development of the 2007-2009 VAWA State Plan (see map below). Agencies were asked to share the invitation with other appropriate community agencies such as medical and mental health providers and other interested individuals. Information was provided at these meetings on the purpose of the VAWA funds, how the funds are currently used, discussion of other funding sources used for the State’s VAWA effort and to highlight accomplishments of VAWA funding. However, the primary purpose of the meetings was to provide an opportunity for communities to provide input about what is working in their communities, what gaps and needs remain, and what are suggestions for solutions for improving the criminal justice system’s response to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. At the end of each meeting the attendees were asked to pick three to five of the discussed gaps/needs to be marked as a priority. Concerned individuals were invited to provide written input if they could not attend a meeting. All of the feedback (prioritized and non-prioritized gaps/needs) generated in the community meetings was compiled and put into a toolkit for the VAWA Advisory subcommittee. The identified prioritized gaps/needs were marked on the toolkit so subcommittee members were aware of the main focus of the community meetings.

September, 2007 Focus Meetings - The focus of the Focus Meetings was to update the core plan with more detailed information on underserved victims. The same process as the community meetings was followed. All the information was compiled and provided to the VAWA Advisory Committee and Grant Review Committee to review and provide feedback on major changes. (See map below for meeting locations)

Community Meetings 2007-2009 State Plan



★ October 2005 Community Meetings
 * September 2007 Focus Meetings

D. Input From Statewide Meetings and VAWA Advisory State Plan Subcommittee

At the community meetings held across the state, Crime Commission staff provided an opportunity for individuals to share accomplishments, identify gaps/needs and solutions that need to be part of the State Plan. While meetings were held in different areas of the state, similar messages were heard. A toolkit was prepared after the community meetings for the VAWA Advisory subcommittee. The toolkit was used as a resource for subcommittee members to utilize during the meeting to focus and prioritize the State Plan. The VAWA Advisory subcommittee members were asked to consider the gaps/needs identified and provide input on what the solutions would involve and who would be responsible for the oversight and implementation of the solution. The input received for accomplishments, gaps/needs and solutions fit primarily into the following seven categories:

- ✓ Coordinated Response Efforts and Coordinated State Efforts
- ✓ Legislation Issues
- ✓ Offender Accountability
- ✓ Public Awareness and Education
- ✓ Training and Technical Assistance
- ✓ Needs of Unserved and Underserved Victims
- ✓ Victim Services and Safety

Although many accomplishments were identified during this process, it was agreed that most of the accomplishments continue to remain as gaps to varying degrees and a plan of action is needed for each gap. Following is a summary of the gaps and needs provided at the statewide meetings and by the VAWA Advisory Subcommittee. This does include the input from the Focus Meetings held on underserved victims, which is discussed in more detail in Section IV (See Attachment A for a detailed listing of accomplishments, gaps/needs and solutions, which are broken down by domestic violence and sexual assault).

E. Domestic Violence / Sexual Assault Identified Gaps and Needs

The following identified gaps and needs are listed according to the seven primary areas of need identified at the statewide meetings. Many could be listed in multiple categories.

Coordinated Response Efforts and State Response Efforts

- Educating Judges on Pre-sentence Investigations
- Use of alternative witnesses or information if victim is reluctant or does not want to participate in prosecution of the case
- Statewide listing of trained attorneys for domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking issues
- Coordinated response team standards/policies
- Services statewide to respond to victims and ensure victim safety
- Systems accountability to promote positive response to victims on a consistent basis
- Standards to promote and monitor 'best practice' response to victims by a coordinated response effort
- Consistent judicial response, statewide, for issues of victim safety and offender accountability in cases of domestic violence, sexual assault and protection orders
- Standard approach to support a victim who is involved in a violation of a protection order
- Promote victim education on protection orders and outcomes that will be part of the process
- Dual arrests and, aiding and abetting issues.
- Child custody matters be part of protection orders
- Law enforcement officers available to do a 'Standby' for a victim to retrieve belongings
- Difficult to have law enforcement enforce a protection order issued by a tribal reservation or another state
- Communication within a Coordinated Response Team (CRTs) needs to continue
- Statewide consistent response to sexual assault victims
- CRTs continue to focus on sexual assault victims

Legislation Issues

- Legislation to address accountability of sexual assault offenders
- Restructure protection orders to be victim centered
- Protection order legislation include probation and judges utilizing Batterer Intervention Programs
- Required in-service training on domestic violence and sexual assault for all law enforcement

Offender Accountability

- Consistent enforcement of the Firearm Laws (statewide).
- Struggles finding qualified male facilitators for Batterer's Intervention Programs (BIP) in rural areas
- Lack of jails to transport offenders to for mandatory 12 hour hold (rural areas)
- Lack of preventative approach on issues of domestic violence, i.e., adolescent groups, adult groups, presentations in schools, etc...
- Limited referrals to BIPs
- Need more approved BIPs, specifically in rural areas
- Consistent judicial response, i.e., no bond without appearing before judge, cash bond, no contact order placed on bond, mandatory 12-hour hold, violation of a protection order, etc.
- Acceptance of BIPs by judges
- BIP 'best practice' model, specific for rural areas
- Improve prosecution and investigation skills for sexual assault cases

Public Awareness / Education

- Raise general awareness with presentations done with various groups (Ex. churches, workplaces, minority/cultural groups, schools, etc...)
- Information to unserved/underserved victims that domestic violence is a crime that won't be tolerated
- Statewide recognition/acceptance of domestic violence
- More information available on sexual assault

Training / Technical Assistance

- Limited adult sexual assault training, i.e., proper investigative practices, investigative reports, rape kit collection, gathering medical evidence, interviewing a victim, etc.
- Upholding victim confidentiality in rural areas
- Difficulty tracking or receiving statistics from key agencies to show the community's response to victims
- Training on Firearm Laws
- Training for specific issues experienced by Tribal program
- Trainer(s) that are experts in issues of domestic violence and sexual assault that will train Coordinated Response Team (CRTs) and be part of statewide training
- Annual statewide training for new issues and information
- Difficulties providing training, i.e., staff turnover, cost of training, paid overtime to attend training, not enough staff available to maintain agency coverage, resistance to attend training, keeping up with issues in the community, etc...
- Continuous training for CRTs addressing issues of domestic violence and sexual assault
- Available training/technical assistance not fully utilized
- Training on evidence based prosecution versus using or relying on victim testimony
- Training on cultural issues
- Train Judges on domestic violence issues in regards to protection orders
- Victims and offenders receiving information about their responsibilities in the protection order process
- Training about sexual assault for all agencies, i.e., consent, date rape drugs, acquaintance rape
- Trained medical staff regarding sexual assault, especially in rural areas, i.e., SANE/SART nurses, emergency room staff, etc...
- Overall improved investigation abilities with evidence gathering for sexual assault cases

Underserved Victims

- Difficult to recruit interpreters
- Programs struggle with cost of interpreters
- Available interpreters for several different languages/dialects that are not high cost
- Outreach to underserved victims in various languages
- Education for interpreters, used by the criminal justice system, to maintain victim confidentiality
- Increased needs of underserved victim populations for services, i.e., non-English speaking, elderly, Native Americans, disabled, hearing disabled, individuals with mental health issues and/or rural area women.
- Long-term/second level care for underserved victims
- Lack of bilingual personnel in all areas to eliminate 3 person communication (victim, interpreter and advocate)
- Lack of deaf interpreters
- Buy in leaders in with a culture to provide input and partner with efforts to serve victims in the specific population.
- Limited Batterer Intervention programs available for non-English speaking offenders.
- Training for criminal justice agencies involved in rape investigations where drugs and alcohol were involved.
- Increased specialized sexual assault services provided in rural areas to allow victim to stay in community and not have to travel to a different city/town for services.
- Education and cultural training needed for all criminal justice agencies, victim services programs and state assistance agencies.
- Gain trust within the culture in order to provide services.
- Difficult to get accurate details if a family member or child is used to interpret.
- Counselors available to work immediately with victims who suffer from mental illness.
- Limited mental health facilities in Nebraska.
- Counselors and/or treatment facilities that is affordable to victims to receive treatment.
- Difficult for law enforcement to get need case details if victim is unable to provide detailed information due to a mental disability or illness.
- Outreach and education to underserved populations to explain violence is not tolerated and what laws are in place that will be enforced.
- Identify effective steps to outreach to underserved victims in various cultures.
- Limited medical and financial assistance available for Illegal Immigrants who are victims of sexual assault.
- Outreach and education to underserved cultures to explain reportable crimes such as intimate partner rape, incest and statutory rape.

Victim Safety / Services

- Increased availability of second level care to victims, i.e., job skills training, educational needs, support groups, transitional living, financial assistance, child care, etc.
- Programs provide services and support to the victim from the time of arrest/incident to the prosecution of the case (timeframe can vary from case to case)
- Assistance for victims who attend court and don't have support for their children
- Educate victims on how to complete a self-petition
- Limited volunteers in rural areas
- Struggles with availability of staff to be on-calls
- Need earlier access to victims after the incident to provide for immediate needs
- Lack of sexual assault and domestic violence prevention programs to educate high risk teens
- Victims may have difficulties comprehending the process or making a decision in regards to getting a protection order
- Areas with high dual arrests or arrests of a petitioner for aiding and abetting violation of a protection order
- Ongoing advocacy for sexual assault victims
- Availability and accessibility to a trained SANE nurse in rural areas
- Difficult to provide immediate assistance to sexual assault victims
- Sufficient funding for Crime Victims Reparations (CVR) program
- Sexual assault cases difficult and time consuming to prosecute
- Need to recognize the criminal justice system is adversarial and must learn to work within such system

It is evident from the extensive list of gaps/needs there remains much to accomplish with the VAWA funds along with other resources. In addition, there are ongoing systemic issues such as budget issues affecting jail sentencing and turnover in personnel. It was also noted the criminal justice system, overall, is an adversarial system but it is the system we must work within.

Nebraska continues to show the need when looking at state statistics regarding domestic violence and sexual assault victims. In 2004, 597 Forcible Rapes were reported and this is an increase from 495 in 2003 (Crime in Nebraska preliminary report 2004). This is only one form of sexual assault and those numbers represent the population that chooses to report the incident to the police. The Annual Statistical Report completed by the Nebraska Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition indicates there were 64 adult survivors of incest or child sexual abuse, 319 adolescent sexual assault, 125 child sexual abuse and 223 adult sexual assault victims served by Domestic Violence Sexual Assault programs statewide (Report period is 10/1/2003 to 9/30/2004). These victims were served by the domestic violence and sexual assault programs whether they reported the crime to the police or not. The need for sexual assault victims is still a reality in Nebraska.

Domestic violence is another issue that affects every community throughout the state. VAWA funded programs, statewide, show that in their communities in 2004, 18,932 domestic violence related calls were made to law enforcement. These same programs show in their communities 7,413 protection orders were filed and 6,471 were granted. Advocacy for victims is a key piece to victim services. In Nebraska a focus of VAWA funding is Enhanced Advocacy. This advocate is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week that can be called by law enforcement. When law enforcement encounters a domestic violence or sexual assault incident they are able to call the enhanced advocate. At that time the advocate can come to the scene, meet the victim at a secured location or set up a meeting with the victim to meet within the next 24 hours. Programs that received referrals from law enforcement for enhanced advocacy provided face to face and/or phone contact to 1,723 victims within 24 hours of the incident, and 1,020 victims after 24 hours of the incident. The Nebraska Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition shows 151 child physical abuse, 194 dating violence, and 3,886 domestic violence victims being served by the programs. Domestic violence continues to be an issue that needs to be addressed. VAWA funds will continue to be utilized to make the criminal justice system's response immediate to victims and support their needs.

Applications for 2007-2009 VAWA funds will provide the flexibility for new and innovative programs. Applicants will be asked to consider the gaps and needs voiced statewide and request funds accordingly. These gaps and needs will be listed in the RFP along with any priorities for funding. Attachment A provides the solutions identified at the statewide meetings to address the gaps and needs.

III. 2007-2009 VAWA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN PRIORITIES AND APPROACHES

A. Relation of 2007-2009 VAWA Plan to Prior Implementation Plans

The goal of Nebraska's 2007-2009 State Plan remains the same as in prior years and states:

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

Nebraska will continue to build on previous years' efforts and successes in the 2007-2009 State Plan. Since the VAWA funds became available, they were used primarily to establish, maintain and enhance Coordinated Response Teams/Efforts (CRT). A CRT is defined as a local group of representatives from law enforcement, prosecution, probation, victim services and other agencies who work together in a coordinated manner to improve the criminal justice system's response to women who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Nebraska communities applying for continued 2007-2009 VAWA funds for CRTs are expected to show how they have expanded from implementing and maintaining CRTs to enhancing the effort in their community. Many communities have moved from the discussion mode to the action mode where positive results are both measurable and recognizable. Law enforcement, prosecution and other agencies are working directly with each other to resolve problems, i.e., prosecutor contacts law enforcement for more information in order to prosecute. This direct communication enables the overall response to victims and offenders to improve. This direct communication between agencies is expected to become a routine way of doing business in communities with established coordinated response efforts.

Coordinated efforts have also expanded statewide. A VAWA grant to the Nebraska State Patrol provides for the training of new State Patrol recruits and in-service training for State Patrol veterans. The grant funded position also developed training for local law enforcement agencies, particularly rural agencies. Because 83 percent of Nebraska's local prosecutors are part-time, the Nebraska Attorney General's office received VAWA funds for a dedicated prosecutor to provide prosecutorial assistance for domestic violence and sexual assault cases in rural communities. In addition, Probation has 15 districts and 950 probationers who are on probation due to domestic violence or related domestic violence issues. Probation receives VAWA funds for a Domestic Violence Specialist who is dedicated to developing the system to hold offenders accountable and assist with getting domestic violence specialized officers put in various districts. All three of these positions and their respective agencies are involved in statewide training efforts. These three grants work hand in hand with a new Coordinated Response Team effort that is statewide and is directed by the Attorney General's office. The Attorney General's office is working with the Grants to Encourage Arrest. With these initiatives joining together they will be able to reach out to more agencies (especially rural areas), provide frequent training, have training that is current with issues the communities are dealing with and many more positive outcomes will be seen due to this enhancement.

Input gathered statewide supports continued need for Coordinated Response Teams/Efforts (CRTs) to work toward addressing the gaps and needs identified in this plan which are relevant to their communities. Additionally, the Coordinated Response Teams/ Efforts show the need for systems accountability within the Coordinated Response Teams. The gaps and needs identified for this aspect again are relevant statewide and

have solutions that are accessible by the communities to implement.

It should also be noted there are some communities that have never received VAWA funds. However, the community's leaders recognized the need to come together to address issues and make changes. Such efforts show that changes may not always require funds, but rather the commitment from key leadership and the community. The model for ALL communities in Nebraska should be a coordinated response effort and VAWA funds will continue to be used to support these efforts. However, communities in Nebraska are unique and one size does not necessarily fit all. The challenge is to maintain or increase the momentum of the established coordinated response efforts in years to come. Along the way of establishing the Coordinated Response Teams/Efforts statewide 'best practices' for areas to use as a building block will be identified, which supports CRT's to enhance in all areas. Sharing 'best practices' will assist many CRTs throughout the state and the flexibility of the 'best practice' will be a key piece for communities with unique features.

The Nebraska Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition receives direct funding from the Office of Violence Against Women and, continues to coordinate, provide training, technical assistance and support to the communities receiving VAWA funding. They also work closely with the Nebraska State Patrol, the Nebraska Attorney General's Office and the Nebraska Supreme Court on VAWA funded education and training projects. They are also looking at the need for statewide policies and, at minimum, are working to gain some consensus on this issue. All of these key pieces will continue to be enhanced by the working relationship of all the entities involved in the Grants to Encourage Arrest and VAWA funded programs.

B. Major Shifts in Direction

Input from across the state does not support a need to make any major shifts in direction. The priorities of previous plans were:

- √ Coordinated Response Efforts
- √ Needs of Unserved and Underserved Victims
- √ Offender Accountability
- √ Public Awareness and Education
- √ Training and Technical Assistance
- √ Victim Services and Safety

There was an addition to one of the priorities, which increases the focus on the Coordinated Response Efforts to enhance into the statewide level. This enhancement is to include Coordinated State Response, which supports the need for systems' accountability. This additional aspect will strive for an enhancement of support provided to victims and response to victims, while providing services to victims in a positive, empowering manner.

Each of these priorities was identified at the VAWA meetings held across the state and there is a continued support for VAWA funds to be utilized for the identified purposes. Although a major shift in direction is not warranted, the primary concerns voiced at the meetings was the limited efforts to address State Coordinated Response, systems' accountability along with the underserved and unserved victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Unserved and underserved efforts have been a priority of previous State Plans, but efforts will continue throughout the state to meet the needs in this area. Input from the VAWA Advisory Committee and the statewide meetings document the need to ensure these areas to be a funding priority. Identified gaps and needs include:

- √ Creating 'best practice' models for Coordinated Response Efforts for rural and urban areas
- √ Continuous training statewide on priority issues and updated information
- √ Leadership for Statewide Response Efforts
- √ Improvement of services, support and response to victims by promoting system accountability
- √ Underserved victim populations, i.e., non-English speaking, rural, immigrants,

minority, undocumented women, Native American women, women with disabilities need link to service organizations

- √ Interpreters needed statewide for various languages
- √ Lack of bilingual personnel in all areas of system
- √ Training on issues or problems encountered by unserved and underserved victims

C. Use of 2007-2009 VAWA Funds and Identification of Priorities for Funding

❖ *Federal Guidelines for Use of VAWA Funds*

2007-2009 VAWA STOP (Services, Training, Officers, Prosecution, Courts) Program subgrantees will meet one or more of the statutory program purpose areas as identified in the Violence Against Women Act of 2005. The emphasis of the VAWA STOP Program, as stated in federal guidelines, continues to be the implementation of comprehensive strategies addressing violence against women that are sensitive to the needs and safety of victims and hold offenders accountable for their crimes. Projects should include implementing community-driven cultural specific initiatives to address the needs of underserved populations as defined by the Violence Against Women Act of 2005, including people with disabilities and elder victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking and address sexual assault through service expansion; development and implementation of protocols; training for judges, other court personnel, prosecutors, and law enforcement; and development of coordinated community responses to sexual assault.

❖ *Requests for Continuation of VAWA Funding*

Each VAWA funded community requesting continuation funds must collaboratively determine their needs, prioritize their needs and request VAWA funds accordingly and within the guidelines of the VAWA funds and the needs identified statewide. Given the limited amount of funds available and given the application process is competitive across the state; there may not be sufficient funds for full funding of previous projects. This plan does not serve to preclude any efforts previously funded; however, the VAWA State Plan Subcommittee identified the need for VAWA funds to be used for enhance services to unserved and under served victims and to build Coordinated Response Efforts to be part of a Statewide Coordinated Response.

Coordinator positions were funded in previous years to implement and oversee CRTs. In the beginning, the Coordinator's role was largely administrative and responsible for bringing agencies together, organizing meetings, gathering statistics, working with agencies to develop and implement policies and procedures, defining agency roles, developing a criminal justice response plan, tracking cases and organizing training. Many of these activities should now be completed or require considerably less time. Many activities should now be the responsibility of individual agencies. Communities must evaluate their CRT to determine if a paid coordinator position is vital to the CRT's continued improvement and success or if there are greater needs in the community, i.e., paralegal, a probation liaison to work with the victims of domestic violence probationers, a prosecutor, a law enforcement officer, someone to work with the victim and offender to follow up on protection orders, clerical help for criminal justice agencies or advocates to provide immediate response to victims. CRT programs requesting continuation funds are expected to clearly state how their CRT will improve because of the VAWA funds. In addition, CRT's must show they have active participation from the key stakeholders within the community or area.

❖ *How Communities Should Determine Requests for 2007-2009 VAWA Funding*

Communities must answer the question of how their community can BEST utilize the VAWA funds and work together to determine what is needed to do a better job. Specifically, law enforcement, prosecution, probation, and victim service providers, at minimum, should work in a coordinated way to identify needs, gaps and solutions for their community and including the needs of unserved and under served victims. Those coordinated response teams that have been established for some time need to evaluate and start

involving other needed agencies and representatives (Health and Human Services, Medical Personnel, etc...). Communities will then need to prioritize their identified needs and ask for funds accordingly. Communities should also consider if there are changes to be made that would require only the time and commitment of leadership in the community.

Applicants requesting funding for a CRT are required to have a written a criminal justice domestic violence improvement plan. The plan should identify gaps, needs and solutions in the local criminal justice system when addressing domestic violence cases. The plan should clearly state the role of each agency to insure domestic violence victims are provided coordinated assistance at each stage of the criminal justice system. Established CRTs should be developing a similar plan to address sexual assault.

Regardless of the funding requested, there must be community involvement in the development of applications for VAWA funds. Involved agencies must have the opportunity to provide input on the application and review it prior to submitting it to the Crime Commission. It is important for all agencies in a community to take ownership in the VAWA program regardless of which agency applies for the funds. Ownership includes, but is not limited to, ensuring procedures are followed, ensuring everyone receives training, ensuring complete law enforcement reports are provided for prosecution and providing information and statistics needed by the Crime Commission in a way that is not a burden to any one person or agency.

❖ **Priorities for 2007-2009 VAWA Funding**

2007-2009 VAWA funds will be distributed as per the guidelines of the Violence Against Women Act which requires 25% be provided to law enforcement, 25% to prosecution, 30% to victim services (10% of victim services will go to culturally specific community based organizations) and 5% to the courts. The distribution of the 15% discretionary funds will be as needed among the four categories and will be determined when funding decisions are made.

Based on input received statewide, VAWA funds and coordinated efforts must continue to meet the following needs:

- √ Coordinated Response Efforts and Statewide Coordinated Efforts
- √ Offender Accountability
- √ Public Awareness and Education
- √ Training and Technical Assistance
- √ Needs of Unserved and Underserved Victims
- √ Victim Services and Safety

These remain the same needs identified in previous Plans. However, the VAWA Advisory Subcommittee identified coordinated response efforts locally and statewide, and services for unserved and underserved victims as a priority of 2007-2009 funding which, was supported statewide. It should be noted services to unserved and underserved victims was a priority need in previous State Plans. However, the requests for funding to address this need have been minimal. The request for proposals for 2007-2009 VAWA funds will identify coordinated response efforts and, underserved victims as a priority for funding. Funding requests to improve and increase services to underserved victims must be made through the CRT making application. Services to minority victims could be provided by replicating successful programs, developing materials that are culturally appropriate and in the appropriate language, hiring of bilingual staff, developing a pool of interpreters for use statewide, funds set aside for interpreters, or a new and innovative program could be proposed. Services for the cultural specific set-aside must show the program will focus on domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and staking victims; focuses on the underserved population's unique needs; provide tailored services to meet the unique needs; has the expertise to work with these victims; and has to

demonstrate the capacity to work effectively with these victims in the underserved populations. Applications for 2007-2009 VAWA funds will be asked to identify underserved victims in their community, what services are currently provided, what services are needed, the number of victims served, the coordination with the local Coordinated Response Team and expertise of working with the population in any proposal submitted.

❖ **Types of Programs to Be Supported with 2007-2009 VAWA Funds**

2007-2009 VAWA funds will continue to be used to build and enhance coordinated response efforts and to address the issues identified statewide including:

- √ Coordinated Response Efforts and Statewide Coordinated Efforts
- √ Offender Accountability
- √ Public Awareness and Education
- √ Training and Technical Assistance
- √ Needs of Unserved and Underserved Victims
- √ Victim Services and Safety

However, priority funding will be considered for unserved and under served victims as defined by VAWA. Possible solutions for these priority funding areas identified by the VAWA Advisory subcommittee and at the statewide meetings include:

- √ Programs to ensure a consistent, fair response by all agencies
- √ Technical assistance provided by a team approach in rural areas
- √ Assistance through cultural community centers
- √ Use television, newspaper advertisements
- √ Partner with Cooperative Extension and other appropriate community agencies
- √ Working with schools
- √ Interpreters for non-English speaking victims
- √ Developing a pool of bilingual interpreters to be used statewide
- √ Increasing bilingual law enforcement officers
- √ Statewide bilingual hotline with access to multiple languages

Many of the solutions could be supported with the VAWA funds but, many require primarily the commitment of leadership both locally and statewide. The RFP will serve to define programs that can be VAWA funded.

Only one application from a community will be accepted for 2007-2009 funds for a Coordinated Response Team/Effort (CRT). Consideration will also be given to providing assistance to sparsely populated rural communities who may never have a complete Coordinated Response Team but need some help to improve investigations and prosecutions of domestic violence and sexual assault cases. Law enforcement and prosecution agencies in these small communities may apply directly for funds for an identified need that will directly improve the criminal justice response to domestic violence and sexual assault, and particularly unserved and under served victims. Funding could be requested to meet an identified need to serve unserved and underserved victims, for overtime for officers to address domestic violence/sexual assault offenses, for the prosecutor to improve prosecution of domestic violence cases, for training, etc. Small communities could also coordinate with an existing Coordinated Response Team/Effort in their region, if there is one.

Communities can contact the Crime Commission to discuss how the funds could be used in their community within the purposes of VAWA and how they can access technical assistance and training to improve their response to domestic violence and sexual assault.

Overall, 2007-2009 VAWA funds may be used for personnel and related expenses, training and technical assistance to improve the criminal justice system's response to domestic violence and sexual assault, programs to increase outreach to unserved and underserved women who are victims of domestic violence and/or sexual

assault, increasing public awareness about domestic violence and sexual assault and its issues, enhancing local or statewide coordinated response efforts, improving systems' accountability, enhancing victim services and holding offenders accountable.

D. Grant Award Process

Crime Commission Operating Instructions provide guidelines for awarding grant funds administered by the Crime Commission. Applications for 2007-2009 VAWA funds are to include:

- √ A thorough description of the problem
- √ Relevant statistical documentation of the problem
- √ Relevant solutions to address the problem
- √ Goals, measurable objectives, performance indicators
- √ Activities and timetable relevant to addressing the problem
- √ Budget and budget narratives supporting the request of funds
- √ Statistics and supporting documentation showing underserved populations in the community needing services.

When considering applications for award, the following are considered:

- √ Ability of the proposed program to address 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
- √ If previously funded, the performance and ability of the applicant to manage a grant program, including the timely submission of required reports to the Crime Commission

A key element in making funding determinations will be evidence of criminal justice agencies and victim service agencies, at a minimum, working together to be effective in filling the gap for which funds are requested. Applicants will be requested to show the commitment of funds other than VAWA to the project to show support and to help insure success and sustainability.

Following is the timeline for awarding 2007 VAWA funds.

- **November, 2007** - Grant Announcement mailed to more than 1,300 law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, victim service providers and other appropriate agencies. The announcement provides information about the VAWA funds and how to apply for funds.
- **February, 2008** - Grant Applications due in Crime Commission Office
- **March, 2008** - Staff Review Committee meets to review and critique submitted grant applications and make funding recommendations.
- **April, 2008** - The VAWA Advisory Committee meets to make funding recommendations on 2008 applications. Funding determinations and recommendations made by the Staff Review Committee and the VAWA Advisory Committee are based on, but not limited to:
 - (1) The focus of the project and how well it addressed the goal of the state plan.
 - (2) The geographic area of the state requesting funds based on need. Consideration given to population size and diversity of the area to be served; resources available within the area to be served; how the

proposed project compliments or enhances existing resources; how well the proposed project was planned and supported by law enforcement, prosecution, probation and victim services; and, the number of domestic violence victims and/or sexual assault victims benefited as well as how they would benefit.

(3) The cost and sustainability of the proposed project.

- **May, 2008** - Nebraska Crime Commission makes final funding determinations
- **June, 2008** - Grant Management Training provided to representatives from the awarded projects. Information includes how to complete required forms, when the forms are due, how to maintain financial records, data gathering, etc. Program representatives have the opportunity to discuss their program, how it operates and what they are trying to accomplish.
- **July, 2008** - Date tentative. Crime Commission staff provides project planning and grant writing training.

Grants are awarded using the standardized grant process as stated in the Crime Commission's Operating Instructions. Grants recommended for denial have the opportunity to appeal the denial but only on the basis stated in the Operating Instructions.

E. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Crime Commission works with subgrantees to ensure information needed for good funding decisions is gathered. Applications for 2007-2009 VAWA funds will again request statistics specific to each coordinated response to enable better funding decisions and to help determine what has changed because of the VAWA funded coordinated response effort. Statistics requested in 2007-2009 applications will include the following for a three year period, if available.

- **Law Enforcement** - Number of domestic violence related calls to law enforcement, number of related domestic violence and sexual assault arrests / custodial arrests, number of children present during domestic violence incident.
- **Protection Orders** - Number of protection orders filed, number granted and number violated.
- **Prosecution** - Number of domestic violence and sexual assault cases reviewed, number charged, number found guilty, number of cases where charges dismissed, number of cases found not guilty and type of sentence.
- **Victim Services** - Number of victims referred by law enforcement to victim services and provided direct advocacy within 24 hours and after 24 hours.
- **Underserved Persons** – Number of victims seeking services that could not be served.
- **Batterer Program** - Number of offenders enrolled in batterer's program, number completing the program, number terminated from the program, and number returned to program after termination.
- **Coordinated Response Team** – Number of developed, revised and implemented policies and procedures and what type of agency was involved.

These statistics are currently required, along with others, on a quarterly basis from all funded Coordinated Response Teams/Efforts.

The Nebraska Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition coordinates quarterly consortium meetings for VAWA funded coordinated response efforts and other pertinent issues statewide. These meetings provide updates of what is going on in the different communities, an opportunity to share resource information and an opportunity to provide training. The meetings have been very beneficial to new and continuation subgrantees.

Financial monitors of VAWA funded programs are conducted annually to ensure funds are used appropriately, there is satisfactory documentation of awarded and matching funds and agencies have an acceptable method of accounting for federal and matching funds.

Crime Commission staff does programmatic monitors of subgrantees by conducting site visits and reviewing activity and statistical reports sent into to the Crime Commission. Activity reports are provided quarterly. Part one of the activity report provides the activities and successes that have occurred during the quarter, any problems encountered and how problems were addressed. Part two reports on the measurable objectives that were stated in the grant application.

IV. ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

A. Underserved Populations

The populations identified from input across the state provided various populations that were underserved because of their geographical location, race and/or ethnicity, or special needs (i.e. language barriers, disabilities, alienage status, age, etc...). The prioritized populations will be the main focus for the cultural specific plan in Nebraska. The populations identified were:

- ✓ Non-English Speaking
 - Spanish/Hispanic*
 - Sudanese*
 - Asian
 - Arabic
- ✓ Native American*
- ✓ Rural Women*
- ✓ Mental Health Disabilities*
- ✓ Illegal Immigrants*
- ✓ Substance Abuse Issues
- ✓ African American
- ✓ Elderly
- ✓ Deaf/Hearing Impaired
- ✓ Children/Teens

* Populations identified as a priority.

In addition, a number of victims who are deemed as difficult to reach out to and provide comprehensive services to that do not fit directly into the federal definition were identified. The types of victims identified were: male victims; homosexual victims; stalking victims; sexual assault victims; victims with a criminal background; victims who are repeatedly victimized; and, victims who come from families that have passed violence down from generation to generation.

B. Cultural Specific Community Based Set-aside

Nebraska continues to work on the growth of Community Response Teams (CRTs) across the state and work toward the enhancement of these CRTs. Since the VAWA funds became available, they are used primarily to establish, maintain and enhance CRTs. A CRT is defined as a local group of representatives from law

enforcement, prosecution, probation, victim services and other agencies who work together in the coordinated manner to improve the criminal justice system's response to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence.

Input gathered statewide supports the partnership of cultural specific organizations, such as a cultural center, with a domestic violence sexual assault program that has a CRT in place and fully functioning. The cultural center will be an active member of the CRT. This partnership will promote the enhancement of CRT's across the state. This partnership will look at combining the expertise of those who work with domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence victims with those who have the expertise on a specific underserved population that has been identified as a priority. This will allow victims to have the expertise services that will assist with the specific victim issues and specific cultural needs.

Applications for 2007-2009 funds will provide the guidelines and requirements for this partnership. Applicants will be asked to consider the gaps and needs voiced statewide and request funds accordingly. These gaps and needs will be listed in the RFP along with prioritized underserved populations. Attachment A provides the solutions identified at the statewide meetings to address the gaps and needs for underserved populations.

V. CONCLUSION

Each community in Nebraska is unique. VAWA funds will help to ensure the positive changes in how the criminal justice system in Nebraska responds to women who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault will continue even if the VAWA funding ends. Changes will be sustained because of policy and procedure changes, changes in agencies' daily operations, training, technical assistance and established ongoing working relationships.

Funding from the Violence Against Women Act will not always be available but it can be used now, along with other funding, to help stop the violence against women by creating permanent changes in Nebraska's criminal justice system. These changes will provide fair and consistent responses to domestic violence, sexual assault and all violence against women in our state.

ATTACHEMENT A

<p align="center">Domestic Violence Accomplishments</p>	<p align="center">Domestic Violence Gaps/Needs</p>	<p align="center">Domestic Violence Solutions</p>
<p>Coordinated Response Efforts/ State Response Efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Improved collaboration and relations between victim service programs and criminal justice agencies. -Coordinated Response Teams (CRTs) continue enhance positive response to victims. -Coordinated Response Teams established partnerships with schools. -Visible increase of specialized units statewide in the areas of Investigations, Prosecution and Probation. -Probation continues cooperative efforts statewide with victim service programs by response to domestic violence cases (approaching judge to hold offenders accountable, willingness to discuss concerns of victim safety, etc...). -Health and Human Services is collaborating with Coordinated Response Teams (CRTs). -More offenders are being held accountable because of the guidelines for Batterer Intervention Programs (BIP). 	<p>Coordinated Reponse Efforts/ State Response Efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Communication within Coordinated Response Teams (CRTs) needs to continue and difference of opinions should not negate accomplishments. -Educating Judges on Pre-sentence Investigations (consistently ordered). -Use of alternative witnesses or information if victim is reluctant or does not want to participate in prosecution of the case. -Statewide listing of trained attorneys for domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking issues. Rural areas have difficulty finding available attorneys. The attorneys would be utilized in civil cases, divorce, child custody, etc... - Development of Coordinated Response Team (CRTs) standards/policies that support both rural and urban areas. -Services statewide to respond to the victim and support victim safety. -Systems' accountability for those key stakeholders to help promote positive response to victims and offender accountability on a consistent basis throughout the criminal justice system. -Standards to promote and monitor identified best practices that are recommended for Coordinated Response Teams (CRTs) to utilize on a consistent basis. -Consistent statewide Judicial response for issues of victim safety and offender accountability in cases of domestic violence, sexual assault and protection orders. - Development of a standard approach to support victims who are involved in a violation of a protection order. (aiding and abetting) -Education and communication within communities to prevent a victim protection order violation or arrest of Aiding and Abetting. -Promote victim education on protection orders and outcomes that will be part of the process. 	<p>Coordinated Response Efforts/ State Response Efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identify leadership to work with CRTs Statewide. These identified individuals need to be accessible statewide. -Courts and Prosecution accept the use of witness statements and proceed with the case with evidence based/victimless prosecution. -Resources available statewide to support the use of evidence based prosecution for Judges and prosecutors. -Development of 'best practices' for Presentence Investigations. -Training for law enforcement and prosecution regarding evidence collection and evidence based prosecution. -Communication between County Attorney's offices and Victim Service programs. -Empowerment of victim to make their own choices. -Communication should continue during court process with the victim. - Keep community members aware of CRT progression and identify the supportive key stakeholders. -A statewide committee that will discuss issues that are taking place across the state with domestic violence and sexual assault. This will be a piece of leadership in the state to educate and train on the issues. -Listing of attorneys that have been identified or volunteered to provide services to victims. -Attorney General's Office is available for prosecutorial guidance or advice for case of domestic violence and sexual assault. -Identify best practice models or standards for Coordinated Response Teams that fit various areas of the state and follow the guidelines of the grant funds. -Frequent training for criminal justice agencies that make referrals to victim service programs. -Coordinated Response Teams share relevant statistics.

Domestic Violence <i>Accomplishments</i>	Domestic Violence <i>Gaps/Needs</i>	Domestic Violence <i>Solutions</i>
<p>Coordinated Response Efforts/ State Response Efforts cont'd</p> <p>Legislation -Legislation passed for stricter penalties for strangulation -Propose legislation (LB93) implement surcharges offenders are responsible to pay. Funds would be used for the victim compensation program and victim services.</p> <p>Offender Accountability -Enforcement of mandatory 12 hour hold of offenders after arrest with no bond agreement unless county attorney is involved. -Batterer Intervention Programs (BIP) have experienced an increase in attendees because more offenders are being court ordered to attend and more individuals are attending on a volunteer basis. -More Batterer Intervention Programs have been implemented statewide. -Judges and court personnel have shown an increase in knowledge for domestic violence issues. -Increase seen in cases charged and penalties to hold offenders accountable. -Specialized units in Probation have been a partner in the efforts to hold offenders accountable and continue to work with victim service programs. Ex. Probation liaison and DV Probation Officer. -Statewide Batterer Intervention Program standards are in place and being utilized by programs.</p>	<p>Coordinated Response Efforts/ State Response Efforts cont'd - Child custody matters be part of protection orders -Law Enforcement officers available to do 'Standbys' for a victim to retrieve belongings. -Enforcement of protection orders that are issued by a tribal reservation or another state. -Educating Judges on protection orders to enhance knowledge in any specific circumstances that protection orders can be applied for. -Leadership needed statewide to educate and promote on the issue of enforcement of protection orders.</p> <p>Legislation -Restructure protection orders to be victim centered -Legislation for protection orders to clarify illegal and legal contact to avoid arrests of Aiding and Abetting -Legislation to include in protection orders the use or referral to Batterer Intervention Programs -Required in-service training on domestic violence and sexual assault for all law enforcement officers</p> <p>Offender Accountability -Offender can return or resume contact with victim after 12 hour hold. -More certified Batterer Intervention Programs, specifically in rural areas. -Lack of a preventative approach to address issues of domestic violence, i.e., adolescent groups, adult groups, presentations in schools, etc... -Limited referrals to Batterer Intervention Programs. -'Best practices' for Batterer Intervention Programs, specific in rural areas. -Lack of jails to transport offenders to for mandatory 12 hours.</p>	<p>Coordinated Response Efforts/ State Response Efforts cont'd -Neutral facilitator, to avoid biases, to lead training for Judges. Make domestic violence curriculum part of new Judge training. -Identify resources or other states that prohibit, 'Aiding and Abetting' arrests for violation of a protection order. -Clarify language in protection orders to address illegal contact, allowable legal contact, and grounds for violation of a protection order. -Protection orders available in different languages -Both parties (petitioner and respondent) involved in a protection order need to be educated on the parameters and guidelines of the order. -Coordinated Response Teams work on developing and implementing policies for law enforcement officers to do 'Stand-bys'". -Training for law enforcement officers on enforcing protection orders from other states and tribal reservations.</p> <p>Legislation -Develop and propose changes in legislation to promote victim safety and 'best practice' response. Research the steps taken by other states that have approached these issues</p> <p>Offender Accountability -No contact order be issued or a written in condition of the Bond Release. -Standards for Batterer Intervention Program available for different models/practices in rural areas. -Rural areas work with neighboring cities/counties to increase referrals. -Provide training to the Coordinated Response Team and outreach information to community to promote preventative steps in domestic violence. -Implement an increased hold of 24 hours before the offender can be released on a cash bond.</p>

Domestic Violence <i>Accomplishments</i>	Domestic Violence <i>Gaps/Needs</i>	Domestic Violence <i>Solutions</i>
<p>Public Awareness/Education -Statewide training held for criminal justice agencies and victim services programs. The training explains: new laws; statutes that affect the response to domestic violence and sexual assault victims; identifying the prominent aggressor; confidentiality between victim and advocate; and child advocacy centers advising law enforcement about their services. -Public Awareness and outreach activities have increased individuals from rural areas seeking services. -Rural areas receive support from local media and newspapers. - Statewide public awareness training has been available for individuals in the criminal justice system -Training opportunities have been provided to HHS to promote appropriate responses to domestic violence and sexual assault victims. -Consortium meetings provide training and resources for coordinated response efforts -Training opportunities available for judges, law enforcement, probation, prosecution, victim advocates, HHS and others.</p> <p>Training/Technical Assistance -Increased training opportunities to promote appropriate responses to domestic violence and sexual assault victims have been provided to HHS. -Consortium meetings provide training and resources for coordinated response efforts. -Statewide training was available for judges, law enforcement, probation, prosecution, victim advocates, HHS and others</p>	<p>Offender Accountability cont'd -Acceptance of Batterer Intervention Programs by Judges. -Consistent judicial response, i.e., no bond without appearing before judge, cash bond, no contact order placed on bond, mandatory 12 hour hold, violation of protection order, etc... -Struggles finding qualified male facilitators for Batterer's Intervention Programs (BIP) in rural areas. -Consistent enforcement of Firearm Laws (statewide).</p> <p>Public Awareness/Education -More presentations needed to reach different groups. -Struggle with collecting and organizing information for the development of public awareness announcements. -Unserved/underserved victims need information that domestic violence won't be tolerated. -Need to increase general public awareness of domestic violence (statewide).</p> <p>Training/Technical Assistance -Continuous training for Coordinated Response Teams (CRTs) addressing issues of domestic violence. -Difficulties providing training, i.e., staff turnover, cost of training, paid overtime to attend training, not enough staff available to maintain agency coverage, resistance to attend training, keeping up with issues in the community, etc... -Annual statewide training for new issues and information. -Trainer(s) that are experts in issues of domestic violence that will train Coordinated Response Teams (CRTs) and be part of statewide training. -Training for specific Tribal program issues. -Training on Firearm Laws. -Difficulty tracking or receiving statistics from key agencies to show the communities response to victims.</p>	<p>Offender Accountability cont'd -Open communication between Batterer Intervention Program facilitators, probation officers, court and prosecution regarding offender's status in the program. -Public awareness to promote that volunteers are able to attend the Batterer Intervention Program. -Educate Judges on importance of Batterer Intervention Programs -Strengthen relationship with probation by including them in the operation of the Batterer Intervention Program, especially important in rural areas. -Consistent training of for enforcement of Firearm Laws. - Implementing stiffer penalties to hold domestic violence offenders accountable.</p> <p>Public Awareness/Education -Presentations to various groups, i.e., churches, workplaces, minority/cultural groups, schools, etc... -Work with school administrators to get information to students. -Public awareness efforts to identify where unserved/ underserved victims can go to receive services.</p> <p>Training/Technical Assistance -Develop a 'best practice' model for mandatory training and follow up after the training has been done to measure any changes in accuracy/consistency in the response to victims. -Coordinated Response Teams key stakeholders in the criminal justice system will update policies and procedures to reflect the 'best practice' models. -Training sessions need to be accessible to all key stakeholders and accommodating to different agency schedules. -Statewide training that addresses and educates the criminal justice system on the enforcement of the Firearm Laws. -A training team will serve as a leader throughout the state to work with and educate communities and Coordinated Response Teams.</p>

Domestic Violence <i>Accomplishments</i>	Domestic Violence <i>Gaps/Needs</i>	Domestic Violence <i>Solutions</i>
<p>Underserved Victims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increased outreach by bilingual advocates to Latino community -Increased availability statewide of bilingual advocates is a positive benefit for non-English speaking victims. -Increased victim services specific for African American victims. -Increased victim services to victims that suffer from a mental illness. - Statewide use of the Spanish Crisis Hotline. -Increased training on Native American culture for programs. - Shelters evaluating unique cultural needs to allow extended family members to access shelter services when appropriate. - Increased understanding by victim programs regarding Self Petitions for illegal immigrants. -Increased knowledge of mental health issues of victims. -Partnerships with victim programs and local residential facilities to coordinate services for victims with mental health and substance abuse issues. -Domestic violence shelters are open for community agencies to reach out to victims. -Increased availability of brochures for the Hispanic population that explains program services, information about domestic violence and sexual assault and other important community programs that can assist the victim. -Training provided for interpreters that may be called to with victims. -Goodwill services in rural areas assist and provide services for mental health victims. -A glossary of legal terms translated into Spanish is available for victims. -Increased NSP presence on Native American reservations to assist with domestic violence. - Increased coordination with Health and Human Services with victim programs. 	<p>Training/Technical Assistance cont'd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Upholding victim confidentiality in rural areas. -Available training/technical assistance is not fully utilized. -Training on evidence based prosecution. -Training on cultural issues. -Training for Judges and prosecutors on domestic violence issues in regards to protection orders. -Victims and offenders receive information about their responsibilities in the protection order process and after it is granted. <p>Underserved Victims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Difficulty recruiting interpreters. -Programs struggle with cost of interpreters. -Need a statewide listing of interpreters for several different languages/dialects that are not high cost. -Outreach to underserved victims in various languages. -Education on maintaining victim confidentiality for interpreters used by criminal justice system. -Increase needed services for underserved victim populations, i.e., non-English speaking, elderly, Native Americans, disabled, hearing disabled, individuals with mental health issues and/or rural area women. -Long term/second level care for underserved victims. -Lack of bilingual personnel in areas to eliminate 3 person communications (victim, interpreter and advocate). -Lack of deaf interpreters. -Training for the Health and Human Services Department on various cultures. -Training for domestic violence/sexual assault programs on various cultures. -Interpreters available for law enforcement to utilize to communicate with victims. -Enforcement of protection orders on Tribal reservations. 	<p>Training/Technical Assistance cont'd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Coordinated Response Teams will work together to collect statistics for the community to reflect the response to victims. The statistics collected must include the Federal requirements. -Coordinated Response Teams will discuss any discrepancies in the statistics or areas of concern regarding victim safety. The team will make a decision how to correct this situation. <p>Underserved Victims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Adequate number of bilingual advocates located in communities that show a need. - Cultural training for those who work with the underserved victims, both in the criminal justice system and victim services. -Enhance outreach to minorities by forming partnerships with in the community, churches or cultural centers. -Assessment by programs/communities to provide second level of care or long term care to underserved victims. -Statewide/local campaign to reach underserved victims. -Availability of materials/posters in various locations in different languages that address all the services available. -Develop statewide listing of interpreters that are available to work with programs. -Provide training/education about the importance of victim confidentiality. - Develop policies and procedures that will support victim confidentiality with working with interpreters from different agencies. -Support of the training from the criminal justice agencies. -Add cultural training to law enforcement academy curriculum. -Mandatory training for all members in the criminal justice system that work with victims.

<p align="center">Domestic Violence Accomplishments</p>	<p align="center">Domestic Violence Gaps/Needs</p>	<p align="center">Domestic Violence Solutions</p>
<p>Underserved Victims cont'd -Increased education and prevention programs for teens and parents in rural areas that focus on breaking negative relationships and building healthy relationships. -Bilingual Enhanced Advocates that are able to provide immediate assistance. -Increased number of bilingual law enforcement officers that are natives to an underserved populations. -Increased outreach to the Hispanic Population. -Training that focused directly on domestic violence in the African American culture. -Training that focused on victims whom are illegal immigrants and the laws surrounding this issue. -Increased awareness of the statewide Spanish hotline and local Spanish hotlines. -Enhancement of victim advocates skills to assist victims whom are illegal immigrants. -Programs have sought out and applied for funds that will assist with specialized counseling/therapy for those with mental health issues that are non-English speaking. -Growing list of available interpreters across the state.</p> <p>Victim Safety/Services -Victim empowerment continues to be a top priority of victim services programs. -Law Enforcement supports victims during crisis situations. -Increase number of volunteers willing to work with victim services. -Victims receive education about their rights, choices and possible outcomes of their decisions, which provides a better understanding of the criminal justice system. -Improvement in domestic violence investigations by law enforcement due to use of best practices for evidence collection, response to victims and calling an advocate out to the scene for support to the victim.</p>	<p>Underserved Victims cont'd -Holding Native American offenders accountable when they have fled to the reservation to escape law enforcement -Upholding victim confidentiality in rural communities. -Lack of prevention activities for children and teens. -Identify in local areas the leaders in a culture and make them part of efforts to serve victims. -Agencies working with victims need to gain trust in the cultural community. -Difficult to get an accurate story if a family member or child is relied on to interpret. -Education for victims and system agencies regarding issues where the victim must leave the residence in order to keep children. -Victims need immediate access to counselors so symptoms and trauma does not worsen. -Limited mental health facilities. -Need affordable counselors or treatment facilities for victims. -Difficult for law enforcement to get all details in a case when the victim is dealing with mental illness. -Limited services mentally ill victims who are involved in the criminal justice system. -Need increased awareness to various cultures to explain violence is not tolerated and explain the laws that support these views. -Continued outreach and communication with rural victims. -Criminal justice agencies have limited number of bilingual staff to assist with interpretation and to ensure forms are filled out correctly. -Need to identify effective ways to outreach to victims in various cultures. -Limited number of interpreters for the Asian and Sudanese population. -Limited number of Batter Intervention Programs available for non-English speaking offenders.</p>	<p>Underserved Victims cont'd -Specific HUD vouchers for homeless domestic violence victims. -Listing of attorneys available statewide that will work with illegal immigrants. -Prosecution agency develop polices to assist illegal immigrants who are victims of domestic violence. -A state team that is available to programs to assists or answer questions for illegal immigrants who are victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault. -Domestic violence/sexual assault programs conduct more fundraisers and/or apply for rural grants to assist with cost of reaching rural victims. -Meet the HIV certification put in place by VAWA so discretionary grantees will not loose 5% of funding. -Programs have mental health counselors within the agency. -Increase the access victims have to Health and Human Services. -Recruit and build a resource list for the underserved population in rural areas. -Request hospitals and mental health facilities to provide training to victim services and key stakeholders in the criminal justice system. -Identify mental health counselor who will work with victims and provide guidance to advocates if victim could become violent. -Have affordable services for low income victims to utilize that are culturally friendly. -Assist victims to continue on medication to ensure long-term mental health. -Educate interpreters to understand the importance to the victim of immediate response. -Motivate bilingual personnel in the criminal justice system with incentives, extra pay or bonuses.</p>

Domestic Violence Accomplishments	Domestic Violence Gaps/Needs	Domestic Violence Solutions
<p>Victim Safety/Services cont'd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Evidence based/victimless prosecution has been performed by courts/prosecution in various areas of the state. -Communities statewide have applied for and received other grant funds (rural/discretionary) due to the collaboration that was already established within the community and state. -Decrease in dual arrests statewide. -Increase in granted protection orders. -Increase in victims served by victim service programs -Victim services can adapt to victims' specific needs. -Many programs have been able to sustain and continue efforts to provide immediate response and services to victims. -Increase in completed victim impact statements. Increase in assistance provided by the advocate housed in the Probation office to help victims. -Victim service programs provide a safe environment for victims and uphold victim/advocate confidentiality. -VINE (Victim Information Notification Everyday) is being used statewide. 	<p>Victim Safety/Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Need more second level of care to victims, i.e., job skills training, educational needs, support groups, transitional living, financial assistance, etc... -Provide services and support to the victim from time of arrest/incident to the prosecution of the case. -Assistance for victims who attend court and don't have support for their children. -Educated victims on self-petition. -Limited volunteers in rural areas. -Struggles with availability of staff to be on-calls. -Need earlier access to victims after the incident to provide for immediate needs. -Lack of sexual assault and domestic violence prevention programs to educate high risk teens. -Victims having difficulties making a decision or comprehending the outcomes with protection orders. -Victims being arrested for aiding and abetting. -Sufficient funding for crime Victims Reparations (CVR) program. -Need to recognize the criminal justice system is adversarial and must learn to work within the system. 	<p>Underserved Victims cont'd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Criminal justice agencies seek additional funding by grant or in state/county/city budget to have interpreters available immediately for victims. -Coordinate with cultural center to provide training. -Coordinate with cultural center to provide services to victims. -Presentations to children/teen groups and schools. -Get school counselors involved. -Mentoring groups for teens to disclose in and receive information and services. -Parenting group for parent's to ask questions when child is in an abusive dating relationship to know what options are available. -Create manual or brochure for parents to utilize if child is in an unhealthy relationship. -Utilize media for outreach and PSAs. -Implement a prevention programs in school. Ex. Dare Program -Educate the family members on domestic violence in various cultures to end the family violence cycle that can be passed down from generation to generation. -Conduct a survey to identify the best way to approach and assist the victims in a specific culture. -Create a working group of victims or leaders from the culture to develop an outreach plan. <p>Victim Safety/Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Program has a complete array of services for victims that will be available from the time or arrest or incident until the case is resolved. -Second level of care or long term care should be available to those victims that need that step. -Victim advocates need continuous education to address the issue of domestic violence. -Programs develop sustainability and enhancement plans for their program.

Domestic Violence <i>Accomplishments</i>	Domestic Violence <i>Gaps/Needs</i>	Domestic Violence <i>Solutions</i>
		<p>Victim Safety/Service cont'd</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increase the number off enhanced advocates and those enhanced advocates that have bilingual capabilities. -Create policies and continue to educate law enforcement agencies to called the enhanced advocate immediately out to the scene. -Increase public awareness of services available to victims. -Recruit volunteers to be part of the program. -Educate advocates to assist victims with self-petitions -Research other steps taken by other states to promote victim safety with the use of protection orders. -Utilize statewide hotline to help provide resources or assistance with self-petitions.

Sexual Assault <i>Accomplishments</i>	Sexual Assault <i>Gaps/Needs</i>	Sexual Assault <i>Solutions</i>
<p>Coordinated Response Efforts/ State Response Efforts -Law enforcement is connecting quickly with the hospital/medical facility in regards to a victim of sexual assault, which provides immediate assistance and services to the victim during a critical time. -In some communities law enforcement has allowed the Child Advocacy Center to utilize the department's Forensic Interviewer to obtain critical information from the victim. -Child Advocacy Centers provide a team approach to assist victims.</p> <p>Legislation</p> <p>Offender Accountability -Sex Offender Registry is operational and widely used in Nebraska by Law Enforcement and citizens can obtain some information on different offenders. -DNA testing is being done in the criminal justice system and utilized for court cases.</p> <p>Training/Technical Assistance</p> <p>Underserved Victims -Increased inquires from hospitals about specialized sexual assault training. -Increased number of hospitals making SANE/SART nurses a priority. -Increased efforts by hospitals to utilize interpreters for language assistance to victims.</p> <p>Victim Safety/Services -Child Advocacy Centers assist and provide services to adult sexual crime survivors. -Sexual Assault victims are not billed/burdened with the cost for the Forensic Sexual Assault Exams. -Standardized Sexual Assault Exam kits are available at hospitals statewide. -Crimes Against Children funds have been established and supported with state funds. -Sex Offender Registry is available for citizens to utilize information to help promote safety.</p>	<p>Coordinated Response Efforts/ State Response Efforts -Inconsistent response to sexual assault victims at the statewide and local levels. - Coordinated Response Teams continue to focus on sexual assault victims.</p> <p>Legislation -Legislation to address accountability of sexual assault offenders. -Required in-service training on sexual assault for all law enforcement.</p> <p>Offender Accountability -Improved prosecution and investigation skills for sexual assault cases.</p> <p>Training/Technical Assistance -Limited adult sexual assault training, i.e., proper investigative practices, investigative reports, rape kit collection, gathering medical evidence, interviewing a victim, etc. -Trainers that are experts in issues of sexual assault that will train Coordinated Response Teams and be part of statewide training. -Continuous training for Coordinated Response Teams addressing issues of sexual assault. -Training about sexual assault for all agencies, i.e., consent, date rape drugs, acquaintance rape -Trained medical staff regarding sexual assault, especially in rural areas, i.e., SANE/SART nurses, emergency room staff, etc... -Need improved investigation abilities/ evidence gathering for sexual assault cases</p>	<p>Coordinated Response Efforts/ State Response Efforts -Statewide sexual assault training. -Accountability of response to victims should be consistently evaluated to promote victim safety. -Available statewide SANE nurse training. -Policies, procedures, or legislation that outlines how reports should be taken and how victims are referred to services. -Statutes that mandate the use of standard rape kits statewide.</p> <p>Legislation -Leadership agencies develop legislation to help guide the laws to protect and support sexual assault victims.</p> <p>Offender Accountability</p> <p>Training/Technical Assistance -SANE/SART training within the state -Develop best practices for criminal justice system to reflect in polices. -Training for law enforcement, prosecution, and judges to educate on testimony, interviewing and investigative techniques that are specific to sexual assault cases. Training can be broken up for each criminal justice agency, i.e., law enforcement, prosecution, courts, etc... -Education and training for the complex issues and different dynamics in sexual assault cases. -Training be part of law enforcement continued education credits (currently a legislative bill is being introduced to have mandatory 4 hours of training for domestic violence, could build on for sexual assault training).</p>

Sexual Assault <i>Accomplishments</i>	Sexual Assault <i>Accomplishments</i>	Sexual Assault <i>Solutions</i>
<p>Victim Safety/Services -VINE is available to notify victims or any individual that is concerned for their safety, about the status of an individual within the correctional system.</p>	<p>Underserved Victims -Training for the criminal justice system regarding the issues of rape where drugs and alcohol were involved. -Complete services for victims of sexual assault in rural areas to allow victims to stay in local area and be near their support system. -Illegal Immigrants who are victims of sexual assault cannot receive assistance with medical treatment and are not eligible to apply for assistance funds. Ex. Compensation Funds. -Sexual assault cases can be costly, time consuming and the victim may not want to participate, which makes it difficult to prosecute the case. -Difficult to explain and for various cultures to understand intimate partner rape, incest and statutory rape is a reportable crime in the United States. -Mentally disabled victims may not be able to share all the needed details or fully explain what happened to help with an investigation. Charges may be hard to press without the needed information.</p> <p>Victim Safety/Services -Ongoing advocacy for sexual assault victims. -Availability/accessibility to a trained SANE nurse in rural areas. -Difficult to provide immediate assistance to sexual assault victims. -Sexual assault cases difficult and time consuming to prosecute.</p>	<p>Underserved Victims -Utilize Enhanced Advocates in the area to provide support to the victim. -Provide training to all victim services programs and criminal justice stakeholders on the complex issues of sexual assault. -Mandate training for sexual assault issues for key stakeholders who work with victims. -Seek funding source to assist with cost of providing training. -Education to various cultures on sexual assault issues.</p> <p>Victim Safety/Services -Statewide hotline.</p>

ATTACHMENT B

STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT ADVISORY GROUP

(Includes Stop Violence Against Women Act Advisory Committee and Crime Commission Grant Review Committee)

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Tom Hunter, Director
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Revised 10-2005

ATTACHMENT C

2007-2009 VAWA State Plan Subcommittee

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ATTACHMENT D

STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT ADVISORY GROUP

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