Legislative Report for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Grant Program

Laws of Minnesota 2019, 1st Spec. Sess. chapter 9, article 11, section 108

FEBRUARY 2020
Legislative Report for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Grant Program

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As requested by Minnesota Statute 3.197: This report cost approximately $1,350 to prepare, including staff time, printing and mailing expenses.

Upon request, this material will be made available in an alternative format such as large print, Braille or audio recording. Printed on recycled paper.
Dear Senators Benson and Marty, and Representatives Moran, Kiel, Liebling, and Schomacker:

Domestic and Sexual Violence are significant public health and human rights issues in Minnesota. In 2019, the Minnesota State Legislature took a vital step to support prevention initiatives by directing the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to implement a Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Program. Pursuant to the Laws of Minnesota 2019, 1st Spec. Sess. chapter 9, article 11, section 108, the legislature appropriated $750,000 over the biennium to fund grants to nonprofit organizations to incorporate community-driven and culturally relevant practices to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault in Minnesota communities. The legislature allocated fifteen percent of the total program funding to MDH to promote and administer the program as well as to provide technical assistance to program grantees.

Pursuant to the legislation, MDH submits the enclosed report to describe initial implementation efforts as well as the expenditure of funds for the newly established Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Program. With this legislative funding, MDH has identified six grantees to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault in historically underserved communities in Minnesota using community-driven and culturally relevant practices. This report is the first of two required under the legislation.
If you have additional questions or comments, please contact Beatriz Menanteau, JD, violence prevention programs unit supervisor, Injury and Violence Prevention Section, Minnesota Department of Health (651.201.4154).

Sincerely,

Jan K. Malcolm
Commissioner
Minnesota Department of Health
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Executive Summary

Sexual violence and domestic violence are major public health problems in Minnesota. In their lifetimes, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 9 men are victims of domestic violence.\textsuperscript{1} For sexual violence, 1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men report being victims.\textsuperscript{2} Students of all backgrounds reported experiencing sexual and domestic violence on the Minnesota Student Survey, with some students experiencing violence at higher rates than others. Based on this data, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) found disparities in sexual and domestic violence victimization by race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, students with disabilities, and students facing economic hardships.\textsuperscript{3,4}

In 2019, the Minnesota State Legislature appropriated $750,000 over the biennium for a new Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Program.\textsuperscript{5} The legislature allocated fifteen percent of the total program funding to MDH to promote and administer the program as well as to provide technical assistance to program grantees. The remaining funds were allocated for grants to be awarded to nonprofit organizations for the purpose of funding programs that incorporate community-driven and culturally relevant practices to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault. This new program recognizes that domestic violence and sexual assault impact different communities in different ways, and, in turn, prevention efforts must be community-driven and culturally relevant to be effective. Grant goals include reaching communities that have historically been underserved by mainstream domestic violence and sexual assault prevention efforts and creating best practice recommendations for community-driven and culturally specific domestic violence and sexual assault prevention.

MDH is Sexual Violence Prevention Program collected input from community stakeholders through in person meetings and an online survey to inform the request for proposals (RFP) and review process. RFP was published on September 30, 2019 and closed on November 15, 2019. Twenty-nine organizations submitted applications. A committee of 32 reviewers, consisting of content experts and community members, scored applications and participated in review meetings. After considering the final scores, comments from reviewers, target populations, and geographic areas served, MDH selected six applicants for funding. See Table 1 for a brief description of all grant awards.

Pursuant to the legislative language, MDH submits this report detailing initial implementation efforts and the expenditure of funds. This initial report includes a description of all organizations receiving grant funds under this new program, as well as a description of the practices they will implement over the next two years. A

\textsuperscript{1} National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS). (2017). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

\textsuperscript{2} ibid.


\textsuperscript{4} Minnesota Student Survey, 2019.

\textsuperscript{5} 2019 Minn. Laws Chap.9, Art. 11, § 108, 1st Special Session.
second report will be submitted in February 2022 and will include additional information in keeping with the legislation.

**Table 1: Brief description of all grant awards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Target Population</th>
<th>Counties Served</th>
<th>Grant Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota</td>
<td>Lao, Vietnamese, Karen, Karenni, Bhutanese and Cambodian communities</td>
<td>Hennepin and Ramsey</td>
<td>$118,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEWA-AIFW, Inc.</td>
<td>South Asian communities</td>
<td>7-County Metro</td>
<td>$82,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somali Community Resettlement Services</td>
<td>Somali communities</td>
<td>Rice and Steele</td>
<td>$118,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upstream Arts</td>
<td>Adolescents with disabilities</td>
<td>Hennepin</td>
<td>$82,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Initiative for Self Empowerment (WISE)</td>
<td>Adolescent immigrants and refugees</td>
<td>Ramsey</td>
<td>$118,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women of Nations</td>
<td>Native American communities</td>
<td>7-County Metro</td>
<td>$118,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$637,500</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grant Awards**

**Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota**

Target Population: Lao, Vietnamese, Karen, Karenni, Bhutanese and Cambodian communities  
Counties Served: Hennepin and Ramsey  
Grant Award: $118,250

The Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota was created to respond to the urgent resettlement needs of thousands of fellow Lao refugees in Minnesota and beyond in 1983. The project will leverage collaborative partnerships already established in the Asian Pacific Islander (API) Women’s Health Coalition with Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota leading the work. Other members of the API Women’s Health Coalition include Vietnamese Social Services, United Cambodian Association of Minnesota, and Bhutanese Community Organization of Minnesota. Partners in the project will address domestic violence and sexual assault through culturally relevant victim services, outreach and education, a media campaign, and conversation circles in the community.
SEWA-AIFW, Inc.
Target Population: South Asian communities
Counties Served: 7-County Metro
Grant Award: $82,250

SEWA-AIFW, Inc. is a nonprofit organization committed to serving, supporting, and enhancing family wellness for the South Asian community. With this funding opportunity, SEWA-AIFW, Inc. will implement multi-generational educational workshops focused on understanding and maintaining healthy relationships and changing social norms within the South Asian community. As part of the evaluation, workshop participants will be encouraged to share their stories about how having healthy relationships created change in their lives and their families’ lives.

Somali Community Resettlement Services
Target Population: Somali communities
Counties Served: Rice and Steele
Grant Award: $118,250

Somali Community Resettlement Services was formed in 1999 by a volunteer network of Somali refugees to directly respond to the needs of Somali refugees and immigrants. To prevent and respond to sexual and domestic violence in the Somali communities of Rice and Steele counties, Somali Community Resettlement Services will collaborate with Healing Outreach Prevention Education (HOPE) Center, a sexual and domestic violence organization, to hire a new Somali Services Advocate.

Upstream Arts
Target Population: Adolescents with disabilities
Counties Served: Hennepin
Grant Award: $82,250

The mission of Upstream Arts is to use the creative arts to activate and amplify the voice and choice of individuals with disabilities. With this funding opportunity, Upstream Arts will bring The Art of Relationships to the students receiving special education services in the Minneapolis Public School District. The Art of Relationships is a unique arts-based program that educates individuals with disabilities on sexual health, safe relationships, and abuse prevention, while cultivating a culture of prevention within disability organizations, schools, and families.

Women’s Initiative for Self Empowerment (WISE)
Target Population: Adolescent immigrants and refugees
Counties Served: Ramsey
Grant Award: $118,250

Women’s Initiative for Self Empowerment (WISE) was founded in 1995 by a group of multicultural, first generation immigrant women as a vehicle for educational, leadership, social, and economic empowerment for
immigrant and refugee women and girls. WISE will implement a new sexual violence prevention program and social media campaign with immigrant and refugee high school student groups in Saint Paul.

**Women of Nations**

Target Population: Native American communities  
Counties Served: 7-County Metro  
Grant Award: $118,250

Women of Nations was founded in 1982 as a community advocacy program serving Native American women who were victimized by domestic violence. In 1992, Women of Nations opened the Eagle’s Nest Shelter in Saint Paul, Minnesota. With this funding opportunity, Women of Nations will provide sexual health education to individuals and families receiving services at Eagle’s Nest Shelter, as well as to youth served through Native American youth-serving organizations. Women of Nations will also do outreach with Native American communities and host roundtable discussion to develop new strategies to prevent violence.

**Conclusion**

MDH is grateful for the opportunity to work with the six aforementioned organizations to learn and support new community-driven and culturally relevant domestic violence and sexual assault prevention efforts. MDH will continue to work with each grantee to meet the legislatively required evaluation components of this grant program, as well as to support continuous quality improvement throughout the two-year grant period. Pursuant to the legislation, MDH will submit a second report to the legislature on the findings from this grant program, including best practice recommendations, in February 2022.