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# National Institute of Justice

## S o l i c i t a t i o n

*Jeremy Travis, Director*

*May 1999*

### **Evaluation of a Multi-site Demonstration for Enhanced Judicial Oversight of Domestic Violence Cases**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: July 9, 1999**

**U.S. Department of Justice**  
**Office of Justice Programs**  
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800-421-6770

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**Office of Justice Programs**  
**World Wide Web Site:**  
*<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov>*

**National Institute of Justice**  
**World Wide Web Site:**  
*<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>*

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## Evaluation of a Multi-site Demonstration for Enhanced Judicial Oversight of Domestic Violence Cases

### I. Introduction

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Violence Against Women Office (VAWO) are collaborating on a demonstration program aimed at reducing domestic violence through enhanced judicial oversight, victim safety, and offender accountability. VAWO is directly supporting four demonstration sites with funding from their Grants to Encourage Arrest Program and NIJ is supporting the evaluation of the demonstrations. This announcement is for a single evaluation to measure the added value resulting from the changes and enhancements made at each of the demonstration sites.

#### Letter of Intent

Researchers can help in a significant way by sending NIJ a nonbinding letter of intent by June 14, 1999. The Institute will use these letters to forecast the numbers of peer panelists it needs and to identify conflicts of interest among potential reviewers. There are two ways to send these letters. You can reach NIJ by Internet by sending e-mail to [tellnij@ncjrs.org](mailto:tellnij@ncjrs.org) and identifying the solicitation, or you can write a letter with the same information to Judicial Oversight Demonstration Evaluation, NIJ, 810 Seventh Street NW, Washington, DC 20531.

Proposals are solicited to evaluate the multi-site demonstrations of enhanced judicial oversight and sanctioning of domestic violence offenders. The purpose of the demonstrations is to test the hypothesis that strong judicial oversight of domestic violence offenders together with extensive graduated sanctions for offenders and comprehensive services for victims will reduce

reoffending, increase accountability of the defendant and the system, and insure victim safety.

Like all research-demonstration programs sponsored by NIJ, an award will be made to conduct an independent evaluation of the demonstrations. The evaluator chosen by NIJ will be expected to work closely with the demonstration sites, NIJ staff, and an Evaluation Program Board. This solicitation makes \$500,000 available for the first stage of the multi-site evaluation; up to \$2.5 million is anticipated for the entire multi-year evaluation expected to extend to five years.

### II. Background

The Judicial Oversight Demonstration Initiative is a joint effort of the Office of Justice Programs' Violence Against Women Office and the National Institute of Justice. The initiative will support demonstration projects in 3 – 4 communities that wish to build upon an existing *coordinated community response* to domestic violence by managing offenders' behavior through frequent judicial oversight, provision of batterer intervention programs, intensive supervision of offenders, and comprehensive advocacy and services to the victims of those offenders. Court initiatives that leverage the coercive power of the criminal justice system and challenge judges to play an active and expanded role in enhancing victim safety will be central to the development and implementation of local initiatives. These demonstrations will make significant changes in how domestic violence cases are handled in the demonstration communities as well as enhance and insure the availability of services for victims and offenders in domestic violence cases. **Demonstration sites**

**will receive technical assistance and financial support for up to five years. *Throughout this time, each site will be required to participate in a rigorous evaluation of project activities.***

In Fiscal Year 1999, each demonstration site will receive *up to* \$2 million for 18 months for program activities. Contingent upon Congressional appropriations and progress, demonstration sites will receive comparable financial support for the duration of the five-year demonstration period.

### **Required Elements of Demonstrations**

Local demonstration sites will be required to create or enhance the following project activities:

- Judicial response to domestic violence, *including but not limited to* the creation of specialized dockets and dedicated felony and/or misdemeanor domestic violence courts guided by teams comprised of judges, prosecutors, advocates employed by non-profit, non-governmental domestic violence programs, pre-trial service personnel (including bail commissioners), probation officers, individuals who work with men who batter and other criminal justice or community-based partners.
- Advocacy and services provided by non-profit, non-governmental domestic violence programs that promote safety for victims of domestic violence, *including but not limited to*,: immediate outreach to the victim at the time of arrest, court-based advocacy; shelter; long and short-term advocacy and safety planning; legal advocacy; transitional housing; medical and dental care; child care; assistance with transportation needs and other vital; restorative services that increase victim safety and autonomy.
- Creation and enforcement of a range of graduated criminal justice and community-defined sanctions that hold domestic violence offenders accountable for their violent behavior. A range of sanctions should be designed to respond to all domestic violence offenders, including those who are re-arrested, violate protection orders, or are re-convicted for crimes of domestic violence. These sanctions may include frequent judicial oversight; incarceration; intervention programs for men who batter and community-defined sanctions including community service; intense supervision at the pre-trial; probation or parole stage, treatment for alcohol or substance abuse where appropriate; drug testing and sentences consistent with those imposed for other crimes of violence or assault.
- Creation or enhancement of data collection systems for the judiciary that accurately depict the criminal history of the defendant including the defendant's history of abusive behavior, the impact of violence on the victim, and the presence of children in the home. These comprehensive data collection systems will also be used for evaluation purposes.
- Practices that promote formal collaboration among the courts, law enforcement, prosecution and non-profit, non-governmental domestic violence programs that result in improved policies and protocols, improved police reporting and investigation, aggressive prosecution strategies that make victim safety a priority, advanced training for police and prosecutors, and other practices that will lead to improved judicial handling of domestic violence cases.
- Creation of formal mechanisms between the judiciary; non-profit, non-governmental victim advocacy programs; and pre-trial services to maximize victim safety by setting bail for domestic violence offenders consistent with similar crimes of serious assault and by intensifying pre-trial

supervision of domestic violence offenders and structured conditions of release.

- The employment of court-based victim advocates from non-profit, non-governmental victim advocacy programs who would be available to victims of domestic violence at the local courthouse throughout the hours of court operation to assist and interview victims and advise judges on issues regarding victim safety and protection orders.
- Practices that promote coordination among the judiciary, pre-trial services, and local law enforcement to ensure victim notification of the pending release of a domestic violence offender.
- Education for judges on the chronic nature of battering, the tactics of men who batter, the complex dynamics associated with the crime of domestic violence, ways the judiciary can expand its role to enhance victim safety and more effectively manage the violent behavior of offenders, and the role of victim advocates in the courtroom.
- Education for prosecutors and public defenders on the chronic nature of battering, the tactics of men who batter, the complex dynamics associated with the crime of domestic violence and the underlying principles of domestic violence courts that are dedicated to enhancing victim safety and managing offender behavior.

## Location of Sites

The location of the three to four sites for the demonstration will not be known until September 1999. Therefore, for budgeting purposes on the evaluation, though not one of the potential sites, applicants should use Kansas City (as a geographic average) to estimate travel costs to a site. Four sites should be anticipated for

budgeting purposes in the evaluation application. A more specific budget will be required early in the evaluation when the sites are known. The initial budget should be planned for 18 months.

## Hypothesis To Be Tested

The Violence Against Women Act and the various programs developed and supported under the Act acknowledge the importance of a coordinated community approach to address domestic violence. Community wide domestic violence councils and coalitions, and increased coordination among key practitioners are based on the presumed effectiveness of a coordinated approach.

In addition to, or as part of, a coordinated community approach, strong judicial oversight of domestic violence cases is considered to be an effective response to domestic violence. Thus the hypothesis to be tested in these demonstrations is: **Strong judicial oversight of domestic violence offenders together with extensive graduated sanctions for offenders and comprehensive services for victims will reduce reoffending, increase accountability of the defendant and the system, and enhance victim safety.**

## Four Phases of the Demonstration and Evaluation

**Phase I**— Capacity Building at the Sites, Methodological Refinement of Evaluation Plan and Baseline Data Collection

**Phase II**— Program Implementation and Formative Evaluation (includes feedback to the site)

**Phase III**— Program Refinement and Process Evaluation

**Phase IV**— Outcome/Impact Evaluation

## Target Population (Individual Level)

- Anyone (male or female) who engages in domestic violence against a female.

## **Target Population (System Level)**

- All domestic violence cases coming into a municipal court, county court, or combined court that handles both misdemeanor and felony cases involving a female victim.

## **Intervention Points**

Various stages in the criminal justice process at which intervention with domestic violence offenders and/or victims occurs, including:

- Arraignment (effective pretrial services program is a critical factor)
- First Hearing
- Additional Hearings
- Trial
- Post Adjudication
- Violations of Probation or Court Orders

## **Intervention**

- Intensive, proactive judicial oversight to manage offenders' behavior
- Court-ordered risk assessment including criminal history, particularly history of previous violations of protection orders and previous history of domestic violence
- Substance abuse testing and treatment
- Graduated sanctions for domestic violence offenders including batterer intervention programs

## **Victim Services**

- Immediate and ongoing safety planning for victims
- Victim needs assessment at time of arrest, and provision of services at various stages
- Notification of victim by court about status of case and offender at arraignment stage
- Notification of all court hearings
- Notification by court of trial outcome
- Notification of offender release at any stage of the process

## **III. Required Features of the Evaluation**

### **The Phases of the Evaluation Program**

**Phase I**— Methodological Refinement and Baseline Data Collection

**Phase II**— Formative Evaluation

**Phase III**— Process Evaluation

**Phase IV**— Outcome/Impact Evaluation

The initial phases of the evaluation are important prerequisites to determine the changes that have occurred as a result of a systematic implementation of the program elements. It is recognized that this initial budget period may focus largely on phase one activities and planning for subsequent phases.

An evaluation of the demonstration programs will seek to collect the types of information presented below at each site. Applicants are encouraged to propose additional measures as well.

### **Outcome Measures (Domestic Violence Offender)**

- Recidivism (official reports, complaints, protection orders, rearrest, victim interviews)
- Length of time violence-free
- Perceptions, attitudes regarding battering pre/post-intervention
- Child abuse (perpetrated by batterer)
- Intermediate outcomes (number of batterer program sessions attended, substance use/abuse, victim interviews)

### **Outcome Measures (Criminal Justice System)**

- **Law Enforcement**
  - Number of calls for service
  - Number of cases pursued
  - Number of reports filed
  - Number of arrests

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- Referrals and services provided for victims
- **Pre-trial**
  - Number of defendants who bond out without supervision
  - Number of defendants who bond out with supervision
  - Nature of pretrial supervision (standard, or specialized caseload)
  - Pretrial services reports of violations of protection orders to judge (number of reports, bond revocations, etc.)
- **Prosecution**
  - Changes in charging decisions (capture data regarding original charging, reductions in charges, and pleas to lesser charges)
  - Changes in number of cases going to trial
  - Number of dismissals at every stage
- **Court**
  - Number of additional hearings
  - Number of appearances by defendant in court
  - Number of bench warrants issued
  - Number of warrants quashed
  - Effects on calendar
  - Graduated sanctions—number and type of sanctions used
  - Availability of victim advocates
- **Probation**
  - Transition from pretrial services to probation (How is the process handled?)
  - Nature of probation supervision (standard or specialized caseload)
  - Probation reports of violations to judge (number of reports, bond revocations, etc.)
- **Unintended Consequences** (such as changes in system resulting in victim dissatisfaction with process; decrease rather

than increase in number of cases prosecuted; etc.)

## **Outcome Measures (Victim Services)**

- Availability of resources for victims (e.g. court accompaniment, shelter, transitional housing, advocacy for economic needs, support)
- Impact on victim services agency case processing
  - Assessments completed
  - Follow-up safety plans developed
  - Information forwarded to judge regarding victims' needs, preferences, impact of domestic violence on their lives, etc.
  - Type, level, and number of services provided
- Client satisfaction with services offered
- Safety and clients' perception of safety

## **Initial Phase of the Evaluation**

In the first 18 months, the demonstration sites will be addressing various capacity building activities including recruitment of personnel, enhancement and expansion of services, modifications in domestic violence case handling/processing, and improvements in data collection. During this phase the National Evaluator will refine the evaluation plans given knowledge of the specific sites selected, work with sites on evaluation issues, recommend criteria for recruitment of site evaluation coordinators (if not already selected), assist sites on improving data collection, determine availability and appropriateness of measures to be used for the National evaluation with input from the Evaluation Program Board (noted below), and provide a report on the status and activities of the demonstrations with specific recommendations for future phases.

Given the Judicial Oversight Demonstration as presented in this solicitation, applicants are encouraged to consider and propose other phase

one evaluation activities that may be critical to this National evaluation.

#### **IV. Relationships Among Demonstration Sites, NIJ, VAWO, Evaluation Program Group and the Evaluator**

NIJ envisions that implementing the Judicial Oversight Demonstration will be a cooperative effort. Both the demonstrations and the evaluation will be supported as Cooperative Agreements.

NIJ staff are involved with VAWO staff in the planning and implementation of the demonstration projects and NIJ and VAWO will be jointly involved in all major resource and policy decisions. Key personnel at the demonstration sites (project director and site evaluation coordinator) and on the evaluation (principal investigators) will require approval by VAWO and NIJ.

Each Demonstration Site will employ a Site Evaluation Coordinator who will be the critical site level point of contact with the National Evaluator. While the Site Evaluation Coordinator will report to the local level Project Director, they provide for data and information needs of both the National evaluation and any local level evaluation interests. As currently envisioned the Site Evaluation Coordinator will have a lead role in the development and drafting of the initial site level narrative descriptions and data collection responsibilities for all phases of the evaluation. Guidelines, standard reporting formats, and the final framework for the National evaluation will be developed by the National Evaluator with input from Site Evaluation Coordinators and with oversight and guidance from an NIJ selected group of experts. Applicants should include a strategy for regular communication with site evaluation coordinators. Demonstration sites will have budgeted for four trips to Washington, D.C., during the first 18 months for the Site Evaluation Coordination meetings. Therefore applicants should incorporate plans for organizing and managing these four meetings in their proposal.

NIJ will support an Evaluation Program Board comprised of several National experts. This Board will provide technical review and advice to the National Evaluator on a regular basis including through meetings arranged by NIJ and the evaluator.

#### **V. How to Apply**

Those interested in submitting proposals in response to this solicitation must complete the required application forms and submit related required documents. (See below for how to obtain application forms and guides for completing proposals.) Applicants must include the following information/forms to qualify for consideration:

- Standard Form (SF) 424—application for Federal assistance
- Assurances
- Certifications Regarding Lobbying, Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (one form)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
- Budget Detail Worksheet
- Budget Narrative
- Negotiated indirect rate agreement (if appropriate)
- Names and affiliations of all key persons from applicant and subcontractor(s), advisors, consultants, and advisory board members. Include name of principal investigator, title, organizational affiliation (if any), department (if institution of higher education), address, phone, and fax
- Proposal abstract
- Table of contents
- Program narrative or technical proposal. This section of the proposal is expected to provide detail on the initial 18 months of the proposal and also provide information on the overall five year evaluation plan. Anticipated budget supplements for the evaluation will require an application detailing plans for the next budget period.
- Privacy certificate
- References

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- Letters of cooperation from organizations collaborating in the research project
- Résumés
- Appendixes, if any (e.g., list of previous NIJ awards, their status, and products [in NIJ or other publications])

**Proposal abstract.** The proposal abstract, when read separately from the rest of the application, is meant to serve as a succinct and accurate description of the proposed work. Applicants must concisely describe the research goals and objectives, research design, and methods for achieving the goals and objectives. Summaries of past accomplishments are to be avoided, and proprietary/confidential information is not to be included. Length is not to exceed 400 words. Use the following two headers:

**Project Goals and Objectives:**

**Proposed Research Design and Methodology:**

**Page limit.** The number of pages in the “Program Narrative” part of the proposal must not exceed 30 (double-spaced pages).

**Due date.** Completed proposals **must be received** at the National Institute of Justice by the close of business on July 9, 1999. Extensions of this deadline will not be permitted.

**Award period.** The initial award is anticipated to extend over the first 18 months of the evaluation. It is also anticipated that the Judicial Oversight Demonstration and National Evaluation will extend for up to five years.

Number of awards. NIJ anticipates supporting one cooperative agreement under this solicitation.

**Award amount.** One award totaling \$500,000 in FY 1999 funds will be made available for this NIJ solicitation for the first 18 month period. Supplements of up to \$500,000 each year are anticipated for future years, for a total funding level up to \$2,500,000 over five years. Applicants should provide a detailed budget for the initial \$500,000, 18 month phase as well as an estimated five year budget plan. **Detailed budget plans will**

**be required for the subsequent supplements that are anticipated.**

**Applying.** Two packets need to be obtained: (1) application forms (including a sample budget worksheet) and (2) guidelines for submitting proposals (including requirements for proposal writers and requirements for grant recipients). To receive them, applicants can:

- Access the Justice Information Center on the web:  
<http://www.ncjrs.org/fedgrant.htm#NIJ>  
or the NIJ web site:  
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/NIJ/funding.htm>  
These web sites offer the NIJ application forms and guidelines as electronic files that may be downloaded to a personal computer.
- Request hard copies of the forms and guidelines by mail from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 800–851–3420 or from the Department of Justice Response Center at 800–421–6770 (in the Washington, D.C., area, at 202–307–1480).
- Request copies by fax. Call 800–851–3420 and select option 1, then option 1 again for NIJ. Code is 1023.

**Guidance and information.** Applicants who wish to receive additional guidance and information may contact the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 800–421–6770. Center staff can provide assistance or refer applicants to an appropriate NIJ professional. Applicants may, for example, wish to discuss their prospective evaluation with the NIJ professional staff.

**Send completed forms to:**

Judicial Oversight Evaluation  
National Institute of Justice  
810 Seventh Street N.W.  
Washington, DC 20531  
[overnight courier ZIP code 20001]

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To find out more information about the National Institute of Justice, please contact:

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