Dear OVW Award Recipient –

Due to a lapse in appropriations for Fiscal Year 2014, the Office of Justice Programs, which handles the grant payment system (GPRS) and Grants Management System (GMS) will cease operations after 5:00 p.m. (EDT) on Friday, October 4, 2013. OVW staff, however, will continue to work their normal schedule until further notice.

We are providing the following information, in question and answer format, regarding the availability of OVW and OJP systems and services.

**Continuation of Grantee Activities under Existing Grants**

1. **Will I be able to continue activities and projects already funded under my existing OVW grants or cooperative agreements during a period of a funding lapse?**

**Response:** Yes. Grantee activities and projects already funded under existing grants will generally be able to continue to the extent the grantee has funding available (see the Q&A regarding the status of OJP’s payment system and the question below regarding payment requests post October 4, 2013). The exception to this guidance would be if Federal employee involvement is critical to the project being carried out or proceeding to the next step. For example, under a cooperative agreement, there may be actions that a Federal employee has to take for a project to continue; that is, the project has arrived at a decision point that requires Federal government approval or other determination in order for the project to proceed to the next step. This is a determination that shall be made by OVW when necessary and OVW would notify the grantee of this determination.

2. **Will grantee-sponsored events (such as conferences, meetings, and trainings) scheduled during the period of a funding lapse be affected?**

**Response:** Most approved grantee-sponsored events (e.g., conferences, meetings, trainings) scheduled during a potential funding lapse generally will not be affected and can proceed as planned. If Federal employee participation in these meetings or trainings is critical in order for these events to proceed, the event cannot be held even if previously approved. This could include Federal employee involvement to carry out the event or provide oversight or guidance. This is a determination that shall be made by OVW when necessary and OVW would notify the grantee of this determination.

3. **Will I be able to request payments and draw down funds during a period of a funding lapse?**
Response: No. The Grant Payment Request System (GPRS) will not be available to users after October 4, 2013.

OJP has processed payment requests received as of 9:00 a.m. (EDT) October 4, 2013 and OJP expects grantees will receive these payments. However, OJP and OVW will not be able to verify or resolve any potential problems that may arise during the processing of the payments until after appropriations are enacted and federal staff returns to work. Requests made after 9:00 a.m. (EDT) on October 4, 2013 will be processed once the government is reopened. These systems will not be available after 5:00 p.m. (EDT) October 4, 2013.

Grants Management System (GMS) and Grant Administration Activities

1. Will the Grants Management System (GMS) and the GMS Help Desk be available during a period of a funding lapse?

Response: No. The Grants Management System (GMS) will not be available to users. Users will not have access to apply for funds, submit progress and Federal Financial Reports (FFRs), request grant adjustment notices, submit closeout actions, or respond to on-site financial monitoring issues for resolution. Likewise, the GMS Help Desk will not be available to users. Grantees whose funds are currently frozen due to overdue reports or other reasons will remain in this status unless the issues are resolved prior to by 5:00 p.m. (EDT), Friday, October 4, 2013.

2. Will OVW’s Grants Financial Management staff and my program specialist be available to answer questions or provide assistance during a period of a funding lapse?

Response: Yes. OVW staff, including the Grants Financial Management Analysts and Program Specialists, will be available during the period of the funding lapse until further notice. To the greatest extent possible, OVW staff is prepared to review and approve via email grant adjustments that normally has been submitted through GMS.

3. Will requests for grant modifications be addressed during this lapse in federal funding?

Response: Yes. OVW staff have prepared themselves as much as possible to continue to assist you with your grant needs during this time. Since GMS will no longer be available, all requests will have to be processed by email. Grantees are advised to retain copies of email approvals in their own grant files. OVW staff will also retain copies. When the federal government fully re-opens and GMS is brought back on-line, any requests approved via email must be uploaded into GMS for record keeping purposes. Your OVW program specialist may contact you with questions regarding GANs that were pending in GMS. Additionally, OVW’s Grants Financial Management Division will continue to review budgets from our FY 2013 awards. GFMD staff may reach out to you with questions about your pending budget. OVW staff will do all that we can to ensure that your projects can proceed as planned.

4. Will I be able to submit Federal Financial Reports (FFRs) or progress reports to the GMS system?
Response: No. The Grants Management System (GMS) will not be available to accept progress reports and Federal Financial Reports (FFRs) during a period of a funding lapse. Please note: To provide adequate time to grantees to prepare and submit their Federal Financial Reports (FFR) due on October 30, 2013 for the period July 1–September 30, the deadline will be extended by the number of days GMS is not available due to the funding lapse.

5. Will the System for Award Management (SAM) remain operational during a period of a funding lapse?

Response: According to GSA, the System for Award Management (SAM) will remain operational during a lapse of appropriations. Users will be able to submit new registrations and updates to existing registrations. Users will be able to search for entity registration records and exclusion records on the SAM.gov web site. Please check the Federal Service Desk at www.fsd.gov or the SAM.gov home page for any changes to SAM's operating status. OVW currently does not have any open solicitations.

OVW On-site Monitoring Visits and Office-Based Desk Reviews Scheduled During a Lapse

6. Will an OVW programmatic or financial on-site monitoring visit scheduled during the period of a funding lapse still occur?

Response: No. All on-site monitoring visits scheduled during the period of a funding lapse will be postponed or cancelled. If your OVW program specialist has not yet contacted you, they will do so within the next week. If an OCFO financial monitor has not yet contacted you to reschedule the monitoring visit, expect them to do so once the government is reopened.

Recovery Act Recipient Reporting

1. As a Recovery Act funding recipient, will I be required to report to FederalReporting.gov during the current recipient period of October 1-14, 2013?

Response: Yes. FederalReporting.gov and their Help Desk will not be impacted by a lapse in funding and will remain open and fully operational during the October Reporting Cycle and Continuous QA. Please note that beginning with the October reporting cycle, the Help Desk will no longer receive live calls, rather will use email as the sole method to receive requests for assistance. The Help Desk email address is FederalReportingHelpDesk@ratb.gov.

Applying for OVW Open Solicitations

1. Will I be able to submit funding applications for open solicitations/funding opportunities through the Grants Management System (GMS) or Grants.gov during a period of a funding lapse?

Response: No. The GMS will not be available to accept funding applications. While Grants.gov may be available, OVW does not have any open solicitations at this time. To provide
adequate time for an applicant to prepare and submit an application, OVW will extend deadlines for open solicitations that are impacted by a funding lapse.

**OVW-Sponsored Websites**

1. If we operate a non-.gov website (e.g., .org) with full or partial grant funding from OVW, are any special actions required?

Response: No.

**Questions about this Guidance**

1. If I have a question relating to this guidance or the impact of a funding lapse on my grants, who can I contact to assist me?

Response: Until further notice, OVW employees will be available to assist you. We would also like to learn about any direct impact that the funding lapse has had on your program or the survivors you serve. Please contact your OVW program specialist with this information. You can find their contact information in your award document or they can be reached by calling the OVW main number at 202/307-6026. We realize the inconvenience and disruption this may cause in many local communities around the country and we appreciate your understanding and patience.

Bea Hanson
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