



**NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline
2021 – 2024 Request for Proposals
Questions and Answers**

1. **Question:** How many calls are we expected to get per year/per day?

Answer: It is difficult to project the expected amount of contacts per year/day as the volume of contacts changes depending on need and external factors. For example, the Hotline saw a significant increase in contacts during 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The total contacts per year and an average number of contacts per day for 2019 and 2020, are as follows:

- In 2019, the Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline had a total call volume of about 9,221 with an average of 25 calls per day. The PREA Hotline had a total call volume of about 3,338 with an average of 9 calls per day.
- In 2020, the Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline had a total contact volume (calls, text, and chats) of about 13,803 with an average of 39 contacts per day. The PREA Hotline had a total call volume of about 5,795 with an average of 16 calls per day.

2. **Question:** How can we use the funding? Can it be used for salaries?

Answer: The funding can be used for all eligible expense outlined in the RFP (Section E. Funding > Eligible Costs). Eligible Costs include:

- Salary
- Fringe
- Contractual Services
- Travel
- Equipment
- Other (office supplies, printing, telephone, technology {phone, connectivity, etc.}, indirect costs {federally approved rate})

Any additional costs incurred are the responsibility of the provider/program. Proposed budgets that include charges to OPDV in categories other than those identified above will be disqualified. Budgets that reflect match contributions by the applicant are permissible, but not required.

3. **Question:** It appears that [our program] would need to be a provider/program that is either:
- Licensed by NYS Office of Children & Family Services
 - Rape crisis program approved by NYS Dept of Health
 - NYS program funded by Office of Victim Services
 - Designated by either NYS Coalition Against Domestic Violence or NYS Coalition Against Sexual Assault



[Our program] currently has a contract with NYS for Nurse Triage and Advice Services provided to NYU. Would this meet the above requirements?

Answer: Eligible programs must be included in one of the following categories:

- NYS domestic violence providers/programs that are licensed and/or approved by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS);
- NYS rape crisis programs approved by the NYS Department of Health (DOH);
- NYS victim assistance programs currently funded by the Office of Victim Services (OVS);
- Other organizations as designated by the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV) provider directory;
- Other organizations as designated by the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NYSCASA) provider directory

4. **Question:** Is the data collection system utilized provided to the grantee by OPDV/NYS or do we need to utilize our own data collection system?

Answer: The awardee will need to utilize their own data collection system based on their experience providing hotline services. The current technology supporting the call/chat/text function is the iCarol crisis, referral and helpline software. It is not a prerequisite of the contract to utilize iCarol, but it is imperative that the selected applicant be able to track and report on data requested by OPDV. OPDV will work with the awardee to identify specific data points that are necessary and in what format this information should be reported.

5. **Question:** We currently have a chat feature on our website; can you please clarify where the chat function on the NYS Hotline is located and accessed?

Answer: The chat feature is located on the OPDV website. When clicking on the link on the OPDV website, the contact is routed to an operator who is employed by the current vendor for the Hotline. A similar connection will be made to the new awardee's system of their choice.

6. **Question:** Regarding the resource database of community programs, etc., is this already in existence and maintained by the grantee or, does the grantee have to develop it?

Answer: The resource database will need to be developed by the new awardee. OPDV can provide some recommended resources to assist in building out the database when the award is made, and the awardee should utilize any resources they currently use to refer clients to services.



7. **Question:** Regarding the porting of the hotline number, am I correct in assuming that would just be a matter of working with our phone provider to accomplish this?

Answer: Yes, that is correct.

8. **Question:** I'm having trouble locating more recent stats from the NYS Hotline, could you please direct me accordingly? I am only able to locate 2018 as most recent.

Answer: The Hotline Datasheet for 2019 is not currently available and is undergoing revision. Here are some data points for 2019 that may be of interest.

- During 2019, the Hotline responded to callers in the following languages (listed in order by volume of calls):
 - Spanish
 - Chinese-Mandarin
 - Russian
 - Arabic
 - Bengali
 - Chinese
 - Italian
 - Korean
 - Portuguese (Brazil)
 - Chinese-Cantonese
 - Farsi
 - Haitian Creole
 - Tamil
 - Turkish
 - Burmese
 - Hindi
 - Japanese
 - Polish
 - Somali
- 90% of non-English speaking calls requiring translation were Spanish
- Overall, the Hotline received the highest call volume (56%) from NYC and Long Island (New York, Kings, Bronx, Queens, Suffolk, Nassau and Richmond). When looking at call volume for the rest of the state, the highest call volume came from the following counties:
 - Albany 12%
 - Erie 12%
 - Westchester 11%
 - Schenectady 7%
 - Orange 5%
- The Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline had a total call volume of about 9,221.



- The PREA Hotline had a total call volume of about 3,338.

9. **Question:** Please reconfirm the due date for this procurement by providing it in response to answers to questions.

Answer: The due date for applications is July 9, 2021 12:00PM EST. All applications must be submitted in the Grants Gateway.

10. **Question:** Are bidders permitted to deviate in any way from any manner of quoting fees you may be expecting? For example, if there is a pricing page in the RFP, can bidders submit an alternate fee structure? If there is no pricing page in the RFP, do you have any preference for how bidders should quote fees or can bidders create their own pricing categories?

Answer: All applicants must follow the budget instructions included in the RFP. Applicants are only allowed to utilize this funding for the eligible costs outlined in the RFP and in question #2 above. Applicants may submit budgets that they feel are most appropriate for their program to operate the NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline 24/7/365. Interpretation costs, systems costs (i.e. iCarol), personal and nonpersonal services required for operating the line must be included in the budget submitted by the applicant. There are also MWBE and SDVOB requirements for all discretionary spending associated with the grant. The minimum percentage is 30% for MWBEs and 6% for SDVOB of discretionary state fund purchases.

11. **Question:** Please describe your level of satisfaction with your current or recent vendor(s) for the same purchasing activity, if applicable.

Answer: This question is not applicable to clarification of the RFP.

12. **Question:** To what extent will the location of the bidder's proposed location or headquarters have a bearing on any award?

Answer: Each application will be evaluated based on the criteria outlined in Section G. Evaluation of Proposals of the RFP. All applicants must meet the eligibility requirements outlined in Section B, F, and G (Tier 1 Evaluation – Pass/Fail) in order to be considered for an award.

13. **Question:** How are fees currently being billed by any incumbent(s), by category, and at what rates?

Answer: Fees are billed by quarterly vouchers, pursuant to contract. Budgets are constructed based upon need by the vendor and eligible categories set forth by the 2015 procurement for this grant, as well as formal amendments made to the contract after the initial start of the contract term.



14. **Question:** What estimated or actual dollars were paid last year, last month, or last quarter to any incumbent(s)?

Answer: The amount paid to the vendor of the current contract for fiscal year April 2020 – March 2021 was about \$570,000.

15. **Question:** What is the minimum required total call capacity?

Answer: There is no minimum required total call capacity. The number of contacts can vary from year-to-year depending on need and external factors (i.e. COVID-19 pandemic. In general, data collected since 2011 indicates the following most frequent findings. Annually:

- The range of volume of phone calls to the Hotline fell between a base call volume of 7,000 and a peak of 12,360 between 2011 and 2019.
- In 2020, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hotline saw an increase in the number of contacts, bringing the total number of contacts (calls, text, and chats) to 13,803.
- The text/chat component of the Hotline started in late April 2020, so trend data are not available at the moment. In 2020, there were about 1,400 text/chats received by the line.
- PREA Calls: maximum call time 30 minutes; 2020 volume of calls: over 5,000 (PREA hotline function came online statewide in 2019.)

16. **Question:** What is the minimum simultaneous inbound call capacity?

Answer: Staffing and supervision levels are to be identified by the applicant based on their experience providing hotline services. The simultaneous inbound call capacity must be sufficient to accomplish the tasks within the parameters set forth in the workplan.

17. **Question:** What is the maximum hold time?

Answer: The workplan requires: Answer Hotline calls within 20 seconds (approximately 5 rings) and respond/refer per procedure. Answer text inquiries within 30 seconds and respond/refer per procedure. Answer chat contacts within 30 seconds and respond/refer per procedure (Workplan Task 1.1)

18. **Question:** What percentage of calls must be resolved without a transfer, second call, or a return call?

Answer: Due to the nature of the calls and services provided, all calls must be resolved following protocol. For the most part, callers remain anonymous so reaching out to them after a call (second call or return call) may not be possible



and it may endanger them. Some calls require providing referral information. Depending on the nature of the call and the wishes of the caller transfer to a referral may be required.

19. **Question:** What is the maximum percentage of calls that can be terminated by the caller without resolution?

Answer: Callers are in control of when they engage or disengage.

20. **Question:** Is there a minimum or maximum number of operators and supervisors?

Answer: Staffing and supervision levels are to be identified by the applicant based on their experience providing hotline services.

21. **Question:** What is the required degree of dedication for the call center?

Answer: The NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline service is not a call center activity. The statewide Hotline services must be operational 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. The PREA Hotline provides services for incarcerated individuals according to the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) between the hours of 8AM and 11 PM, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. Service provision, beyond the requirements set forth in the RFP and workplan, should be described by the applicant based on their experience providing hotline services.

22. **Question:** What is the required degree of dedication for the operators?

Answer: The NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline service is not a call center activity. The statewide Hotline services must be operational 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. The PREA Hotline provides services for incarcerated individuals according to the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) between the hours of 8AM and 11 PM, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. Service provision, beyond the requirements set forth in the RFP and workplan, should be described by the applicant based on their experience providing hotline services

23. **Question:** What are the recording requirements for inbound and outbound phone calls and how long must recordings be maintained?

Answer: Based on the functionality of the current iCarol hotline/text/chat features, demographic, statistical information, and referrals made data are maintained for performance measure/data reporting. Free form comments and notes typed manually are shredded after 7 days. Stored data must be encrypted.



24. **Question:** What are the recording and storage requirements for non-phone communications?

Answer: Based on the functionality of the current iCarol hotline/text/chat features, demographic, statistical info, and referrals made data are maintained for performance measure/data reporting. Free form comments and notes typed manually are shredded after 7 days. Stored data must be encrypted.

25. **Question:** What is the current number of seats for operators and supervisors at your existing call center?

Answer: The NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline service is not a call center activity. The statewide Hotline services must be operational 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. The PREA Hotline provides services for incarcerated individuals according to the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) between the hours of 8AM and 11 PM, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. (RFP p 4) Service provision, beyond the requirements set forth in the RFP and workplan, should be described by the applicant based on their experience providing hotline services.

26. **Question:** What is the current average after-call work time for operators?

Answer: We do not collect that information.

27. **Question:** Over the past year, what percentage of calls received were in Spanish?

Answer: In 2020, there were about 919 calls that required Spanish translation, or 7.4% of total calls into the Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline.

28. **Question:** Can you please forward me the referenced documents on the last page of the RFP?

Answer: All documents related to this RFP are in the Grants Gateway. Applicants may access all documentation required for this RFP under the "Pre-submission Uploads" section of this opportunity in the [Grants Gateway](#).

29. **Question:** Our agency already has a hotline 24/7. Would we be able to bid for this?

Answer: As long as an applicant meets the criteria set forth in the Eligible Applicants section of the RFP, they are free to apply.



30. **Question:** Section F (page 9), second section, bullet 3 - Can you clarify, is the requirement to simply have a process to push to local hotlines if the State Hotline goes down? Or does this mean if any other regional/local/program hotline goes down in the state that the State Hotline has to absorb their calls?

Answer: The awardee is required to have a plan for continuation of operation of the Hotline in the event of local, statewide, or national emergencies that may affect ability to continue business as usual. The awardee may determine the best approach to the continuation of operations based on their past experience with hotline operations.

In the event of a similar emergency for local hotlines, the awardee may also be required to absorb or accept a rerouting of the contact volume of local hotlines in so that services may continue as needed.

31. **Question:** If we were to subcontract does it have to be with the agencies outlined on page 3 & 9? For example, could we subcontract with an entity outside of New York State?

Answer: The operation of the Hotline must be conducted by an organization that meets the criteria outlined in the eligible applicants section of this RFP. Subcontracting for the operation of the Hotline cannot be with an entity outside of NYS.

32. **Question:** Does the Joint partnership require a subcontractor or would the second party contract directly with OPDV?

Answer: A joint partnership will require a subcontract with the awardee. The primary applicant will receive the award for the operation of the Hotline and will be responsible for all requirements outlined in the contract. The letter(s) of intent submitted should detail how roles and responsibilities will be disseminated through the joint partnership.

33. **Question:** Do we have to have a federally approved rate for indirect costs in order to include them on the RFP response? If not, what are the administrative limitations (including % limit) if the organization does not have a federal rate?

Answer: A federally approved indirect cost rate is not required. There are no administrative limitations on this funding. The applicant is responsible for submitting a budget that adequately reflects the operation of the Hotline and meets all of the requirements associated with operating the Hotline outlined in the RFP.



34. **Question:** On page 15 of the RFP, it says that contracts must use MWBE and SDVOB vendors for a predetermined amount of discretionary spending/expenses. However, on page 24, it says that the use of SDVOB by bidders/proposers are strongly encouraged and expected to consider SDVOBs in the fulfillment of the requirements of the contract.

- a. Is the use of SDVOB encouraged or required?
- b. Is there a list for SDVOB we can reference?
- c. What is the % of MWBE and SDVOB?
- d. Additionally, is there a different % for each of the 2 budgets presented?

Answer:

- a. Is the use of SDVOB encouraged or required? Required
- b. Is there a list for SDVOB we can reference?
<https://online.ogs.ny.gov/SDVOB/search>
- c. What is the % of MWBE and SDVOB? 30% for MWBE and 6% for SDVOB
- d. Additionally, is there a different % for each of the 2 budgets presented?
No. The percentage requirements are applied to the total available discretionary funding allocated in the approved total budget over the life of the contract.

35. **Question:** Can we request extensions on the due dates for the fiscal reporting? Can you clarify what happens, for example, if we do not have all the bills from vendors, before 12th due date for billing, what is the process? This is especially important at grant year-ends.

Answer: Extensions may be requested, and a justification must be provided to and approved by the OPDV Contract Manager. Requests for an extension will be considered and granted, if appropriate, allowable, and in accordance with policies and procedures of the Division of the Budget and the Office of the State Comptroller, as well as in accordance with State Finance Law.

36. **Question:** Where can we access the Additional Documents that are listed on page 25 of the RFP? Are they in Grants Gateway or the OPDV website? We do not see in GG.

Answer: The documents can be found in the Pre-submission Uploads section of [Grants Gateway](#).



37. **Question:** P 14 indicates providing phone/chat/text using translation services. How are translation services provided now? Can you also provide information regarding current translation services available/in use for both text and chat? What are the startup and operating costs of this service(s)?

Answer: Translation services currently in use are provided via phone. Individuals who use the text and chat functions of the Hotline are directed to call the Hotline number to receive translation services. In the coming months, the current Hotline vendor will be instituting translation via text in addition to phone interpretation. Since translation services are required for all three points of entry, applicants are responsible for including interpretation costs into their budgets based on their past experience with translation services or knowledge of applicable software and as new technologies emerge that facilitate enhanced access to services for non-English speaking help seekers.

38. **Question:** OPDV has not required separate time sheets in the past as part of this contract. Can you clarify if that is what is being requested by the following phrase: "In accordance with the standard contract provisions, grantee staff whose salaries are paid in whole or in part from grant funds shall maintain a time recording system that shows the time and effort devoted to the grant project." Or, is showing allocation justification and how salaries, etc. are allocated through payroll sufficient. Separate timecards are a significant lift for all staff and management if required.

Answer: The awardee should keep detailed records of time and attendance for staff working on the Hotline. Although OPDV does not request the timecards be included in the quarterly reports, the records should be maintained in the event that an audit is necessary. For quarterly reporting purposes, showing allocation justification and how salaries, etc. are allocated through payroll is sufficient.

39. **Question:** Please describe the expectations and required availability for afterhours support of the PREA Hotline. What is the administrative lift, including management OT on nights and weekends?

Answer: The PREA Hotline provides services for incarcerated individuals according to the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) between the hours of 8AM and 11 PM, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. The awardee will be responsible for ensuring there is adequate staffing to cover the operations of the PREA Hotline and the execution of all applicable protocols. As victim service providers are aware, services, particularly to special populations, require flexibility and innovation in administration of programming. The awardee will need to determine how to meet the requirements of the contract and the needs of PREA callers appropriately and efficiently.



40. **Question:** It notes in the RFP that the expectation is that all unfunded costs are the responsibility of the Agency. Can you provide information regarding what is typically covered by the funding and how much is unfunded under the current vendor's structure?

Answer: Any additional costs incurred are the responsibility of the provider/program. OPDV does not collect information about what is unfunded outside of the contract.

The funding can be used for all eligible expense outlined in the RFP (Section E. Funding > Eligible Costs). Eligible Costs include:

- Salary
- Fringe
- Contractual Services
- Travel
- Equipment
- Other (office supplies, printing, telephone, technology {phone, connectivity, etc.}, indirect costs {federally approved rate})

Any additional costs incurred are the responsibility of the provider/program. Proposed budgets that include charges to OPDV in categories other than those identified above will be disqualified. Budgets that reflect match contributions by the applicant are permissible, but not required.

41. **Question:** Specifically, under PREA, there has been no increase in funding since the last RFP. Is the funding allocated truly representative of the lift?

Answer: The funding allocated to the PREA Hotline has been determined to be adequate for operation of the PREA Hotline and was developed in consultation with the current provider and sister state agencies involved in project planning and implementation.

42. **Question:** Are there other requirements outside managing the hotline and providing required quarterly reporting (e.g. training of community partners)? How often is non-quarterly reporting/data requested by both OPDV and DOCCS?

Answer: The awardee may be required to participate in various meetings and workgroups as the vendor for the NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline and the PREA Hotline. Non-quarterly reporting/data may be requested by OPDV and DOCCS when needed. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, OPDV and other state agencies needed information about the Hotline's contact volume and requested regular reporting to monitor service needs. The awardee must be responsive to data requests when needed as this is a vital service for the State and for survivors. Additionally, OPDV works collaboratively with all local



assistance grantees and service providers to assist in collecting important data to inform the enhancement of the service delivery model and promulgation of policy.

For more information about requirements, please reference the Workplan document located in the Pre-Submission Uploads section of Grants Gateway.

43. **Question:** Can you expand on DOCCS involvement in the process? What do they require from the contracted parties? Is there a separate MOU with the selected contractor and DOCCS? What is DOCCS' role and responsibilities in ensuring compliance with PREA legislation? What is the enforcing body in PREA compliance? What is specifically required by the legislation in regards to the Hotline?

Answer: The contract for this grant will be solely between the selected vendor and any identified subcontractors. For more information on DOCCS involvement in the PREA Hotline and other information related to PREA please visit <https://doccs.ny.gov/prea>.

44. **Question:** What is the trend of PREA Hotline calls? For example, how does this compare to State Hotline quantity and are calls consistently increasing?

Answer: The PREA Hotline calls have increased over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the full implementation and inclusion of the Hotline as an available service in all DOCCS facilities. In 2019, as the PREA Hotline came online in more DOCCS facilities, the call volume progressively increased. In 2020 the PREA Hotline received about 5,795 calls. The Hotline received about 12,360 calls. Establishing a trend for overall PREA calls is not possible to the fairly new existence of this service on a statewide basis.

45. **Question:** P 5 mentions database management, is there a format or software platform for this requirement? What are the expectations for how this is maintained and communicated to OPDV?

Answer: The awardee will need to utilize their own data collection system based on their experience providing hotline services. The current technology supporting the call/chat/text function is the iCarol crisis, referral and helpline software. It is not a prerequisite of the contract to utilize iCarol, but it is imperative that the selected applicant be able to track and report on data requested by OPDV. OPDV will work with the awardee to identify specific data points that are necessary and in what format this information should be reported.



46. **Question:** P 9 indicates English/Spanish staff must be present at all times of operation and doesn't reference utilization of interpreters on this page, but translation/interpretation is referenced elsewhere in RFP. Can you clarify, please?

Answer: There must be English and Spanish speaking staff members present at all times of operation. In the event that an individual whose primary language is not English or Spanish contacts the Hotline, interpretation services must be provided in the language of the person seeking services. Applicants should include interpretation services in their submitted budgets to cover these interpretation needs.

47. **Question:** Is the applicant required to be a DOH certified Rape Crisis Program as well as meet the DV eligibility requirements outlined due to the PREA Hotline serving incarcerated sexual assault survivors?

Answer: Applicants must be a program in one of the categories outlined in the Eligible Applicants section of the RFP. Prior to contract start, as per NYCRR 69-5, all staff/volunteers must have received the required advocate training for the purpose of rape crisis certification. Additionally, prior to contract start, all staff working the PREA Hotline must participate in training as prescribed by DOCCS in conjunction with local PREA partner programs and/or the NYS Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NYSCASA).

48. **Question:** Can you clarify what the requirement is for the Hotline to provide technical support to professionals throughout the state mentioned in the RFP and work plan? What would this look like?

Answer: The Hotline may participate in communications, meetings, and workgroups with stakeholders as the vendor for the NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline and the PREA Hotline. Technical support may be necessary in the form of information sharing, providing guidance on Hotline operations, and informing processes and procedures.

49. **Question:** Can budgets be adjusted with justifiable needs between each of the years? E.g. to account for fluctuation in call volume/shift management?

Answer: Budget modifications may be submitted during the contract period. Budgets cannot exceed the dollar amount outlined in the funding section of the RFP for each fiscal year. The awardee should work closely with the OPDV Contract Manager and keep them informed of any potential budget changes that may be needed throughout the contract period. Requests for modifications will be considered and granted, if appropriate, allowable, and in accordance with



policies and procedures of the Division of the Budget and the Office of the State Comptroller, as well as in accordance with State Finance Law.

50. **Question:** What are the expected implications of the various New York State DV Task Forces and coalitions convening to address domestic violence in NY on Hotline operations?

Answer: The Hotline may participate in communications, meetings, and workgroups with stakeholders as the vendor for the NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline and the PREA Hotline. Hotline operations are subject to change during the contract period.

51. **Question:** Is it possible mid-contract the structure of either Hotline will be adjusted?

Answer: Yes. As a service available to victims in crisis on a statewide basis, Hotline operations are subject to change. OPDV reserves the right to revise the award amount as necessary due to changes in the availability of funding. In the event that OPDV and the successful applicant cannot execute a contract within the parameters specified by the grant, OPDV reserves the right to rescind the award and redistribute the funds at the discretion of the OPDV Executive Director. OPDV will enter into a contract period as noted in this solicitation. OPDV reserves the right to modify the contract period in the best interest of the State.

52. **Question:** What is the anticipated impact on New York State's PREA Hotline due to the proposed National PREA Hotline conversation?

Answer: For more information about the NYS PREA Hotline, please visit <https://doccs.ny.gov/prea>.

53. **Question:** Does this funding cover administrative costs?

Answer: Yes, administrative costs are covered and determined by the vendor in consultation with OPDV and within the allocated resources.

54. **Question:** Which agency currently holds the contract/provides this service?

Answer: The current vendor is Suicide Prevention and Crisis Services, Inc.



55. **Question:** Does communication via phone, text, *and* chat need to be available 24-hours per day, both in English and Spanish?

Answer: Yes, communication via phone, text, and chat needs to be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. It must be available in all languages requested by the contact. Applicants should include interpretation costs in their submitted budgets.

56. **Question:** To clarify, if indirect costs (like administrative costs) are covered, what is the rate?

Answer: Programs should use their federally approved indirect costs rate.

57. **Question:** On page 9 of the RFP it states that "in order to be considered eligible, applicants must have English and Spanish speaking staff present". Does this mean we have to have a Spanish speaking staff person(s) on payroll currently in order to be considered eligible?

Answer: Applicants do not need to have Spanish speaking staff currently on their payroll, but they must have a plan to hire those staff so that they can operate the line as of October 1, 2021. Funding under this grant can cover salary and fringe costs.

58. **Question:** On page 9 of the RFP it states that "Applicants must be from the following groups" and then it lists off 5 various groups. Do applicants have to be members of all 5 groups? Or just 1 of those groups listed?

Answer: Applicants only need to be from one of the groups listed under the Eligible Applicants section.

59. **Question:** On page 7 of the RFP it states that "Successful proposals will describe the applicant's experience: managing, operating and promoting 24/7/365 statewide ... hotline". If our program has experience offering a 24/7/365 hotline for our service area but it is NOT statewide, does this mean that our application will not be "successful" as is stated in the RFP?

Answer: The applicant should outline their experience in operating a hotline and their plan for operating the statewide Hotline via their answers to the application questions.



60. **Question:** If our program is not currently trained in providing Prison Rape Elimination Act Hotline services, will this prevent us from being able to be considered as eligible to apply? Or is this something we could receive training on upon funding award?

Answer: This will not prevent you from being considered. Prior to contract start, as per NYCRR 69-5, all staff/volunteers must have received the required advocate training for the purpose of rape crisis certification. Additionally, prior to contract start, all staff working the PREA Hotline must participate in training as prescribed by DOCCS in conjunction with local PREA partner programs and/or the NYS Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NYSCASA).

61. **Question:** If our program does not currently have a Spanish speaking staff person, will access to interpretation services be sufficient?

Answer: Applicants do not need to have Spanish speaking staff currently on their payroll, but they must have a plan to hire those staff so that they can operate the line as of October 1, 2021. Providing interpretation services for Spanish speaking callers is not sufficient. Funding under this grant can cover salary and fringe costs.

62. **Question:** As a provider of domestic violence services, we are affiliated with OVS, OCFS, and NYSCADV but not the Department of Health or NYSCASA. If we partner with a Sexual Assault Services provider, would that meet the requirements of the RFP?

Answer: Applicants only need to be from one of the groups listed under the Eligible Applicants section.

63. **Question:** If the agency does not have an indirect cost rate, what rate of indirect costs/admin can be covered by these funds?

Answer: Applicants who do not have a federally approved indirect cost rate should outline the administrative costs necessary to operate the Hotline in their budget submissions.

64. **Question:** Can you please send me info on how to become eligible requirement by NYSCADV?

Answer: For further information about receiving/confirming designation, please contact the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence directly via:

Mail: 119 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12210

Telephone: 518-482-5465 (Albany) / 585-413-0887 (Rochester)

Fax: 518-482-3807



Online: <https://www.nyscadv.org/who-we-are/contact.html>

65. **Question:** Is rent an eligible expense?

Answer: Yes, rent for the program to operate the Hotline is an eligible cost.

66. **Question:** I have a question on supplanting. If we already are operating a 24/7-hour call center, would this be considered supplanting or could we use the 24/7 center to just be the foundation of this RFP?

Answer: This would not be considered supplanting as your program is not currently operating the NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline and the PREA Hotline. The NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline service is not a call center activity. The statewide Hotline services must be operational 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. The PREA Hotline provides services for incarcerated individuals according to the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) between the hours of 8AM and 11 PM, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. Service provision, beyond the requirements set forth in the RFP and workplan, should be described by the applicant based on their experience providing hotline services.

67. **Question:** Does the Hotline Operation Acknowledgment Form bind the chosen bidder to accepting the contract?

Answer: Yes, if the applicant is awarded the contract under this grant, the Hotline Operation Acknowledgment Form binds them to accepting the contract and the awardee must be prepared to begin operating the Hotline as of October 1, 2021.

68. **Question:** Where is copy of RFP?

Answer: The RFP can be found on the Grants Gateway by searching "NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline 2021-2024" or visiting <https://on.ny.gov/3fnUrJO>.

69. **Question:** If our Call Center works with the County Rape Crisis Program and have the calls coming through the Call Center to then dispatch an advocate does the counselors answering the phone need to receive all of the required training?

Answer: Yes, the operators of the Hotline must receive all required training. Prior to contract start, as per NYCRR 69-5, all staff/volunteers must have received the required advocate training for the purpose of rape crisis certification. Additionally, prior to contract start, all staff working the PREA Hotline must participate in



training as prescribed by DOCCS in conjunction with local PREA partner programs and/or the NYS Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NYSCASA).

70. **Question:** Do you have to do chat?

Answer: Yes, operation of the Hotline via phone, text and chat 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year is required.

71. **Question:** What if the existing community resources are not useful?

Answer: The resource database will need to be developed by the new awardee. OPDV can provide some recommended resources to assist in building out the database when the award is made, and the awardee should utilize any resources they currently use to refer clients to services.

72. **Question:** What if existing laws and courts reward abusers?

Answer: This question is not applicable to clarification of the RFP.

73. **Question:** Who/what department is funding this grant?

Answer: OPDV is issuing this grant opportunity. Funds for this contract are provided by the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence Aid to Localities appropriation, which is funded by the state general fund, and federal funding administered by the Office of Victim Services (OVS). All agreements and funding are subject to the availability of funds. OPDV reserves the right to revise the award amount as necessary due to changes in the availability of funding.

74. **Question:** What is the process for applying toward a Joint Venture to the Executive NYS OPDV Lead Agency?

Answer: This question is not applicable to clarification of the RFP.

75. **Question:** Can we receive an email of the [Pre-Bid Webinar] recording?

Answer: Yes, a recording of the Pre-Bid webinar and associated slides will be shared via email and will be uploaded to the OPDV website.



76. **Question:** Can this hotline help to provide actual solutions to dv issues that are unresolved in communities?

Answer: Please refer to section C. Hotline Core Services, Data, & Proposal Requirements of the RFP for more information about the services provided by the Hotline.

77. **Question:** If we won't have a Spanish Speaker available at all times, does that disqualify us from this bid opportunity?

Answer: Applicants do not need to have Spanish speaking staff currently on their payroll, but they must have a plan to hire those staff so that they can operate the line as of October 1, 2021. Funding under this grant can cover salary and fringe costs.

78. **Question:** Since the Q&A dates are being adjusted, will the RFP due date be extended as well?

Answer: No. The Q&A submission due date was extended from June 9 to June 11. The Q&A posting date was extended from June 11 to on or about June 16. All applications are due on July 9 at 12:00PM EST.

79. **Question:** How many applications were received in response to the initial solicitation?

Answer: OPDV received two (2) applications for the previous solicitation, "2020-2023 NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline."

80. **Question:** If we have never operated a hotline, could we qualify?

Answer: All entities that meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the Eligible Applicants section of this RFP are able to apply. Applicants must demonstrate their ability to operate the statewide NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline and the PREA Hotline in their submitted applications.

81. **Question:** When will notification of award be made to the awardee?

Answer: Anticipated notification of award will take place on or about August 2, 2021.



82. **Question:** What is the average call time for non-PREA calls? I know you mentioned during the webinar for a maximum of 30 minutes.

Answer: In 2020, the average call length for the NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline was 7 minutes. All calls into the NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence (D&SV) Hotline must be answered within 20 seconds (approximately 5 rings). All text and chats into the NYS D&SV Hotline must be answered within 30 seconds. Calls into the PREA Hotline must be answered within 20 seconds (approximately 5 rings).

83. **Question:** Can a brand-new organization apply for the grant or does it have to be an organization that has been established. Is that what it means when it states in the RFP that “applicants may apply as individual organizations?”

Answer: Eligible applicants must fit under one of the categories listed under the Eligible Applicants section of the RFP. These categories are:

- NYS domestic violence providers/programs that are licensed and/or approved by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS);
- NYS rape crisis programs approved by the NYS Department of Health (DOH);
- NYS victim assistance programs currently funded by the Office of Victim Services (OVS);
- Other organizations as designated by the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV) provider directory;
- Other organizations as designated by the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NYSCASA) provider directory