



Department of Justice



Office of Justice Programs

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OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS AWARDS \$12 MILLION TO INCREASE ACCESS TO LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR CRIME VICTIMS

WASHINGTON – The Office of Justice Programs’ Office for Victims of Crime has awarded grants totaling almost \$12 million to greatly expand direct legal services to crime victims and foster technological innovation in the delivery of legal assistance to those affected by crime in rural areas.

“Crime victims have a myriad of legal needs that often go unaddressed,” said OVC Director Darlene Hutchinson. “Survivors suffer from emotional, physical, and financial trauma because of criminal acts, and too often, this trauma is exacerbated unfortunately by the criminal justice process.”

Nearly \$9 million was awarded to Equal Justice Works to increase the number of attorneys available to enhance victims’ access to civil legal help through a Legal Fellows Program. This program will place more than 60 lawyers in organizations throughout the country to provide direct services for victims of crime, including advocating for the enforcement of crime victims’ rights.

“Over the years, states have enacted laws to give victims the right to be notified of their criminal cases and the right to be present and heard, and we must assure these rights are always respected,” Hutchinson added.

The second part of this grant initiative will award more than \$3 million to the National Crime Victim Law Institute to use technology and other innovations to increase legal access in rural areas. The program will establish three locations to improve the delivery of comprehensive legal services to victims in remote areas.

“So often, survivors of crime face additional legal challenges, beyond the prosecution of the defendant. They may need help with child support, housing or protective orders which result from the crime they endured. This grant program will help meet these needs,” said Hutchinson.

The Office of Justice Programs, headed by Acting Assistant Attorney General Alan R. Hanson, provides federal leadership in developing the nation’s capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice and assist victims. OJP has six bureaus and offices: the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; the Office for Victims of Crime; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking. More information about OJP and its components can be found at www.ojp.gov.

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