



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

U.S. Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 14, 2019

DOJ OIG Releases Report on the Office on Violence Against Women Training and Technical Assistance Program

Department of Justice (DOJ) Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz announced today the release of a report examining the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) Training and Technical Assistance Program (TA Initiative). The TA Initiative provides direct training and technical assistance to existing OVW award recipients, potential recipients, and the public in order to improve overall responses to violence against women. Since 2010, OVW has invested over \$300 million in the TA Initiative.

The DOJ OIG found that (1) OVW generally conducted thorough and detailed reviews of award budgets within the scope of this audit; (2) the majority of TA Initiative recipients in our review were successful in completing the goals and objectives of their awards; and (3) OVW has, or is in the process of, taking steps intended to improve its TA Initiative. However, we also identified deficiencies, including:

- **OVW does not have a process in place to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness or value of all resources produced under the TA Initiative.** Currently, OVW does not measure the effectiveness or value of many in-person trainings, does not uniformly collect and aggregate user feedback on TA products, and does not have processes in place to measure improvements or progress in the other OVW programs the TA Initiative is expected to enhance.
- **TA Initiative Products Could Be Better Distributed.** While OVW funded the creation, and currently funds the maintenance, of a website intended to function as the primary distribution point for TA resources, the website is not effectively promoted by OVW. Additionally, many resources were not posted to the website as required by the terms and conditions of the award, limiting their availability and value to recipients of OVW awards.
- **Awards and supplemental awards were made far in advance of the recipient's ability to commence work.** In FYs 2015 and 2016, we identified over \$7.2 million in funding (approximately 10 percent of the total amount audited) that OVW awarded to a recipient but kept "frozen" in the recipient's account for over 1 year, as the recipient completed work on a prior OVW award.

In addition, we identified deficiencies in OVW's provision of final financial clearances, the peer review process, staff training, approval of TA Initiative products, and the use of the DOJ consultant rate.

Today's report makes 13 recommendations to OVW to address the deficiencies identified and improve oversight of the TA Initiative. OVW concurred with, or proposed actions to remedy, all recommendations in the report. Four of the recommendations have already been closed.

Report: Today's report can be found on the OIG's website under "Recent Reports" at the following link: <https://oig.justice.gov/reports/2019/a1908.pdf>.

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