



# National Task Force to End Sexual & Domestic Violence

**ACTION ALERT: Contact your members of Congress and tell them to urge the Department of Justice to immediately restore terminated Office of Justice Programs grants, protect the Office on Violence Against Women and its authorized, appropriated grant programs, and not to make further cuts.**

**April 24, 2024**

**Please forward widely!**

The Department of Justice has [terminated](#) more than **360 federal grants, worth hundreds of millions of dollars**, that promote public safety and provide victims and survivors with access to safety, security, and justice. These cuts come at the end of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, just weeks after we observed Crime Victims Rights Week. These outrageous, harmful, and unprecedented cuts do not show care for victims.

These cuts are devastating. Victim services will be decimated, programs will close, and victims and survivors will have nowhere to turn in their hour of need - **nowhere** to seek refuge from abusive partners, **nowhere** to get a sexual assault forensic exam, **nowhere** to get help navigating complicated legal systems. We have already seen that the Victim Connect national hotline may have to [cease operations](#) as soon as April 25 due to the elimination of its grant funding. Critical funding for community-based violence prevention has been eliminated. Law enforcement and prosecutors will lose access to important training and expertise that help them investigate and prosecute domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, child abuse, gun violence, hate crimes, and more.

These cuts make all of our communities less safe. And there is more to come. We expect cuts focused specifically on services and legal responses to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking in the coming days.

**Contact your members of Congress (instructions [here](#))** and urge them to push back against these catastrophic cuts, demand the release of FY25 Notice of Funding Opportunities, and maintain the Office on Violence Against Women as an independent agency!

Keep scrolling for a [phone script](#), [email template](#), [sample tweet](#), [click to email](#), and a [sign-on letter](#) and information sharing for organizations. There are also [talking points](#) at the end, if you want to draft your own email - or write an op-ed or letter to the editor! Also check out this [toolkit](#)

from Valor; they are collecting survivor stories to illustrate the harm and have useful advice for setting up meetings with your members of Congress and their staff.

### Phone Script:

Hi, my name is [your name], and I am a constituent calling from [your location and, if applicable, your program]. I'm calling to urge [Representative/Senator XXX] to demand that the Department of Justice immediately reinstate all previously awarded Office of Justice Programs grants and refrain from terminating grants in any other agencies, including the Office on Violence Against Women. These cuts will deeply harm public safety by forcing victim service programs to cut services or close entirely, inhibiting the ability of law enforcement and prosecutors to hold offenders accountable, and undermining community programs that reduce violence and save lives. [Describe how these cuts will impact your community]. Congress must also urge the Department of Justice to release the Fiscal Year 2025 Notices of Funding Opportunities and to abide by the federal law establishing the Office on Violence Against Women as an independent agency. This is a crisis for public safety, for victims' rights, and for trust in government and systems. Lives are literally at stake. It's Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and we just observed Crime Victims Rights Week—Congress needs to stand with victims and survivors today and everyday.

### Email Script:

Dear [Representative/Senator XXX],

I am a constituent writing from [your location and, if applicable, your program], and I am writing to express deep concern about the Department of Justice's (DOJ) termination of previously awarded and fully appropriated Office of Justice Programs (OJP) grants and cooperative agreements. This action is unprecedented, destabilizing, and poses an immediate threat to victim services, public safety initiatives, and survivor-centered training and research programs nationwide. **Congress must demand that the DOJ immediately reinstate all previously awarded OJP grants and refrain from terminating grants in any other agencies!**

Victims and survivors will have nowhere to turn in their hour of need - **nowhere** to seek refuge from abusive partners, **nowhere** to get a sexual assault forensic exam, **nowhere** to get help navigating complicated legal systems. Programs mobilizing communities to prevent violence will be shuttered. Law enforcement and prosecutors will lose access to essential training and expertise that help them investigate and prosecute domestic violence, sexual assault, gun violence, hate crimes, and more.

In our own community, [explain how your community or program will be impacted—for example: "this will mean we must turn away over 150 victims annually" or "we will have to eliminate our legal advocacy and housing assistance programs"].

These cuts will have a disproportionate impact on survivors who already experience the highest rates of violence and homicide—and already face significant barriers to accessing safety and justice.

I respectfully urge Congress to do the following:

- Demand that DOJ reinstate all terminated OJP grants and refrain from terminating awards from other agencies, including the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW).
- Insist that DOJ post all FY25 grant solicitations for both OJP and OVW programs without further delay.
- Emphasize to the Department of Justice that, according to federal law, the ***Office on Violence Against Women must remain an independent office*** and not be subsumed under any other entity.
- Conduct ongoing and rigorous oversight of DOJ to ensure transparency and stability in grantmaking, to ensure victims have access to critical services, and to promote the DOJ's core mission to enhance public safety - not undermine it.

It's Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and we just observed Crime Victims Rights Week—Congress needs to stand with victims and survivors today and everyday. Thank you for your leadership and for standing with survivors and communities.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

#### **Sample Tweet:**

[@Handle] DOJ has terminated hundreds of millions of dollars in OJP grants—devastating victim services, community violence prevention, & public safety nationwide. Congress must act NOW to reinstate these grants & prevent additional cuts. #StandWithSurvivors #PublicSafety

#### **Click to Email:**

You can also [click here](#) to automatically email your members of Congress. Language is pre-populated, but please personalize the email to illustrate how these cuts will impact your community!

#### **For Organizations ONLY:**

[Sign](#) onto this domestic violence/sexual assault field [letter](#) addressing grant cuts, FY25 grant solicitations, and the proposal to merge the Office on Violence Against Women into other grantmaking offices. And fill out [this form](#) to explain how these cuts will impact your organization and your ability to provide services to victims and survivors.

#### **Talking points:**

Asks

- Congress must demand that the Department of Justice immediately reinstate all terminated Office of Justice Programs awards and refrain from terminating awards from other agencies, including those from the Office on Violence Against Women. Congress must also demand that the Department of Justice immediately post the FY25 Notices of Funding Opportunities from the Office on Violence Against Women and the Office of Justice Programs.
- Congress must emphasize to the Department of Justice that federal law stipulates the Office on Violence Against Women shall not be subsumed into any other office.

### *Background*

- The Department of Justice (DOJ) has terminated already-awarded Office of Justice Programs (OJP) grants and cooperative agreements ***that have already been awarded***, despite these funds being appropriated by Congress.
- This action is destabilizing to victim services providers, public safety initiatives, and survivor-centered research and training programs across the country.
- Programs serving victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, image-based abuse, gun violence, human trafficking, child abuse, and elder abuse will be forced to reduce services, lay off staff, and many will close altogether.
- Survivors who rely on these services for safety, healing, and justice will be left without support.
- These grant terminations also encompass community-based programs that reduce violence, train sexual assault nurse examiners, equip law enforcement with the tools they need to investigate crimes, and enhance the ability of prosecutors to hold offenders accountable.
- Use specific examples from your community to illustrate the harm these cuts will have. For example, "We will be able to serve ### fewer victims, or we will have to cut xyz services."
- These cuts will have a disproportionate impact on survivors who already experience the highest rates of violence and homicide.
- April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and we just observed Crime Victims Rights Week.