

*City of Alexandria, Virginia*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 25, 2025

TO: JAMES PARAION, CITY MANAGER

FROM: ROBERT SNYDER, CHIEF INTERNAL AUDITOR

SUBJECT: DCHS SEXUAL ASSAULT AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE OFFICE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN  
SITE VISIT (FS25-06)

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**Background**

On August 16, 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) alerted the Division Chief of the Alexandria Sexual Assault Center and Domestic Violence Program (SACDVP) that they would be conducting a site visit in reference to the OVW Grant to Prevent and Respond to Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Sex Trafficking Against Children and Youth Program (CY) grant award 15JOVW-22-GG-01072CY.

**Discussion**

On September 24, 2024, the DOJ grant team conducted their site visit. On February 11, 2025, they provided a post site visit letter detailing their observations. During their visit they reviewed the award document, grant deliverables, financial reports, and performance reports. They met with key staff and project partners. They identified no programmatic or administrative issues requiring a response from the department and praised the goals and work of the grant. They did note that there may be a need to request an extension due to project implementation delays.

Based on the grant team's statement regarding extensions, our office reviewed the City's financial system. Our review indicated that as of February 12, 2025, a total of \$177,458.62, or 35% of the program budget has been expended. The closing date of the grant is September 30, 2025. We noted that with approximately five (5) months remaining in the fiscal year, we would anticipate that an additional \$100,000 would be expended in FY2025. This would validate the grant team's comment regarding extension, and we would recommend that the department pursue this to capitalize on the funding afforded by this grant.

Additional information provided by the department indicated that the OVW required that the programs not start their programming for at least six months after the award was granted. The grant requirements were to develop a needs assessment, logic models, and required policies such as a confidentiality policy not only for the awarded project, but for the project partners. Once these various requirements were developed, there was a delay in the grant monitor to approve each document before the department was allowed to implement programming. When all pieces

were approved, including the program budget, they began the process for hiring the Prevention Project Supervisor who started on May 13, 2024.

### **OIA Analysis of DCHS SACDVP and Other Audits**

OIA has reviewed our records regarding other engagements involving the DCHS SACDVP. This program is one of the more heavily audited or monitored programs and has consistently been praised for its effectiveness and impact to vulnerable members of our community. Table 1 shows the engagements involving the DCHS SACDVP.

**Table 1 Prior Audits or Monitoring Reviews**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Engagement Name</b>	<b>Notes</b>
12/06/23	<a href="#">FS24-04 DCHS SACDVP DCJS Follow-up Monitoring Review</a>	VCJS confirmed that recommendations to federal audit had been implemented.
04/17/23	<a href="#">FS23-10 DCHS -SACDVP DOJ OIG Monitoring Visit</a>	One (1) finding related to accounting treatment of expenditures.
01/07/23	<a href="#">FS23-09 DCHS SACDVP VDSS Monitoring Review</a>	Three (3) required actions and two (2) recommendations largely related to program officiation.
07/14/22	<a href="#">FS23-01 DCHS Sexual Assault Domestic Violence (SACDVP) Site Visit</a>	No recommendations made.

### **Conclusion**

The DOJ grant team conducted their site visit and identified no programmatic or administrative issues requiring a response from the department. Our review of the grant expenditures indicates the department has expended approximately 35% of the funding and the due date for final completion of the grant is less than one (1) calendar year away. Therefore, we recommend that an extension be requested as soon as possible to facilitate use of the grant funding.

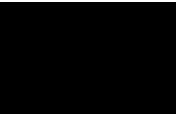
### **Recommendation**

Based on our review of this engagement we are issuing the following recommendations to the Director of the Department of Community and Human Services:

- 1. Review the terms and conditions of the grant and request an extension of the period of performance in order to maximize the use of grant funding.**

### **Department Response**

A written response was requested from the Department on February 25, 2025, which has been attached to this report. In their response they agree to request an extension to make use of the funding provided by this grant. OIA will follow up with the department to ensure that an extension has been granted. Should you have any questions, please contact [internalaudit@alexandriava.gov](mailto:internalaudit@alexandriava.gov) or via phone a 703.746.4742.

cc. , Deputy City Manager  
 Director DCHS  
 Domestic Violence Program Division Chief

# *City of Alexandria, Virginia*

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 10, 2025

TO: ROBERT SNYDER, CHIEF INTERNAL AUDITOR

FROM: KATE GARVEY, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND HUMAN SERVICES

SUBJECT: AUDIT RESPONSE TO FEDERAL AND STATE AUDIT OR MONITORING REVIEW FS25-06 DCHS SACDVP DOJ OVM

This memo has been prepared to update our department/office's response to the Office of Internal Audit (OIA)'s recommendations.

**Review the terms and conditions of the grant and request an extension of the period of performance in order to maximize the use of grant funding.**

The Department of Community and Human Services concurs with this recommendation. The Sexual Assault Center (SAC) and Domestic Violence Program (DVP) staff have been speaking with their grant monitor about applying for a no-cost extension for four months due to the delays in implementing the project. OVW required that the programs not start their programming for at least six months after the award was granted. The grant requirements were to develop a needs assessment, logic models, and required policies such as a confidentiality policy not only for the awarded project, but for the project partners. Once these various requirements were developed, there was a delay in the grant monitoring to approve each document before the department was allowed to implement programming. When all pieces were approved, including the program budget, they began the process for hiring the Prevention Project Supervisor who started on May 13, 2024.

By obtaining the no cost extension this will allow the program to continue the below projects that are covered by the OVW grant.

- Funding for a Prevention Project Supervisor who supervise Peer Advocates and guide their work in teaching other Alexandria youth on topics related to sexual and reproductive health, sexual assault prevention, healthy relationships, mental health, and substance use prevention. The Community Education Specialist will be responsible for overseeing planning and recruitment for workshops, presentations, activities, and events for a new branch of the Keep It 360 Peer Advocate program and other prevention programs. Other responsibilities include overseeing and creating social media content for Alexandria Teen Life and providing advocacy and training on Sexual Assault Center (SAC) & Domestic Violence Program (DVP) resources. This position will work with and alongside the Youth Development Team, including the Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy (ACAP) and the Substance Abuse

Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA) in these efforts, in addition to Sexual Assault Center staff.

- Peer Advocates- who are youth in their teens and early twenties - who educates high school and college-age peers on building healthy relationships, safe dating, healthy sexuality, empowering young people, bystander intervention, and local domestic and sexual violence resources and supports. Our work in Alexandria has shown us that youth like learning from other youth and trust youth as presenters and facilitators.
- A partnership with Capital Youth Empowerment Program (CYEP) who expanded the reach of the evidenced-based healthy relationships curriculum Safe Dates to more middle and high-school youth in Alexandria, with an intentional focus on Black and Hispanic youth. CYEP's programming aims to "level the playing field for the underserved." Outcomes from the Safe Dates curriculum show that participants will be less likely to be involved in dating violence, either victim or the aggressor; less likely to be involved in intimate partner violence as adults; more likely to intervene if they see problems related to dating abuse; and less likely to experience problems associated with dating violence, including declining school performance, depression, and suicidality.
- A partnership with Safe Space NOVA who engages LGBTQ+ youth in Alexandria to present their newly designed healthy sexuality curriculum for queer youth that covers topics such as body autonomy, consent, communication, and boundary-setting, and more.<sup>3</sup> Safe Space will offer a bi-weekly support group for LGBTQ+ youth to ask questions, connect with other youth, and build a resource network. Finally, Safe Space will develop and deliver training for allied professionals and youth-serving organizations to improve sexual and domestic violence services for LGBTQ+ youth.

If we were not able to apply and receive this no-cost extension from OVW, the SAC and DVP would not be able to provide services to vulnerable youth who may be experiencing sexual and/or domestic violence. As part of the grant, our program provides prevention and educational programming to youth who may be experiencing violence. In addition to the prevention programming this grant provides funding to Safe Space NOVA to provide support groups to LGBTQ+ youth and training to allied professionals who are providing services to youth-serving organizations.

Please contact: [REDACTED] Department of Community and Human Services, Sexual Assault Center and Domestic Violence Program [REDACTED]

September 30, 2024

[REDACTED]  
City of Alexandria

[REDACTED]  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Re: Post Site Visit Letter

OVW Grants to Prevent and Respond to Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Sex Trafficking Against Children and Youth Program 15JOVW-22-GG-01072-CY

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for the time and assistance you and your project partners provided during the OVW site visit on September 24, 2024. [REDACTED] Associate Director, [REDACTED] Grant Management Specialist and I appreciated your coordinating the time and opportunity to discuss and hear more about your program and the amazing violence prevention, education, and mentoring work you are doing with youth in Alexandria that centers around racial and social equity.

There were no programmatic or administrative issues requiring formal resolution identified during the visit. However, we did discuss the possibility of a project extension due to the delays in implementing the project. This should be discussed in July or August of next year.

The following documentation was reviewed during the visit:

1. Award documents (narrative, budget and budget narrative, MOU) and award conditions);
2. Grant deliverables and submissions; and
3. Performance reports.

Throughout my visit, I was pleased by the passion, knowledge, and expertise the key staff bring to this project and the collaboration with your community partners, Capital Youth Empowerment Program (CYEP) and Safe Space NOVA. I look forward to seeing all of the great prevention work you will continue doing through the You+Me=We, Safe Dates Program, and the DO YOU Campaign curriculums creating comprehensive prevention strategies and breaking the cycles of violence in the youths.

Again, thank you for your cooperation during my recent visit. I look forward to continuing to work with you and your partners.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
Grant Management Specialist