



CDVSA Executive Director's Update

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April – June 2023

FY2023 Quarter 4

An update of CDVSA activities/highlights April – June 2023

Staffing and personnel

The good news is that staffing has stabilized a little in the past few months. We have nine (9) full-time positions filled, with two positions vacant. Lisa Morley began as a new Program Coordinator 2 on April 10. Lisa will be the point person for our programming to address those who cause harm – Lisa is charged with reviewing the work of the Perpetrator Rehabilitation Workgroup, their considerations and recommendations and begin creating an updated, evidence-informed approach to serving this population. Her first steps are to become familiar with our existing BIP and PBP programming, understand what approaches are available to address individuals who cause harm, and identify a new approach for Alaska. Services for this population are critical to reducing the number of victims and survivors who experience violence.

A few weeks after Lisa began, on April 28 we lost Ann Rausch to retirement. While we miss her terribly, she appears to be enjoying every minute of “owning her own time” in retirement! We finally received approval for the updated job description for our Prevention Program Coordinator and hope to begin recruiting for a new prevention expert the week of May 30.

The final position we are recruiting for is a new Administrative Officer 2. We initially posted the position on March 21 through April 4. While we had several good applicants, two withdrew their applications and we were unable to make a hire from the original job posting. We have reposted the AO2 position, and it will close on June 8. It is difficult to enter this very busy time of end-of-year activities (FY2023) and beginning-of-the-year activities/set-up (FY2024) without a CDVSA dedicated Administrative Officer.

Even though we have not been fully staffed for many months, staffing feels much more stable at this time. This has been an extremely busy quarter with legislative activities, two Request for Proposals, and three Proposal Evaluation Committees, on top of everyone's day-to-day work.



And as always happens, everything got done, on time, and with excellence! THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU to every CDVSA staff person – your work ethic, energy, and passion for what we do keeps me humble and grateful for such an amazing staff.

CDVSA Funding Challenges

As you know, CDVSA has three increments included in the Governor's FY24 budget:

- \$3,000,000 (UGF) One-time-increment for DVSA Victim Services Grants Support (continuing replacement of federal VOCA funds)
- \$1,200,000 (UGF) to increase and enhance community-based prevention and abusive partner intervention program activities
- \$420,000 (RJA) to align authority with the statutory distribution of the balance in the Restorative Justice Account

When the legislature gaveled out on May 18, following a 1-day special session, these three increments remained in the final budget passed by the House and Senate. The \$3.0 million 1-time UGF and the \$420,000 RJA funding have both been added to the FY24 Victim Services funding pool, helping to balance our gap in VS funding for FY24. The remaining \$1.2 million in UGF has not yet been added to our FY24 budget, while we determine the best use of these funds in FY24, focusing on Prevention (60% of the funding) and Perpetrator Rehabilitation (40% of the funding).

As we continue to watch the trend of our four (4) federal formula grants, they appear to be maintaining a similar level of funding over the past 3 years. Even VOCA appears to have stabilized at around \$3.3 million – we no longer have a VOCA gap, we just have less funding, and it is important to keep this in mind moving forward. We will be using the remaining “extra” funds that were available due to COVID, to fund subgrantees in FY24. To get an idea of our level of grant funds in FY25 it appears we will have approximately \$6,949,648 in federal funding and \$11,628,583 in state general funds for \$18.5 million—leaving us short approximately \$3.5 million to remain at the current level of grant funding.

As we have done over the last few years, we will all need to pay close attention to what funding we have, and what funding we need to maintain statewide services for those who have been harmed, those who have caused the harm, and high-quality prevention programming to begin reducing the high rates of domestic and sexual violence in Alaska. As we know, these are



services that are essential for the health and safety of individuals, families, communities, and all Alaskans. I feel confident that during the recent legislative session, there was more recognition that services funded through CDVSA are critical and necessary, and service agencies need consistent, stable funding, that keeps up with inflation, to begin turning the curve on the rates of DVSA.

CDVSA Priority Projects Update

▪ FY24-26 Competitive RFP and PEC Processes

During the past three months, CDVSA staff have been busy working through the process of receiving grant applications for our two competitive Request for Proposals (RFP), Enhanced Services and Victim Services. The two RFPs were for a three-year funding cycle, SFY 2024 through SFY 2026.

A portion of the funding available for Victim Services is dependent on the approval of the FY24 budget, and the \$3.0 million 1-time GF increment. Additionally, we will use the \$420,000 RJA increment received in the FY24 approved budget. As we have discussed over the last three years, our current allocated grant funding is a “patchwork” of various funding sources, including many one-time supplements. To cobble together the necessary funding for the FY24 Victim Services grants, we will be using 11 different funding sources. This is not ideal for our funded programs or for CDVSA staff because the more funding sources, the more separate grant awards each agency receives to equal their funding award. We will do our best to keep the number of separate grant awards to each agency between 2-3, but we can’t promise this for all agencies.

On May 3, agencies recommended for Enhanced Services (ES) funding received an email indicating the recommended amount of their FY24 award. These were sent for planning purposes with the caveat that nothing is final until the CDVSA Board reviews and approves all FY24 funding recommendations and the state’s FY24 operating budget is signed by Governor Dunleavy. A similar email was sent to all agencies recommended for Victim Services (VS) funding, indicating a 2% reduction from their FY23 funding level (for current sub-grantees) and a 2% reduction from their requested funding for the two new agencies recommended for funding. The total 2% reduction equaled \$353,951. It was a difficult decision, but with so many unknowns about future CDVSA funding, it was the most prudent decision to make at this time.

In your Board packet is an overview of the FY24 grant funding recommendations we are making for all grant programs: Prevention, BIP/PBP, ES, and VS. Prevention and BIP/PBP are continuation years, while ES and VS were both competitive years with new grant awards. Also included in the Board packet is an Excel spreadsheet, with a tab for each grant funding category.

▪ **FY23 Supplemental Funding for Utilities, Gas, and Other Consumable Commodities**

During last year's legislative session and FY23 budget decisions, CDVSA received a \$300,000 UGF increment designated as supplemental funds for our sub-grantees. The intent of these funds was to help with the high cost of utilities, gas, and other consumable commodities. In FY22 we provided a similar supplemental to support our programs. Using the same formula as we did in FY22, distribution will use the state's Geographic Pay Differential, based on the higher cost of living in different parts of the state. An example of this is that Anchorage and surrounding areas have no differential, Juneau is a 5%+ differential and Bethel is a 50%+ differential. We believe this is a fair, equitable, and easy-to-calculate distribution. This year's payments, based on a total of \$300,000 available, will range from \$8,064 (0% differential) to \$12,903 (60% differential). Two agencies declined the supplemental funding, dividing the \$300,000 among 33 agencies. All payment information has been sent forward to DPS Payables and will be processed in the next week (or so, they are very busy right now!). Because these funds are supplemental and not grant funding, the process will require no reporting or receipts on the expenditures. We are happy we were able to provide these supplemental funds once again.

▪ **33rd Legislative Session**

The first regular session of the 33rd Legislature ended on May 17. On May 18 a 30-day special session began, called by the Governor for the purpose of completing and approving the FY24 operating budget. By the end of May 18, a budget was passed, and the special session ended. As discussed last quarter, there are several legislative bills with possible impact to CDVSA. Below is a partial list of bills introduced and in various stages of hearings and movement in the legislative process by the end of the first session:

- HB 11 – An act establishing the crime of assault in the presence of a child (Rep. Josephson)—5/9 moved to House Finance Committee
- SB 12 – An act relating to creating an address confidentiality program (Sen. Kiehl)—passed the Senate; 4/26 referred to House State Affairs

- SB 28 – An act relating to workplace violence protective orders (Sen. Claman)—3/24 referred to Senate Judiciary
- HB 67/SB 65 – An act relating to domestic violence/sex offenses (Governor)—referred to House and Senate Judiciary
- HB 68/SB 66 – An act relating to sex and human trafficking (Governor)—4/28 referred to House Finance and 2/8 referred to Senate Judiciary
- HB 116 – An act relating to appropriations from the restorative justice account (Rep. Coulombe/Himschoot)—5/8 referred to House Finance
- HB 119 – An act relating to marijuana taxes (currently funding CDVSA Prevention) (House Rules Committee)—was read and held over in House Labor and Commerce until next January.

When the second Regular Session of the 33rd Legislature begins next January, these bills will continue to be monitored for their impact on the work of CDVSA.

▪ Improving services for those who cause harm

Lisa Morley, our new Program Coordinator 2, is bringing new energy and concepts to CDVSA's efforts to implement a new and improved approach to state-approved services for individuals who use violence in their relationships and harm others. The first steps are for Lisa to become familiar with our current BIP/PBP programs, collaborate with DOC, and continue our work with the UAA School of Social Work, in the development of a training curriculum on domestic violence directed at behavioral health providers, to expand the number of service providers in the state that have a solid understanding of domestic violence, becoming skilled at providing services to those who use violence and abuse in their relationships.

As mentioned in the Q. 3 report, CDVSA was a sponsor for the April symposium – "Voice! Acknowledgment! Power! Victims' Rights & Restorative Justice Symposium", in Anchorage. This event was hosted by Dr. Ingrid Johnson and Dr. Rei Shimizu from UAA and featured several speakers including sujatha baliga, an internationally recognized leader in the field of restorative justice. The symposium was well attended and brought new thinking to the work we do to restore families and individuals who have experienced violence or caused violence. We will continue working in partnership with Drs. Ingrid Johnson and Rei Shimizu, as we explore alternative types of services that can be included in our approach to working with individuals who cause harm and those who are harmed. It is time to broaden our thinking and look to new research and alternative approaches to reduce the rates of DV in Alaska.



▪ **Communications, Outreach, and Media**

Having a regular presence in public education campaigns on social media, radio, and television, is our goal. Due to very limited funding for these prevention efforts in the last 6 years, our efforts have been sporadic and mainly focused on the national and state recognition months of February (Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month), April (Sexual Assault Awareness Month), and October (Domestic Violence Awareness Month).

With the additional FY24 increment for prevention activities (shared with increased funding for BIP programming) we anticipate expanding our reach with more consistent and stable messaging, including new creative and targeted themes. We will work closely with Walsh|Sheppard this summer to have some new messaging for FY24 October, February, and April recognition months.

All in all, it has been a busy, challenging, and productive year. It is hard to believe we are about to put FY23 behind us and launch into state FY 2024.