

[Transcript from the OVC Fiscal Year 2020 Emergency and Transitional Pet Shelter Program preapplication webinar, which was held April 14, 2020. The archived webinar can be found at: <https://www.ovc.gov/grants/webinars.html>.]

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Good afternoon, everybody, and welcome to today's webinar, OVC Fiscal Year 2020 Emergency and Transitional Pet Shelter and Housing Assistance Grant Program, hosted by the Office for Victims of Crime. At this time, I would like to turn it over to the presenter.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Thank you very much, Mary Jo. And I'd like to thank all three of the folks who are technically getting this to you--Michelle and Mary Jo and Daryl. I very much appreciate your support all the time, but especially now when all of our communication is electronic.

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm very glad to be able to spend some time this afternoon with you discussing this program. My name is Katherine Darke Schmitt. I'm a Deputy Director in the Office for Victims of Crime at the U.S. Department of Justice. And we're going to spend time today talking about a program that was recently released, which you have expressed interest in, and I am very gratified to know that you are on the line with particular interests in expanding services for victims of domestic violence who are also seeking shelter for companion animals.

As Mary Jo said in the introduction, the purpose of these webinars is largely to make sure that you understand the language that is in the solicitation. And therefore the presentation that I will be making and the slides that you will see largely track the language that is in the solicitation. But if there are parts of the solicitation language or in my remarks that are unclear, please do use that Q&A option at the bottom of your screen, so that we can give you clarification during the webinar. I am occasionally also stumped by questions that come in during the webinar. And if that happens, then I will duly note that I do not know the answer. And if it is a question that we can answer while the solicitation is open and competitive, I will research the answer and with the team here on the webinar, we will make sure that we can communicate back what the answer to the question was. With that in mind, let's go ahead and get started.

For this afternoon, we will focus very briefly on the OVC Mission. We'll spend most of our time on Solicitation Purpose. There are some slides at the back about how to apply, the technical parts of what you do to submit your application to us; however, that information is covered in the solicitation. And so I will not spend very much time there. I'll just refer you to the solicitation document that details how you send an application for funding in.

I know that many of you on the call are probably very familiar with the Office for Victims of Crime. And our mission is always to enhance the Nation's capacity to assist crime victims and to provide leadership in changing policies and practices to promote justice and healing for all victims of crime. I want to note that particularly now in the difficult circumstances in which we are all living and working, OVC is so extraordinarily grateful to the work that victim service providers are doing in the field right now, against, incredible odds. We know and we appreciate the efforts that you are going to, to make sure that your staff and your volunteers are safe and

healthy and the efforts that you are going to, to try to connect victim services with services that they need even while we are all sheltering at home. Thank you for that.

The program that we're discussing today is intended to provide shelter and transitional housing and other kinds of assistance to victims of domestic violence and their companion animals. Under this program, companion animals means pets, service animals, emotional support animals, and horses. And I'm not sure why horses got a special shout out in the legislation, but they did. So, I want to make sure you know they are included in the program to be funded. Also, an interesting note--the legislation from which this program is drawn defined domestic violence victims as a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. So that is not how most of us in the field use the term domestic violence victim. Most of us are very much more precise with our language when we talk about different kinds of victimization, but for the purpose of this program, it was Congress' intent that we serve victims of all four of those crimes: domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

From the statute, which is encoded at Public Law 115-334, we have a variety of eligibility requirements. These are set by law, and so OVC cannot change them. They are very important because if you are listening to this webinar and you are contemplating whether you would like to submit an application for funding under this program, you must see the kind of agency that you represent listed here on this slide. This slide, as I mentioned earlier, is taken directly from the solicitation. So this information is also available there, if the slide goes by too fast. Grants can be made to states and territories, units of local government, Indian tribes, and organizations that have worked with domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking victims. And then the statute goes on to list some examples there. And also to organizations that work with pets, service animals, emotional support animals, or horses and collaborate with any of the organizations that are described in the four bullets above that.

Here's probably the most important piece of information that you will get all afternoon, and that is that applications are due Thursday [Friday], May 29, 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time. No, I will not actually be sitting at my computer or answering the phone at that time, I hope. But at that point, Grants.gov ceases to accept new applications. If you are a new applicant, it's very important you understand that there is no human being on the other end who can receive your pleas for, "Just wait 1 minute. I'm in the middle of..." It's a machine. It doesn't know or care. At 11:59 p.m., it stops accepting applications. So the lesson there is that it is really important to start and finish the submission of your application before the deadline approaches. OJP typically encourages applicants to finish submitting their application 72 hours prior to the due date.

Under this program, the grants will fund projects that do a few different things. Four things are called out specifically in the statute. One, the projects will provide emergency and transitional shelter and housing assistance for domestic violence and companion animals as those terms were defined earlier in the slideshow. And that also extends to short-term shelter and housing assistance, which is slightly different than emergency and transitional shelter. It is also expected that projects funded under this program will provide support services that are designed to enable persons who are fleeing situations of domestic violence to locate and secure safe housing with the victims' companion animal or animals. And finally, the statute requires that grantees also do some training for relevant stakeholders. Training about the link between abuse and neglect of

animals and interpersonal violence. Training about how your community can better respond to victims of domestic violence who are seeking shelter for companion animals. Training about the kinds of services that your project is making available so that community partners will know about you and will be able to refer victims to you.

The statute includes a number of definitions, some of which I have already covered. I am not going to read these to you. This list is printed on page 6 of the solicitation. So if you have any question about whether the persons or the companion animals that you are anticipating serving are eligible to receive services, please just double check that list on page 6. It's pretty broad.

The statute defines that grantees are going to make housing and supportive services, as described in the previous slide, available to victims for a period of no more than 24 months, which means that serving victims for a lesser period of time is acceptable if, for instance, you're using an emergency shelter model. And for folks who are working in the transitional housing end of things where we would anticipate the service period would be longer, you may extend that 24 months to an additional 6 months, for a total of 30 months in the case of a victim who has made a good faith effort to acquire permanent housing for themselves and their companion animal or animals but has been unable to acquire such. And the determination of what is good faith would be up to you as the grantee.

The statute also requires these second two bullet provisions, which are also listed on page 6 of the solicitation. There is a specific requirement about nondisclosure of confidential information. Those of you who are Office of Violence Against Women, VAWA Act grantees, will recognize this. This is a normal course of business for you all. And there is an additional provision, which you will see requires that no grantee who is offering services funded by this grant award may require a victim to participate in the criminal justice system in order to receive services. Both OVW and OVC often use a variation of this kind of language in our solicitations, and I want to point out that it is here in this one.

There are a few unallowable costs, which I will call to your attention. These are listed on page 6 and 7 of the solicitation. These are unallowable because the Office for Victims of Crime's authorizing statutes do not permit them. They are: holding beds, paying stipends or incentives to victims in order to compel them to participate in services, and primary prevention activities. Now, this last one is a stumper often for folks in the field who are so used to their work being partially rooted in prevention, in addition to your response to victims and survivors. However, the Office for Victims of Crime is not, by statute, allowed to fund primary prevention activities, and as such, you may not propose primary prevention activities under this program. Just a note, if this language is unfamiliar to you, typically primary prevention activity means an education or prevention program that is geared to persons whom we have no reason to believe are victims or are at risk of victimization. If you are doing activities with victims or with persons who might reasonably be assumed to be at-risk of victimization, that becomes a gray area. Sometimes those activities are allowable. Grantees have to get permission from their program managers at OVC to conduct such activities.

Here is the broad brushstroke goal of this program, to provide shelter and transitional housing to victims of domestic violence and their companion animals.

Because OVC collects performance measure data from our grantees, we also spend some column inches in the solicitation describing the particular objective for this program. The objectives for this program are drawn from the authorizing statute. So, what we are looking to see is that our grantees are increasing the number of shelter beds and transitional housing options to meet the needs of victims of domestic violence who need shelter for themselves or for their companion animals. We will also be asking our grantees to quantify the kinds of training they are providing. And you can see, again, the list of training subjects, which were covered in the statute and which are reproduced in the solicitation.

We are looking to count the provision of emergency and short-term and transitional shelter as an outcome of this award and also assistance with expenses incurred for relocating to temporary shelter, housing, and boarding, transportation, and fostering of the companion animals that are incidental to securing the safety of the victim and of the victim's companion animals. We will also ask grantees to quantify the support services that they are providing which are helping the victims flee the domestic violence situation. And here, training gets another note at the bottom of this slide.

Under this program, OVC anticipates making up to 5 awards. The maximum dollar amount for each award will be \$400,000. There were \$2 million allocated for this program. The project performance start date will be October 1, 2020, and the awards will be 36 months long, so they will wrap up in 2023. I hope I'm not embarrassing myself by doing the math wrong there. 36-month project period. You--Yes, you could submit an application, which requests less than \$400,000. Totally fine. \$400,000 is the maximum, so any project with a federal request greater than \$400,000 will not be responsive to the solicitation, and so that application will not be reviewed.

We're getting into the territory now where I'm going to refer you to the solicitation so that you are not subjected to me reading to you pages of slides of requirements that are already published there. If you are new to OVC, then please note there are some parts of your application, which must be included so that our peer reviewers can fairly evaluate the projects that are described in the application. When these pieces are missing, the peer reviewers can't make good assessments of the likelihood that the project will achieve its stated deliverables and outcomes, and that would therefore, make it very difficult for OVC to make an award. So I call your attention to this information that is found on pages 10 to 13 of the solicitation and also on page 15 of the solicitation.

These two particular attachments here, your Program Narrative and your Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative, are required for your application even to go to peer review. So, an application that is submitted in Grants.gov by the deadline and is missing either of these two things will not be reviewed and will not be considered for funding.

We give you a long series of directions about what the Narrative should look like. Note, there is a page limit. The peer reviewers do not read anything past the page limit. They are off the hook for that. So please pay attention as you construct your document to these specifications.

This Data Collection section we highlight in the webinar because this may be new for grant--for applicants who have not had federal funding before. We tell you explicitly in the solicitation what kind of data you will need to collect and submit to OVC in your routine reporting. Please note that what you have to submit with the application that you provide to us, on or before May 29th, is not the data itself. It is your plan for how you will collect and report the data that are required in the solicitation.

In an effort to try to make the construction and submission of your budget as easy as possible, OJP has supplied a template for you, which includes a fillable PDF. Sorry, a fillable Excel spreadsheet it is now. I highly encourage you to use the DOJ form, even if this is not how your agency does its internal budgeting. The reason it is useful to get to know this form at the application stage is this is how you're going to have to manage your grant budget with us for the life of the award. And so, if you do not create this spreadsheet now and you are selected for an award, you are going to have to create it immediately afterward so that we can track your expenses together. And you can see the URL there at the bottom of the slide where you would find that template [Budget Detail Worksheet](#).

In case you run into difficulty submitting your application, there are two sources of help. One, for technical questions about actually submitting documents over Grants.gov comes directly from Grants.gov. There's an email noted on this slide. [support@grants.gov] There is a 1-800 number for their customer support. [800-518-4726] And there is a website where you can find information about Grants.gov. Those folks are super helpful and anxious to help you do everything correctly, but not at 11:59 p.m., on the 29th. If you ran into difficulty late at night on the 29th and contacted them, they would do their best to help you; but it is likely that in that kind of a window they would not be able to help you submit an application on time. So, that is a good reason for beginning and completing the submission of your application 72 hours ahead of time.

This next slide details several other sources of help. You can look at [OVC's website](#) to see in general programmatic information about OVC and the programs we fund. There are significantly bulky resources here that are devoted to helping you prepare an application, so that it's competitive. I encourage you to look at those. And there are some links at the bottom which our grantees have to become familiar with, but which as an applicant you don't necessarily need to know intimately at this point.

This concludes my prepared remarks about the content of the solicitation and the requirements of the program. The hosts for the webinar are going to take over now to help facilitate a Q&A. Please remember that it is best if you submit your questions and answers in the Q&A Box using the three dots at the bottom of the screen. Please make sure they are addressed to all panelists, so we can field and respond correctly. We're using the Chat Box to help people solve technical problems with audio on the website--audio on the webinar and so forth, so please don't submit questions in Chat or we may overlook them. All right, Mary Jo, back to you and your team. Thank you.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Thank you so much, Katherine. So our first question, "Does that include family violence or just intimate partner violence?" So the termin--the definition of domestic violence.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Oh, goodness, I have pros on this call! The statute was very specific in terms of saying domestic violence means victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. So, I'm going to rely on the strict interpretation of that statute. I believe the intent of the program is to serve victims of domestic violence. Now, if your agency defines domestic violence more broadly to include victims of sibling violence or parent-child violence or any of the other source of IPV relationships that could exist in a family unit, you are welcomed to describe those in your application. But I would attend to the fact that Congress was clearly thinking about domestic violence when the statute was drafted.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: This next question--I think you've already answered it, but I'm going to ask it. "Does this include victims of sex trafficking?"

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Sex trafficking was not called out specifically in the statutory definition of domestic violence; however, I have certainly seen in the field programs that serve victims of sex trafficking because they are also victims of sexual assault or victims of domestic violence.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Do you have to provide direct services to victims under this grant, or can you work with providers who provide those services?"

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: The solicitation encourages applicants to form partnerships to make sure that the relevant services can be provided to victims and their companion animals. So, I would encourage you to look for a program design that is going to enable you to propose the best and most comprehensive services possible, including by using community partners to help.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Does this solic--" This is a two-part question. "Does this solicitation require victim service programs to follow the voluntary services model? And also does this solicitation have any restrictions about charging for services, such as transitional housing?"

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: I am not going to issue an opinion on voluntary services model as a term of art. I will say that, in general, the Office for Victims of Crime encourages programs to not make services mandatory, but to respect the autonomy and dignity of the victims being served, so that they have a voice in what kinds of services are best for them to receive. So, I'm not opining on, "Yes, voluntary services program is mandatory." I am telling you what OVC's practice typically is. And, Mary Jo, I'm sorry. Could you repeat the second part of that question for me?

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Yes, definitely. "Does this solicitation have any restrictions about charging for service..."

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Right.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "...such as transitional housing."

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Thank you very much. There were no restrictions in the statute about whether the victims and survivors being served could be charged. So the statute is silent, therefore the solicitation is silent, therefore there is no prohibition.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Are the Budget Detail Worksheets the same across DOJ?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Oh, that’s a good question. I think the answer to that is no. I think it is possible that the COPS Office and the Office of Violence Against Women may have similar, but not exactly the same, template that they used.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: That may also be something that they can submit to NCJRS and they could look into to getting an answer, perhaps.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Absolutely, Mary Jo. Thank you.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “We have a 45-bed domestic violence shelter and a pet shelter onsite. The pet area can use com--some--excuse me. The pet area can use some improvements and enhancements. This would not give us more beds, just enhance the pet facility. Would that be an eligible project?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: I’m glad that this question was asked for a couple of reasons. One is to clarify, which this questioner did not ask for, but I’m going to clarify anyway. Construction, breaking of new ground is not allowable under this program; however, improvements to facilities, renovation of facilities is allowable. And that is what this questioner is asking about. The solicitation only requires that your program provide services to victims of domestic violence, largely focused on shelter and shelter for companion animals. So if you are able to build a program design that does that, whether or not it is entirely funded by this grant or, say, it’s also funded by your existing operational budget or grants you have from other places. What you really need to do is just meet the description of the services to be provided that is in the solicitation.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “The maximum award amount is \$400,000, over the entire period of 36 months. Is that correct?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: That is correct.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “I would like to clarify that it is acceptable we provide offsite, temporary--” Whoops! Hold on a second. My screen just...jumped. “I would like to clarify that it is acceptable if we provide offsite, temporary foster homes for companion animals up to 6 months.”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: There is no requirement that the services for companion animals or the shelter companion animals be onsite.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Sorry. We keep getting questions added, and every time that happens, I lose my place. And this is a question about “the slides.”

Yes. The slides, recording, and the transcript for the webinar will all be made available. It will take approximately 5 to 7 business days to get those posted to the OVC website. And we will email everybody that registered for the event, letting them know that that information has been posted. And the email will also contain the links directly to each of the items that I had mentioned.

“If you have a shelter existing but are working to add the animal component, is that acceptable, or do you have to increase units for victims rather than using existing units and adding a pet component?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: I think this is very similar to the last question I answered.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Yes, I’m sorry. Didn’t realize it at first.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Nope. No worries, Mary Jo.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Are victims of domestic violence who don’t have companion animals, but are in need of shelter, eligible for this program?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: I am going to have to seek counsel on that one. I’m not sure what the answer to that is. Mary Jo, can we flag this to get back to the participants on?

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Yes, we can flag that. I can also ask the participant if they would like, they can go ahead and submit it to Grants@NCJRS.gov. And then NCJRS will work with you and reach out to you to work out an answer for them.

...Let’s see... Some of these are similar.

“Does short-term shelter and housing assistance include rental assistance in the private market?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Short-term housing assistance means anything your program suggests it should mean. And the better designed and clear the program design you submit is to OVC, the more competitive it is for funding.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Will full funding allow our program to clean up and do small repairs on an existing building to utilize as shelters for victims with companions? I understand that we cannot fund construction, but we need new carpet and floor covering and drywall repair.”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Thank you. So I’m just going to refer folks to the footnote that is on the bottom of page 5 of the solicitation. “Minor modifications or renovations to existing structures are permissible under this program,” such as the one that questioner suggests-- some re-carpeting and painting and so forth. “Construction involving the breaking of new ground is not permissible under the Office for Victims of Crime’s authorizing statute.”

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: I think your last answer answers this question, but I am still going to read it. “My organization is planning to expand our facility by increasing the number of shelter beds and transitional living units. Can we use this funding to make sure some of the new units are equipped to accommodate people with their animals?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: That sounds to me like our renovations and modifications acceptable question, and the answer is yes. Renovation and modification of existing units is acceptable.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “It sounds like applicants must be able to provide emergency shelter, short-term housing, and transitional housing. Am I understanding this correctly? Could these be provided in the same housing?” I guess like the same building.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: I think this is an excellent question. It’s a good one to ask. There are no “ands” in the list of deliverables that are on page 7 of the solicitation. So, it is not required that a project fund every single kind of possible housing assistance; emergency and short-term and transitional. The project can be designed to provide one or more of those, and you want to justify your choice as completely as you can in the application that you submit to OVC.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Would pet adoption fees be an allowable expense?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: It sounds to me like the question is “Could the grantee use grant funds to pay for a program participant to adopt an animal?” Mary Jo, can we ask the person with the question for clarification or direct them straight to NCJRS so we can parse this out for them?

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Sure. So, if you were the person, if you’re still on the call, and you asked the question about the adoption fees, if you could just put some clarification in--we will try to get an answer to you.

“Can training include developing online webinars for the use in the community?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: You can construct your training programs to relevant stakeholders on the link between domestic violence and the abuse and neglect of animals, etc., etc., as described on page 7, the most efficient way you see fit for your community.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Do pets or horses have to be housed at the same site as the human victims, or is it acceptable to apply the funds to support animal housing in the same town or county?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: The answer to this is similar to the one I gave before. It is not required that the animals be housed on the same site as the human victims.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “What is the billing and payment model for the grant?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: So maybe I should not have sped past those weblinks for the OJP grant mechanism so quickly. They are covered in this slideshow. This is a reimbursable grant award. So, grantees submit monthly or quarterly orders to draw down funds to reimburse grant expenses.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “And can beds be utilized by people who are not part of this program, when the beds are open?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: If that is your practice at the organization where you work that you make beds available as needed, then as long as you are using those policies consistently for all beds, those that are federally funded and those that aren't, yes.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “If two organizations are partnering in a program to keep pets safe for victims of domestic violence who are displaced, how does one determine who the applicant should be?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: That's an excellent question. So this is negotiated ahead of time. You and your partner need to sit down and decide who is best positioned to be what we call the lead or the prime applicant, which does not denote importance. Obviously, you're equally important if you're supporting the two halves of the program. But the agency that is the lead organization that is the applicant also assumes the fiduciary responsibility of monitoring the funds and reporting to OVC. So you should consider that when you, with your partner, decide who is lead and who is what we call the subaward.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Can you give me a sense of the number of beds and performance targets expected for this program?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: There are no such expectations. This is a brand-new program. So we have no track numbers to offer in terms of past performance. We will be looking to the applicants to design and justify a model that makes the best possible use of the funds that are available.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “I apologize, but could you please repeat the answer to the question about family violence?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Don't apologize. I would like this question, please, by one or both of the persons who have submitted it to go to NCJRS. And after I'm finished, Mary Jo will remind you how to do that. I think it's important to keep a record of this question because it's a good one.

The statute was very specific in its definition of victims of domestic violence, as I read at the very beginning of the slideshow. Although most of us in the field would not say the meaning of a victim of domestic violence is a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault or stalking or dating violence; that is the language that the statute used. So, because the statutory language is so specific, it is important that applicants design programs with that definition in mind. If you also happen to serve victims of other kinds of family violence and your agency defines those as

domestic violence victims, I would be explicit about that in your application and defend your choice for making sure that those kinds of victims also have access to services. I would certainly not encourage you to not attend, however, to the language that is in the statute about who is to be served.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: And the slide for NCJRS is showing right now, so you can write that information down, and it also has been added to the Chat Box.

The next question is “How do we adjust our budget in subsequent years?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Oh, excellent. So, I don’t want to get into a lot of our team’s detail here, but it is absolutely normal that over the course of a 36-month project budget adjustments would be made, either because demand for services is different than you originally anticipated or the costs that you were encountering are different than what was originally anticipated. So you will submit a budget that totals no more than \$400,000 for a total of 36 months, and it will be in the OJP template Excel spreadsheet so that we can easily look where your costs are assigned. You will get, if you are selected for an award, eventually what is called Budget Clearance, which means our financial analysts have looked at your expenses. They agree that they comport with the requirements of the program, and you are free to start funding. And then, at month 3 or 6, or 12, as--[audio cuts out]

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Katherine?

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: ...And then... That’s all right. I see it. I’ll back up a little bit. And then at month 3 or 6 or 12 or 18 as you realize that your expenses are different than you originally anticipated, you will work with your OVC Program Manager to submit a budget modification. And that modification will get approved by the financial analysts and then you’re back in business. It is not uncommon for this to happen several times over the life of an award.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: I think, again, this is kind of similar to something you’ve already answered, but I am going to read it. “Do clients have to have an animal to qualify for the program? And can participants be dual-enrolled in another program and still receive pet assistance?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: I asked for the question about, “Must clients have an animal to receive services for the program,” to go to NCJRS. This is an important question. I think it would be interesting to all participants to know how the attorney advisors decide. Again, the statutory language is fairly specific. The title of the act was Shelter for Pets, so clearly Congress’ intention was that we be serving victims of domestic violence with companion animals.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “And can they be dual-enrolled in another program to receive pet assistance?” I’m assuming that, that person has a pet and are using another type of assistance.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: That is a very sophisticated program design question. If the question is, “Can a victim who is receiving some services through some other program not funded by this one, receive animal-related services under this one?” I think that’s a clear, “Yes.”

If the question is, “Can you provide services for a victim of domestic violence whose animals are being cared for in some other way not related to your program?” I think that question needs to go to NCJRS so the attorneys can weigh in. It seems to me that is, sort of, skirting the Congressional intent of the program.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Did you say that training for relevant stakeholders was a required activity or just one of the allowable activities that would be funded under this solicitation?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Oh, sorry. Those are my companion animals in the background. With any luck, the rooster will be quiet, but here we go. [Background noise] The objectives of the program are to increase the number of shelter beds and transitional housing options and to provide training. So, applications that are most competitive are going to address both of the objectives.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Is there an expectation for the number of beds and performance targets?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: I think I’ve handled this question already, so it will show up in the transcript.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: And my companion animal is being a little bit... active. [Chuckles]

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Companion animals are welcome on this webinar.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: [Chuckles] I figured, he fits right in. “Is October--Is October also the expected notification time period for selected winners?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Yes, probably. OJP always tells applicants that award decisions will be made by the end of the fiscal year, which is September 30. Do we sometimes process awards more quickly and get announcements out before that? Yes, sometimes; but the bulk of our awards every year are announced in the second half of September, I would estimate.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: My apologies. We do have--It’s 4:22, 4:23 right now. The webinar is supposed to end at 5:00. We do have a fair amount of questions yet to answer. I think we will have enough time to get through most of them. Right now, I’m just trying to find the ones that are not repeats. There are quite a few repeats right now. So just bear with me.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: We appreciate that, Mary Jo. No problem.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “How is it possible to start a new program onsite without any construction?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Well, that is a logical question. So, my answer would be that this funding is not intended to start from ground zero, as it were, since construction is not allowed.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “So if we provide shelter and support services with other dollars, can we write for dollars just to be used to upgrade the existing pet facility?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: I think this is a variation of a question we heard before, but it’s coming in so often that it must be a very important question that’s on people’s minds. Your program design can include services that are being provided with other funding, and you could then reserve your federal dollar request under this program, for instance, for only the animal end of things, as long as you were also making sure that the victims that your serving are themselves being housed somehow. You just need to be very clear about what it is you’re doing in the program design; so that the peer reviewers can tell clearly there is shelter, there is housing for human victims being provided, and this is where it’s coming from and there is shelter and housing provided for companion animals, and this is how that is being provided.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “It appears that both shelter services and TA are required. Is the cost of developing a manual or other materials to support TA, which may be applicable to both local and national domestic violence programs allowable?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: If you propose the development of a manual as part of your training plan and you account for it in the budget and so forth and it is approved, then that becomes an allowable expense.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Could you work on this program or project with multiple shelters to implement new programs?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: That is a program design question, which is up to the applicant. There is no prohibition against collaboration with other service providers to come up with the best, most efficient, and effective program design possible.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Another question about how the distribution of funds will be done. “Is it monthly or reimbursement?” I know you did address it, but just in case the person missed the answer.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Sure. Funds are reimbursed.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “With regards to the boarding of the animals--” So their question is, “Is it acceptable to apply for a grant to support victims of companion animals by providing funding to board the animal at a nonaffiliated boarding facility?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: I think the solicitation speaks to this. Give me one moment. I am just scrolling back to the program description. So, an allowable expense under this program-- I’m looking at page 5. It’s just above the super long footnote. It says, “Paragraph B.” “Short-term shelter and housing assistance for domestic violence victims with companion animals including expenses incurred for the temporary shelter, housing, boarding, or fostering of companion animals of victims of domestic violence and other expenses that are incidental to securing the safety of such companion animals during the sheltering/relocation of such victims.” So the answer to that question is, Yes. It’s on page 5 and 6 of the solicitation.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Must a bed in facility usage be dedicated to this program only?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: That is a very relevant question when we are all stretched to provide services to victims as best we can in all kinds of circumstances. So, you need to design a program and provide a justification for the size of the program that you are proposing based on what you know about your community needs. So, if you’re in a very small community, clearly you’re not going to be looking to set up a 200 bed shelter with a kennel. I hope you’re not. I hope the community’s problem is not that large. So using local data, you are going to estimate what the need for the beds and the animal space is, and you’re going to design a program around your own community estimates. Now, once the program is started, if your companion animal person/beds are not full all the time, could they be eligible for other victims who need the emergency help? If you include that in your program design, that is an acceptable part of your design. You need to be careful. I know you would be anyway. You’d have to be careful as you report data back to OVC, however, to be clear about how many victims with companion animals are being served, since that is the thrust of this program.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Can technical assistance be provided locally, or does it need to be a part of a larger project?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: I’m not sure I understand that question, Mary Jo. Can we ask the questioner, if he or she recognizes himself or herself, to chat you back in the panelists’ chat about what that means?

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Yes.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: There is a training requirement under this program. I don’t think we use the words “technical assistance” anywhere. Let me scan the solicitation to see...

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: And this particular question came through the captioner. So the person--

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Oh, I see.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: So the person--the captioner. So if they need to follow up with them.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: OK. So, if you are a local entity proposing a local program, which I presume many, if not all of you, will be because of the scope of the budget we’re talking about here. Right? This is not going to house the nation. Then the training that you are required to do would just be for your local partners, the people who would be responding as first responders or the folks who run other sorts of community service agencies who might be referring people to you. Or maybe there are already organizations in your community that serve animals in some kind of capacity, and perhaps you would be working with them as a training partner. So the training plan should fit nicely to the scope of the program that you are designing

in your community. There is no requirement for technical assistance in this solicitation. I know OVC typically uses those phrases continuously, “training and technical assistance,” but that is not the case here.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Does short-term shelter include temporary emergency nights in hotel rooms when no traditional shelter space is available?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Short-term emergency shelter means whatever your program’s lived experience is for how you take care of victims. Just document it and justify it in your program plan. And figure out where the animals are going to go if you’re putting a human victim in the hotel space.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Does this funding provide assistance for victims in transitional housing to acquire emotional support animals or just to be offered--” I’m sorry. “...or just to offer support to those who already have them?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: The focus of this program is to provide services to victims who already have companion animals.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Is facility rent an acceptable expense that would be reimbursable?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: That is the kind of expense that you would detail in your proposed budget.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Does the maximum \$400,000 include the overhead, or is overhead in addition to the \$400,000?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Very good question from someone who is new to the OVC world. \$400,000 includes overhead or indirect, however your agency calls those costs. It’s all included. \$400,000 is the maximum federal request.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Is the purchase of...” “Is the purchase of property for the emergency or transitional housing available--allowable?” Excuse me. So the property purchase.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Mary Jo, I’m going to ask for that question to please come in on NCJRS, so I can have the attorney advisors craft the answer.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: OK. Let me just... I wanted to send that message to them as well.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Thank you.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Is portable construction permissible?” I’m sorry. “...a portable structure.”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Oh, goodness. I do not know the answer to that question. I need that also, please, to go to the attorney advisors.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: If you could please send that question to Grants@NCJRS.gov, they will work with Katherine to get an answer to you.

Sorry. Again, I'm scanning to see. A lot of these questions are very similar, so it's taking me a while to read them and figure out what might be different.

So this is slightly different. "We've already broken ground on a new interim housing site for women that is set to open later this year. Would we be eligible to apply for this grant, since the site is already under construction?"

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Um, goodness. I--The definition of construction to OVC is breaking new ground. That is not allowable. If you are not breaking new ground, then I suggest you describe in your program design exactly what it is that you intend to do and how your plans align with the goals and objectives of the solicitation.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: This next question is along the same lines, but they are interested in knowing, "if they can purchase a home or building or remodel an existing-- so purchase or remodel something that is existing?"

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: So the remodel is an easy, "Yes" because modifications and renovations to make the property acceptable for the purposes of this program are OK. The purchase is trickier. I'm putting that on my list of things the attorney advisors have to tell us. We have one other purchasing property question pending, so we will get an answer for that so that you all can see what it was.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Can we use the funds to purchase pet supplies such as food, collars, leashes?"

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: That is a clear, "Yes." Those kind of expenses are incidental to caring for the animals while they are in your shelter or while their person is in your shelter. And I believe that information was on page 5 and 6 of the solicitation.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Can't this grant cover animal-assisted therapy relative to domestic violence?"

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: This grant may be used to provide supportive services to victims of domestic violence. It is up to you to define what those supportive services are.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Are individual, 2- to 3-bedroom independent living acceptable for this grant? Our organization offers independent apartment living, which is part--which accepts pets as well."

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: So under the statute and as reflected in the terms of this solicitation, any shelter, short-term, or transitional housing solution for domestic violence victims with their companion animals is eligible under this program.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Sorry. “We currently provide 92 pet-friendly--provide 92 pet-friendly shelter and townhouse units for domestic violence survivors. Are we eligible to apply for this funding for the current program--for current program support, or must it be used specifically to expand services and beds for survivors and their companions?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: There is no requirement that the proposed project be an expansion.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Could the grant be used to work with programs statewide to increase the network of pet-friendly services?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Collaboration can be integral to building and sustaining an effective response. The data that the grantees are going to be required to send to OVC will need to count the number of victims served and the kinds of services that were provided to those victims. So, the program that you design must be able to report that kind of data.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: And we got another question here about, “using the funds for boarding the animals in a public boarding facility.” I believe you already asked that, but that one just came in recently, so I thought maybe it needed...

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Sure.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: ...to be answered again.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Yep, absolutely. So you can use your grant funds to shelter and house animals in any way that supports the care of the animal while their human is being supported and housed by your program. There is no requirement that the pet be physically sheltered by the same organization in the same space.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: All right, this next question, I apologize. It's going back to the construction, but it's with a little bit of a twist to it. “Can additions to an existing structure be allowed to expand the capacity?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Sure. I don't mind the construction questions at all. We need to nail down what is, and is not, allowable. So please keep them coming, and we will write down the specifications of each question, and we will get an answer. OVC funds no construction projects; none at all. So for me, this is the first foray into a kind of program where it is logical for people to be considering whether construction would be useful in helping them meet the goals of the solicitation. However, under the authorizing statute for the Office for Victims of Crime, we may not fund construction. We can't do it. It would be a negative audit finding. The grant funds would have to be repaid. So, it is for that reason that I'm being very conservative about answering these questions. From the exposure that I do have to OVC's construction statute, I

would say that if the addition is going to break new ground, then we need to get the attorney advisors specifically to weigh in on additions. If the addition would be more of a renovation remodeling, then OVC does have statutory authority to fund that kind of project.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Under the reimbursement model, the organization--can an organization only request funds for the number of nights the beds were occupied?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: That is an excellent question, and the answer is no. When you design a project budget that you submit with your application and maintain over the life of your project, you are estimating costs to run the facility and provide the services, whether or not every single night every bed is full or every possible unit of service is actually consumed.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Will more than 5 grant applicants be funded if there are competitive applications that propose budgets of under \$400,000?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: That is possible. You can bet I am going to max out the \$2 million that were appropriated for this project. So if we happen to get a number of small budget applications and those applications were deemed highly fundable by the peer reviewers, then it is entirely possible that our recommendation at the end of the day would be to fund more than 5. It depends how the numbers work out.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Can funds be used to train existing pets to become service animals?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: [Chuckles] If that is part of your program design and it is a service that is going to be delivered to the companion animal of the victims that you are serving, I would justify that choice as a service delivery mechanism. And be explicit about what you’re doing in the program design.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “If you’re an existing service provider and want to submit this proposal to provide technical assistance and training to other organizations, is that fundable under this project, or do you have to provide services as well?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: This program is to provide victim services. So, a technical assistance and training proposal would not be responsive to the solicitation.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Sorry, again. I just got a scan here. And see...

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Mary Jo, while you’re scanning, I’m going to answer a question that happened to have caught my eye in the Chat, although we are encouraging people to use Q&A for that because that’s how Mary Jo does the recordkeeping for what goes in the transcript, please.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: I saw the one that you’re going to--it’s a good one, too! [Chuckles]

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: It is a good one, and it's clearly someone who's familiar with OVC asking me, "What is the match?"

And I am delighted to tell you there is no match! [Chuckles]

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: I think a lot of these actually look very similar. "Did you say that education of families regarding the safety of animals is a requirement?"

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: No, I did not.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: This is a little bit different than the other one, but I think what they're going for is--The question is, "Can this grant be used for animal-assisted therapy for victims of domestic violence and their children?" So I'm thinking the victims don't have the children, but they want--an animal, but they want to have an animal at the facility.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: So I'll just refer you back to the objectives of the program that are listed in the solicitation. The objective is to provide shelter and housing for victims of domestic violence and their companion animals and supportive services there too. If in your program you provide supportive services that include animal-assisted therapy, then you can choose to include that in your program design and justify why that is part of the services that you provide. However, you need to attend to the objective of the program, which was to provide services to victims with companion animals; not to provide services to any victims as long as the services include animals.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Are we able to pay the cost of sheltering a pet for a victim who is fleeing but staying with family or friends and receiving nonresidential services?"

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: I see nothing in the solicitation that would prohibit that.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "What costs connected with the training are eligible, such as creation of materials, design, printing? Is that allowable?"

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Yes, all of those that are part of your training plans, as described in your application, become eligible expenses.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: I'm not really sure if I understand this question, but they want to know, "if funding can be used to assist victims of domestic violence with pet deposits?"

I guess that's to purchase...

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Oh, I know what that question means.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: I'm sorry?

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: I understand what that means, Mary Jo. So the activities described under this program, including helping victims of domestic violence secure housing and

supporting the expenses thereof. So, If--I'm looking specifically on page 7 under the deliverables. This is number two. I say this mostly for Mary Jo and the transcriptionist's benefit, not to the people who are listening. "Assistance with expenses incurred for the relocation or temporary shelter housing, boarding, or fostering of a companion animal that are incidental to securing the safety of the companion animal." So if you are supporting a victim and helping her find safe and secure permanent housing and one of the expenses of helping that victim find safe and secure housing is paying a deposit to the landlord, that is allowable under these deliverables described in the solicitation.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Uh...has been answered. "Does the award cover vet bills or shots?"

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: The award covers any expenses incidental to securing the safety of the companion animal. And vet services would be included in that if they are necessary to secure the safety of the companion animal.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Um, a question about, "the Q&A being available after the webinar." So the Q&A will be a part of the transcript as well as the recording that is provided, so you'll be able to go back through and read the questions and the answers. "We are a law enforcement agency, and we do not house victims. We have a domestic violence specialist that connects victims with resources and shelters. Would it be possible to use this grant to open a temporary boarding facility with pets until the victims provide--find shelters?" And I guess that depends on whether or not they're talking about construction.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Uh, yes, certainly. It does hinge on the construction question. If you are providing services to victims, either yourself or because there are community partners who provide these kinds of services to make sure that the human victim is housed and safe and receiving supportive services, and then you are able to use project expenses to secure the relocation and temporary sheltering, housing, boarding, and fostering of companion animals.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: And I apologize, because I was reading the questions and not listening to one of your answers. So, I apologize if this is the same answer. "If somebody is--If somebody is going from, I guess, temporary housing into a new housing situation on their own and they need to provide a pet deposit for that new housing, is that an allowable expense?"

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: We had a question that was a little bit like this one before. So my answer is this. What needs to be, may be, provided for victims is spelled out in the solicitation with some specificity. So if you have a victim who has come through your program and is now exiting and moving on to safe and secure permanent housing, the solicitation does say that, "assistance with expenses incurred for relocating, boarding, fostering the companion animal

incidental to securing its safety, as the victim is moving to safe and secure housing, are acceptable.” So in that constellational circumstances, you have a victim who’s come through the shelter and is exiting, it seems to me that would be allowable. If the program is providing no support or shelter to human victims of domestic violence, then I think that may be straying into unallowable.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Can we... Is it correct that these funds cannot be used to supplant services already being provided under another federal funding stream?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: That is an excellent question from an experienced federal grantee. So you may not duplicate expenses. If the services are being funded one way, under the state or under a different federal grant, you may not charge identical expenses to the grant. That’s sort of a baseline litmus test. If you are seeking these federal funds to replace state funding, that is supplanting, unless the state funds are no longer available to you or the state funds are not sufficient to meet the need and so you need the federal grant to expand the availability of services to meet victims whose needs would otherwise be unmet.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: “Is there a requirement to spend a percentage of the money each year?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: No. The \$400,000, and the budgeting thereof, is entirely at the discretion of the applicant. So in your program design in your budget, you will be telling us what the appropriate spend rate is over the 3 years.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: This is a follow-up clarifying question. They would like to know, “When the organization submits reimbursement, is the reimbursable dollar amount based on bed usage?” And I know that you did address that. But they’re asking--I don’t know if it’s the same person, but they do want a clarifying.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Well, sure, and that’s important to small agencies that do not have a lot of cash on hand. So when you submit your monthly or your quarterly, however you do it, reimbursement request to OVC, you are submitting a total that is based on staff hours that were used over the last period, facilities costs over the last period, incidental expenses over the last period, all of the things that go into your project budget. So, for some projects, but not all, and this is certainly not a requirement, the monthly or quarterly drawdowns are fairly consistent over the life of the project because a lot of kinds of expenses don’t change. Your rent, if you’re paying rent, doesn’t change. The fringe and salary that is being paid to your staff who are doing this work does not change. There’s no point at which you submit a form that says, “I had 12 beds, 10 of them were occupied, so I’m only asking 5/6 of my drawdown this month.” You are reimbursed for supplying the services that are described in your program design, whether or not every single bed is occupied every night, whether or not every single possible hour of mental health services or the other kinds of supportive services that you’re providing are used. But keep in mind, you are at the same time that you submit your financial drawdown request to reimburse yourself for your expenses, you are also quarterly sending us performance data. So we will be looking at how many victims came through the door, how many animals were served, how many units of service were performed. And we do look at those in conjunction

with your drawdowns. And if they were wildly out of whack, if you were drawing down consistently, say, \$25,000 of your \$400,000 award every quarter, but your performance data said there were no victims served, that would cause your Program Manager to call you and start asking questions. But your Program Manager is never going to ask you, “So, how many of your 12 beds were occupied by domestic violence victims last month?” They’re not going to ask you that.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: OK. “We have a federal fund for TLP for domestic violence but not for those with pets. Would this be considered supplanting or not?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: I am not familiar with the acronym TLP. But if the question is, “Could these funds be used to enhance or expand services that are being provided to domestic violence victims so that they have an option for the safe care of their companion animals?,” yes, that is allowable. If the question is, “Could the same program that is funded by the other federal grant also be funded by OVC in order to expand the number of victims we can take and the OVC funding would support the victims who have companion animals and the other program would fund the support for the other victims without companion animals?,” that is also allowable.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: I think at this time, that’s the last question, but I do want to just scroll through to see if I missed any that were different because there was a few that I skipped over. But...I just want to make sure.

“Will there be a funding opportunity in FY 21?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Oh, if only I had a crystal ball. I don’t know. All OVC program solicitations like this one are issued as funds are available, and awards are made contingent on funding availability. So I do not know.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: I think this is--I think you’ve covered it, but “Would something along the lines of a short-term boarding facility be eligible for this grant?”

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Well, that depends what “be eligible” means. If it means “Could an animal welfare agency who runs a short-term boarding facility be an eligible partner?,” Yes. If it means, “Could grant funds be used to pay fees associated with a short-term boarding facility?,” Yes. I’m trying to think of any possible other constructions of those words in case that wasn’t what the questioner intended. If that wasn’t it, if I didn’t get it yet, please write back to Mary Jo in the Q&A box.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: I apologize for the silence as I look through these.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: You’re fine, Mary Jo. This is yeoman’s work.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: I think...that looks like...the last... I don’t see anything that we have not addressed. There’s some more questions about the--similar questions about the funding amounts that you’ve addressed. I mean, so that comes up a lot, as well as the construction, and

the renovation, and the land--purchasing land. So I don't know if you just want to kind of talk to those items one last time to summarize.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: You bet, Mary Jo. I'll handle the easier of those first and that is the funding amount question. So there are a total of \$2 million available for this program. OVC has determined that of that amount, it will make 5 grant awards for 36 months, at no more than \$400,000. The \$400,000 includes all costs direct and indirect. It includes overhead, and it needs to be able to sustain the project that is proposed for 36 months. I do not know if there will be future funding available under this title.

The construction questions are good ones, and some of them are very nuanced. And I need to do due diligence and get you answers that will be of real help to you in designing your programs. These are the questions that are pending that we are going to seek counsel on and get back to you with more specific answers than I have been able to give today. They are: "Is the purchase of portable structures allowable?" "Is purchasing property allowable?" "Is building an addition to an existing structure allowable?" "Is modifying construction that is already in progress allowable?" We will be forwarding those and any other construction questions Mary Jo gleans from the Q&A to the attorneys so that we can get back to you with solid answers that will help you make decisions about your program design.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: And with that, nothing else has come through. So we have finished. We have addressed every question that is--has been received.

KATHERINE DARKE SCHMITT: Perfect.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: All right, on behalf of Katherine as well as the Office for Victims of Crime, we would like to thank you very much for your interest in this solicitation. And we look forward to receiving your applications.