

# **ALABAMA**

---

## **STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN PROGRAM**

### **STATE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2014-2017**

**STATE OF ALABAMA**  
**Robert Bentley, Governor**

**ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**  
**LAW ENFORCEMENT/TRAFFIC SAFETY DIVISION**

**Jim Byard Jr., ADECA Director**  
**William M. Babington, LETS Division Director**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

COMPLEX NATURE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

STATE OF THE STATE

## DESCRIPTION OF PLANNING PROCESS

### NEEDS AND CONTEXT

### PLAN PRIORITIES AND APPROACHES

ISSUES NOT ADDRESSED

PRIMARY ISSUES

RECOMMENDATIONS AND OUTCOME MEASURES

## GRANT MAKING STRATEGY

ALABAMA SEXUAL ASSAULT STRATEGY

## ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF UNDERSERVED VICTIMS

### THE COMPLEX NATURE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Violence against women is a national crisis causing great harm and cost to our society as reflected by national statistics. Approximately 2.3 million people each year in the United States are raped and/or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend.<sup>1</sup> Approximately 1 in 5 women have been raped in their lifetimes within the U.S, and almost 50% of American women have experienced sexual assault other than rape during their lives.<sup>2</sup> More than 50% of sexual assaults, including rape, are committed by a woman's romantic partner.<sup>3</sup> More than 40% of sexual assaults against women are committed by an acquaintance.<sup>1,5</sup> Approximately 13% of rapes are committed by a stranger to the victim.<sup>1,5</sup>

Sexual assault victims face a myriad of challenges including trauma from the assault, fear of the perpetrator, limited resources, and insensitive and ineffective reactions when reporting the crime. Victims often do not believe that the system can assist them because of previous experiences with inadequate systemic responses. Without trusting the system's ability to provide assistance in a safe and sensitive manner, victims often decline to report the crime or seek intervention.

Violence against women is a complicated problem posing enormous challenges for the criminal justice system. Most of the crimes involving violence against women involve victims whose lives are entangled with the lives of their perpetrators. Violence against women includes patterns of coercive acts used by perpetrators to obtain dominance over their victims. Perpetrators

---

1 National Institute of Justice and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey." July 2000.

2 Black, M.C., Basile, K.C., Breiding, M.J., Smith, S.G., Walters, M.L., Merrick, M.T., Chen, J. & Stevens, M.R. (2011). "Sexual violence victimization." National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Atlanta, GA.

often use tactics such as threats, isolation, false promises, intimidation and economic coercion to force victims to comply with every demand. By asking a victim to come forward and take action against the perpetrator, the victim is forced to confront the very person who holds tremendous power over her, and who can cause serious injury or even death in retaliation for reporting. Without trusting the system's ability to provide assistance in a safe and sensitive manner, victims often decline to come forward or seek intervention. Through a better understanding of the special characteristics of crimes against women, the system can more effectively respond to these unique cases.

The State of Alabama continues its strong commitment to the eradication of violent crimes against women in our State. The following information is filed in response to the requirements imposed for participation in the STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program as authorized by the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 and reauthorized by the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000. The information presented is designed to continue the previous formats and substantially conform to the format recommended in the Office on Violence Against Women STOP Implementation Plan Toolkit.

The State Implementation Plan was designed through a collaborative effort among the Alabama Coalition Against Sexual Violence, the Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the members of the Alabama Council on Violence Against Women. This Plan evolved through a process of reviewing past recommendations and implementation efforts to improve responses to victims and perpetrators of domestic and sexual violence.

---

3 Franklin, C.A. (2010). "Physically forced, alcohol-induced, and verbally coerced sexual victimization: Assessing risk factors among university



## STATE OF THE STATE: NEEDS AND CONTEXT

Alabama's population estimate as of 2012 is 4,822,023. This number includes 14.5% 65 years or older; 51.5% female; 26.5% African American; 0.7% American Indian; 1.2% Asian; 1.5% 2 or more races; 4.1% Hispanic/Latino and 3.5% foreign born. National data suggest as many as 1 in 4 women will experience some form of intimate violence in their lifetime. Intimate partner violence exists in all communities resulting in the need to develop specialized holistic responses throughout a myriad of systems throughout our State.

Sexual violence offenses in Alabama are classified as the following offenses: (1) Rape in the first and second degrees; (2) sodomy in the first and second degrees; (3) sexual misconduct; (4) sexual torture; (5) sexual abuse in the first and second degrees; and (6) indecent exposure. In 2012, the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center reported 1,264 rapes while the FBI Crime in the United States reported 1,296 rapes for the state. In addition the FBI reported 152 rapes in Birmingham; 45 rapes in Mobile; and 21 rapes in Montgomery for 2012. As of 2013, Alabama's law enforcement agencies will be using the new FBI definition of rape as guidance when reporting sexual violence offenses. The FBI's new definition of rape is, "a penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim."

Domestic violence offenses in Alabama are classified as the following offenses: (1) Domestic violence in the first, second and third degrees; (2) Violation of protection orders; (3) Interference with an emergency call; (4) domestic violence by strangulation/suffocation and (5) offenses involving a qualified relationship between the offender and the victim. Of the 20,863

---

women." Journal of Criminal Justice, 38(2), 149-159.

violent offenses\* reported in 2012, 14% were domestic violence incidents. Domestic violence was indicated in 2,992 offenses reported: in 24 homicides; 183 rapes; 63 robberies; and in 2,722 aggravated assaults. 1,753 incidents of domestic violence were cleared for a 64% clearance rate. 45% of the clearances were exceptional, i.e. lack of prosecution. There were 32,995 domestic simple assaults, which represent 39% of all simple assaults reported in 2012. There were 183 domestic violence rapes in 2012, representing 14% of the 1,264 rapes reported in Alabama for that year.

## DESCRIPTION OF PLANNING PROCESS

Alabama has continued to build on its STOP State Implementation Plan development process, which traces its origin to July 1995 when a six-member state team attended the Office of Justice Programs' "Collaborating to STOP Violence Against Women" conference in Washington, D.C. Most recently, the development of Alabama's 2013 STOP State Implementation Plan was again undertaken by Alabama's Council on Violence Against Women, spearheaded by the Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The Council was developed collaboratively in 2003 by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, the Alabama Department of Public Health and two statewide nonprofit organizations addressing violence against women issues -- the Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ACADV) and the Alabama Coalition Against Sexual Violence (ACASV). The Council's 27 members include law enforcement, policy makers, legislators, health care providers, government officials, social service providers and representatives from ACADV and ACASV.

Work groups comprised of experts in particular areas of concern and representatives of domestic and/or sexual violence programs met during 2011 and 2013 to develop

recommendations for consideration by the Council on Violence Against Women. The Council met in October 2013 to review and adopt the proposed recommendations and to discuss priority areas for implementation for 2013-2015. This 2013 State Implementation Plan, approved October 18, 2013, reflects these priority areas.

In addition to the work group process, ACADV staff met with other allied community groups including: the staff of the Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama; the advocacy organizations for persons with disabilities; and representatives of Survivors Overcoming Abusive Relationships (SOAR); advocacy organizations for LGBTQ communities and advocacy agencies for underserved immigrant populations in order to identify specific needs of victims from these communities. This information was included in the goals and objective sections of this Implementation Plan.

Since its inception, Alabama's STOP Implementation Plan has reflected a broad collaboration of law enforcement, policy makers, legislators, health care providers, government officials, and social service providers. Consequently, it was no stretch to ensure that the state's STOP Implementation Plan coordinated with programs under the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act, the Victims of Crime Act and section 393A of the Public Health Services Act (Rape Prevention Education).

The state's Family Violence Prevention and Services Act Program and the Victims of Crime Act Program do not have state plans. However, both programs are administered in Alabama by the Law Enforcement and Traffic Safety (LETS) Division of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs. The LETS office also administers the state's STOP and other Violence Against Women Act programs. The program managers of the FVPSA, VOCA and VAWA programs work in concert to provide funding to programs that address

domestic violence and sexual assault, and to evaluate those programs. Allocations to victim service agencies are made taking in consideration amounts available through all three streams of funding to provide services throughout the State of Alabama. The majority of the state's domestic violence shelters and rape crisis centers receive funding from at least two of the three programs, and all are monitored for compliance by the LETS office.

In 2007 the Alabama Department of Public Health and the Alabama Coalition Against Sexual Violence formed the Sexual Violence Prevention Committee (SVPC) to address sexual violence within our state. The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) maintains a collaborative relationship with the Alabama Coalition Against Sexual Violence to fulfill the grant requirements of the Rape Prevention and Education Program. Because the ACASV is a key player under both plans, it is imperative that both plans include strategies to increase the number of sexual prevention programs and efforts, and to encourage societal norms and attitudes that promote respect and to decrease the attitudes that condone sexual violence. Efforts under both plans support the coalition's mission to reduce and end sexual violence. Most of the centers that receive ADECA funding also receive RPE funding. Lastly, representatives from the Alabama Department of Public Health, the Alabama Coalition Against Sexual Violence and ADECA serve on the Council on Violence Against Women and lend support to the Council in the development, implementation, and amendment of strategies to prevent the initial occurrence of sexual violence (primary prevention) in the Violence Against Women Plan.

## **PLAN PRIORITIES AND APPROACHES**

The Council on Violence Against Women has developed a comprehensive Plan that is revised every three years to prioritize particular areas and recommendations for implementation. This is an on-going process that includes continued work in all areas addressed by the Plan in



addition to the prioritized recommendations. In October of 2013 the Council prioritized the following areas for implementation during 2014 and 2015.

Priority areas include the following: Data integration, Forensic exams, Evidence Based investigation, Strangulation investigation, Drug facilitated rape investigations, Homicide reduction, Enforcement of Domestic violence statutes, Compliance with Campus SaVe Act, Collaboration between victim advocacy agencies and the Department of Corrections, Compliance with the Prison Rape Elimination act, Accountability for Incarcerated offenders, Economic Justice, LGBTQ victim response, and Immigrant and underserved victims. The Primary Needs section of this Implementation Plan addresses the specific recommendations and approaches regarding the above priority areas.

## **ISSUES NOT ADDRESSED IN THE PLAN**

One of the greatest challenges facing Alabama is the lack of a comprehensive state database for convictions and protection orders. Although the Council included recommendations in the State Plan on Violence Against Women for the establishment and use of such a system, there are funding and technological barriers to accomplishing this goal. Currently there is no mandate for municipal courts' case disposition to be entered into the Administrative Office of Court's state court data system. Therefore accessing prior convictions requires criminal justice professionals to contact the applicable municipal court to request case disposition information creating an undue burden. In addition, the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center has mandated data from local law enforcement agencies be transmitted electronically. This requirement is being met by a majority of local departments except for a few of the large jurisdictions still working to meet this requirement. There have also been discrepancies in the

FBI UCR data reports and the ACJIC state crime reports. In addition, protection orders are not consistently entered into the Administrative Office of Courts protection order data system.

Currently the only method approved for entry of protection orders in the NCIC protection order database is through local sheriff departments' NCIC terminal. This increases the workload of local sheriff departments thereby creating inconsistent entry of protection orders and problems with enforcement of Alabama protection order violations nationwide.

Legislation – Due to the uncertainty of the process specific legislation was not specifically recommended for the upcoming legislative session. The State Plan includes general recommendations for legislative changes and supports legislation that reflects the purpose areas included in the Plan. Alabama is in compliance with the VAWA certification requirements for STOP funding.

Limited English Proficiency – Due to the complex issues related to compliance with the DOJ directives, the Council recommended the establishment of a specific work group to outline the needs of victims whose first language is not English and develop recommendations for courts and social service providers to meet the needs of victims.

**PRIMARY NEEDS/ISSUES**

**DATA INTEGRATION:**

Alabama’s disjointed data system poses a barrier to effective tracking of offenders, implementation of enhancement statutes and enforcement of protection order violations. Municipal data if not centralized and the protection order registry lacks the ability to link with the national protection order database.

<b>PLAN RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>OUTCOME MEASURES</b>
Create and use universal definitions of domestic and sexual violence offenses and qualifying relationships across court, prosecution and law enforcement systems	Consistent use of common terminology by the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center (ACJIC) ALACOP and LETS systems and Administrative Office of Courts ALACOURT and SJIS systems. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2016</i>
Create standardized data collection forms and mandate electronic data submissions by local courts and law enforcement agencies into statewide data systems.	Expand the availability of electronic supplemental forms for domestic violence, sexual violence and strangulation offenses. Partner with the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center and the Administrative Office of Courts to facilitate distribution of forms. <i>To be accomplished by Fall 2016</i>
Mandate municipal court domestic and sexual violence case dispositions be electronically transferred to a statewide court/criminal justice data system.	Partner with the Alabama League of Municipalities, Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center and the Administrative Office of Courts to draft either Supreme Court rules and/or legislation to facilitate municipal court data transfers. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2016</i>
Mandate entry of protection orders and domestic violence conditions of release by local and state courts into statewide data systems.	Partner with the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center, Alabama Sheriff’s Association and the Administrative Office of Courts to draft either Supreme Court rules and/or legislation to facilitate entry of protection orders into a statewide data system. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2016</i>
Link integrated data systems connecting information from state and city courts, law enforcement agencies and other criminal justice agencies.	Partner with the State and local entities that have data systems accessible by criminal justice professionals including but not limited to: ALACOP, LETS, ALACOURT, SJIS, and ID ABUSE. <i>To be accomplished by Fall 2016</i>
Enhance data coordination with NCIC regarding protection orders and firearms violations	Request technical assistance from the National Center on Full Faith and Credit, the National Center on Firearms and the National Crime Information Center for technical assistance. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2015</i>

## FORENSIC EXAMS:

Alabama is lacking comprehensive access to forensic exams statewide. Although there are rape crisis services, SANEs and SARTs within the State five counties are not covered by these services. Currently, there is no standardized supplemental form for law enforcement to use during an investigation or model protocol adopted and implemented for criminal justice professionals statewide.

<b>PLAN RECOMENDATIONS</b>	<b>OUTCOME MEASURES</b>
Ensure victim has access to a forensic exam within 72 hours of the assault, if the victim so chooses.	Develop sample Memorandum of Understandings, protocols and technical assistance list to facilitate access to forensic exams. <i>To be accomplished by Winter 2015</i>
Investigate and respond to anonymous reports of sexual assault in the same manner and to the same degree as reports by known victims.	Develop model best practice tool and distributed to law enforcement agencies throughout the state. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2015</i>
Use assault evidence kits for evidence collection	Develop model best practice tool and distributed to law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Provide information on how to obtain sexual assault evidence collection kits. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2016</i>

**EVIDENCE BASED INVESTIGATION:**

Regardless of the decision to proceed with prosecution, it is beneficial in all cases to properly collect, document and store all available evidence. This approach maximizes the available options for victims and the system.

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	OUTCOME MEASURES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of supplemental forms routinely</li> <li>- Collect, describe and document all relevant evidence</li> <li>- Photograph all injuries on suspects and victims</li> <li>- Collaborate with SANE programs to obtain forensic evidence (with voluntary victims)</li> <li>- Conduct follow-up interviews, photograph progression of bruising, and if possible, obtain relevant medical records</li> <li>- Document statements by victims, suspects and witnesses with description of applicable demeanors</li> <li>- Collect a known sample from any suspect that is named or developed for DNA comparison</li> <li>- Protect the crime scene and seal the area</li> <li>- Photograph and sketch the scene and all evidence first, including photographs of any evidence of a struggle.</li> <li>- Process for fingerprints and other fragile evidence at crime scene and on victim and place in proper evidence packaging to protect the evidence from deleterious change and/or loss.</li> <li>- Use caution not to damage, mark, or contaminate the evidence.</li> </ul>	<p>Develop model policies and protocols and distribute to all law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Survey law enforcement agencies and district attorney offices regarding implementation of recommendations. Provide a presentation to Alabama Chiefs of Police Association and Alabama Sheriff’s Association regarding model best practices. Encourage District Attorneys’ Association to include model best practices in the forensic training. A minimum of one training on best practices will be provided each year.</p> <p><i>To be accomplished by Winter 2017</i></p>

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- All evidence should be collected while wearing gloves. Blotting trace items with regular tape renders hairs and fibers useless for analysis. Furthermore, hair comparison is possible only when the FBI lab receives known hair samples from the victim. If a sexual assault evidence kit is collected, hair samples from the victim will be included within the kit.</li><li>- Place evidence in an appropriate paper (not plastic) container, seal and initial.</li><li>- In accordance with federal law, governmental entities must incur the full out-of-pocket costs of forensic medical exams for victims of sexual assault.</li><li>- Document chain of evidence throughout investigation.</li><li>- Prepare evidence forms and property forms.</li><li>- Deliver to laboratory in accordance with department policy and procedure.</li></ul> |  |
|--|--|

## DRUG-FACILITATED RAPE INVESTIGATIONS:

Alabama's rape statutes allow for the greatest degree of charge if consent is nullified due to involuntary ingestion of a substance that causes intoxication. Therefore it is especially important that criminal justice professionals are aware of best practices when responding to sexual assaults involving the use of drugs. In addition, victim autonomy and safety should be prioritized during such investigations. Providing technical assistance materials outlining these issues will promote consistency among responses.

<b>PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>OUTCOME MEASURES</b>
Be aware of the signs of drug-facilitated sexual assault based upon the victims' behaviors	Develop model policies and protocols and distribute to law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Develop and distribute a resource tool for law enforcement officers and victims. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2015</i>
Properly document evidence and help victims decide if "full drug screen" is necessary	Develop model policies and protocols and distribute to law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Develop and distribute a resource tool for law enforcement officers and victims. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2016</i>
Collect a urine sample as soon as possible	Develop model policies and protocols and distribute to law enforcement agencies throughout the state. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2016</i>

**STRANGULATION INVESTIGATION:**

In 2012, Alabama passed its first strangulation statute making strangulation and suffocation in domestic violence cases a felony. The passage of this statute necessitates training, technical assistance materials, and best practice guides for the field.

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	OUTCOME MEASURES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Take photographs of victims, offenders and the crime scene.</li> <li>- Take photos of victims during the initial reports and arrange for follow-up photos at later time when bruises, swelling, redness, and scratches are more visible and prominent.</li> <li>- Take full-body length photos of the victims, along with close-up photos of all injuries at different angles</li> <li>- Document all statements made by victims, offenders, and witnesses</li> <li>- Use the term “strangulation” in reports rather than “choking”</li> <li>- Encourage victims to keep logs of describing changes in injuries and symptoms related to strangulation assaults</li> <li>- Take recording of victim’s voice at time of investigation for later comparison to show any voice changes</li> <li>- Conduct forensic exam with permission of victim</li> </ul>	<p>Develop model policies and protocols and distribute to all law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Survey law enforcement agencies and district attorney offices regarding implementation of recommendations. Provide a presentation to Alabama Chiefs of Police Association and Alabama Sheriff’s Association regarding model best practices. Encourage District Attorneys’ Association to include model best practices in the forensic training. A minimum of one training on best practices will be provided each year.</p> <p><i>To be accomplished by Winter 2017</i></p>



**HOMICIDE/FELONY REDUCTION STRATEGIES:**

Alabama has seen an inconsistent response to severe assaults and homicides in domestic/sexual violence cases resulting in a year to year change. Alabama has ranked in the top 10 for women killed by men for eight years since 2000 by the Violence Policy Center. In response to this inconsistency, Alabama has begun implementation of the nationally recognized Maryland Lethality Assessment Program and domestic violence fatality review teams.

<b>PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>OUTCOME MEASURES</b>
Implement the nationally recognized Lethality Assessment Program	Replicate LAP in 3 appropriate jurisdictions. Develop and distribute a resource guide and data report on LAP in Alabama. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2015</i>
Partner with Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence for development of data analysis reports	Incorporate LAP question in ALICE system used by domestic violence programs to collect LAP data and use for statewide aggregated report. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2014</i>
Develop safety checks and safety planning strategies for victims	Include safety assessment and confidentiality information in the LAP resource guide. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2014.</i>
Identify and track high risk offenders	Partner with the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center and the other local/regional offender tracking systems to integrate information to improve tracking of high risk offenders. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2015</i>
Participate in fatality review teams	Develop a how-to resource guide for jurisdictions seeking to develop fatality review teams. Develop and distribute a lessons learned report from existing fatality review teams statewide. <i>To be accomplished by Fall 2015.</i>

**ENFORCEMENT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATUTES:**

Since 2000 Alabama has enacted specific statutes related to domestic violence as a crime. In 2010 the Alabama Legislature passed significant changes to these statutes necessitating training, technical assistance and best practice guides for the field.

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	OUTCOME MEASURES
Conduct search for prior convictions, protection orders and conditions of release in effect at point of arrest	Partner with the Administrative Office of Courts, the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center and the local/regional data systems to improve entry of protection orders and conditions of release into a statewide data system. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2016</i>
Document all known prior arrests, convictions, protection orders and conditions of release for offenders arrested for domestic violence	Provide sample standard operating procedures for law enforcement and court personnel regarding input and search best practices regarding violations of court orders. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2016</i>
Use evidence-based investigation strategies (outlined in Rec.22LE) and supplemental reports	Partner with the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center to develop/revise supplemental report forms and partner with the Alabama Association of Chiefs of Police and Alabama Sheriff’s Association to ensure usage of evidence based strategies and supplemental forms. <i>To be accomplished by Fall 2016</i>
Document if notice of a protection order was provided to an offender	Partner with the Administrative Office of Courts and the Sheriff’s Association to improve return of service process for protection orders. Encourage law enforcement to use ALACOP-LETS systems to document when on-site services is provided. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2016</i>
Charge all relevant offenses including violations of protection orders	Develop a statutory guide for prosecutors and partner with the District Attorney’s Association to distribute and to offer training. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2015</i>
Provide court with certified copies of prior convictions and/or protection orders to promote enhancements and mandatory minimums available under the domestic violence statutes.	Provide sample standard operating procedures for law enforcement and court personnel regarding input and search best practices regarding violations of court orders. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2016</i>

**LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP):**

Persons in need of translation and interpretation services are often at a disadvantage when attempting to access or respond to the criminal or civil justice system. Although Alabama has established a certification process for interpreters, there is still a great need to further standardize this process and expand usage of such services in civil cases.

<b>PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>OUTCOME MEASURES</b>
Comply with requirements set forth in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) applicable to state court systems ( See DOJ 2010 compliance letter)	Establish a work group to develop specific recommendations to increase Alabama’s compliance with the Department of Justice mandates and federal law related to LEP provisions. <i>To be accomplished work group by Summer 2014 and implement recommendations by Winter 2017.</i>

**IMPLEMENT AND COMPLY WITH MANDATES OF CAMPUS SaVE ACT:**

Alabama has many state universities, community colleges and other educational systems that need on-going access to education and information regarding best practices and compliance with federal laws and regulations for responding to sexual violence crimes.

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	OUTCOME MEASURES
Develop policies and protocols regarding responses to stalking and sexual, domestic and dating violence offenses	Partner with campuses receiving VAW funding to provide model policies and protocols to all campuses in Alabama. Survey universities regarding compliance with Campus SaVE Act. <i>To be accomplished by Fall 2016</i>
Deal promptly, equitably and effectively with campus-based reports of violence as required under Title IX.	Partner with campuses receiving VAW funding to provide best practice models to all campuses in Alabama. Survey universities regarding compliance with Campus SaVE Act. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2015</i>
Conduct campus-wide awareness/prevention events	Partner with campuses receiving VAW funding to provide a prevention resource guide to campuses in Alabama. Create an on-line calendar describing prevention events hosted by applicable universities. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2016</i>
Report a broad range of sexual violence incidents occurring on campus	Track reporting of incidences through the Alabama Criminal Justice Information Center statistics system. Provide information to campuses on the FBI's new definition of Rape. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2016</i>
Improve the complaint process so victims know their rights and are supported.	Partner with campuses receiving VAW funding to develop model standard operating procedures for the complaint process and develop a Know Your Rights brochure for students informing them of the process. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2016</i>
Establish an equitable disciplinary proceeding	Partner with campuses receiving VAW funding to develop model standard operating procedures for the complaint process. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2016</i>

## **CORRECTIONS COLLABORATION:**

The needs of incarcerated women are unique and for a great majority include victimization issues involving sexual violence. Addressing victimization issues of incarcerated persons provides a greater possibility for rehabilitation and reduction in recidivism.

<b>PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>OUTCOME MEASURES</b>
The Department of Corrections should actively collaborate with ACASV and local rape crisis centers in the provision of comprehensive sexual assault victim services, for victims who incarcerated, as well as in depth training for correctional staff on issues relevant to incarcerated victims	Partner with the Department of Corrections to develop materials, resource guides, training and services regarding incarcerated victims of sexual violence. <i>To be accomplished by Winter 2015</i>

**COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION ACT:**

This federal mandate provides the framework for ensuring safe environment for incarcerated persons. Incarcerated persons are vulnerable to abuse by officials and are therefore in need of specific protections.

<b>PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>OUTCOME MEASURES</b>
Incorporate recommendations outlined in the National Standards to Prevent, Detect and Respond to Prison Rape proposed by the U.S. Department of Justice.	Partner with the Department of Corrections to develop policies based upon the national recommendations. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2015</i>
Increase access to services, safety, and effective responses for incarcerated sexual assault victims as outlined in the Recommendations for Administrators of Prisons, Jails, and Community Confinement Facilities for Adapting the U.S. Department of Justice’s A National Protocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations, Adults/Adolescents	Partner with the Department of Corrections to develop materials, resource guides, training and services regarding incarcerated victims of sexual violence. Develop a safe reporting system for incarcerated victims to provide feedback regarding the effectiveness of services and responses. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2015</i>

**ACCOUNTABILITY FOR INCARCERATED OFFENDERS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:**

Incarcerated domestic violence perpetrators may benefit from the power and control based curriculum of a perpetrator intervention program. Immersion into a new approach and belief system that does not promote or condone intimate partner violence may be a catalyst for change for some perpetrators.

<b>PLAN RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>OUTCOME MEASURES</b>
Allow domestic violence perpetrator intervention services to be offered within the corrections facility	Develop a resource tool describing available perpetrator intervention programs and their effectiveness with incarcerated offenders. <i>To be accomplished by Fall 2014</i>

**ECONOMIC LITERACY/JUSTICE:**

Victims of intimate partner violence often find their financial status drastically reduced as a result of the power and control tactics used by batterers. Victims face a range of barriers but often the economic issues pose the most immediate challenges.

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	OUTCOME MEASURES
Adopt and implement domestic and sexual violence workplace policies for State, county and municipal governmental employees.	Develop and distribute model workplace violence policies. <i>To be accomplished by Fall 2015</i>
Invite local businesses to participate in domestic and sexual violence coordinated community response task forces to develop domestic and sexual violence policies.	Provide information on task forces and CCRs to business membership organizations throughout the state. <i>To be accomplished by Winter 2016</i>
Develop model court-based domestic violence workplace policies and encourage adoption and implementation throughout the Unified Judicial System.	Partner with the Administrative Office of Courts to develop workplace violence policies specific to courts.  <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2016</i>
Domestic violence and sexual violence victim advocates, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, lawyers, and others should become aware of basic financial issues that victims and survivors may confront when seeking independence from batterers, such as joint debt with the attire, predatory lending obligations, debts incurred the behest of the batter, debt collection dunning by debt collectors, collection law suites and wage garnishment.	Develop a resource guide and outreach material regarding the financial needs of victims and resources available. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2016</i>
Increase awareness among health, social, rehabilitation and correction service providers of financial literacy classes for domestic violence survivors and offer information and/or financial literacy services.	Develop a resource guide and outreach material regarding the financial needs of victims and resources available. <i>To be accomplished by Fall 2015</i>
Advocates and lawyers should utilize an economic	Partner with the Legal Services of Alabama and the



<p>and consumer screening instrument to assess the needs of victims and survivors and make recommendations and referrals as necessary.</p>	<p>State Bar Association to develop and distribute the screening tool. <i>To be accomplished by Winter 2015</i></p>
<p>Advocates, attorneys, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and other service providers should maintain a list of referral sources for victims and survivors who present with economic independence from their batterer.</p>	<p>Partner with the Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the Alabama Coalition Against Sexual Violence to develop a webpage of financial resources and economic justice information. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2016</i></p>
<p>Domestic violence programs should establish financial literacy programs that address victims and survivor economic security through utilizing the Allstate curriculum and providing assistance in obtaining a copy of their credit reports, analyzing the credit report, identifying financial problems and barriers, learning prudent consider habits and practices, establishing realistic long term financial goals.</p>	<p>Partner with the Alabama Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the Alabama Coalition Against Sexual Violence to develop classes and services. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2016</i></p>
<p>Advocates and attorneys who assist and represent victims in securing protection orders should seek relief for clients that includes the removal of economic barriers to victim security.</p>	<p>Develop and distribute materials for attorneys regarding economic needs and reliefs for victims. <i>To be accomplished by Winter 2016</i></p>
<p>Domestic violence and sexual violence victim advocates, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, lawyers, and other service providers should develop local cross-disciplinary partnerships with other individuals and organizations that can provide holistic economic and financial services to victims and survivors.</p>	<p>Develop and provide networking technical assistance guides for local programs and coordinated community responses throughout Alabama. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2016.</i></p>
<p>When engaging in safety planning for victims and survivors, domestic violence and sexual violence victim advocates, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, lawyers, and other service providers, should include issues of economic security and empowerment.</p>	<p>Develop and distribute economic justice and resource materials to stakeholders statewide. <i>To be accomplished by Winter 2016.</i></p>

**RESPONDING TO LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, and TRANSGENDER VICTIMS AND OFFENDERS:**

Intimate partner violence exists in all communities and therefore responses, services and interventions should be developed to encompass a wide range of populations as well as include some specific approaches for each community.

<b>PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>OUTCOME MEASURES</b>
Develop and implement policies for victim service providers prohibiting harassment based on race, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity (or expression), religion, and national origin	Develop and distribute model templates for anti-harassment and ant-discrimination policies. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2016.</i>
Provide training for staff of services providers on how to prevent and respond to harassment or bullying in all forms	Develop and distribute training tools for service providers. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2015.</i>
Develop public awareness materials specific to the needs of LGBT victims	Develop awareness messaging, literature and other public education materials for social media outlets. <i>To be accomplished by Fall 2016.</i>
Provide information on legal rights, available reliefs and options for LGBT victims	Develop and distribute a Know your rights brochure. <i>To be accomplished by Fall 2014</i>
Ensure safe access to domestic and sexual violence services.	Provide advanced education training tools for service providers. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2015.</i>
Partner with LGBT community support/education and resource organizations to develop effective responses to victims and offenders of sexual and domestic violence.	Develop and distribute protocol templates for organizations. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2015.</i>

## RESPONDING TO VICTIMS WITH DISABILITIES

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	OUTCOME MEASURES
Domestic and sexual violence service providers should develop and implement policies and procedures that ensure services offered are accessible, appropriate and effective for victims with disabilities	Develop a Committee of advocates from the disabilities and domestic violence communities to offer technical assistance and recommendations for effective responses. <i>To be accomplished by Fall 2014.</i>
Information provided to the public regarding domestic and sexual violence should be available in a variety of modes that address access for people with physical, sensory, or cognitive disabilities as outlined in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	Distribute requirements and compliance recommendations tools through electronic media. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2015.</i>
All service providers and programs serving domestic and sexual violence victims should receive training on how to provide effective accommodations, access resources and enhance safety for victims with disabilities.	Request that the Committee develop training tools and plans for services providers. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2015.</i>
Law enforcement agencies, courts and prosecution offices should establish policies, procedures and processes that ensure an informed criminal justice response to people with disabilities who are victims of domestic and sexual violence	Develop and distribute model policy templates for the criminal justice system. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2016.</i>
Greater collaboration and cross training should take place among organizations serving victims of domestic and sexual violence and community-based programs serving people with disabilities.	Implement training plan developed by the Committee and local CCR teams. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2016.</i>
Public awareness materials specific to the needs of victims with disabilities should be developed	Committee will develop materials and distribute statewide. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2015.</i>
Statewide domestic and sexual violence coalitions should establish workgroups to facilitate ongoing dialogue, collaboration and problem solving among domestic and sexual violence service providers, representatives of major disabilities populations and others involved in providing services to people with disabilities	Develop work groups as identified and recommended by the Committee. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2015.</i>
Service providers should ensure on-going dialogue with people with disabilities, caregivers, and direct service	Develop model policy templates for services providers. <i>To be accomplished by Summer</i>

workers to develop client-focused policies and services	2015.
All professionals who respond to domestic and sexual violence should receive training on the effects of domestic and sexual violence on victims with disabilities	Implement training plan developed by the Committee. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2016.</i>
Law enforcement agencies should receive specialized training on investigation techniques for cases involving victims with disabilities. Follow up investigators need to develop specialized skills for interviewing and gathering evidence that take into account the barriers and challenges that victims with disabilities face	Develop model law enforcement training and policies templates and distribute to law enforcement agencies statewide. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2015.</i>

## SPECIALIZED RESPONSES

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	OUTCOME MEASURES
Agencies and service providers responding to victims from specific cultures should receive training from community based resources with relevant expertise.	Collaborate with community organizations to develop tool kits for specific communities. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2015.</i>
Confidentiality laws, regulations and policies should be thoroughly explained to victims from close-knit communities to promote the use of victim services	Develop a resource tool on confidentiality and referral list <i>To be accomplished by Fall 2014.</i>
Criminal justice agencies and courts should receive training on the expanded jurisdiction of tribal authorities authorized under the VAWA 2013	Distribute VAWA training resource tools. <i>To be accomplished by Spring 2016.</i>
Federal, State and Tribal law enforcement agencies and courts should develop protocols for responding to domestic violence crimes involving tribal members on tribal lands that respect the autonomy of all sovereign authorities	Develop and distribute model protocol templates to federal, state and tribal agencies. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2015.</i>
Domestic and sexual violence programs should become knowledgeable of cultural values, community attitudes, and social experiences that may affect reactions and responses to victims	Collaborate with community organizations to develop tool kits for specific communities. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2016.</i>
Agencies responding to victims and offenders of domestic and sexual violence should have access to best practice information developed by national resource centers with expertise on responding to applicable cultures	Collect and distribute national best practice materials throughout the State. <i>To be accomplished by Summer 2016.</i>

## ALABAMA'S SEXUAL ASSAULT SET ASIDE

The state's sexual violence program is coordinated in Alabama by the Alabama Coalition Against Sexual Violence. ACASV empowers its 17 member rape crisis centers to facilitate the humane, consistent, and compassionate care of victims of sexual violence and their families. These are accomplished through community awareness, standardization of member services, education, research, and advocacy activities. The 17 rape crisis centers serve all counties in Alabama except Choctaw and Conecuh. ACASV endeavors to continually improve the treatment of sexual violence survivors and to ultimately end sexual violence.

Services offered by ACASV include:

- Training for allied professionals such as through workshops and conferences.
- Community education programs about sexual violence, websites, quarterly newsletters, and other materials.
- Advocacy for sexual assault survivors with statewide agencies and in the formation of public policy.
- Support for sexual assault program staff through training, technical assistance, and a resource library of books, videos, and training materials.
- Networking with other statewide agencies that address issues of violence against women.
- Providing information, technical assistance, and resources to everyone seeking to learn more about the prevalence and prevention of sexual violence.

In the FY2013-2014, more than 20 percent of the STOP funding to victim service agencies was clearly awarded to sexual assault programs. The challenge for Alabama will come

with its efforts to meet the set-aside in the other allocations of law enforcement, prosecution and courts. While several of the law enforcement and prosecution agencies, as well as dual programs, include sexual assault in their applications, we want to be sure that STOP funds are being used to meaningfully address sexual assault. We believe the key meeting the sexual assault set aside mandated under VAWA 2013 across the various allocations will be training and technical assistance. To that end, ACASV has contacted Resource Sharing Project to work with us to provide training and technical assistance to the state's law enforcement and prosecution agencies, as well as dual programs.

Lastly, Alabama will be using five percent of its STOP funds to assist the state come into compliance with standards under the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). This penalty amount will also count towards the 20 percent sexual assault set aside requirement. The Violence Against Women Act reauthorization bill includes a new purpose area for “developing, enlarging, or strengthening programs addressing sexual assault against men, women, and youth in correctional and detention settings.”

## GRANT MAKING STRATEGY

In Alabama, STOP funding will be awarded to agencies that provide victims with critically needed services for support and protection, and to law enforcement and prosecution agencies that hold perpetrators accountable. In the distribution of its annual federal STOP award, Alabama follows the formula mandated by VAWA: 25 percent is allocated to Prosecution programs, 25 percent to Law Enforcement programs, 30 percent to Victim Service programs; 5 percent to Court programs; 5 percent to Discretionary programs and the remaining 10 percent of the STOP award is allocated to Administration.

One of the largest challenges is the funding of Alabama's law enforcement and prosecution agencies. Of the 41 district attorney offices in the state, only 12 receive funding to operate their domestic violence units. The 12 judicial circuits represent 17 of the state's 67 counties. It would further enhance the state's ability to provide victims of domestic violence and sexual assault if it was monetarily feasible to have prosecution available in each of Alabama's judicial circuits in order to assist victims and prosecute offenders. Unfortunately, funding is unavailable.

Alabama has more than 400 law enforcement agencies, including campus, municipal, county and state agencies. STOP funds support five law enforcement agencies. Presently, STOP funds are awarded to Alabama currently also has 17 domestic violence shelters and 15 rape crisis centers. Most of these 31 non-profit organizations are members of ACADV or ACASV, and in some cases, are dual programs. ACADV and ACASV receive STOP funding. The Court allocation is given to the statewide Alabama Administrative Office of Courts. The discretionary allocations are usually used to fund Victim Service, Prosecution or Law Enforcement programs which we are unable to fund in these categories due to limited funding. Documentation from each of the allocations is included to identify the current and proposed use of STOP grant funds.

Geographic distribution of VAWA funds has always been a priority and is equitable in Alabama. STOP awards to subgrantees are made ensuring all victims of domestic violence and sexual assault are provided with protection and needed assistance. Shelters and rape response centers cover the state providing service to all counties in the state though their respective service area. Currently, the majority of the STOP grants in Alabama are continuation grants.



However, this office is making plans to develop an RFP system that will make the application and award process competitive.

The majority of the current STOP grants are some of the first programs funded with STOP dollars. Originally when an application for STOP funding was submitted, a review was made by the STOP Administrator and Division Director of the services available across the state. The goal was to cover the state, without duplication, with services in all the purpose areas of the Violence Against Women Act. It was literally a matter of taking a map of the state and marking where and what the services were. Programs were originally approved for funding if they provided a well-developed proposal. Over the years, ADECA has continued to fund these programs if they continued to be in compliance with federal and state guidelines, as well as continue to implement a necessary program in compliance with STOP purpose areas. This system has helped in a statewide program with services located throughout the state.

The total Courts allocation is awarded to the Administrative Office of Courts, and is, therefore, statewide. ADECA funds all 17 shelters which cover every county in the state. All but three shelter programs receive STOP funding (those three receive funding under the Victims of Crime Act Program). There are 17 rape crisis centers (either sole or dual programs) in Alabama, and all receive ADECA funding . Additionally, ACADV and ACASV receive funding from the STOP Victims Services allocation, which allows these two organizations to provide technical assistance and training to victim service, as law enforcement and prosecution agencies across the state.

Several factors are involved in the determination of the amount of STOP awards to subgrantees. The Court award is dictated by law at five percent, with service provided to the entire state through the Administrative Office of Courts. Allocations to victim service agencies

are also made taking in consideration amounts available through Victims of Crime Assistance and Family Violence grant programs, which together with STOP, provide services throughout the State of Alabama.

Grants awards are made annually according to the subgrantees demonstrated ability to achieve their goals and objectives in prior years, audit results, and monitoring results. A copy of the LETS grant application is included in the application appendix. Considering that over 90 percent of the STOP awards are continuation funding, ADECA's Law Enforcement and Traffic Safety Division maintains an effective monitoring program that visits and reviews the subgrantees operation on site each year. The STOP Administrator visits all subgrantees on site, therefore having firsthand knowledge of their operation and services provided. Each new program is visited by a monitor and/or the program manager to ensure funds are being spent as reflected in the award package.

Several factors come into play in determining the amount of the subgrant award, generally beginning with the federal award amount. Other factors include:

- Availability of Funds
- Size of Service Area to be Covered
- Size of Population to be Served
- Compliance with the Purpose Areas Identified by VAWA
- Funding History of the Applicant
- Funding Resources of the Applicant (other than VAWA)
- Agency Stability (active Board of Directors, established management and staff, visibility within the community, etc.)
- Geographic Distribution of Funds (obviously)

- History of Compliance with Reporting Requirements (for continuation grants), including demonstrated ability to achieve their goals and objectives in prior years, audit results, and monitoring results.

After the federal award is received and accepted, ADECA begins the grant award process. Subgrantees are required to submit new applications 60 days prior to the grant's start date.

Historically, the STOP grants are 12 months but had different start dates with most beginning October 1. In order to provide continuity, this office began efforts to place all grants on a January 1-December 31 funding cycle which extended some grants beyond 12 months. Beginning January 1, 2015, all STOP grants will be 12 months and will be on the January 1-December 31 funding cycle. This change will also enable the grants to correspond with the required STOP annual report calendar.

All applicants that are not victim service agencies must include in their application a statement certifying that they have consulted with victim service providers during the course of developing their grant application. The statement is an effort to ensure that the proposed activities are designed to promote the safety, confidential and economic independence of victims. The statement is signed by a representative of the applicant agencies (courts, law enforcement, prosecution) as well as a representative of a victim service agency.

As previously stated, this office plans to begin awarding grants through a Request for Proposal (RFP), beginning with FY2014 funding. However, under the current process, each applicant is required to submit a grant application for funding . The application must adequately address five areas: Problem Identification; Goals & Objectives; Methods & Procedures; Evaluation; and Budget. The applications are scored on a 100 scale as follows: Completion

(Max of 5 points); Problem (Max of 40 points); Goals & Objectives (Max of 15 points); Methods & Procedures (Max of 15 points); Evaluation (Max of 20 Points); and Budget (Max of 5 Points). Additionally, applications must be complete, and contain appropriate signatures, as well as the various required certifications and assurances. Applicants are required to submit applications at least 60 days before the grant start date.

The STOP Administrator issues a funding recommendation based on several factors, including the application review, history of compliance and funding availability. The application and amount must then be approved by the Division Director , ADECA Director and Governor. Grant awards are issued for a 12-month period. An extension of the grant period can be requested with ample justification. The extensions are considered and granted on a case-by-case basis.

## **ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF UNDERSERVED VICTIMS**

The Council on Violence Against Women has prioritized recommendations for the following underserved populations in the 2013 State Plan: (1) victims with disabilities; (2) victims from the LGBTQ communities and (3) victims from Asian communities. In addition, recommendations from an Administrative Office of Court's Domestic Violence Court Committee, including representation from the Band of Poarch Creek Indians and the Elder Abuse Task Force Report were used to inform the State Plan process. The next revision of the State Plan will incorporate specific recommendations for elder and tribal member victims. The implementation of the specific recommendations listed in the priority section this Plan will improve systemic responses, data collection, and development of best practice materials for these underserved populations.

## **RECOGNIZING THE NEED:**

### **Disabilities**

*2011 Alabama Disability Status Report, Cornell University*

In 2011, the prevalence of disability within the Alabama was: 15.5 percent for persons ages 21 to 64 and 31.9 percent for persons ages 65 to 74. The prevalence of the six disability types among persons of all ages in Alabama was: 3.1% reported a Visual Disability; 4.3% reported a Hearing Disability; 10.1% reported an Ambulatory Disability; 6.9% reported a Cognitive Disability; 3.7% reported a Self-Care Disability; and 7.8% reported an Independent Living Disability. In 2011, 16.4 percent of females of all ages and 16.6 percent of males of all ages in Alabama reported a disability.

### **LGBTQ**

*2012 Report on Intimate Partner Violence in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and HIV-Affected Communities in the U.S., National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP)*

NCAVP finds a 29.6% increase from 2011 in reports of intimate partner violence (1437 in 2011 to 1863 in 2012). Highest IPV homicide rate ever reported to NCAVP. In 2012, NCAVP documented 21 intimate partner violence (IPV) homicides, the highest yearly total ever recorded by the coalition. This is an increase from 19 homicides recorded in last year's 2011 report, and more than three times the 6 documented homicides in 2010. For the second year in a row, nearly half (47.6%) of IPV homicide victims were gay identified men. Of the 21 IPV homicide victims in 2012, a majority (52.4%) were people of color with 28.6% of homicide victims identifying a Black/African American, 23.8% identifying as Latin, 23.8% identifying as white, and 23.8% of homicide victims with unspecified race or ethnicity.

## **Native American Tribal Community**

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians is the only federally recognized Indian Tribe in the state of Alabama, operating as a sovereign nation with its own system of government and bylaws. Currently there are 3,074 members of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, of which over 1,000 live in the vicinity of Poarch, Alabama (eight miles northwest of Atmore, Alabama, in rural Escambia county, and 57 miles east of Mobile).

## **Immigrant Communities**

### *The Facts on Immigrant Women and Domestic Violence, Futures Without Violence*

Forty-eight percent of Latinas in one study reported that their partner's violence against them had increased since they immigrated to the United States. A survey of immigrant Korean women found that 60 percent had been battered by their husbands. Married immigrant women experience higher levels of physical and sexual abuse than unmarried immigrant women, 59.5 percent compared to 49.8 percent, respectively. Abusers often use their partners' immigration status as a tool of control. In such situations, it is common for a batterer to exert control over his partner's immigration status in order to force her to remain in the relationship.

In 2013, Alabama held a two-day statewide conference on Underserved Communities conducted by Aleese Moore-Orbih of the Women of Color Network. The first day session was attended by approximately 25 members of the state Council on Violence Women. The second day's session was attended by more than 60 representatives of STOP-funded agencies, including victim service, law enforcement and prosecution agencies. The meeting, a collaborative effort by ADECA, ACASV and ACADV, represented the renewed emphasis on underserved

populations in preparation of VAWA 2013. The state plans to conduct a meeting each year to build on the fundamentals reflected by this conference.

Currently, Alabama has exceeded the 10 percent set aside requirement for culturally-specific organizations. For the past three years, Alabama has designated the Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama in Birmingham as the culturally specific organization. In 2013, ADECA began a partnership with AshaKiran in Huntsville that aids South Asians in crisis situations, including domestic violence. Beginning with FY2014 funds, the 10 percent set-aside probably will be divided equally between these and other culturally specific organizations that may be identified.

## CONCLUSION

The 2014-2017 State Implementation Plan addresses the gaps and recommendations identified by the Alabama Council on Violence Against Women. The Plan seeks to connect projects and programs funded through STOP grants to promote consistent standardized responses to victims and perpetrators of domestic and sexual violence. Throughout the approaching years, Alabama will strive to implement strategies to enhance the safety of women and children, increase coordination of services and improve the systemic response to victims of sexual and domestic violence.