From: OVW Director (JMD) [OVW.Director@usdoj.gov]
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2013 8:26 PM
Subject: Potential Lapse in Federal Government Funding

Dear OVW Grantee and Cooperative Agreement Recipient,

Unless Congressional action is taken, funding for federal government operations expires at midnight EDT on Monday, September 30, 2013. Should a lapse in federal government funding occur, the effect will be far-reaching. Most offices across the federal government will be seriously impacted as a result of the lapse.

However, consistent with the Department of Justice (DOJ) Contingency Plan (http://www.justice.gov/jmd/publications/doj-contingency-plan.pdf), a determination has been made that the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) has sufficient resources to remain operational through Monday, October 7, 2013. As a result, OVW will be available to assist grantees, stakeholders, and the public during this period; however, our ability to meet grantee needs will be affected by the impact the lapse has on other DOJ components and federal agencies. Should the federal government experience a lapse in appropriation that is longer than five business days, we will reassess our ability to remain open and provide you with updated guidance.

We are aware that many of you may have additional questions regarding how a potential lapse in the federal appropriation would affect your grant/cooperative agreement, even if OVW is able to remain open. Below are responses to some of the most frequent questions we have received:

**Continuation of Grantee Activities under Existing Grants**

**QUESTION:** Will I be able to continue activities and projects funded under my existing OVW grants or cooperative agreements during a period of a federal government funding lapse?

**RESPONSE:** Yes. Grantee activities and projects funded under existing grants will generally be able to continue to the extent the grantee has funding available (see note below regarding “Grantee Requests for Payments”. The exception to this guidance would be if federal employee involvement is critical to the project being carried out or proceeding to the next step. If the federal employee involved is an OVW staff member, then things should proceed as planned for the short term. OVW will be available to conduct all normal business. However, if the federal employee is not with OVW, their availability will be determined by their agency.

**QUESTION:** Will grantee-sponsored events (such as conferences, meetings, and trainings) scheduled during the period of a federal government funding lapse be affected?

**RESPONSE:** No. Grantee-sponsored events (e.g., conferences, meetings, trainings) scheduled during a potential funding lapse generally will not be affected and can proceed as planned. The exception to this guidance would be if federal employee participation in these meetings or training is critical in order for these events to proceed. This could include federal employee involvement to carry out the event or provide oversight/guidance. Again, if the federal employee is an OVW staff member, things should
proceed as planned. However, if employees of other federal agencies are involved, the status of the agency and the particular employee will determine their availability.

**Grantee Requests for Payments**

As you may know, the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) manages the Grant Payment Request System (GPRS) and the Grants Management System (GMS). OVW utilizes both systems in the management of OVW’s grants and cooperative agreements. Should a lapse in federal appropriation extend past October 4, 2013, OJP will not have sufficient resources to remain operational and will therefore convert to a furlough and shut down status, ceasing all operations, including operation of GMS and GPRS.

Please note: under the normal payment system schedule associated with end of the fiscal year activities, there are no grant payments between September 25th and October 2nd. Payments requested through GPRS from September 25th through October 2nd will be paid October 3rd. Payments requested before October 4, 2013 will be paid October 4th.

**QUESTION: Will I be able to request payments and draw down funds after October 4, 2013?**

**RESPONSE:** No. The Grant Payment Request System (GPRS) will not be available to users should OJP experience a period of a funding lapse. Please note: payments requested before Friday, October 4th will be paid October 4th.

**Grants Management System (GMS) and Grant Administration Activities**

**QUESTION: Will GMS and the GMS Help Desk be available after October 4, 2013?**

**RESPONSE:** No. The Grants Management System (GMS) will not be available to users. Users will not have access to apply for funds, submit progress and Federal Financial Reports (FFRs), request grant adjustment notices, submit closeout actions, or respond to on-site monitoring issues for resolution. Likewise, the GMS Help Desk will not be available to users. As a reminder, OVW’s GMS support can be reached via email at Ovw.gmssupport@usdoj.gov or by calling 866-655-4482. Should you need GMS assistance prior to the close of business on October 4th, we encourage you to contact OVW GMS support.

**QUESTION: Will the OVW Grants Financial Management Division or my OVW program specialist be available to answer questions or provide assistance during a period of a federal government funding lapse?**

**RESPONSE:** Yes. OVW staff will be available during their regular business hours. However, if the lapse extends beyond October 7, 2013, OVW and the Department will need to reassess the ability of OVW to remain open.

**QUESTION: Will I be able to submit Federal Financial Reports (FFRs) or progress reports after October 4, 2013?**

**RESPONSE:** No. The Grants Management System (GMS) will not be available to accept progress reports and Federal Financial Reports (FFRs) during a period of a Federal government funding lapse for OJP. Please note: To provide adequate time to grantees to prepare and submit their Federal Financial
Reports (FFR) due on October 30, 2013 for the period July 1–September 30, the deadline will be extended by the number of days GMS is not available due to the funding lapse.

**OVW On-site Monitoring Visits**

**QUESTION:** Will an OVW programmatic on-site monitoring visit scheduled during a period of a federal government funding lapse still occur?

**RESPONSE:** Yes. However, if the site-visit is scheduled to take place after October 7, 2013, and the federal government funding lapse continues, OVW will need to reassess its ability to remain open and conduct monitoring visits.

**Recovery Act Recipient Reporting**

**QUESTION:** As a Recovery Act funding recipient, will I be required to report to FederalReporting.gov during the current recipient period of October 1-14, 2013?

**RESPONSE:** Yes. The FederalReporting.gov and their Help Desk will not be impacted by a federal government lapse in funding and will remain open and fully operational during the October reporting cycle. Please visit FederalReportingHelpDesk@ratb.gov for assistance and additional guidance regarding submission of your report.

**Applying for OVW Open Solicitations**

**QUESTION:** Will I be able to submit funding applications for open solicitations through GMS after October 4, 2013?

**RESPONSE:** No. GMS will not be available after October 4th to accept funding applications; however, OVW does not have any open solicitations at this time.

**QUESTION:** Will I be able to submit funding applications for open solicitations through Grants.gov during the period of a Federal government funding lapse?

**RESPONSE:** Yes. Grants.gov will be available to accept applications for open solicitations; however, OVW does not have any open solicitations at this time.

**OVW Website**

**QUESTION:** Will I be able to access information from the OVW website?

**RESPONSE:** Yes. However, the website will not be updated during the period of a federal funding lapse.

**Questions about this Guidance**

**QUESTION:** If I have a question relating to this guidance or the impact of a federal government funding lapse on my grants, who can I contact to assist me?
**RESPONSE:** Federal government employees will be available to assist you while the federal government is open; and should the federal government experience a lapse in appropriation, OVW staff will remain available to answer your questions. However, if the lapse extends beyond October 7, 2013, OVW and the Department will need to reassess the ability of OVW to remain open. Please contact your OVW program specialist using contact information provided in your award document. If your program specialist is not available, please contact the OVW main number at 202-307-6026. **Please note that at such a time as there is a lapse in appropriation, federal staff in other offices may not be available to answers questions.**

We realize the inconvenience this may cause and will do everything we can to be responsive with reduced resources. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding.

Most Sincerely,

Bea Hanson