



To encourage and facilitate mutual support, awareness, and cooperation among states and territories administering Violence Against Women Act formula grants.

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## **AVA Connect Conversation**

**February 22, 2021**

**2:00PM EST**

### **OVERVIEW**

AVA conducted our 6th AVA Connect conversation on February 16th, 2021. The intent of our conversations is to create informal opportunities to stay socially connected with each other as peers in a meaningful way. A key part of AVA Connect is giving you the opportunity to talk about whatever is most on your mind, ask questions and share ideas.

### **SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

VAWA administrators from six states met for our fourth AVA Connect conversation. We agreed in advance to attempt to limit the call to one hour. AVA Board members Amy Baynes and Gene Nelson started the meeting with a quick welcome and overview and then encouraged everyone else on the call to introduce themselves and share how long they have been in their current VAWA Administrator role.

After the introductions, participants then began to discuss any issue that they had concerns about or simply wanted to learn how other administrators are addressing an issue/challenge.

The conversation was a sharing of ideas, experiences, and concerns. Some of the topics included:

- Questions and concerns about a proposal that would change the STOP VAWA allocation areas
  - If approved, the proposal increases the amount of required funding (percentage) for culturally specific services.
  - Some states felt that if this proposal is approved, that it would be challenging for them to find enough programs in their states to meet the proposed funding allocation percentage.
- Implementation Plans due in 2022
  - Questions and conversation around any speculation that there would be any change in focus, as with the last Implementation Plan.
  - Multiple states shared that ALSO resources available to administrators were extremely helpful.
- Impact of 35% decrease in VOCA funding
  - For those administrators on the call that manage both VAWA and VOCA, administrators shared steps they have taken or will take to address the decrease in VOCA funding

We encourage you to participate in one of the upcoming AVA Connect conversations if you think you might find it useful. We are holding our next AVA Connect Conversation on March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 2:00pm EST.

Take care and thank you for all that you do!