

 To encourage and facilitate mutual support, awareness and cooperation among

 states and territories administering Violence Against Women Act formula grants.

**AVA Connect Conversation
AUGUST 27, 2020
3:00PM EST**

**OVERVIEW**AVA conducted our second AVA Connect conversation on August 27th, 2020. The intent of our virtual get-togethers is to create informal opportunities to stay socially connected with each other as peers in a meaningful way.  The most important part of AVA Connect is to give you a chance to talk about whatever is most on your mind, ask questions and share ideas.  We want to create that round-table space, where we might sit down and have a cup of hotel coffee and muffins and check in with each other.
 **SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**VAWA administrators from eight states met for our second AVA Connect conversation. We agreed in advance to attempt to limit the call to one hour. AVA’s Immediate Past President, MaryEllen Garcia, 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.

All of the conversation was particularly useful and timely. It was more of a sharing of ideas, experiences, and concerns. Some of the topics of discussion included:

* Federal funding that administrators are currently managing, including the following:
	+ Emergency Short-term COVID relief funding
		- 4 months to spend
		- Staff stretched thin
		- Types of programs being funded
	+ Family Violence Prevention and Services Program CARES Act Supplemental Funding
		- Managing equitable distribution
		- Being careful to support only VAWA fundable items
	+ VAWA STOP funding
		- Some states are just beginning to distribute 2019 VAWA funding
* Criminal history background checks and non-discrimination language
* Transitioning to working from home due to COVID-19
* Differences in state’s COVID-19 policies/phases
* Subgrantee monitoring requirements and expectations

We encourage you to participate in one of the upcoming AVA Connect conversations if you think you might find it useful. We still have room for a few more participants on the next AVA Connect conversation scheduled for September 22 at 2:00pm EST.

Take care and thank you for all that you do!