

# THE SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES FORMULA GRANT PROGRAM

A Report on Key Issues

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National Sexual Assault Coalition

**Resource  
Sharing  
Project**



The Sexual Assault Services Formula Grant Program (SASP), administered by the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) in the United States Department of Justice, was authorized in 2005 through the Violence Against Women Act as the first federal funding stream dedicated to the provision of direct services to victims of sexual violence. After an initial implementation phase, SASP has now been operating in all 50 states and 6 territories for several years, making a real difference in the experience of survivors. According to the 2012 OVW report to Congress on SASP, almost 40,000 survivors received services, over 200 advocates and counselors were funded at local programs, and over 60,000 hotline calls were answered through SASP.

The National Sexual Assault Coalition Resource Sharing Project (RSP) is the comprehensive technical assistance provider for SASP and works directly with state administrators and coalitions to support their work to provide core and comprehensive services to sexual assault survivors across the lifespan. In April 2014, RSP began surveying administrators on key questions related to approaches to the SASP program. Forty-one states and territories responded to the survey. Additionally, RSP provided coalition directors an opportunity to respond to the survey. In this survey, RSP looked at some of the key topics we are often asked about when administrators are curious how other states and territories approach SASP, such as:

- Coalitions as pass through agencies for state funds;
- Approaches to SASP: funding formulas, competitive proposals, and hybrids;
- Dual and multi-service programs funded with SASP;
- SASP planning processes;
- Involving the state coalition;
- Subgrantee monitoring;
- Reaching underserved populations and funding culturally specific services; and
- Innovations.

We hope this paper provides you with a richer picture of how SASP is working around the country to meet the diverse needs of survivors and gives you food for thought as you think about how SASP is working in your state or territory.

## SASP Funding Served



400,000  
Survivors



200  
Advocates



60,000  
Hotline Calls

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# Coalitions as Pass Through Agencies for SASP Funds

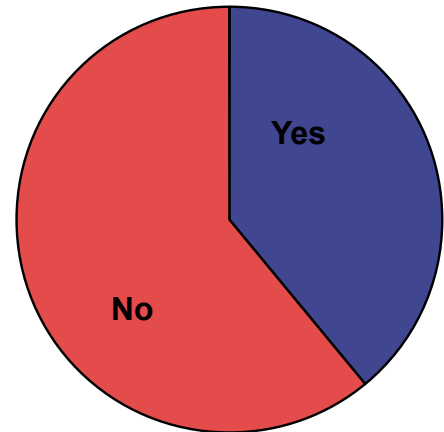
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**16**  
States  
pass through  
funding

Sixteen states that responded to the survey pass SASP funds through the state sexual assault or dual coalitions to local programs: large states such as Florida, Illinois and Pennsylvania and smaller states such as Arkansas, New Hampshire, and West Virginia. In states where the coalition acts as a pass-through, the coalition often fulfills many of the administrative responsibilities from drafting RFPs and reports to contracting with and monitoring subgrantees. In most states that pass through these funds, the administrator shares some or all of the administrative funds with the coalition to help support these efforts.

Twenty-five states that responded to the survey do not pass funds through the coalition. In several states, such as Iowa, Ohio, Texas and Washington, the administrator and the state coalition work very closely together but have not chosen a pass-through approach. In a few states where the coalition is not a pass-through, the coalition would prefer to administer the funds, however, in most of these states the administrator and coalition have agreed on a plan.

Does your state pass through funds to the state sexual assault coalition for distribution?



# Approaches to SASP: Funding Formulas, Competitive Proposals, and Hybrids

Fifteen states that responded to the survey, including Connecticut, Kentucky, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Nebraska, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Virginia, use a formula to distribute SASP funds. Connecticut, Illinois, Louisiana, Nebraska, New York, and Pennsylvania are examples of states where funds are passed through to the coalition and distributed by a formula that includes a number of different funding sources pooled together. Massachusetts and Iowa do not pass funds through the coalition, but do combine funding sources and use a formula for funding. In Iowa, a formula is used to distribute a variety of federal and state funds including SASP. A few states have a hybrid model in which they use a formula and an RFP process. For example, Virginia lists the programs eligible to apply for SASP in their RFP, and then only accepts applications from those programs.

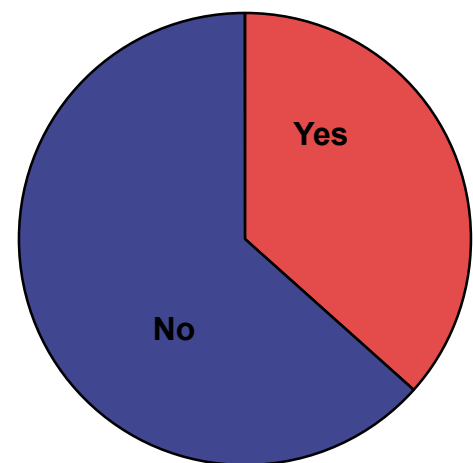
**15**  
States use  
a formula

**21**  
States use a  
competitive  
RFP

Twenty-one states that responded to the survey, including Arizona, Michigan, Ohio, Oregon, and Washington, use a competitive approach to SASP. States such as Florida, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Oklahoma, and Oregon use a competitive RFP. In some states, like Idaho, where the SASP funds are passed through the state sexual assault coalition, the coalition has developed the RFP process. Ohio uses two separate RFPs. One is used to reach previously unserved geographic regions of the state, and the other, just recently launched, targets funding for culturally specific services. The first two awards under the second RFP have recently funded Asian American Community Services and the Ohio Hispanic Coalition. Arizona's and Idaho's RFPs ask for evaluation plans that include both process and outcome measures. Some trends in the competitive approach include a pre-application meeting for possible applicants, training, cultural competency, and evaluation requirements in the RFP.

A few states use neither a formula nor a competitive approach to SASP. Some smaller states (either in terms of population or geography) reported that SASP funds were too small to do an open solicitation. For several very small states like Rhode Island and Delaware, neither a formula approach nor a competitive process seemed workable. In these states, funds are generally granted to one direct service provider. In Texas, the coalition and administrator work together using a needs assessment to determine projects to fund that meet the needs of underserved communities, such as advocates to serve Spanish-speaking survivors at centers that serve communities with large Latin@ populations.

Does your state use a formula to distribute SASP funds to subgrantees?



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## State Highlight: Oregon

The Oregon Department of Justice Crime Victims' Services Division (CVSD) SASP Subcommittee developed funding priorities for the [2014-2015 SASP Formula Grant Program Request for Applications](#). The SASP Subcommittee includes members of their larger Advisory Committee and other community members including the Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, the Oregon Sexual Assault Task Force, the Department of Human Services, and Victim Assistance Programs. They also conducted two surveys. One survey went to all domestic violence and sexual assault grantees on current sexual assault-specific services, community collaborations, needs, gaps, and successes. A second survey was directed specifically to underserved communities to assess services needs. Through this process, CVSD included the following priorities in their RFP:

- Enhance and strengthen meaningful access to population specific and culturally proficient services to adult, youth and child victims of sexual assault who are members of an underserved population, including services to family and household members of such victims and those collaterally affected by the victimization.
- Direct funding to address one or more of the gaps identified in the Assessment of Services to Survivors of Sexual Assault Survey and the 2014 Sexual Assault Underserved Populations Survey such as advocacy services; counseling and support group services; emergency financial support services; medical and legal accompaniment; system collaboration and outreach; and other locally documented services gaps.
- Direct funding to organizations that can demonstrate a track record of providing population specific services.
- Enhance equitable distribution of grants and grant funds in rural areas.

CVSD also includes a training requirement in their RFP. The applicant must demonstrate that any staff person approached by a sexual assault survivor should be able to respond appropriately to assess need and provide crisis intervention and information and referral. As appropriate, staff may refer survivors with longer-term needs for services to the SASP-funded staff. CVSD requires a minimum of 30 hours of content-specific training for crisis line response and an additional 10 hours of training for in-person response for all grant-funded staff and volunteers serving survivors. In addition, to qualify for SASP funding, each staff person wholly or partially funded by SASP must have attended at least 24 hours of advanced sexual assault training within the last 24 months.

Most of the funded programs in Oregon are dual programs. The subcommittee that guides their funding decisions is using the Resource Sharing Project publication, [Opening Our Doors: Building Strong Sexual Assault Services in Dual/Multi-Service Advocacy Agencies](#), as a tool in their grant solicitation process. This year, the Oregon solicitation asked potential grantees to respond to components for strong sexual assault programs but did not rate responses based on the components. They found that many of the programs were strong in most of the indicators

but had room to grow in others. In the future, they hope to rate solicitations based on these requirements, or some iteration of the requirements, both for SASP funds and also to guide funding under the sexual assault set-aside in STOP. In this round, potential grantees completed a checklist: “Indicators of High Quality Sexual Assault Programs.” Applicants also provided narrative responses discussing their strengths related to sexual assault service provision and plans for further development of sexual assault services.

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### **State Highlight: Florida**

Florida’s RFP gives priority consideration for funding to programs that meaningfully address underserved populations including:

- Outreach, advocacy and counseling services for victims with disabilities;
- Supervision for counselors/advocates targeted at working with victims with disabilities (supervision may be provided remotely);
- Culturally relevant supervision for front office staff;
- Outreach, advocacy and counseling services to incarcerated victims;
- Outreach, advocacy and counseling services to geographically isolated victims;
- Outreach, advocacy and counseling services to immigrant populations;
- Outreach, advocacy and counseling services to victims and their families at or below the poverty level;
- Outreach, advocacy and counseling to lesbian, gay, transgender, questioning (LGBTQ) victims;
- Outreach to Senior Centers and other organizations and professionals that work with elders; and
- Outreach to rural populations.

# Dual and Multi-Service Programs Funded with SASP

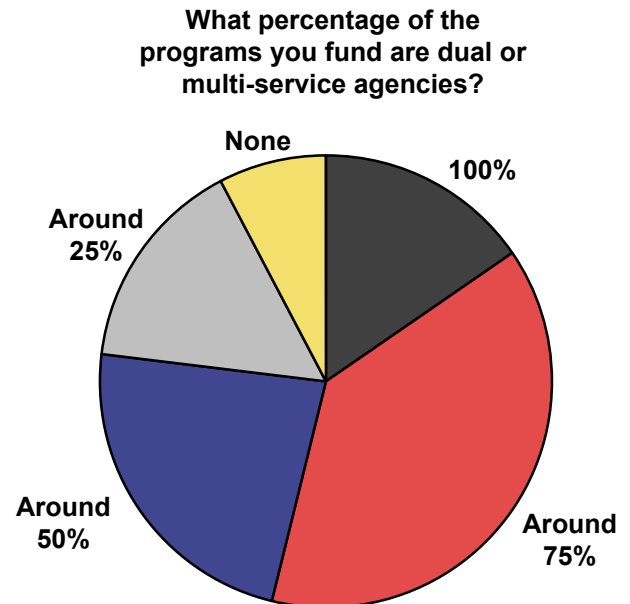
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According to the survey, in six states all of the programs funded with SASP are dual or multi-service; in 12 states 75% of programs are dual or multi-service; and in 9 states, 50% of programs are dual or multi-service. That means that in about 3/4 of states, at least half of the programs funded with SASP are dual or multi-service programs.

RSP is part of a separate project that looks specifically at sexual assault services in a dual or multi-service program context. The Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative (SADI), a collaboration between RSP and the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) and funded by the Office on Violence Against Women, is the first large-scale project to address the challenges dual and multi-service programs face in reaching sexual assault survivors by dedicating resources, support, and replicable tools tailored specifically to the needs of those programs. The SADI project has developed a range of innovative resources to help reach more sexual assault survivors with comprehensive quality care including:

- [Building Cultures of Care: A Guide for Sexual Assault Services Programs](#)
- [Listening to Our Communities: Assessment Toolkit](#)
- [Multi-Services Programs and the Essentials of Sexual Assault Services: Annotated Bibliography](#)
- [Building Comprehensive Sexual Assault Services Programs](#)

To see all of the SADI publications and resources you can visit the [RSP website page for SADI](#).



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## State Highlight: Nebraska

In Nebraska, the SASP Administrator has a strong working relationship with the Nebraska Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition (NDVSAC). SASP funds are passed through to NDVSAC to be sub-granted by formula to 19 small, rural dual programs to provide sexual assault services. Program directors have expressed concern to NDVSAC about some of the challenges they face reaching sexual assault survivors in rural areas. They worry that many survivors don't seek services because of privacy issues, a culture of victim-blaming, and a belief among those in the community that sexual violence doesn't happen in rural areas. As programs have created specific sexual assault advocate positions with SASP, they've reported large increases in victims served. The Coalition is currently working with programs to figure out additional ways to build robust sexual assault services.

At a recent meeting for local program directors, the NDVSAC set aside time for a conversation about SASP allowable expenses and possible approaches for programs to reach more sexual assault survivors. Part of the conversation focused on strategies for tracking staff time and budgeting around personnel so that SASP funds are being used to their full potential. In many of the small, rural agencies in Nebraska, all of the advocates (and often the executive director as well) serve sexual assault survivors, even if the agency has a designated advocate for sexual assault. They wanted to make sure they helped programs develop tracking mechanisms to count the services provided by all employees. At the same time, NDVSAC staff reiterated and discussed unallowable expenses for SASP including paying for domestic violence services for survivors who aren't seeking services for sexual violence issues. The coalition has provided programs with written guidance about allowable and unallowable activities under SASP. At the meeting, they also focused on ways to increase access for survivors to mental health care and holistic healing services. For the smaller agencies, it is often most feasible to contract with community partners to provide these services, and they talked through how the services and corresponding funds would be justified, budgeted, tracked and monitored. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, they talked about the various extended advocacy and outreach activities programs could be doing with SASP. These included things such as having "office hours" at the victim witness unit or on college campuses to assist sexual assault survivors and providing support groups at partnering agencies including those serving youth.



# SASP Planning Processes

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A significant number of states rely on the coalition as their primary partner in the planning process especially when funds are passed through the coalition. Several states including Arkansas, Oregon, and Washington have a coordinating or advisory committee that assists with SASP planning. Illinois, Iowa, and Tennessee are examples of states that have planning processes that overlap with planning for other funding sources such as STOP and/or the Rape Prevention & Education (RPE) Program. Ohio conducted a statewide needs assessment to determine priorities for SASP funding and determined that funding for previously unserved geographic regions of the state and culturally specific services would be their priorities. The needs assessment revealed a need to prioritize services for African-American communities. During their first RFP process for culturally specific services, they did not receive any fundable applications focusing on the African-American community, so, guided by their assessment, they plan to redouble their efforts in the next round to find appropriate potential grantees.

## State Highlight: Iowa

Given the increase in federal and state budget cuts in conjunction with research that brought to light ways to strengthen victim services in the state of Iowa, the Iowa Attorney General's Office, where the SASP administrator is housed, called for a reallocation of resources to best meet the needs of survivors. This restructuring included SASP funds as well as other federal and state funding sources for domestic violence and sexual assault services.

Creating a strategic funding and services plan for all victim services in the state was an essential part of the initiative. This plan was created with input from many stakeholders including the state sexual assault coalition, the state domestic violence coalition, sexual assault program directors, culturally-specific program directors, survivors, other professionals, and the general public.

Six multi-county services areas were developed to ensure that all survivors in the state had access to essential services. Programs now focus on comprehensive sexual assault services, comprehensive domestic abuse services, or shelter based services rather than all of these services being housed at the same agency.

Rethinking service models was an important part of the initiative. For domestic violence services, this means focusing less on shelter and more on mobile advocates in the community and financial empowerment for survivors. For sexual assault services, this means more mobile advocacy, reaching young survivors and those who are not participating in the criminal justice system, and attending to the longer term needs of survivors.

These statewide changes were only possible because of close and ongoing collaborations between the Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault (IowaCASA) and the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV), and between the coalitions and the Crime Victim Assistance Division (CVAD). IowaCASA emphasizes that ICADV's and CVAD's recognition of historical underfunding for sexual assault services was critical to moving forward. Iowa is well on its way to the goal of taking what they've learned from survivors, their experiences, the best of past and present models, and research-based practice to redesign a system that is cost-effective, sustainable, and client-focused.

# Involving the State Coalition

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Many states involve the state coalition in a planning committee or advisory group that makes recommendations for SASP funding. In some states, especially where the coalition is a pass-through for funds, the coalition makes key funding decisions in consultation with programs and stakeholders. For example, in Nebraska, the coalition is responsible for developing a state plan as part of its role as the pass-through. In Texas, the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault, not a pass-through, makes recommendations to the Governor's office based on funding gaps and needs around the state. The administrator then funds programs based on these recommendations. In Ohio, the administrator worked with the coalition to conduct a needs assessment to guide SASP funding. Some coalitions indicated that priority areas were determined by the SASP administrator alone while most states embed the coalition and other stakeholders in the planning process.

## State Highlight: North Carolina

As the pass-through, the North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NCCASA) takes on many of the administrative duties related to the SASP formula grant funds:

- Drafting the SASP Formula Grant application
- Drafting the State RFP
- Hosting grant information calls
- Convening a Multi-Disciplinary Review Team (MDRT) to review SASP proposals
- Compiling MDRT comments and feedback to send to non-funded programs
- Preparing modifications and special conditions for programs recommended for funding
- Providing programmatic technical assistance and monitoring
- Providing assistance concerning the Annual VAWA Progress Report
- Compiling and analyzing progress report data

The MDRT is comprised of representatives from the legal community, NC Office of Disabilities and Health, NC Council for Women (state funder of sexual and domestic violence centers), law enforcement, University of NC School of Social Work, Governor's Crime Commission (VAWA STOP Administrator), Kiran, Inc. (a non-profit organization serving South Asian victims of domestic violence), El Pueblo, Inc. (a non-profit statewide advocacy organization serving the Latin@ community), and the community at large. This collaborative group is committed to improving and making services accessible to all sexual assault survivors. The MDRT reviews the proposals and makes recommendations for awards. The team also provides documents to assist applicants in grant writing.

In many states, the coalition and SASP administrator work closely together in a true and functional partnership. In some cases, the relationship is strong but the coalition and administrator have to work through differing opinions about the best approach to SASP funding. In a few cases, the relationship between the coalition and the administrator is strained either due to perceived differences in goals and/or approaches or individual factors or both. Targeted technical assistance, including an RSP site visit, has shown success in helping the relationship get back on track.

# Subgrantee Monitoring

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Almost all of the states that responded have subgrantee monitoring tools. Several states, such as Kentucky, Montana and Virginia, monitor a certain percentage of programs on an annual basis and rotate those each year. A number of states prioritize monitoring visits for programs that seem to be struggling. Some states alternate between in-person monitoring and desk review. In some states the monitoring process is specific to SASP, in others it isn't. Here are a few examples of state approaches to monitoring:

- In Louisiana, The Louisiana Foundation Against Sexual Assault is the pass-through for SASP, and they have a dedicated staff person assigned to monitor programs.
- In Alabama, a unit in the state Department of Economic and Community Affairs, separate from the program staff, is responsible for monitoring and program compliance.
- The Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault (which passes funds through) provides a routine on-site monitoring every three years, a needs-based onsite review if a program is struggling, and additional monitoring and technical assistance combined as a precursor to any corrective action that might be needed for a struggling program.
- The Office of the Governor in Kansas includes questions on community engagement in its monitoring forms like with which organizations the funded agency collaborates, to whom it refers survivors, and how it publicizes its services.
- The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control includes in-depth reviews of each service provided to ensure that the service is meeting standards of confidentiality and training.
- In Massachusetts, the Department of Health SASP monitoring includes test calls to program hotlines.
- While it is not used for SASP specifically, NDVSAC uses a peer review process to monitor programs with teams that include a NDVSAC staff member and two local program directors.

Oklahoma's grant monitoring procedure manual has general approaches that cover a variety of grant programs as well as specific monitoring tools for the various grant programs the District Attorneys' Council oversees. For the SASP grant, the following subjective questions are asked in addition to more typical audit questions, giving subgrantees the opportunity to talk more broadly about their work with survivors and their strengths and challenges:

- What is the major accomplishment of this project?
- What are you most proud of?
- What has been the significant impact?
- Have you experienced any barriers in implementing this project?

The Ohio Department of Health's monitoring tool also asks subjective questions that allow staff to provide a broader range of information:

- What is the best thing about your program? Please share ways in which your program is unique.
- What are things you are doing that could be duplicated by other agencies?
- What problems does your staff have in implementing your program?
- What are problems for survivors/the public in using your services?
- What is your process for responding to complaints (particularly with reference to access and civil rights)?
- What can the Ohio Department of Health do to assist you?

Ohio also includes a checklist of items a program might need along with space for further elaboration:

**What do you need:**

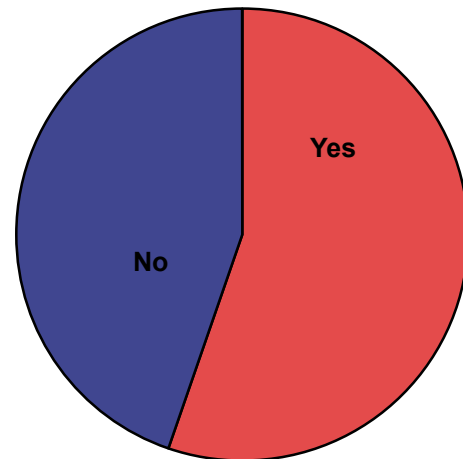
- More staff
- More volunteers
- More space
- Prevention standards
- Crisis hotline standards
- Help with evaluation
- Equipment
- Training
- Changes in policies/legislation
- Model programs
- Clarification regarding reports or procedures
- Other
- Reaching Underserved Populations and Funding Culturally Specific Services

# Reaching Underserved Populations and Funding Culturally Specific Services

## 21 States have a project to reach a specific population

Twenty-one states responded that they currently have a project to reach a specific underserved population or populations, and seventeen states responded that they did not. While some states choose to focus SASP funding on core services provided by mainstream organizations, a number of states are developing approaches to fund culturally specific organizations and communities. A few states are doing both and many have strategies to start the work of reaching underserved communities.

**Do you currently have a project focus on reaching a particular underserved population or populations?**



Examples of projects to reach survivors in underserved communities:

- In Connecticut, 2/3 of SASP formula funding goes to support services for Latin@ survivors.
- Louisiana is in the process of reaching out to the three tribes in that state as well as organizations that service Latin@ and Vietnamese populations to discuss response to sexual assault survivors.
- Maine directs SASP formula funds to the United Somali Women of Maine, a culturally specific organization that provides outreach and services to the large Somali immigrant population in Lewiston.
- Massachusetts uses SASP funds to support services for year-round and transient worker populations on two rural islands, the Khmer-speaking community in Lowell, Brazilian-, Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking victims on Cape Cod and the islands, Latin@ immigrant populations in the Framingham area, and low-income residents, primarily Latin@s, in Lawrence.
- Nevada is using SASP to try and address the lack of services in the frontier.
- South Dakota funds providers who serve Native-American populations.
- In Washington, a SASP grant supports services to homeless and street dependent youth. PiPE employs innovative ways to build relationship with youth in their environment such as streets, parks, and coffee houses.
- West Virginia has a focus on services in rural areas.

In states such as Delaware, Michigan, Ohio, and Oklahoma, the administrators have adjusted approaches to try and better reach underserved communities. In Michigan and Ohio, administrators created an RFP specifically for culturally specific organizations. In Oklahoma and Washington, they've researched culturally specific providers and reached out to them by phone and in-person. Washington has also modified grant requirements to align with culturally specific approaches to services. Delaware met with culturally specific agencies during their SASP planning process.

The Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault (IowaCASA) has incubated several culturally specific organizations in Iowa. That is, the organization is at first a project of IowaCASA but then eventually becomes its own independent organization. IowaCASA is currently incubating an LGBTQ project, funded in part with SASP funds, which they hope will eventually become its own organization. This approach was very successful with [Monsoon United Asian Women of Iowa](#) (referred to as Monsoon or MUAWI) which was formed in 2003 as a culturally specific advocacy group under the aegis of IowaCASA to provide services to ethnic Asian and Pacific Islander (API) survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence in Iowa. Monsoon is now an independent non-profit. Through a partnership with the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence, this model has also worked to launch culturally specific programs for Latin@ immigrant survivors, Deaf and hard-of-hearing survivors, and African-American survivors.

Learning from these impressive and inspirational examples of funding for culturally specific programs and approaches to meeting underserved communities can help us all embrace the significant work remaining to ensure that survivors from every community have access to culturally relevant services.

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### **State Highlight: Massachusetts**

In Massachusetts, the RFP includes specific language requiring a demonstrated commitment to cultural competence, understanding as fully as possible the cultural context in which clients live, and respecting participants' cultural values and beliefs. Programs are expected to incorporate the understanding that an individual's response to sexual victimization and attitudes about sexual assault may be intrinsically connected to their ethnicity/culture, race, economic status and language(s) spoken. Strategies and plans to address linguistic access, cultural relevance, anti-racism work, and affirmative action must be integrated into all aspects of the subgrantees' programs.

# Innovations

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Several states are funding innovative approaches to services with SASP formula funds. In Idaho, services for survivors include yoga and book groups. Maryland funds a project to provide direct legal services for survivors. North Carolina is focused on outreach and services for teens and youth. South Dakota is considering partnerships with counseling centers to provide services to sexual assault survivors. Oregon started asking applicants to address the ten components of strong dual/multi-services advocacy agencies with the long-range goal of developing sexual assault services delivery standards in conjunction with implementation of VAWA 2013 sexual assault meaningful access requirements.



In 2015, Massachusetts will compile and implement new “Methods of Administration” to assure civil rights compliance, and will implement new fiscal reconciliation protocols based on recommendations from routine Department of Justice Office of Civil Rights and fiscal compliance audits.

States in each region of the country including Montana, New York and Tennessee are contemplating transitions from a formula or continuation funding approach to a competitive approach. In small states, the territories, and the District of Columbia, award sizes have often meant funding one project. With appropriations for SASP increasing, administrators can contemplate other sexual assault projects that need funds. Increased funding means more potential for innovation and reaching previously unserved communities.

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## State Highlight: Michigan

In Michigan, a percentage of SASP funding is set aside to fund culturally specific organizations. Over the course of a summer, staff took time to slowly develop an RFP to specifically reach potential culturally specific subgrantees. They asked several women of color organizations to review the RFP and provide feedback. As a result, Michigan funded three culturally specific organizations to provide sexual assault services: LaVida serves the Latin@ population of southeast Michigan; SASHA supports African-American survivors with holistic services; and the YWCA of Kalamazoo partnered with an LGBTQ organization to start a program to reach out to LGBTQ survivors.

After funding these programs, the administrative staff set about creating a technical assistance and support plan for each organization. They contracted with a sexual assault expert at a local university to do a joint assessment with each organization to help determine where support was most needed. In some cases, the grantee’s expressed need was to strengthen administrative and organizational infrastructure. In other cases, the grantee recognized their domestic violence expertise but needed to grow in the area of specifically reaching and supporting sexual assault survivors. The SASP contract gave the programs 90 days to develop infrastructure and programming rather than providing services right away. Michigan believes this type of in-depth, long-term investment in culturally specific services will mean more survivors in Michigan will receive the services they most need to heal.

# Challenges and Considerations for the Future

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One theme that came through in the survey is the relatively small amount of SASP grant funds when compared to the need to ensure quality services are available to survivors from a wide variety of communities across the lifespan. Some states remarked that programs have at times declined to apply for funds because of small grant amounts. Many states struggle with whether to focus on core services or try to have a deeper impact in a more targeted or innovative area. States with competitive approaches have found it gives a clear picture of the impact of SASP funds in their states.

## Words of Wisdom

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Finally, RSP asked SASP administrators to share their words of wisdom about administering the SASP formula funds. Two of the strongest themes were the value of working closely with your state coalition and the importance of engaging in efforts to bring culturally specific programs to the table. Here's what administrators and coalitions had to say:

*“Work closely with your state coalition and other funding (VOCA/VAWA) agencies.”*

*“If you administer more than one funding stream/source, remember to make sure SA services are not lost in Dual DV-SA programs. Gather information and input from the field when considering making changes to processes and procedures.”*

*“It has been very efficient to administer the SASP funds through our coalition. Because the current SASP funding amount is modest, these funds supplement other efforts to fortify State General Revenue, VOCA and VAWA funds.”*

*“SASP funds are extremely helpful in supporting advocates that can focus 100% of their time to underserved populations.”*

*“What I have most valued about administering these funds are the connections to new communities and conversations about how to best address unmet needs of survivors that have occurred and continue to occur.”*

*“Advocates are the experts and must be included as leaders, partners and advisors in all SASP-related activities.”*

*“Have a FAQ sheet to include in the solicitations if states do competitive bids. I also have quarterly meetings with both RPE AND SASP subgrantees (combined) it has really proved invaluable to both, including creating more networking!”*



*“ Be willing and available to provide technical assistance to culturally specific organizations. Tap TA resource people in or out of state who may wish to help with the success of culturally specific SASP initiatives. ”*

*“ Provide clear guidance to subgrantees for completing the Annual Progress Report, and offer annual ‘refresher’ trainings to subgrantees on this topic. ”*

*“ Always tap into resources that are available. ”*

*“ SA advocates fought hard to receive SASP funding therefore it is important that we ensure funding is being used for its intended purpose. That is one of the reasons we chose to advocate for a competitive process. The volume of paperwork vs. the per agency funded also did not warrant it to be non-competitive. ”*

*“ Because of the SASP reporting requirements, we limit the number of agencies that actually get SASP funds, even though all eligible sexual assault programs benefit from the presence of SASP funding, because their grant amount goes up, but made up of other funds. Their grant award is decided based on the competitive process, and then SASP is added on top of that, so that it meets the intent of additional funding for sexual assault. It sounds a little complicated but isn't. We are lucky that we have other sources of funds to administer in combination with SASP. That allows us to administer it the way we do. The grantees getting the actual SASP dollars have enough SASP funds to dedicate specific staff to it, and are able to document services in an easier way than if we split out the funding across the board and everyone had just a little SASP, but still had to pro-rate services in some way to comply with the reporting requirements. ”*

We are experiencing an unprecedented time in our national consciousness when endemic sexual violence issues in various institutions are brought to light and awareness and concern about sexual assault flourishes. While this brings hope and a promise of making progress on the issue of sexual violence, it also brings new challenges for states who must meet the needs of survivors who may have never sought services in the past. Through the dedication of administrators, state and territorial sexual assault coalitions, and local programs, the SASP formula grant program can be an essential tool in meeting the needs of survivors and developing best practices for sexual assault services.