

Client Agency

Montana Department of Justice – Office of Victim Services and Restorative Justice

Participating IJIS Institute Staff

Redha Morsli – Program Manager

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Dates Services Provided

September 8-10, 2004

Overview of Technical Assistance Request:

The Montana Attorney General's Office received a federal grant for the implementation of the Full Faith and Credit provisions of the Violence Against Women Act. The grant, coordinated by the Office of Victim Services and Restorative Justice (OVSJR), has as its goal to provide uniform training to judges, prosecutors, law enforcement, victim advocates, and Montana's eight Indian Tribes in the area of Full Faith & Credit. The grant has allowed OVSJR to implement a uniform Order of Protection Coversheet, which has markedly increased the input of Protection Orders into the Montana Criminal Justice Information Network (CJIN) and ultimately the National Criminal Information Center (NCIC). One of the grant requirements is to statistically report the number of temporary and permanent Orders of Protection requested and granted by the courts. However, due to a lack of integration among the state's computer systems, meeting this requirement has proven to be a complicated and inefficient process. OVSJR requested Technical Assistance (TA) from the IJIS Institute to assess the current Order of Protection process and explore ways to integrate its various components and streamline the workflow. As part of the TA project, the IJIS Institute reviewed the current "manual" process used to administer, manage, and serve Orders of Protection.

Type of Technical Assistance Services Provided

The scope of assistance was limited to three business days. The consultants initially reviewed written documentation provided by the OVSJR and conducted a follow-up conference call with agency representatives to answer questions and clarify the objectives and agenda for the site visit. On September 8-10 the IJIS Institute consultants conducted a series of on-site interviews and meetings with various Montana criminal justice representatives in Helena, Montana. Following the visit, the consultants prepared a final report of specific findings and recommendations and delivered it to OVSJR in October, 2004.

Observations and Recommendations Overview

Through the grant to implement the Full Faith and Credit provisions of the Violence Against Women Act, OVSJR developed a uniform Order of Protection Coversheet leading to the homogenization of the data collected when issuing an Order of Protection. However, it was noticed that the process to issue and manage Orders of Protection was decentralized, highlighting a workflow gap between the court and law enforcement systems. Furthermore, as OVSJR representatives began the process of defining the ideal electronic Order of Protection

solution it was observed that the project was experiencing uncertainties vis-à-vis state and local roles, future court and law enforcement system roles, and the development and implementation of standards. Based on the IJIS Institute findings, the IJIS Institute consultants made various recommendations for the development of centralized Order of Protection registry. These recommendations can be summarized into five general areas: Assess and fine-tune governance; complete detail technical/business planning; define system roles; develop standards and policies; and create a Program Management Office (PMO). A detailed description of the recommendations can be found in the official TA report submitted to OVSJR in October 2004. A copy of the TA report can be found on the IJIS Institute website at www.ijis.org.

Contact Information

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