

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



FY25 Performance Oversight Hearing

**The Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants
(OVSJG)**

Testimony of
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Before the
Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety
Brooke Pinto, Chairperson
Council of the District of Columbia

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9:30 a.m.
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Room 412
Washington, D.C. 20004

Good morning, Chairwoman Pinto, members of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety, and staff. I am Jennifer L. Porter, Director of the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants known as OVSJG. I am proud to share today the outcomes and performance of our agency during Fiscal Year 2025 and Fiscal Year 2026, to date.

The mission of OVSJG is to develop, fund, and coordinate programs that improve public safety; enhance the administration of justice; and create systems of care for crime victims, youth, returning citizens and their families in the District. We deliver on this mission in several ways. OVSJG funds community-based organizations and District agencies that provide services for victims of crime, justice-involved individuals, and juvenile delinquency prevention programs.

As the State Administering Agency (SAA) for 13 federal victim services, criminal justice and juvenile justice funding programs, OVSJG provides training and technical assistance to organizations and agencies receiving grant funding to provide these services. We are navigating the complicated fiscal landscape marked by rising service demands and volatile funding availability. Maintaining the coordinated victim services continuum, while addressing emerging threats like technology facilitated abuse, is a priority of the agency including uplifting services for victims of stalking and domestic violence that involve doxxing.

Today, I will highlight some of the agency's activities and accomplishments in these program areas during FY25, and thus far in FY26.

In FY25, OVSJG administered 121 awards (\$92.6M) to 91 community organizations and government agencies. These awards funded healing services for primary and secondary victims of all crime categories, training and technical assistance for community leaders and staff, and critical supports for returning citizens and reentry serving community organizations. OVSJG received a total of seven federal awards in FY25 funded at \$6.3 million, four were for justice grants and three were for victim services.

OVSJG administers the Private Security Camera Incentive Program, which encourages residents, businesses, nonprofits, and religious institutions to install security camera systems on their property and register them with MPD. This program is intended to help deter crime and assist law enforcement

with investigations. In FY25, 353 rebate and voucher applications were approved, and 899 cameras were funded. Additionally, PSCIP updated the rulemaking for business owners who gross less than \$2.5 million in federal gross sales to have security cameras and glass break sensors installed on the interior of the property.

As a convener we are proud to administer the District's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (OJJDP) State Advisory Group, also known as the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG). JJAG spearheads the development and adoption of the District's application for Title II federal formula funds, which includes developing a three-year plan for Delinquency Prevention. JJAG also advises the Mayor and District Government agencies on compliance with the core requirements of the JJDPA. JJAG facilitates authentic youth engagement and obtains input from youth with experience navigating the juvenile justice system.

In FY25, OVSJG made seven awards advised by the JJAG. JJAG funded a Compliance Monitor and Racial Ethnic Disparities Coordinator. The summary of compliance monitoring deemed that the District of Columbia provided an effective system of monitoring. This designation maintains the District's eligibility to receive 100% of its Title II funding for FY25 and FY26. This year, OVSJG transmitted the JJAG Bi-Annual Report, outlining membership, ongoing efforts related to grants management and grant making, compliance monitoring in accordance with the JJDPA, and racial and ethnic disparities works.

OVSJG is proud to make grant awards to diverse community-based organizations and District agencies to remove barriers to reentry and break cycles of recidivism for returning citizens. In FY25, OVSJG awarded nearly \$8.9 million for returning citizens services, which includes \$850,000 for Incarceration Reduction Amendment Act recipients, for services such as case management, housing, trauma-informed mental health services, peer support, family reunification, job readiness, mediation, and returning citizen direct client assistance funding.

In FY25, OVSJG was proud to make grant awards to many long standing and new organizations to support the lifelong healing journey of survivors in our community. In FY25, OVSJG awarded nearly \$49.1 million for victim services including \$3.2 for the Sexual Assault Victims Rights Amendment Act implementation. OVSJG implemented a new program by grantee *Give an Hour*

named “Help the Helpers.” This program is a trauma-informed training and support model tailored specifically for agency and organizational personnel who serve survivors. This training equips staff with context-specific mental health tools, strategies for boundary-setting and self-care, and professional education and training on trauma-informed practices. Just as important, it creates space for peer support and connection, reducing isolation and reinforcing shared resilience.

OVSJG also operates the District’s Address Confidentiality Program (ACP), which provides a legal substitute address and mail forwarding for eligible DC residents to maintain the confidentiality of their physical address. OVSJG also provides policy making expertise, advisement, and counsel to the Mayor on the status of victims and offenders in the criminal justice system, enhancing the District’s responses to trauma and evidence-based practices to respond to, intervene in, and prevent violence.

During FY25, OVSJG partnered with DC Department of Human Resources to obtain a Capital City Fellow and District Leadership Program intern and partnered with the Department of Employment Services (DOES) for a Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program intern to support the agency. With their support, OVSJG was able to expand capacity to complete community-facing projects. Our interns were exposed to careers in public safety, policy, and public health and seized opportunities to learn about healing happening across the district. Our hope is that their introduction to District resources for survivors will activate them as future healers in our community and champions of how each of us can assist in those efforts. Lastly, OVSJG funded the third cohort of the Capacity Building Program. This program awards ten community-based organizations with the support of a consultant team to provide training, and technical assistance to grow their capacity and potential to expand their organizational effectiveness. As a result, we have seen graduates of the program secure additional external funds, which has allowed them to expand their community impact.

In closing, thank you, Chairperson Pinto, for this moment to share our accomplishments. OVSJG manages grants, supports victims of crime, assists returning citizens and ensures juvenile justice due to the collaboration with agencies within DC government, and community coalitions. Importantly, during this unprecedented year we worked to highlight the importance of preserving the safety and mental health of the incredible healers in our community who sacrifice their own

safety to support our city. Additionally, thank you to the OVJSG public servants who make this work possible and the dozens of community-based organizations that work to heal District residents everyday. I look forward to working with you and the Committee. I am available to answer your questions.