



## Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

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Governor

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### Proposal Narrative

#### Purpose of the Proposal:

##### 1. The Service Area:

The New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV) is the nation's only executive-level state agency dedicated to domestic violence. OPDV proposes to work with Sanctuary for Families, a victim services provider with expertise in technology-facilitated gender-based violence, to establish training programs for law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, judges, judicial personnel, and local emergency dispatch personnel (Purpose Areas 1, 2, and 3) related to technology-facilitated gender-based violence that would serve the entirety of the State of New York. OPDV will also facilitate the sharing of the expertise and information of the federal law enforcement agencies about the investigation, analysis, and prosecution of cybercrimes (Purpose Area 9).

New York, with its mix of major metropolitan cities and rural upstate counties, is one of the most diverse states in the nation<sup>1</sup>, and the communities that would be served by this project include historically excluded groups. According to the United States Census Bureau, New York's population is approximately 19,571,216, 51.1% of whom identify as women and 18% women over the age of 65. 68% of New Yorkers report being white, 17.7% Black or African American, and 9.6% Asian. The Census estimates that about 150,000 people in New York are American Indian or Native Alaskan. 19.7% of New Yorkers report being Hispanic or Latino. An estimated 30% of New Yorkers speak a language other than English at home, and over 1.7 million New

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<sup>1</sup> World Population Review. "Most Diverse States 2024." 2024. <https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/most-diverse-states>

Yorkers reported being more than one race. New York is also home to approximately 2.5 million individuals with disabilities, including 600,000 people who are hard of hearing. 14.3% of all New Yorkers live in poverty, with the mean household income reported at a little less than \$80,000 per year.<sup>2</sup> The New York State Department of Health also estimates that 7.9%, or over one million, of New Yorkers identify as LGBTQ+.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Statement of Needs

OPDV serves as a clearinghouse for information<sup>4</sup> related to domestic and gender-based violence in New York. Though gender-based violence is underreported, data collected by OPDV suggests that domestic and gender-based violence remain a significant issue in New York State, as it does throughout the rest of the country. Criminal justice data suggests that over 80,000 New Yorkers experienced some form of gender-based violence each year. In 2022, a total of 288,427 calls were received between the state hotline, the National Domestic Violence Hotline, and local hotlines statewide from New York residents; however, callers may call or be referred between multiple lines. Although anyone can be a victim of gender-based violence, it is widely recognized that women are generally at a greater risk than men. As shared by the National Network to End Domestic Violence, more than 1 in 4 women have been a victim of rape, physical violence, and/or stalking from an intimate partner in their lifetime, and about 8,000,000 women are raped, assaulted, or stalked by a current or former partner each year. Unfortunately, 1 in 5 women and 1 in 38 men “have experienced rape” in their lifetimes.<sup>5</sup>

Technology-facilitated gender-based violence occurs when one person misuses technology to harass, intimidate, stalk and/or manipulate. Technology-facilitated abuse is just

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<sup>2</sup> United States Census Bureau, “Quick Facts” <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/NY/PST045223>

<sup>3</sup> New York State Department of Health. *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) Brief*. 2022. [https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/brfss/reports/docs/2022-16\\_brfss\\_soji.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/brfss/reports/docs/2022-16_brfss_soji.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> In 2022, OPDV social media gathered 238,115 impressions across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and 164,057 individuals visited resources on our website.

<sup>5</sup> National Network to End Domestic Violence. “Domestic and Sexual Violence Factsheet.” 2022. <https://nnedv.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/DVSA-Fact-Sheet-Updated-71222.pdf>

one of many tactics used in a pattern of behaviors to maintain power and control. Technology creates a myriad of tools abusive partners use to control their partners, including cyber surveillance, non-consensual image sharing, cyberstalking, recording, spoofing, and more<sup>6</sup>, something OPDV regularly hears from victim services providers and survivors across the State. In a 2021 study from the Pew Research Center, researchers found that of adult women who had been harassed online, 47% believed the harassment was because of their gender (contrasted with 18% of men), 54% of Black and 47% of Hispanic participants say they felt their harassment was because of race or ethnicity (contrasted with 17% of white subjects), and 50% of LGBT+ identifying subjects felt their harassment was due to their sexual orientation (contrasted with 12% of straight subjects). Generally, lesbian, gay, or bisexual harassment targets are “more likely to report having encountered harassment online because of their gender (54%) compared with their straight counterparts (31%).”<sup>7</sup> In general, members of the LGBTQ+ community are at a greater risk of violent victimization, including rape or sexual assault, than their straight peers.<sup>8</sup>

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and deepfake technology are readily accessible to anyone on the internet through free apps. The rise and accessibility of AI technology to internet users has led users to make deepfakes (manipulated images for the purpose of creating fake incriminating or pornographic images of their peers of a high-quality degree) making it hard to tell what is real or what is not real. In June 2023, the FBI released a public service announcement – “Malicious Actors Manipulating Photos and Videos to create Explicit Content and Sextortion Schemes” warning the public of deepfake and AI technology being used for exploitation<sup>9</sup>. The intense need

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<sup>6</sup> NNEDV Women’s Law.org. “Abuse Using Technology.” <https://www.womenslaw.org/about-abuse/abuse-using-technology>

<sup>7</sup> Vogels, Emily. Pew Research Center. *The State of Online Harassment*. Pg. 9-10. January 2021. [https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2021/01/PI\\_2021.01.13\\_Online-Harassment\\_FINAL-1.pdf](https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2021/01/PI_2021.01.13_Online-Harassment_FINAL-1.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Truman, Jennifer and Rachel Morgan. Bureau of Justice Statistics, US Department of Justice. “Violent Victimization by Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, 2017-2020.” June 2022. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/vvsogi1720.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation. “Malicious Actors Manipulating Photos and Videos to Create Explicit Content and Sextortion Schemes.” June 2023. <https://www.ic3.gov/Media/Y2023/PSA230605>

for help in this arena is corroborated by OPDV's visits to Enough is Enough (EIE) participating colleges, where EIE coordinators reported that AI and deepfake technology was a threat to which they did not know how to respond.<sup>10</sup> However, the colleges reported concerns beyond that of sextortion. Since 2021, Enough is Enough campuses have seen a 145% increase in stalking reports from students, and it has been shared anecdotally with OPDV at site visits that much of this stalking the campuses are seeing is taking place with the use of technology. These alarm bells are echoed often at OPDV's Domestic Violence Regional Councils, where several providers across the state have shared their concerns with rapidly changing technology and how it has been used to blackmail, coerce, control victims and how it affects the custodial rights, financial security, and personal safety of survivors.

### **3. Current Efforts to Address Technology-Facilitated Gender-based Violence**

New York State has been a leader in addressing the intersection of gender-based violence and technology-facilitated abuse/cybercrimes. In addition to the existing crimes under New York Law such as harassment, identity theft, and extortion, that can be used to charge and adjudicate criminal behavior as it relates to technology-facilitated abuse, there are several laws enacted that specifically address some of these forms of abuse. In 2019, New York enacted legislation that criminalizes the unlawful dissemination of intimate images, which was further expanded to include the dissemination of deepfake images "created or altered by digitization."<sup>11</sup> New York State Law also provides a private right of action for individuals who have their intimate images shared without their consent or have received threats to do so and includes a court

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<sup>10</sup> OPDV oversees the Enough is Enough funding program, funding 52 rape crisis programs across the state to help provide services to student survivors of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking, as well as support colleges' implementation of the Enough is Enough law. Funded programs work to prevent campus sexual violence via education programming that considers the root causes of gender-based violence, promotes bystander intervention, and promotes healthy relationships. They provide student victims with trauma-informed advocacy, counseling, case management and safety planning services. More information can be found [here](#).

<sup>11</sup> NYS Penal Law § 245.15.

process for removal of said images.<sup>12</sup> Victims of the crime of unlawful dissemination of an intimate image are eligible for victim compensation administered by the New York State Office of Victim Services, pursuant to section 631 of the New York State Executive Law. In New York State, as of 2020, as a condition of an order of protection, a judge may prohibit the restrained party from remotely controlling any connected devices affecting the home, vehicle or property of the person protected by the order.<sup>13</sup>

Educating professionals on changes in technology and how that affects gender-based violence victims and survivors is not new to OPDV –in 2021, OPDV hosted a virtual tech abuse conference with approximately 800 registrations. EndTab, one of the country’s leading experts on deepfakes and pornography, served as one of the national presenters. This conference raised awareness of the issues and armed providers throughout the state with strategies for responding to and preventing victimization. Further, in her 2024 State of the State Address and New York State Fiscal Year 2025 Executive Budget, Governor Hochul directed OPDV to “develop a sextortion-focused training and technical assistance programs as well as a public facing informational website and to conduct a public awareness campaign” about sextortion as it impacts teenagers.<sup>14</sup> The public awareness campaign will help ensure that members of the general public, with a focus on teachers, parents, and teenagers, in particular, understand the warning signs of sextortion, technology facilitated abuse and deepfakes, including the disparate impact on women, girls, and LGBTQ+ individuals. The campaign will also highlight that there are resources available to them if they need assistance. As the campaign’s effectiveness is

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<sup>12</sup> NYS Civil Practice Laws and Rules § 52-b.

<sup>13</sup> NYS Family Court Act §§ 352.3, 446, 551, 656, 759, 842, 1056; NYS Criminal Procedure Law §§ 530.12, 530.13; NYS Domestic Relations Law §§ 240, 252

<sup>14</sup> State of the State 2024. 2024. <https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2024-01/2024-SOTS-Book-Online.pdf>, pg 165; At the time of submission, it is unknown whether the Executive’s Proposal will be included in the 2025 enacted budget (due April 1, 2024). OPDV remains hopeful that this initiative will be funded and will support the state’s efforts at Purpose 1.

dependent on system response to survivors of these crimes, the corresponding training and technical assistance program proposed will seek to inform gender-based violence providers and law enforcement agencies how they can best support victims of cybercrimes and investigate these activities. Additionally, there are three major established coordinated community response teams operating in New York related to this issue. Sanctuary for Families, OPDV's partner victim services provider, chairs the New York Cyber Abuse Task Force, which brings together attorneys, law enforcement agencies, and advocates to end cyber-sexual abuse. The Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force is operated by the New York State Police, and while this does not service the entire state, New York City operates the NYC Cyber Abuse Task Force.

#### **4. Gaps in Available Services, Resources, and Knowledge Related to Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence in New York State**

Despite these efforts, more can be done to support key stakeholders' responsiveness to technology-facilitated gender-based violence across New York State. Lack of dedicated resources and knowledge gaps pose significant challenges for law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and Public Safety Telecommunicators, hindering their ability to effectively identify, investigate, and prosecute cases of cyber abuse. Through OPDV's engagement with Domestic Violence Regional Councils and policy listening sessions, it has become evident that prosecutors often refrain from bringing charges related to technology-facilitated abuse due to perceived barriers, chiefly a lack of concrete evidence. This hesitation not only undermines the pursuit of justice but also perpetuates a cycle of victimization and impunity for offenders. These anecdotal accounts are substantiated by data shared by the New York Division of Criminal Justice Services, who recorded 195 adult (18+) top charge arrests under PL 245.15 – "Unlawful dissemination or publication of an intimate image" – in 2023, yet only 23 convictions. Of the 195 arrests, 80 were in New York City and 115 were from the rest of the State, but the 23 convictions exclusively took place outside of New York City.

The impact of this knowledge deficit extends far beyond legal proceedings, profoundly affecting the lives of victims and survivors of cyber abuse. Without adequate training and support mechanisms in place, victims are left vulnerable to ongoing abuse, exacerbating their trauma, and impeding their ability to get services. The systemic failure to address technology-facilitated gender-based violence erodes trust in the criminal justice system and perpetuates a culture of silence and victim-blaming.

Developing training programs for law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and Public Safety Telecommunicators on all forms of technology-facilitated gender-based violence will complement and build on the work OPDV is already planning to better equip service providers and law enforcement agencies to respond to sextortion cases involving youths. Helping to ensure that law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges understand the severity of these crimes, the lasting traumatic effects they can have on a victim, and how to effectively utilize New York State laws to prosecute these crimes and hold offenders accountable is key to improving the law enforcement response to cybercrimes. Public Safety Telecommunicators, frontline professionals that to OPDV's knowledge have not received any formal training or education on evolving technologies and the ways in which they can be used as a tool of power and control, with implications for victim safety, also play a key role in identifying cases of technology-facilitated abuse as the first point of contact for many victims. Without including all professionals in comprehensive training programs, there remains a breakdown in the systemic response to this far-reaching crime.

## **What Will Be Done**

### **1. How the Project Addresses Purpose Areas and Identified Challenges in Responding to Technology-Facilitated Gender-based Violence**

To build on the work OPDV is currently doing to train law enforcement and gender-based violence service providers on sextortion, OPDV proposes to work with Sanctuary for Families to:

(1) develop and co-deliver training for New York State and local law enforcement agencies related to all forms of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, including the payment of overtime incurred as a result of such training (Purpose Area 1); (2) develop and co-deliver training for prosecutors, judges, and judicial personnel throughout the state related to all forms of technology-facilitated gender-based violence (Purpose Area 2); (3) develop and co-deliver training for Public Safety Telecommunicators (emergency dispatch personnel) in New York State on recognizing all forms of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, including the payment of overtime incurred as a result of such training (Purpose Area 3); and, (4) facilitate and promote the sharing of the expertise and information of Federal law enforcement agencies about the investigation, analysis, and prosecution of matters involving laws that prohibit cybercrimes against individuals, including the use of multijurisdictional task forces with law enforcement agencies and prosecutors throughout New York (Purpose Area 9).

Although New York State has laws in effect criminalizing the behaviors associated with technology-facilitated gender-based violence crimes, and to provide victims with civil recourse, OPDV consistently hears from the field that these systems often do not understand the severity of technology-facilitated gender-based violence crimes nor how to respond to them. Domestic violence and sexual assault service providers, in addition to victim service programs on college campuses, have also reported that technology-facilitated gender-based violence is becoming increasingly more common, making this lack of system response even more alarming. The individuals who are more likely to be the victims in these cases of online sexual harassment, cyberstalking, and sextortion, namely women, girls, and members of the LGBTQ+ community, are more often left without legal remedies or access to resources to assist them in healing and keeping themselves safe. This training and technical assistance is intended to provide common language and understanding of technology-facilitated abuse as a part of gender-based violence across systems and to create effective cross-system collaborations, with the ultimate goal of enhancing survivor safety and healing. The program will also center the experiences and needs



of underserved victims of gender-based violence, including those with disabilities and people with limited English language proficiency, to better ensure that law enforcement, prosecutors, judicial personnel, and Public Safety Telecommunicators understand what tools are available to serve individuals in those communities.

As OPDV is an executive agency dedicated to domestic violence throughout the entirety of the State of New York and Sanctuary for Families (SFF) is New York City's largest non-profit organization dedicated to serving victims of gender-based violence, the two entities bring the knowledge and relationships needed to develop the training and materials that serve all of the diverse communities in the state. SFF is also the state's leading organization on the issue of technology-facilitated gender-based violence and the organization's vast experience training on these issues and staying up to date with the latest technological trends will be invaluable to the success of the project.

If awarded this grant, OPDV and Sanctuary for Families will meet with stakeholders to inform them of the project and create a multi-jurisdictional steering committee to drive the project and facilitate collaboration between systems in responding to this issue to focus on preventing, enforcing, and prosecuting these crimes. This committee will provide input and feedback on the trainings and tools developed and will respond to requests for technical assistance from the fields trained. The committee members will work together to troubleshoot frequently reported issues from the field and will serve as conduits to their respective representative groups for the information, best practices, and tools developed throughout the project to ensure consistency in statewide policy. Stakeholders will include statewide coalitions dedicated to the issues of domestic and sexual violence, system representatives including professional associations, local responders, New York State Regional Federal Bureau of Investigation representatives, and state agency partners such as the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, the New York State Police, the New York State Office of Court Administration, and the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency

Services. To ensure that this project is survivor-centered and reflects the lived experiences of those who have been affected by technology-facilitated gender-based violence, the steering committee will also include survivors, particularly survivors from underserved populations. For further input from survivors, we will partner with local service providers, including those who primarily serve individuals with developmental disabilities and culturally responsive providers, including programs that serve members of the LGBTQ+ community, to conduct listening sessions throughout the state. In addition to the multijurisdictional steering committee steering committee, OPDV will support the work of the coordinated community response teams operating in the state that focus on preventing, enforcing, and prosecuting cybercrimes – the New York Cyber Abuse Task Force, Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, and the New York City Cyber Abuse Task Force – to tailor the trainings and tools developed to the needs identified by the teams and leverage their expertise and their networks to deliver this training. OPDV and Sanctuary for Families will provide technical assistance to these teams, as well.

## **2. Goals and Objectives for the Proposed Project**

The information gathered from the survivor voices, along with the expertise of the steering committee, will be used to identify goals and standards for the program. OPDV, with the expertise of Sanctuary for Families, will then develop four separate training curricula designed for the target audiences of (1) law enforcement personnel, (2) prosecutors, (3) judges and judicial personnel, and (4) Public Safety Telecommunicators to enhance their ability to identify, respond to, investigate, and adjudicate technology-facilitated gender-based violence. The trainings will include interactive workshops featuring presentations, case studies, and group discussions to engage participants and promote peer learning. Scenario-based training to simulate real-life situations and role-playing activities will also enhance participants' problem-solving skills.

Trainers from OPDV, with expertise in training law enforcement and court personnel, will deliver the trainings along with the victim service provider, Sanctuary for Families, to the

intended audiences throughout the state, as well as to statewide administrators and systems representatives. As a result of this project, Public Safety Telecommunicators will develop a greater understanding of the dynamics of technology-facilitated abuse, questions they should ask while fielding calls to properly identify this abuse, and the role that they can play to assist victims of these crimes. Prosecutors who attend this training program will feel equipped to identify technology-facilitated abuse, as well as investigate these crimes with the assistance of technology when needed, to charge, and prosecute these crimes under New York State law. Prosecutors will also be familiar with the how to utilize resources available to assist these victims of cybercrimes. Judges and judicial personnel in both the criminal and family court systems will understand the ways in which abusive partners use technology to exert control in order to preside over the complex cases that come before them. These goals will be measured by pre- and post-training quizzes and evaluations, as well as post-training requests for technical assistance. Additionally, OPDV will compare available charge and conviction data to determine if there is an increase in charges and convictions related to unlawful dissemination of an intimate image.

**A. Tangible Products Created Under this Project:**

In addition to the four trainings developed, OPDV, in consultation with Sanctuary for Families, will create an informational website for these stakeholders with tools, resources, and best practices for responding to these crimes. Due to ever-changing nature of the technology at play, a dedicated webpage will be the most effective way to ensure that the field receives the most up-to-date information available. OPDV will also create a recording of its training program for law enforcement to be available for on demand viewing from law enforcement. The website will also include information related to language access, best practices for serving individuals with disabilities, and informational materials on how to respond to these crimes in a culturally responsive manner. OPDV will measure the website traffic to determine the use of these materials and to guide strategies to spread awareness of the webpage's existence. OPDV and

Sanctuary for Families will also partner to host a convening for members of the target audiences to learn directly from federal law enforcement agencies and New York-based and national experts about how to investigate and prosecute technology-facilitated abuse. The convening will employ the use of breakout rooms designed to facilitate local coordination and the use of multi-jurisdictional task forces.

**B. Training Goals:**

**a. Overarching Goals:**

- i. Develop comprehensive training programs on technology-facilitated gender-based violence for law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, judges, judicial personnel, and public safety telecommunicators in New York State.
- ii. Increase awareness and understanding of technology-facilitated gender-based violence among professionals and service providers.
- iii. Foster collaboration and coordination among different agencies and organizations involved in responding to gender-based violence in New York State.
- iv. Empower survivors of technology-facilitated gender-based violence by ensuring that response systems are survivor-centered and inclusive of underserved populations.

**b. Law Enforcement Personnel-specific Goals:**

- i. Identify different forms of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, including cyberstalking, sextortion, and deepfake technology.
- ii. Understand relevant laws and legal frameworks related to technology-facilitated gender-based violence in New York State.
- iii. Learn effective techniques for collecting digital evidence and preserving chain of custody in technology-related cases.

- iv. Enhance survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive communication skills to support survivors of technology-facilitated gender-based violence.
- v. Develop strategies for collaborating with other agencies and community organizations to respond to and investigate cases of technology-facilitated gender-based violence.

**c. Prosecutor-specific Goals:**

- i. Interpret and apply existing laws and statutes relevant to technology-facilitated gender-based violence in New York State.
- ii. Evaluate evidentiary standards and admissibility criteria for digital evidence in court proceedings.
- iii. Develop case-building strategies that prioritize victim safety and incorporate survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive approaches.
- iv. Enhance courtroom advocacy skills to effectively present technology-related evidence and arguments.
- v. Collaborate with state and federal law enforcement agencies and victim service providers to ensure comprehensive support for survivors throughout the legal process.

**d. Judge and Judicial Personnel-specific Goals:**

- i. Understand the dynamics and impact of technology-facilitated gender-based violence on survivors and communities.
- ii. Apply principles of fair and impartial adjudication to related cases, considering the intersectional experiences of victims.
- iii. Issue and enforce protective orders and other legal remedies designed to address technology-facilitated abuse.

- iv. Utilize court management strategies, including reasonable accommodations, to prioritize the safety and privacy of survivors during legal proceedings.
- v. Engage in ongoing survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive education and training to stay updated on emerging trends and best practices in addressing technology-facilitated gender-based violence.

**e. Public Safety Telecommunicator-specific Goals:**

- i. Recognize signs and indicators of technology-facilitated gender-based violence during emergency calls.
- ii. Develop protocols for handling technology-related incidents, including procedures for interacting with callers and documenting relevant information.
- iii. Communicate using survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive practices to effectively interact with callers.
- iv. Collaborate with law enforcement and other responders to coordinate a timely and appropriate response to technology-related emergencies.
- v. Participate in ongoing survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive training and professional development activities to enhance preparedness and responsiveness to technology-facilitated gender-based violence incidents.

**C. Expected Outcomes:**

- a. Enhanced knowledge and skills among law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and public safety telecommunicators in recognizing and responding to technology-facilitated gender-based violence.

- b. Improved identification and documentation of technology-facilitated gender-based violence cases, leading to more effective prosecution and accountability for offenders.
- c. Strengthened collaboration between different agencies and community organizations, resulting in a more coordinated response to gender-based violence in New York State.
- d. Increased access to support services and resources for survivors of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, particularly those from underserved populations.

## **Who Will Implement the Proposal**

### **1. About the Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, its Capacity, and its Role**

The New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV), established pursuant to section 575 of the New York State Executive Law, is proud to be the only executive-level office in the United States dedicated to domestic and gender-based violence. The mission of OPDV is to improve New York State's response to and prevention of domestic violence with the goal of enhancing the safety of all New Yorkers in their intimate and family relationships. OPDV has established three pillars to serve as the foundation of the agency's work: OPDV strives to build a statewide system that is (1) survivor-centered; (2) trauma-informed; and (3) culturally responsive. As the needs of survivors have evolved in the past 30 years, OPDV has also expanded its work to respond to and prevent gender-based violence, sexual assault and harassment, and human trafficking. This transition reflects societal trends and a move toward holistic justice approaches, as evidenced by the White House creation of a Gender Policy Council and National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence. Due to regular outreach initiatives and collaborations, OPDV is well-positioned as the State convener and clearinghouse

on domestic and gender-based violence prevention and response to achieve the goals of this project.

OPDV operates as an advisor to Governor Hochul and the members of the New York State Legislature. OPDV moves toward the eradication of gender-based violence through three primary functions: advise, execute, and coordinate the public policy agenda for the State of New York as it relates to domestic and gender-based violence; train professional stakeholders in both public and private; and conduct public education and awareness campaigns to heighten the response to and awareness of intimate partner violence. Enhancing public awareness of domestic and gender-based violence is a key element of OPDV's mission, and OPDV's enabling statute requires the agency to develop and deliver training and technical assistance to professionals in various fields, including law enforcement and criminal justice agencies.<sup>15</sup> OPDV works to assure the highest quality of law enforcement response to domestic violence calls, and to victims of domestic and gender-based violence.

From April 1, 2022 through the end of March 31, 2023, OPDV trained over 13,000 individuals throughout the state who serve victims as child welfare workers, law enforcement, or other professional groups. Further, in 2023, OPDV worked with the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to develop new training materials for Probation Officers and revise the Municipal Police Training Council's (MPTC) Model Policy for Domestic Incident Response. Revisions to the policy incorporate OPDV's goal of improving law enforcement's response to victims through a survivor-centered, trauma-informed and culturally responsive approach and also incorporated learning of the New York State Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team by incorporating lethality assessment questions into interviews with victims and documentation requirements. In 2024, OPDV and DCJS will begin revisions to the Domestic

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<sup>15</sup> NYS Executive Law § 575(3).



Violence modules of the New York Municipal Police Training Council Basic Course for Police Officers, which is delivered to all officers in Police Academies across the state.

OPDV also serves as a training and technical assistance resource for judges and attorneys, both integral parts of an effective response to gender-based violence. OPDV often collaborates with the Office of Court Administration to provide training to court personnel. In 2023, OPDV has collaborated with the Unified Court System to provide gender-based violence training to all community dispute resolution centers. This work included general awareness and assessment skills building as well as best practice identification and peer learning. In addition, this past year OPDV in coordination with the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, developed a 24-hour training program required for all court-appointed forensic custody evaluators throughout the state.

OPDV will collect information from stakeholders, including the existing community coordinated response teams operating throughout the state, about the needs for training topics and tools to assist with response to technology-facilitated gender-based violence, and will work in consultation with Sanctuary for Families to develop these deliverables, as well as plan a statewide convening to facilitate information sharing. Once the training is developed for each of the four audiences (law enforcement, prosecutors, court personnel, and emergency dispatch personnel), OPDV will leverage its partnerships established via the New York State Domestic Violence Regional Councils and relationships with state and local agencies to deliver with Sanctuary for Families the trainings to the target audiences. As the cornerstone of OPDV's policy engagement process and as a means of ongoing communication within the field, OPDV convenes Domestic Violence Regional Councils with representatives from the state's ten economic development regions and various State agencies to troubleshoot systemic issues.

## **2. About Sanctuary for Families, its Capacity, and its Role**

Sanctuary for Families (SFF) is New York State's largest non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to services and advocacy on behalf of survivors of domestic violence, sex

trafficking and related forms of gender violence. Last year, SFF provided trauma-informed, culturally and linguistically competent direct services including shelter, counseling and case management, legal representation and advice, and career training to 8,000 survivors of domestic violence, sex trafficking and related forms of gender violence. SFF has offices in all five counties of New York City, and provides both in-person and virtual services to clients from NYC and the metro region. Together, these wrap-around services help abuse survivors move from fear and abuse to safety and stability, transforming lives through a range of comprehensive services and advocacy. SFF's preventive outreach and professional education programs reach over 10,000 community members annually.

SFF has been a leader in the fight against technology-facilitated gender-based violence, both in New York State and nationally. Over the last decade, SFF's advocacy and leadership in fighting technology-facilitated abuse has been carried out through the New York Cyber Abuse Task Force, co-founded in 2014 by former SFF attorney Shira Kaufman and survivor rights attorney Carrie Goldberg of C.A. Goldberg, PLLC. In 2016, SFF attorney Lindsey Song took over as Co-Chair of the Task Force, later joined by survivor attorney Annie Seifullah of Incendii Law. Since then, SFF and the Cyber Abuse Task Force have successfully advocated for legislation addressing non-consensual distribution of intimate images (NDII) in New York City and New York State. They have also provided trainings to law enforcement on implementation of these laws; to judges on the prevalence of tech abuse; and created a Cyber Abuse Manual for Advocates. New York City and State now have several laws providing legal remedies to abuse survivors for NDII and related forms of technology-facilitated gender violence.

In her time as Co-Chair of the Task Force, Ms. Song has become a nationally recognized expert in the area of technology-facilitated abuse and gender-based violence, presenting at White House Roundtables on the issue in 2023 and 2024, and featured in the Atlantic, New York Times, BuzzFeed News, The New York Post, and other publications for her knowledge and expertise. She has presented at over 150 trainings including technology-

facilitated abuse, ethics, evidence, and other related topics to educational, governmental, and nonprofit agencies as well as corporations including the New York City Family Justice Centers, the New York State Unified Court System Family Violence Task Force, New York State Integrated Domestic Violence Courts, several District Attorney's Offices, Bar Associations, the Practicing Law Institute; state, local, and national nonprofits; medical schools; dozens of law firms and local area law schools, and others. Ms. Song has also organized dozens of conferences and trainings addressing the intersection of tech abuse and intimate partner violence, including presentations with international representation and advocates from criminal, civil, and related areas of law and policy. Due to its vast expertise, Sanctuary for Families will play a critical role in content development for the training program, website, and informational tools created pursuant to this award. Further, the relationships that the organization has developed will assist in identifying key stakeholders to engage during the curriculum development process and in training outreach. Sanctuary for Families will also lend its expertise to providing technical assistance throughout the state and supporting the existing community coordinated response teams responding to this issue and to gender-based violence as a whole. The trainings will be co-trained by OPDV and Sanctuary for Families employees, and the partnership between OPDV's trainers who have expertise or backgrounds in law enforcement and Sanctuary for Families advocates will help demonstrate a multi-disciplinary approach to responding to these crimes.