

July 14, 2026

Via email (BJG.Feedback@usdoj.gov)

Dear Acting Attorney General Blanche,

We are 19 organizations that support human trafficking survivors and work to address human trafficking across the United States. We write to provide feedback on the proposed consolidation of the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) and the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) into a combined grantmaking office with the Office of the Community Oriented Policing Services. In short, we oppose this merger because it will create grant instability that threatens survivors' access to lifesaving services. We urge the Department of Justice (DOJ) to continue to maintain the separate and specialized nature of these offices to better serve survivors and protect their service access.

Survivors have benefitted from the OJP Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) and OVW specializing in victim services and addressing victim needs. This specialization led to each office hiring staff with unique expertise in the complex needs of crime victims and involvement of impacted communities, which over time created more effective programs that better meet survivors' needs. Human trafficking, domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence victim service providers rely on consistent dedicated federal funding to ensure survivors can access what they need to seek safety and stability. Survivors are able to access the services they need today because the US government has invested in specialized services programs with expert staff.

Grants that serve survivor populations operate differently from law enforcement-facing grants. Merging the mandates of multiple specialized agencies risks further reducing focus on survivors and prioritizing law enforcement. We already see the prioritization of law enforcement over the needs of survivors across the federal government, as resources are funneled into federal enforcement agencies and restricted from victim services grants. New grant opportunities across OJP and OVW have included a prioritization component for programs partnering with law enforcement, forcing grantees to move direct victim services funds away from survivors and towards these partnerships. The funds for human trafficking victim services at OJP and OVW's victim services programs are intended by Congress to serve survivors and help them seek safety and recovery. Survivors deserve services with no strings attached.

Proposed cuts across the FY27 DOJ budget's discretionary programs will impact human trafficking survivors' access to lifesaving services. Human trafficking survivors frequently access non-trafficking-specific victim service programs when specialized services are unavailable in their area or they are not aware they are eligible for trafficking-specific programs. Domestic violence service providers, rape crisis centers, legal service providers, and community-based service providers are frequently utilized by human trafficking survivors across the country. If these programs face cuts, survivors may lose the only resource available in their community that can help them escape trafficking.

This proposed consolidation comes at a time when human trafficking, domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence victim services are already severely limited by federal funding restrictions. FY25 funds from both OVW and OJP are delayed, causing some providers to stop accepting new clients, reduce services available, or close their doors entirely. FY26 notices of funding are also delayed, indicating those funds will not be released on time for most programs. The time spent on merging the mandates and staff of these programs will inevitably delay funds further. Service providers are already

scrambling to keep survivors in services across the country to prevent re-exploitation. This consolidation threatens their ability to keep services operating at no fault of their own.

Survivors depend on consistent and specialized services to escape trafficking and rebuild their lives. This plan threatens the victim services framework the US government and service providers have built over the past 25 years. Without it in place, human trafficking victims will be left with few means to escape. As human trafficking victim service providers and advocacy organizations, we urge the DOJ to halt this consolidation plan. Please reach out to Emma Ecker (emma@freedomnetworkusa.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,
Freedom Network USA
YWCA Kalamazoo
Worker Justice Center of New York
Womankind
Volunteer Lawyers for Justice
The Human Trafficking Legal Center
Swan Counseling Services
Sunita Jain Anti-Trafficking Initiative, Loyola Law School
Safe Horizon
Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network
Preble Street
Mosaic Consulting Co LLC
LOTUS Legal Clinic
Inspiritus
Human Trafficking Prevention Project, Baltimore, MD
HEAL Trafficking
CT Institute for Refugees and Immigrants
Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking
Beautiful Feet Wellness