

ELIZABETH BAUER: Hey, you all! This is Elizabeth Bauer, and we are in the Grants Management session for State and Territorial Coalitions. Welcome. Good afternoon, and good morning to some of you all. Kevin Sweeney is here with me monitoring the chat, so feel free to put your questions in as they come up, and we may stop and address some of them, or we may wait until there's another pause. So, feel free to use the chat box. He's also going to be putting in some links as I mention them, so be sure to be aware of the chat box.

So, we are going to be talking about managing your Coalition award, reporting on your Coalition award, and closing that award. But before we get into all of that, I just wanted to make one note about some of you who are pass-through coalitions for STOP or SASP. There's a session specific to pass-through next week. Ultimately, it's the responsibility of your Administrator to implement and monitor STOP or SASP funds. But we know a lot of you all serve as pass-throughs for different things, and so just a note around, there should be some sort of written agreement about who's responsible for what, right? Who is going to create the solicitation? Is it the Administrator or the coalition? Who is going to do the Pre-Award Risk Assessment? So, just something to think about. And the Administrator and the coalitions should really be in conversation regularly about the passing through and administering of those funds. And the coalitions that are pass-throughs also need to provide information about the subrecipients to the state or territorial Administrator. So, that's a separate session. I just didn't want you to think we weren't going to cover the pass-through responsibilities. That will be next week.

So, jumping into a bit about the management of the Coalition award, we're going to start with our best friend, JustGrants. This link is your login where you can log in to JustGrants. There are different training modules that you all might have already explored. There are FAQs that are helpful, different resources, and then News & Updates. User Support, you can access it through there, but we recommend that you all use our specific OVW Support, and that email address or phone number is on your screen. Kevin's going to put that in the chat for you as well. This is really the entryway into the system. That portal is for both award recipients and applicants to access all of this different information and support. This is just the system login screen, which I'm sure most of you have experienced already.

One of the things that you are responsible for is keeping the personnel information updated in JustGrants. You do that through DIAMD. I'm going to talk about this a little bit later. But after you update different roles in DIAMD, if you have a change in key personnel on your Coalition award, that would be a GAM that you'd have to do, and I'll detail that in just a minute.

But let's look at the different roles here. It all starts with the Entity Administrator. That person is really the one who is the gatekeeper for the different roles in JustGrants—who can submit things and who can just really do different activities. The Entity Administrator assigns all of the roles. Then, the Grant Award Administrator submits programmatic requirements like the reports, the different GAMs, the closeout, and pieces of the

closeout. The Alternate Grant Administrator can initiate different things but may not be able to submit. So, that's something that we've noticed, is that sometimes folks are, like, "I can't submit this grant—this GAM," and it's because you're the Alternate Grant Administrator. It's really important not to have just one person have all of these roles, because you want to make sure, if that person's out sick or something happens, that other folks have access. So, folks can have multiple roles assigned by the Entity Administrator. That's a really good practice, to have a lot of different folks in these roles.

All right. We're going to move into award conditions. You all have multiple award conditions. We're just going to talk about a couple today. One of them is submission of all materials and publications created with the OVW Coalition funds. I'm just going to read a piece of that award condition: "The recipient agrees to submit to OVW one copy of all materials and publications, whether they be written, web-based, audio-visual, or any other format funded under this award, not less than 20 days prior to distribution or public release." That's just for approval. So, if you use your OVW funds for a publication and it goes out into the world and then it's out of scope or it somehow compromises victim safety, then you may not be able to use your funds for that. That's why there's that award condition of 20 days before you plan to put it out into the world, to get it approved. So, really think about what you are reporting on and what the materials and publications are that you use our funds for. So, is it staff time that you're using to create something? Is it in your budget? Does it fit within your purpose areas and your specific project goals? So, it's not just about printing something; it's about the staff time that goes into it. And it really is a good practice to not partially fund a product with a tiny piece of this award. It's just difficult to track and to report on that.

So, the next one ties into that: the publication disclaimer, which I'm sure all of you have seen. That has to go on everything that you use our funds to create and to distribute. We can drop that language into the chat in a little bit. But, again, it's in your award conditions.

Another award condition is prior approval for non-OVW-sponsored technical assistance. So, again, that's going to be an approval submitted via JustGrants through a GAM. You'll need to submit the brochure, the agenda or curriculum, description of the training, an estimated breakdown of costs, and who's attending. And that needs to come in at least 20 days prior to registering for the event. We'll talk a little bit more about different GAMs around that in a minute.

But a few more award conditions. I've seen this quite a bit in some of the reports, the semiannual reports, i.e., talking about direct services. That's not something that you can do with your Coalition funds. I know some of you might have advisory groups that survivors and victims are on. That's not providing direct services. So, just be really clear in your report about what survivors may be doing as part of your Coalition project. Be really clear it's not providing TA to survivors. That's not really allowable, as that falls under direct services. Just be clear on how survivors might be involved in your projects and that you're not providing those direct services with these funds.

And then, as you all probably have just gone through or still are going through, is that conditional budget clearance for you all and that you can access up to \$20,000 of your award before your budget is cleared. That's really why, too, in your reporting, it's okay if you haven't done a lot of activities in the first couple of months while you're waiting on your budget to be cleared. So, really look at that and make sure you're responding to the Grants Financial Management Division, if they have questions on your budget, so we can get them pushed through and cleared.

And then, one more award condition I want to lift up is the policy for response to workplace sexual misconduct and domestic and dating violence, because that is something that you need to have a policy on. I just want to make note of that to ensure that you all have that. Futures Without Violence is one of the TA providers around this award condition. They have some resources for you all on that, if you want to check that out. But I'm sure all of you have that already.

All right. I'm going to take a brief pause and check in with Kevin to see if we have any questions or anything that Kevin would like to add.

KEVIN SWEENEY: No. You're doing great, Elizabeth. I have no questions so far, so...

ELIZABETH BAUER: All righty.

KEVIN SWEENEY: Yeah, we can move right along.

ELIZABETH BAUER: So, let's talk about GAMs, Grant Award Modifications. There are three different types: the project period extension, programmatic cost, and programmatic scope change. So, just a note that any time you want to do a GAM, it's a good idea to just reach out to your Program Manager and talk about what your need is and what's the best fit for that GAM. I'm going to give a few kinds of common examples, but other than project period extension (which is self-explanatory)—programmatic cost and programmatic scope change, sometimes it could be a combination of both of those, depending on what you want to do. So, a couple of things about GAMs. You can't submit them within 30 days of the Coalition award ending or after the award ends.

So, we're going to get into a little bit about project period extensions. For this one, you have to have justification in the form of a letter—just the what and the why. These points need to be addressed in a letter to extend your award: the estimated amount of funds remaining, the project length and your requested project end date, what you'll be doing, and what activities and objectives will be implemented. And then the why of it all—like, why is additional time needed, and why weren't those activities completed during the initial project period. As we know, there are different reasons for that—like, your budget took a minute. Things like that you can add to your justification. These are the things for the project period extension that you all need to address.

And then, going back to the programmatic cost GAM. An example of that would be prior approval for using your mandatory OVW travel and TA funds. So, if you want to use

those funds for a non-OVW-approved training, you would need to submit a programmatic cost GAM.

An example of a programmatic scope change is if you have a change in personnel. So, if you have a different training director who comes on board, you'd have to do that scope change. There's a section to choose change in key personnel under that and for attaching some information about that new staff person, maybe their resume. That's just an example of a scope change. I know that the GAM process is different than it has been in the past, so just maybe take a pause to see if there are any questions.

KEVIN SWEENEY: Elizabeth, there are no questions currently, but I think, to your last point, please reach out to your OVW Grant Manager if you have any questions or hesitations as to whether it requires a GAM and what type of GAM. We can happily assist you.

ELIZABETH BAUER: Yeah. Just feel free to reach out, and we can talk through it. Just a few more general notes about GAMs. They require different workflows and different levels of approval within OVW and outside of OVW sometimes, and that process can take time. So, make sure you're giving yourself time, starting the conversation with your Program Manager and then going from there. The time of year can also impact the approval of GAMs. When we're processing awards or reviewing progress reports, it might take us just a second. But it's always a good idea, like Kevin said, to start with your Program Manager and then, when you get to the point of, "Okay, yes, please go ahead and submit this in JustGrants," sending an email to your Program Manager when it has been submitted, so we can go in and look at it and approve it. Anything else, Kevin, to add on GAMs before we move on?

KEVIN SWEENEY: I don't think so.

ELIZABETH BAUER: Or Amy?

KEVIN SWEENEY: Yeah. I think, personally speaking, we're still learning the processes of JustGrants and the certain GAMs that are required. And it's always better to reach out in advance than to have to retroactively reach out and say, "I need approval on this." So, I know Elizabeth is very keen-eyed when it comes to reviewing progress reports. She notices certain things that have not been submitted prior to, and says, "Oh, did you submit a GAM or a deliverable of some sort in here?" and there's no record of approval. We just want to do this to make sure that you're covered if ever you're audited. It's in your own best interests overall to reach out, proffer questions, and submit a modification.

AMY LODER: I have something to say about GAMs. Elizabeth talked about the project period extension GAMs and how you will not be able to submit one unless it's within 30 days of the project end date. We've actually had a lot of problems with that. So, if you are going to submit a project period GAM, please start thinking about it 90 days, 60 days ahead of time. Don't get to that 30-day mark. And one of the issues that we have

is that, if you request a project period extension after the program end date, most likely we'll not approve it, unless there has been an extraordinary circumstance, because we get in trouble for that, actually. OVW gets audited just like our grantees get audited. That has been something that has come up, and it's something that you can really do. It's totally preventable. You all should know when your grant ends and how much money you have. So, if you're going to need an extension, please submit it well in advance of 30 days before your project end date. It just makes things a lot easier for all of us. So, thanks.

ELIZABETH BAUER: Thank you, Amy, and thank you, Kevin. One of the things we touched on just a minute ago around submitting your products is that it hasn't always worked in the past, but the deliverables option now works. So, we should be submitting everything for approval. Anything that you submit on your performance report that you created with the Coalition funds should be submitted as a deliverable. That's to Amy's and Kevin's point about making sure you're covered if you're audited. JustGrants is the official method of record. So, even if you emailed your Program Manager and they have approved it, if it's not in JustGrants, that could create an issue for you. So, use that deliverables submission to submit those for your official approval. And Amy has her hand raised, so we'll let her jump in on that.

AMY LODER: Sorry. I had another thing about GAMs. You're talking about deliverables, but another important thing, remember, please, only one action per GAM. So, you can't say, "Oh, I want to use money for this purpose, and also I want a year extension." They are very different GAMs, and you have to do them separately. This is one we've seen more often than not, where they'll slip a project period extension within another type of GAM, probably some type of financial GAM. That does not change your project period. The only thing that officially changes your project period is if you do the project period extension GAM, and that will physically change it in JustGrants. If you don't submit it, then your project period doesn't change. So, please only have one request per GAM.

ELIZABETH BAUER: Yeah, that's a great point. Thank you, Amy. Kevin, anything? I just saw you come on screen.

KEVIN SWEENEY: Oh, no, no. I couldn't agree more with what Amy just said, yeah.

ELIZABETH BAUER: All right. Moving forward. Moving on to reporting—as Kevin alluded, my favorite thing. You all know you have to submit semiannual reports. So, this slide is just an overview and a breakdown of those reporting periods—January 1 through June 30, and then July 1 through December 31. The due dates are July 30 and January 30—aside from your final report, which is due 120 days after the end of the project period. So, going back to the GAM conversation, if you have an extension on your award, then there's math you have to do around when your final report is due. So, if you have an extension, it won't necessarily be due January 30. So, again, reach out to our JustGrants Support if there's an issue submitting your report in JustGrants. Anything about the form itself, reach out to the Muskie School of Public Service. That's also where you would download your form.

KEVIN SWEENEY: Elizabeth, may I just interject really quickly?

ELIZABETH BAUER: Yeah.

KEVIN SWEENEY: This last cycle of reporting, July through December, it tends to confuse a lot of Coalition grantees because it's a 12-month award period and doesn't necessarily align with the calendar. Oh, sorry. Maybe I'm cutting you off. I see your next slide.

ELIZABETH BAUER: No.

KEVIN SWEENEY: I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry.

ELIZABETH BAUER: No, you're—Kevin, thank you for that prompt [INDISTINCT]

Commented [A1]: Cannot discern

KEVIN SWEENEY: Okay. You did—okay.

ELIZABETH BAUER: No, it's probably good that you're saying...

KEVIN SWEENEY: My apologies.

ELIZABETH BAUER: No, no, Kevin. I need you here. Please don't go away. It's probably good to hear it from you, too, in two different ways, because it is a little confusing. So, you have a reporting period of July 1 through December 31, but almost always there are two different awards during that reporting period. Here's an example using fiscal year '22 and fiscal year '23. Your fiscal year '22 project period is October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023. So, your final report on fiscal year 2022 is 120 days after the award ends, which is somewhere near January 30, as you all noticed recently. So, your 2022 award is July, August, and September. That's one report for three months. So then, on October 1, your fiscal year '23 award begins, and that's a new project period with new funded activities and a new award number. So, for October, November, and December, you're reporting on your first semiannual report for that award, October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024. Even if you have an extension, you will still have two awards to report on in that July through December time period. Even if you have an extension on your fiscal year '22, you still have to report on your '23, even if you didn't have any activities. Just submit that report saying we have an extension on our prior award and no activities with these funds occurred during this time. So, that is my spiel about July through December. Kevin, do you want to clarify anything in there I just said, or what did I miss?

KEVIN SWEENEY: I couldn't have said it better. Well done. Just keep in mind that there's a likelihood that you'll have two open awards, and so you just have to be mindful, like Elizabeth said, even if you didn't have your budget cleared and you didn't use any money, you'll have to submit something, and you can just notate on your progress report, "Budget wasn't cleared, got an extension." Because if you do not

submit that initial report in your new award, your funds will be frozen, and then you'd have to go back and submit that report. And we wouldn't want that to happen. So, it's a little bit to track, but that's just, unfortunately, how the system is designed.

ELIZABETH BAUER: Yeah. Thank you, Kevin. And I recognize that a lot of your activities are probably very similar from award to award, but you're still responsible for tracking each award separately, especially having an eye on that in July through December. Any questions around that?

KEVIN SWEENEY: I've got something in the chat posted.

ELIZABETH BAUER: All right. So, our financial reporting, Federal Financial Reports, the FFRs, are quarterly and, again, submitted through JustGrants. And, of course, our friends from the Grants Financial Management Division will be doing another session. They're probably going to get into this a little bit more, but just a note about those. And you can always reach out to their general email box, too, at [OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov](mailto:OVW.GFMD@usdoj.gov).

Okay. Let's talk about closing your award. I think all of us have a bunch of closeouts in our work list at the moment. Timely submission of closeouts is a really important part of our grant management, too. You have 120 days, again, from the end of the award to complete the closeout process. During those 120 days, you all complete several closeout requirements and submit your payment requests in ASAP for any remaining expenses that occurred during the project period. In the closeout package for Coalition awards, there are five things. It's your performance report, the final report that's approved. I've had several reports come in after the closeout has been submitted, and so, it has to be submitted and approved for the closeout to be complete. Your final FFR. Your award conditions all have to have been met. Financial reconciliation, which does not have to be necessarily complete. It happens during the review and the reconciliation of the award. And then any deliverables completed. So, again, if you said you're going to use your Coalition funds to create a Sexual Assault 101 manual, then we're going to make sure that that deliverable has been submitted and approved before we can process that closeout. It's really better to be proactive and submit your closeout information before it's automatically generated by JustGrants. And just a note, your funds will be held once you submit it. Once you submit the closeout, your funds are held until that reconciliation process is done. And your funds will be held if that administrative closeout is generated by JustGrants. So, on day 121, it will automatically close out your award and you will not have access to your funds. Kevin, anything to add there, or Amy?

KEVIN SWEENEY: One comment I would just simply say is, if you're fulfilling your grant responsibilities, it'll all be completed just naturally. If you're responding to your reports, federal and performance, and submitting your deliverables on time, then you essentially don't have to do anything except click the Submit button, and then we take care of the rest internally. It's not really a whole package that you have to complete necessarily.

ELIZABETH BAUER: So, we're nearing the end, my friends. These are just, again, in one place, the different resources for you on managing your award. GFMD, our specific JustGrants Helpdesk, VAWA MEI, and the Muskie folks for your performance report form. We have different grantee resources on our website, and then, of course, JustGrants. So, now, if folks want to come on camera and come off mute and ask any questions, anything. If you're thinking it, someone else probably is, too, so feel free to chat in the chat box or show us your face.

KEVIN SWEENEY: There isn't anything currently, Elizabeth, in the chat.

ELIZABETH BAUER: All righty. Guadalupe, did you have a question? I saw you come on camera.

GUADALUPE: No. I don't have a question. I just wanted you to see my face, so you can see...

ELIZABETH BAUER: Oh, thank you.

GUADALUPE: ...who I am. Hi.

ELIZABETH BAUER: Kevin...

GUADALUPE: Well, it's not really a question. So, I just started as the new Executive Director of Violence Free Minnesota. I'm familiar with OVW reports but usually in the tribal unit. These reports are one-year reports, right? And so, I'm trying to catch up. So, I really appreciate the contact with Kevin here. A really great Grants Manager. Kevin, you answered my questions very promptly, and so I appreciate that a lot, especially when you have multiple funding sources. And then the calendar of reporting, because that's what's kind of throwing me off, stepping into a well-oiled machine but not necessarily knowing where I stepped in at. So, I appreciate you all talking.

ELIZABETH BAUER: Yeah. And she's not wrong. Kevin is great.

KEVIN SWEENEY: No. Thank you, Guadalupe. Thank you.

ELIZABETH BAUER: Amy, did I see your hand?

AMY LODER: You did. So, I'm sorry to steal your thunder, Kevin, but there are some questions that came up in the chat. And I...

KEVIN SWEENEY: Let us see.

AMY LODER: ...answered them in the chat, but I did not read them in the chat. So, if that's...

KEVIN SWEENEY: Oh, I missed that. I'm so sorry.



AMY LODER: No, that was my fault. So, I don't mind reading them. Or if you want to read the questions and I can just repeat what my answer was. But it was about having a multiyear discretionary grant that was delayed by COVID. And then the second question that I answered was—or actually it was a statement when you guys were talking about the reports—and I said that JustGrants will automatically hold your funds if you have a delinquent report—either a financial or a progress report. So please submit your reports on time. But there was that question that said, “We have a multiyear discretionary grant that was delayed by COVID, and last year we were only able to extend for 12 months, although OVW can allow for longer-period extensions. Is there a possibility to extend...”

ELIZABETH BAUER: Facts. Yeah.

**Commented [A2]:** I found this interjection to be unintelligible, and I suspect any ordinary listener would also.

AMY LODER: “...for another 12 months?” So, I said that we can extend the award, but it's not an automatic 12 months, and that we'll extend it based on the amount of money that is remaining and the activities that you still need to complete. When I reread the question, a couple of things stuck out for me. One, you said, you have a discretionary grant. So, we're talking about the Coalition awards, which are formula awards. I don't know if you're talking about your Coalition award or about another award you might have with OVW, but I just wanted to clarify, regardless, we do have the ability to extend for a longer period of time. I do want to say that that part of the question—“we're only able to extend for 12 months, although OVW can allow for longer-period extensions”—technically, we do not give extensions for longer than 12 months for discretionary awards. For the STOP and SASP awards, we will give longer extensions, and that's because they make subawards and the OVW award typically does not align with the state subaward. So, in those cases, we give longer extensions. All that is to say, in most cases, yes, we can extend it longer.

I think for discretionary; an exception might be if you have hit that five-year mark. I know that some of the OVW discretionary awards are three years, and if you hit it for an automatic 12-month extension, that would put you at four years. And then, if you went longer, that would put you right up at five years, and we don't keep awards open longer than five years, or we're not supposed to. So, I hope that answers your question. It's a discretionary Justice for Families grant. Yeah. I mean, I would say that if you need another extension on that award, I would contact your Program Manager, and you would have to provide the same information: “We have this much money remaining. These are the grant activities that we still need to complete.” I don't know the particulars about your JFF award, about how long it's been open. I know we haven't been able to supplement any awards in a couple of years because of JustGrants, but I would come in and ask for an extension, and I would certainly do it within sufficient time before the 30 days, because you are running a risk if you don't do it well before the 30 days.

ELIZABETH BAUER: Any other questions? You can put them in the chat and we'll read them, or if you want to come off mute and ask them. Anything around your Coalition award.

AMY LODER: I mean, if you don't have any questions, I'm sure we can all talk about them. That might make things a little easier for you and for us.

KEVIN SWEENEY: I did...

AMY LODER: And one of the things that comes up is budget clearances. Many of you know it takes a little bit of time to get your budget cleared. But sometimes it is not entirely on us. Sometimes it's because a grantee itself is not as responsive as it could be. It might be because you're incredibly busy or it might be because you're not sure there's actually a GAM in JustGrants waiting for you, asking to make a change to your budget. But if you have not received an approved budget yet for 2022, and honestly there are a couple out there still from 2021, which is a little strange. But definitely for 2022, please, first thing you should do is check JustGrants and make sure you don't have a GAM sitting with you. And then, if you don't, I would contact your Program Manager and ask where the budget clearance is in the process, because we certainly want you to begin doing your work as quickly as possible. Oh, I see something coming in.

KEVIN SWEENEY: I had a question right before Kat's.

AMY LODER: Okay.

KEVIN SWEENEY: If I may.

AMY LODER: Please.

KEVIN SWEENEY: So, here's the question: "Going back to the OVW-approved TA, are we able to use OVW funds to attend OVW-funded training provided by other organizations? For example, can coalition staff use OVW Coalitions funds to attend a STOP-funded training, or do we need to seek approval from our Grant Administrator?" I assume that means the OVW Grant Administrator.

AMY LODER: What's a STOP-funded program? I'm not sure what a STOP...

KEVIN SWEENEY: So, I read it to be a state-level training that maybe the STOP Administrator or the state is providing training on. For me, personally, I would, as always, just reach out. If you have a training, that's your state Administrator, or not even necessarily them. But if the topic seems to fit within the crimes of VAWA, it could certainly be within scope and so, therefore, you could use your funds to attend that training. It doesn't necessarily have to be an OVW-funded or -supported training. It would just have to be something you'd have to reach out to your OVW Grant Manager so we could see the agenda and the curriculum and so that it fits within the scope of your position or whomever you're choosing to use grant funds to attend. I don't think it necessarily has to be an OVW-specific TA provider. We recognize that there's a lot of expertise in the field, and not everybody is necessarily an OVW TA provider. So, you might be able to use your funds to support your member programs, your own

organization to attend to those funds. But I would just encourage you to reach out in advance to your OVW Grant Manager to see if it fits within the scope.

KEVIN SWEENEY: Amy, did you have somebody else you want...

AMY LODER: Yeah. No, I would agree about that. If you look at the solicitation, actually what it says in the budget section about identifying \$5,000 or \$8,000 for the OVW-sponsored training, it does say that you can put additional costs in there for non-OVW-sponsored training. I think there are a lot of trainings like that. I know that a lot of people like to go to the Crimes Against Women. I know that a lot of people like to go to—and I know I'm going to get it wrong, but, Kevin, you can correct me. It's the safety net training, but it's not the safety net that OVW supports. It's the one that I believe it's a lot of companies...

KEVIN SWEENEY: Yeah. Tech.

Commented [A3]: Unintelligible

AMY LODER: Like tech companies...

KEVIN SWEENEY: Yes. Exactly.

ELIZABETH BAUER: ...or NNEDV itself. A lot of people like to go to that, and it's certainly relevant to our work, but in that section in the solicitation, it says that "with permission from OVW." So, there are very few cases, especially now, when we're going to say, "No, you can't go. You can't use our funds." We're going to say yes, but reach out to us. Let us know what you want to do. Nine times out of 10, we're going to approve it. Honestly, it just covers you, because if you're ever audited—and honestly, it is a possibility for you—OIG is going to ask you, "Well, could you have used your funds for this? Could you have used your funds to go to this?" And if you don't have the documentation—you'll hear GFMD say documentation about 9,000 times when you attend their session. It's going to be a question cause. So, it's a really easy thing for you to do. Just get permission for it.

Commented [A4]: Doesn't make sense

KEVIN SWEENEY: Yeah. It's not a heavy lift to provide an agenda, a little bit of information about the costs, and whom you want to support to attend that training.

AMY LODER: Yeah. I think the only other thing that I would add to that is, I think we might be a little bit more questioning once NNEDV and RSP, who are the TA providers for the coalitions, begin having in-person meetings. I don't know when that's going to happen. I'm certainly not going to put them on the spot. But we really want you to attend the training events that they are actually putting on, so we will prioritize that you use your funds to attend their events. And then, if there are remaining funds, you should use the money to go attend those others. But, you know, our first priority would be NNEDV- and RSP-sponsored events, and then other events, too, if you have money. That's all I have to say about that.

ELIZABETH BAUER: ...wants to know if we know if JustGrants is working on implementing notifications for GAMs that come back to them as the grantee. Do you know, Amy?

AMY LODER: As far as I know, they do. As far as I know, JustGrants is sending messages out. When GAMs come out, they are sending out all kinds of notifications. I would really encourage you all to look at your spam and junk folders. And honestly, I get so many notices from JustGrants that I have become desensitized to them. So, pay attention. I also think it's not bad practice to go into JustGrants maybe once a week and just take a look, because it could very well be that you're not noticing the messages that are coming back to you.

ELIZABETH BAUER: They're saying in the chat that NNEDV will be holding a few in-person events in 2023, such as the Economic Justice Summit and the Tech Summit. And Kevin provided a link to OVW events, and that's TA, the number 2—TA2TA.org. Any other questions about managing your Coalition award?

KEVIN SWEENEY: I can't reiterate enough that you should be proactive in making sure that all your account information in Grants.gov, SAM.gov, JustGrants, all that information is in order now, before we release the solicitation. It will help you tremendously in the long run, because there's always inevitably a delay in getting things updated. That's just the nature of things, unfortunately. If you're proactive now and make sure you have all your login information in order, all your account information in order, it will be a much more seamless process and less stressful for you and for us. We just want you to have access now and start the process as absolutely early as possible. So please do that. Please. Please. Please. And we're a resource. We are absolutely a resource. If your OVW Program Manager doesn't have the answer, then somebody on the staff will be able to provide some information and walk you through the process. But please start now. Please. Please. Please.

AMY LODER: Yeah. And I'll say something else, too. One of the things that really causes a lot of problems is when one person—only one person in the coalition—has access to SAM or has access to JustGrants. I can't tell you the number of problems that causes. It is not a great idea to only have one person have the username and password for SAM. Or if you change directors or if a director retires and there is an interim director, it is so essential, as Kevin was saying, please update JustGrants as soon as possible. Because you don't think about it until you need it, and when you need it is when you're applying for an award. And honestly, you guys really luck out with the Coalition awards, because you're not competing. I mean, honestly, you just submit an application and you get the money. But if you are applying for a discretionary award, you're really putting yourself at risk of not being able to receive funding under that program—or of not even being considered. So, I can't stress this enough. There's been a lot of turnover within the coalitions over the last several years. I cannot stress to you enough. Please do not have one person be the keeper of all information. It just is really not great. And there seems to be another question in the chat box.

KEVIN SWEENEY: Yes. “Does there need to be approval to use regular travel budget funds instead of the OVW TA travel budget for in-state conferences?” My personal take is, if you’re supporting, say, your staff or member programs to attend an in-state training, I would still encourage you to reach out in advance just to see if it’s within the scope of the Coalitions grant program and within the scope of VAWA. It just covers you. For in-state travel, for example, if you’re hosting a meeting and you’re subsidizing your member programs to attend that—personally, I don’t know when you’re doing it necessarily all the time, so maybe you want to reach out again just to double-check to get approval. But I think if you had it planned and it’s an approved budget item, then you’re entitled to use the funds accordingly. But maybe Amy has a better response to that.

Commented [A5]: Seems unintelligible to me

AMY LODER: No. I couldn’t agree more. I really think it’s not going to hurt to reach out, and it could actually harm you to not reach out. There are definitely things that you should not be using your Coalition funds for. Off the top of my head, I know that human trafficking is something that everybody is really excited about and looking at and wanting to do work on. I think it’s a super important issue—but it’s not allowable. So, if you use funds to go to a human trafficking conference in your state, you would not be able to use your grant funds to do that. You would have to pay those funds back. I think that the sexual assault and dual coalitions, because they have SASP funding, have a lot more flexibility in what they are able to do in terms of their coalition work—the domestic violence, it’s a much narrower set of activities. So, again, just reach out and ask. Honestly, a lot of the problems we see could have been mitigated early on if you just asked. You’re never going to get in trouble for asking or saying that you need help or saying that you might not know something. The trouble comes if you don’t ask and something happens down the road. And, unfortunately, we’ve seen a bit more of that over the last few years. I can’t stress enough, please ask us.

ELIZABETH BAUER: I had one more thing I don’t think I said about reporting, and that is, we know you all do a lot of things at your coalitions and we want to hear about it in different ways. But in your report, we really just need you to report on what you used OVW Coalition funds on, because that’s when we have to come back and ask you questions around “this seems out of scope,” or “this wasn’t in your project description.” So, just be really concise about “these were our goals or objectives, and this is the status on it in this reporting period.” That will get your reports approved quicker and everything moved through quicker.

AMY LODER: Yup. I can’t agree with that more. I mean, the other thing, too—and this isn’t necessarily about management, but it certainly is. I think this goes more into Jen Kaplan’s segment, so I hope you all attend. I think there is some confusion about what to do with the SASP funds. Not necessarily for the stand-alone sexual assault coalitions but for the dual coalitions. I think there really is some confusion. And so, I think that is an area where we are more than happy to help you with that. I know that RSP is going to be very happy to help you with that. But that seems to be an area that can cause some problems and I’ve actually seen some dual coalitions that have struggled a little bit with that. So, it is about your grants management—not about submitting your reports

but how you are actually implementing your project. And I think it's really important to get some clarity around that, even if you think you are a hundred percent aware of where the lines are drawn, because the SASP money is under a different statute, so there are things that are allowable. It's not just a 50-50, "oh, we're going to do domestic violence and we're going to do sexual assault." It just doesn't break down that way.

KEVIN SWEENEY: I was just going to add, along those lines, actually. Your reports probably or definitely should mirror what you propose to do and your budget. So, when you submit a progress report, it should reflect what you've included in your budget and your Proposal Narrative. That kind of also raises red flags when we're reading progress reports in the system—"That doesn't seem to fit with what they propose to do or mirrors what's in their budget." So, it should all go in order. They should all look and reflect accordingly.

AMY LODER: I will just say one thing that hasn't been touched upon. I mean, solicitations are being released, and the Coalition solicitation is going to be released sometime in the near future. We don't have a date for you. We'll certainly be able to tell you when it is released. But please don't wait until the last minute to apply. It's really important that you actually submit your applications on time and early. Already we've seen a couple of glitches with some of the early discretionary programs that have closed, and it is really challenging when you wait until the last minute to submit into Grants.gov or JustGrants. You know, the solicitations don't really change much from the previous year. There's absolutely nothing keeping you from looking at what was included last year in the solicitation and beginning to look at the application you want to submit this year and putting a budget together and being prepared, because you have time. But don't wait until the last minute, because the last couple of years, we've had to extend the deadlines numerous times. And that might seem like a really easy thing, but it's actually not, and it causes quite a lot of internal problems. So, you might want to start thinking about your applications for 2023.

ELIZABETH BAUER: And please—I think we just cannot stress this enough—please reach out to your Program Manager if you have questions, if you just want to run something by us. We're here to help you manage your award as well, and we want to make sure that you are able to spend your funds and that we are able to give your funds to you as quickly as possible. Thank you all.