

Santa Barbara County Human Trafficking Taskforce (SBCHTTF)

The Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office Victim Witness Assistance Program is collaborating with the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office in submitting a project proposal in response to the **OVC/BJA FY 2016 Enhanced Collaborative Model to Combat Human Trafficking Competitive Solicitation**, Program Purpose Area 1: Development of Human Trafficking Task Forces, Competition ID: **OVC-2016-9364**. Within the combined proposal, we are requesting \$1,340,737 of OVC/BJA grant funding over the course of the 3 year project.

Santa Barbara County (SBC) is a diverse southern California county, covering 2700 square miles, with a population of 435,000. The SBCHTTF project will greatly improve our county-wide ability to combat Human Trafficking crimes occurring within Santa Barbara County and provide Human Trafficking victims with appropriate services and resources.

The proposed OVC/BJA funded SBCHTTF project will operationalize a countywide Human Trafficking Task Force that was assembled by District Attorney Joyce Dudley in 2013. To date, the existing Task Force work was focused on identifying and quantifying Human Trafficking crimes occurring within Santa Barbara County, raising public awareness about Human Trafficking, building collaborative relationships between public agencies and CBOs that will participate in combatting Human Trafficking crimes and provide victim services, and providing human trafficking training to our public and private partners. Although quite successful in bringing together the necessary stakeholders and fostering stakeholder collaboration, the existing task force has not been able to operationalize its mission, due to the lack of law enforcement resources and inability to fund a dedicated victim services coordinator/ task force leader.

Between 2013 and 2016, there has been one active Adult Trafficking Investigation conducted jointly between the FBI and the Sheriff's Department. The investigation is ongoing and involves a network of Chinese massage parlors. The Santa Barbara District Attorney's Office successfully prosecuted 1 case of sex trafficking in 2013, 1 in 2014 and there are 3 pending sex trafficking cases. A total of 5 minor victims and 3 adult victims of sex trafficking have been served by the DA Victim Witness Program during this timeframe. The reviewer must consider Santa Barbara County law enforcement hasn't had the ability to dedicate investigative resources to Human Trafficking investigations. As a result of this lack of resources, proactive Human Trafficking investigations are not currently occurring. The above noted cases were the result of reactive investigations to an event or third-party report.

This OVC/BJA funding opportunity will provide \$740,737 to local law enforcement and \$600,000 dedicated to Victim Services through the DA Victim Witness Assistance Program. Funding will provide the investigative resources that are necessary to proactively investigate and prosecute Human Trafficking cases. Additionally, funding will allow for expert an victim advocate and Rape Crisis advocates to provide victim services and be a countywide 24/7 resource to identify and enlist appropriate services for adult and minor, domestic and international trafficking victims. Furthermore, grant funding will build upon early efforts to collect, share and analyze data towards making data and evidence-based system decisions and improvements.