



## Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #433

### **Refugee Family Strengthening Project (DHFS -- Children and Families)**

[LFB 2005-07 Budget Summary: Page 302, #13]

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#### **CURRENT LAW**

*Grants to Serve Victims of Domestic Abuse.* The Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) administers the domestic abuse services grant program and is budgeted approximately \$8,023,600 (\$5,070,200 GPR, \$1,644,600 FED, and \$1,308,800 PR) in 2004-05 to provide services to victims of domestic violence. This funding supports grants for: (a) basic domestic abuse service programs in each county and tribe in Wisconsin, including shelter care, 24-hour telephone support, counseling and advocacy services, and community education; (b) legal advocacy services for victims; (c) programs for children in families that experience domestic violence; (d) transitional living services; and (e) special projects. The attachment to this paper lists the calendar year 2005 domestic abuse services grant awards.

Federal funding is available under the federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) for family violence prevention and services grants. Program revenue funding is available from: (a) the domestic abuse assessment, a \$75 charge levied on individuals convicted of, or participating in deferred prosecution for, crimes involving domestic violence (\$558,800); and (b) federal TANF block grant funds transferred from the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) to DHFS (\$750,000).

Under s. 46.95 of the statutes, DHFS is required to distribute grants to organizations for the provision of any of the following: (a) shelter facilities or private home shelter care; (b) advocacy and counseling for victims; (c) 24-hour telephone services; and (d) community education. In addition, DHFS is required to award a grant of: (a) \$995,000 annually to organizations for domestic abuse services that are targeted to children; (b) \$25,000 annually to each of 30 organizations to enhance support services, which may include case management,

children's programming, assisting victims of domestic abuse to find employment, and training in and activities promoting self-sufficiency; (c) \$200,000 annually (with no grant greater than \$60,000) for domestic abuse services for individuals who are members of underserved populations, including minority group members and individuals with mental illness or developmental disabilities; and (d) \$50,000 annually to the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence for the cost of a staff person to provide assistance in obtaining legal services to domestic abuse victims.

DHFS is also required to: (1) expend \$20,700 annually to contract with a nonstate agency to do all of the following: (a) act as liaison among local, state, federal, and private housing agencies; (b) identify capital resources for a housing initiative; (c) coordinate and disseminate information on job training programs; and (d) circulate information on successful living programs; and (2) expend \$69,700 annually to provide ongoing training and technical assistance to education organizations and advocates for victims of domestic abuse about the judicial system and to organize pro bono legal services on a regional basis.

In 2003, the domestic abuse programs that received state grants served 37,190 individuals, including 6,302 individuals who received shelter for 124,465 nights. In addition, the 24-hour helplines received over 157,300 crisis and information or referral calls in 2003.

*Refugee Family Strengthening Project.* The refugee family strengthening project (RFSP) is the overarching name of the initiative that provides bilingual, bicultural domestic abuse services to refugees in Wisconsin and includes multiple local agencies statewide. These agencies directly provide or contract to provide outreach activities, interpretation services, counseling, educational workshops, case management, advocacy services, treatment services, in-service training, and support groups relating to domestic abuse for refugees.

In calendar year 2004, DHFS distributed \$48,900 in grants to specifically serve refugee victims of domestic abuse to five agencies. In addition, DWD allocated \$713,500 in temporary assistance for needy families (TANF) funds in 2003-04 for refugee domestic abuse services, as approved by the Joint Committee on Finance at its December, 2003, and April, 2004, meetings under s. 13.10 of the statutes. The one-time TANF funds were provided through June, 2005, to offset funding reductions RFSP agencies experienced as a result of a reduction in the state's federal targeted assistance grant (TAG) award.

## **GOVERNOR**

Provide \$563,500 GPR annually to support a grant to RFSP for providing domestic abuse services to the refugee population. Require DHFS to award the \$563,500 annual grant and specify that the funding may be used to hire bilingual staff persons, especially those who speak Hmong.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

1. DHFS allocates grants to serve victims of domestic abuse on a calendar year basis, including funding to five agencies to provide services specifically for refugee victims. Table 1 identifies those agencies and the annual amount of grant funding DHFS awarded them in calendar years 2004 and 2005. In addition to the grant amounts shown in Table 1, these agencies may also receive additional domestic abuse grants from DHFS, as identified in the attachment to this paper. In total, DHFS awarded \$156,500 in calendar year 2005 to agencies that also receive the RFSP grant.

**TABLE 1**

**Annual DHFS Domestic Abuse Service Grants Specifically for RFSP  
Calendar Years 2004 and 2005**

<u>Agency</u>	<u>County/Area Served</u>	<u>RFSP Allocation</u>
CAP Services Family Crisis Center	Portage, Waushara, Waupaca	\$9,780
Catholic Charities -- Green Bay	Brown, Outagamie, Manitowoc, Winnebago	9,780
Freedom, Inc.	Dane	9,780
Hmong American Friendship Association	Milwaukee	9,780
La Crosse Area Hmong MAA	La Crosse	<u>9,780</u>
Total		\$48,900

2. DWD also allocates funding to local agencies to serve refugees, including refugee victims of domestic abuse. These funds include federal TAG and TANF funds, which are allocated for different contract periods, as identified in Table 2. Table 2 also identifies the agencies that receive this funding and the amounts. While the TANF funds are used to provide direct services to victims of domestic abuse, the TAG funds may be used for either domestic abuse or youth services.

**TABLE 2**

**DWD Allocations to RFSP Agencies**

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contract Period</u>		
		<u>CY 2004 TAG</u>	<u>Jan. 2004 - June 2005 TANF</u>	<u>CY 2005 TAG</u>
ADVOCAP, Inc.	Oshkosh	\$40,428	\$191,863	\$32,908
Hmong American Friendship Association	Milwaukee	40,812	95,933	33,221
La Crosse Area Hmong MAA	La Crosse	21,973	127,910	17,886
Medical College of Wisconsin	Milwaukee	40,812	63,955	33,221
Wausau Area Hmong MAA	Wausau	30,628	137,910	24,931
Freedom, Inc.	Madison	<u>0</u>	<u>95,931</u>	<u>0</u>
Total		\$174,653	\$713,502	\$142,168

3. In addition to victim services (including case management, legal advocacy, support services, and counseling), the DWD grantees provide: (a) educational trainings or workshops for refugee families on domestic abuse laws and safety planning strategies; (b) in-service training for domestic abuse programs, police departments, court personnel, and human service agencies on Hmong and Eastern European cultures and effective service delivery; and (c) outreach efforts to connect with existing domestic abuse service providers. In calendar year 2004, the RFSP agencies provided victim services to 677 individuals, 98 workshops with 1,237 participants, and 100 in-service trainings with 1,787 participants.

4. The administration's intent is to continue supporting the grants currently awarded by DWD for domestic abuse services, but transfer the administration of those grants to DHFS and support the grants with GPR funding instead of TANF. This would increase the total grant amount from DHFS for RFSP agencies to \$720,000 annually.

5. Under the bill, the grant for RFSP will fall under the same requirements as other domestic abuse services grants administered by DHFS. This includes the requirement that no organization may receive more than 70% of its operating budget from DHFS domestic abuse service grants, and in-kind contributions may not exceed more than 33 1/3% of the 30% of an organization's operating budget not funded with DHFS grants.

6. As of October, 2004, there are 68,022 current and former refugees in Wisconsin, an increase of 11.8% from August, 2001, when there were 60,838 current and former refugees in the state. DWD anticipates that an additional 1,325 refugees will arrive in 2005. Domestic abuse service providers believe domestic abuse is more prevalent among immigrant women than among U.S. citizens. Research has found that victims of domestic violence from certain communities, including non-English speaking communities, face greater barriers in accessing protections from abuse. Some of these barriers are lack of information about U.S. laws, lack of economic resources, language barriers, lack of culturally relevant services, and the socio-cultural impact on women from traditional cultures who decide to leave a marriage. In addition, research and focus groups with underserved populations in Wisconsin have found that refugees are more likely to access services if the services are provided by individuals who share their culture and language.

7. Because of the increase in the number of refugees in Wisconsin and the specialized needs of this community, the Committee could approve the Governor's recommendation to maintain the current level of support for domestic abuse services for refugees.

8. However, part of the rationale of the administration's April, 2004, request for TANF funding for RFSP agencies was to provide time for these agencies to explore alternative funding sources. If the Committee would like to give the agencies more time to find alternative funding sources, but not permanently fund these programs, it could provide: (a) \$281,800 GPR to support these domestic abuse grants for an additional six months, through the remainder of calendar year 2005; or (b) \$563,500 GPR in 2005-06 and \$281,800 GPR in 2006-07, to support grants for an additional 18 months, through December 31, 2006.

9. Alternatively, given the limited availability of GPR funding, if the Committee decides that providing domestic abuse services for bilingual, bicultural refugees is an acceptable use of current domestic abuse service grant funds, the Committee could direct DHFS to provide a grant of \$563,500 annually to RFSP but not provide additional funding to DHFS. This would require DHFS to provide a grant for the refugee population, but would reduce funding available for other, current grant recipients.

10. Finally, the Committee could decide to delete the provision, since the TANF funds were awarded to RFSP agencies on a one-time basis, and the availability of GPR funds is limited.

## ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve the Governor's recommendation to provide \$563,500 GPR annually and direct DHFS to award a grant to the RFSP for providing domestic abuse services to the refugee population.

2. Modify the Governor's recommendation to instead provide \$281,800 GPR in 2005-06 to support a grant to RFSP for the last six months of calendar year 2005.

<b>Alternative 2</b>	<b>GPR</b>
<b>2005-07 FUNDING</b> (Change to Bill)	- \$845,200

3. Modify the Governor's recommendation to instead provide \$563,500 GPR in 2005-06 and \$281,800 GPR in 2006-07 to support a grant to RFSP until December 31, 2006.

<b>Alternative 3</b>	<b>GPR</b>
<b>2005-07 FUNDING</b> (Change to Bill)	- \$281,700

4. Modify the Governor's recommendation by deleting \$563,500 GPR annually but retain the requirement that DHFS provide a grant of \$563,500 annually to RFSP for providing domestic abuse services to the refugee population and that this funding may be used to hire bilingual staff persons, especially those who speak Hmong.

<b>Alternative 4</b>	<b>GPR</b>
<b>2005-07 FUNDING</b> (Change to Bill)	- \$1,127,000

5. Delete provision.

<b>Alternative 5</b>	<b>GPR</b>
<b>2005-07 FUNDING</b> (Change to Bill)	- \$1,127,000

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**ATTACHMENT (continued)**

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Location/Area Served</u>	<u>Basic Services</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Outreach</u>	<u>Support Services</u>	<u>Under Represented Population</u>	<u>RFSP</u>	<u>Training &amp; Technical Assistance</u>	<u>Total</u>
IndependenceFirst	Milwaukee, SE Wisconsin	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$34,730	\$0	\$0	\$34,730
Janesville YWCA	Rock	81,230	19,565	0	0	0	0	0	100,795
La Crosse Area Himong MAA	La Crosse, Eau Claire, Dunn	0	0	0	0	0	9,780	0	9,780
Manitowoc Co. Domestic Violence Ctr	Manitowoc	85,865	19,565	0	25,000	0	0	0	130,430
Milwaukee Women's Center	Milwaukee	109,035	19,565	0	25,000	0	0	0	153,600
Monroe County Shelter Care	Monroe	34,800	19,565	0	0	0	0	0	54,365
New Horizons	La Crosse, Trempealeau	80,685	19,565	29,345	25,000	0	0	0	154,595
Northwoods Women	Ashland	85,865	19,565	0	25,000	0	0	0	130,430
PADA	Jefferson	34,800	0	0	0	0	0	0	34,800
Passages	Richland	86,455	19,565	0	25,000	0	0	0	131,020
People Against a Violent Environment	Dodge	69,150	19,565	0	25,000	0	0	0	113,715
Personal Development Center	Wood	51,225	19,565	29,345	0	0	0	0	100,135
Rainbow House	Marquette, Oconto	92,180	19,565	29,345	0	0	0	0	141,090
Safe Harbor	Sheboygan	79,765	19,565	0	23,475	0	0	0	122,805
Family Services	Rock	44,420	19,565	0	25,000	0	0	0	88,985
Sojourner Truth House	Milwaukee	119,005	19,565	0	25,000	0	0	0	163,570
Stepping Stones	Taylor	69,695	19,565	0	0	0	0	0	89,260
Task Force on Family Violence	Milwaukee	34,255	19,565	0	25,000	0	0	0	78,820
Timeout Family Abuse Shelter	Rusk, Price, Washburn	90,130	19,565	58,690	13,990	0	0	0	182,375
Tri-County Council on DA and SA	Oneida	90,455	0	58,690	25,000	0	0	0	174,145
Turningpoint	Pierce, St. Croix	98,090	19,565	29,345	25,000	0	0	0	172,000
UNIDOS Against Domestic Violence	Dane, Walworth, Brown, Rock, Outagamie, Racine, Clark	0	0	0	0	58,700	0	0	58,700
UW Extension	Kenosha	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vernon Co. Domestic Abuse Program	Vernon	39,785	19,565	0	0	0	0	0	59,350
Violence Intervention Project Inc.	Kewaunee	49,365	19,565	0	0	0	0	0	68,930
WI Coalition Against DV	Statewide	0	0	0	0	79,385	0	343,655	423,040
WoMen and Children's Horizons	Kenosha	81,230	19,565	0	17,020	0	0	0	117,815
Women's Center	Waukesha	109,035	19,565	0	25,000	0	0	0	153,600
Women's Community	Marathon	93,100	19,565	0	25,000	0	0	0	137,665
Women's Resource Center	Racine	95,115	19,565	0	0	0	0	0	114,680
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$3,750,290</b>	<b>\$899,990</b>	<b>\$674,935</b>	<b>\$887,240</b>	<b>\$290,215</b>	<b>\$48,900</b>	<b>\$355,785</b>	<b>\$6,897,575</b>

**ATTACHMENT (continued)**

<u>County Programs</u>	<u>Basic Services</u>
Barron County DHHS	\$29,345
Sawyer Co. DHHS	29,345
Total County	58,690

<u>Tribal Programs</u>	<u>Basic Services</u>	<u>Children's Program</u>	<u>Support Services</u>	<u>Statewide Shelter</u>
Bad River	\$29,390	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ho Chunk	29,390	0	0	0
Lac du Flambeau	76,365	19,565	24,455	101,410
Lac Courte Oreilles	29,390	19,565	24,455	0
Menominee	78,300	19,565	0	0
Oneida	43,950	19,565	24,455	0
Potawatomi	29,390	0	0	0
Red Cliff	29,390	19,565	24,455	0
Sokaogon	29,390	0	24,455	0
St. Croix	29,390	19,565	0	0
Stockbridge Munsee	<u>29,390</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	\$433,735	\$117,390	\$122,275	\$101,410