DARYL FOX: Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to today's webinar, "FY 2024 Improving Outcomes for Child and Youth Victims of Human Trafficking," hosted by the Office for Victims of Crime. At this time, it's my pleasure to introduce Natalia Aguirre, Victim Justice Program Specialist with OVC, to begin the presentation. Natalia?

NATALIA AGUIRRE: Thank you so much, Daryl, and welcome everyone. Good afternoon. My name, as Daryl mentioned, is Natalia Aguirre and I'm a Victim Justice Specialist in OVC's Human Trafficking Division. We are so pleased that you are joining us here for an overview of OVC's FY 2024 Improving Outcomes for Child and Youth Victims of Human Trafficking solicitation. I am joined by my colleague Lindsay Waldrop, who is going to be assisting with the chat, answering your questions in the Q&A box and providing some additional information throughout the webinar and facilitating the question and answer at the end of the webinar.

Today, we will briefly cover OVC's mission, walk through key portions of the solicitation, and then we will talk about the application process and resources. Finally, there will be time to answer your questions at the end of the presentation. As I mentioned previously, this webinar will cover the solicitation more specifically, so if you have questions about the mechanics of the application, that is the process of submitting the application on JustGrants, I encourage you to join the weekly trainings that are held by JustGrants on Wednesdays from 2:30 to 4:00 PM Eastern. These live virtual sessions discuss everything you need to know about how to submit an application. And the next sessions are listed here on the PowerPoint slide and we're going to go ahead and drop the link where you can register as well in the chat.
[https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/training/training-virtual-sessions] Please note that while I will give some resources that are geared for the application process, we will not be discussing the mechanics of this application on this webinar.

All right, before we get started, a little bit about the Office for Victims of Crime, which is part of the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, which administers the Crime Victims Fund that is financed by fines and penalties paid by convicted federal offenders and not from tax dollars. OVC channels that money towards victim compensation and assistance throughout the United States, raises awareness about victims' issues, promotes compliance with victims' rights laws, and provides training and technical assistance and publications and products to victim assistance professionals. This funding supports formula programs to states, territories, and tribes, as well as many OVC discretionary grant programs for victims of crime.

OVC's Human Trafficking Division leads the nation in supporting the victim-centered and trauma-informed programs, policies, and resources that promote justice, equal access, and empowerment for minors and adult victims and survivors of human trafficking. Our office manages the largest amount of federal funding for human trafficking service--victim service awards across federal government. Our--OVC currently oversees 465 anti-trafficking awards that total over $400 million. We have several solicitations that are currently open and soon to be opening, so please be sure

to check our funding opportunities page. [https://ovc.ojp.gov/funding/current-funding-opportunities] If you are looking to implement systems-level strategies to assist children and youth victims of trafficking, you are in the right place. We'll be talking about that solicitation specifically here today.

Before we dig into the solicitation, please also mark your calendars with these dates. The Grants.gov deadline for this solicitation is April 8th, 2024, at 11:59 PM Eastern Time. And the JustGrants deadline is April 22nd, 2024, at 8:59 PM Eastern Time. Please note that these are 36-month awards that begin October 1st, 2024.

The focus of the OVC FY '24 Improving Outcomes for Child and Youth Victims of Human Trafficking Program is to improve outcomes for child and youth victims of sex and labor trafficking. Section 103 of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, passed by Congress in 2015, establishes the possibility of funding for victim-centered grants focused on creating or enhancing collaborative multi-stakeholder response to identifying and assisting child trafficking victims and investigating and prosecuting human trafficking cases involving children.

Because this work focuses on improving system responses at the state or tribal level, eligible applicants are federally recognized tribes and state government entities. While some direct services may be proposed to fill gaps, the primary focus of these funds should be on working to plan an enhanced coordinated response to addressing child and youth human trafficking at the state or tribal level. Awards are up to $1.5 million. Again, the goal of the program is to improve responses and outcomes for youth victims of sex and labor trafficking through collaboration at the statewide or tribal jurisdiction level, and to create effective changes across these systems.

As outlined in the synopsis section of the solicitation for our OVC FY 2024 Improving Outcomes for Child and Youth Victims of Human Trafficking program, eligible applicants are state governments. And for the purpose of this solicitation "state" means any state of the United States, including the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Native American tribal governments and federal--that are federally recognized are also eligible to apply.

If you are a nonprofit or a private foundation, you are not eligible for this award and you should contact your state or your tribal jurisdictional partners to see if they are interested in applying. However, please note that nonprofits can be subawardees. Grantees awarded funding in Fiscal Year '21, '22, or '23 under the Improving Outcomes for Child and Youth Victims of Human Trafficking solicitation are not eligible to apply for funding under this solicitation unless the new program proposal outlines new services, cost items, or a distinct geographic scope not included in the original application.

OVC will consider applications under which two or more entities would carry out the federal award. However, only one entity may be the applicant for the solicitation. Any

others must be proposed as subrecipients. You can see the application resource guide for additional information on subawards.

As noticed [noted] previously, because this is a statewide or a jurisdiction wide program, the lead agency must demonstrate that it has the expertise and the organizational capacity to successfully undertake such an initiative that involves significant collaboration with other agencies and it must demonstrate that it has partners supporting the effort. As a result, there can be variability in the type of state agencies managing these grants. Current and past examples of lead age--lead state agency recipients include, but are not limited to, the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, the Office of the Attorney General, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Youth Services, the Department of Community Based Services, and the Department of Justice.

The objectives of this program are outlined on this slide and on pages 9 and 10 of the solicitation. And they include developing a jurisdiction-wide strategy that tackles the greatest identified challenge, developing protocols and procedures within and across systems to ensure services, strengthening data collection and information sharing, developing a unified strategy to provide training for professionals across the jurisdiction, identifying and filling gaps in service, and coordinating response in existing youth-serving efforts.

Given the different stakeholders, geographic and demographic makeup, laws, and availability of services, this program is unique in that it allows states and tribes to propose a unique and tailored program to address the challenges they face. While each state or tribe may approach the issue of human trafficking somewhat differently and may choose to engage varying partners, all applications should address both the needs of sex and labor trafficking for child and youth victims in their jurisdiction. Strategies that address the identified challenges and barriers proposed may include, but are not limited to, multidisciplinary teams; task forces; steering committees; screening and identification; research, evaluation, and data systems; enhanced investigation and prosecution; needs assessments or resource mapping; training and outreach; and policies, practices, and guidelines.

We also recommend you carefully review the mandatory program requirement components in OVC's anti-trafficking solicitations, specifically the federal civil rights law that prohibits recipients from funding--from discriminating in this delivery of services, specific guidance to strengthening the response to labor trafficking, new guidance to ensure access for male victims, recommendations on how to better involve individuals with lived experiences in programs, OVC's expectation that its grantees will engage in practices that remove barriers to receiving services and support survivor autonomy, additional new guidance on privacy and confidentiality, and finally, guidance for OVC-funded programs serving children and youth that specify that services must be tailored to ensure that they are developmentally appropriate, culturally responsive, victim-

centered, and trauma-informed. In addition, OVC encourages the use of shared decision-making model and other evidence-based and evidence-informed practices.

In support of the 2021 Advancing Racial Equity Executive Order, OJP will provide priority consideration when making award decisions to the following. Under Priority Area 1A, applications that propose projects that are designed to promote racial equity and the removal of barriers to access and opportunity for communities that have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by inequality. Under Priority Area 1B, applicants that demonstrate that their capabilities and competencies for implementing their proposed projects are enhanced because they, or at least one proposed subrecipient that will receive at least 40% of the requested funding and demonstrated in the application budget, identify as [a] culturally specific organization. More information is available in the solicitation. Please be sure to note in your applications Abstract if you are requesting either priority consideration.

We also encourage you to closely review the solicitation guidance on pages 18 and 19 around Capabilities and Competencies. As stated previously, the lead agency must demonstrate that it has the expertise and organizational capacity to successfully undertake a statewide or tribal jurisdiction initiative that involves significant collaboration with other agencies, and it must demonstrate that it has the partners supporting this effort. Furthermore, the narrative should describe how the identified coordinator will be empowered to lead a multidisciplinary collaborative effort across many existing systems and with a diverse range of stakeholders.

Deliverables for this program are listed on pages 20 and 21 and include a written strategic plan and a training plan, documentation of lessons learned, written protocols and procedures, outreach and awareness materials, as well as submission of regular performance reports.

Okay. So now that we have a better understanding of the intent of the program, I'm going to jump into the application process overview. Again, this is a reminder that I will not be covering the specific mechanics of applying, but rather provide you an overview of the process itself.

Here you can find a quick overview timeline of the steps prior to submission through funding of the award. Before submitting an application, all applicants must register or be registered with the System for Award Management, known as SAM, and apply for a Unique Entity Identifier, also known as a UEI. You must renew and validate your registration every 12 months. If you do not renew your SAM registration, it will expire and an expired registration can cause delays or prevent application submission in Grants.gov and JustGrants. Registration and renewal can take up to 10 business days to complete, so be sure to get started early. Delays are also being experienced by entities that have changed their legal business name or their physical address. There have been extensive delays with the entity validation service process in SAM and you

should not wait until the last minute. So if you haven't already done so, please register with SAM.gov as soon as possible.

Once you have confirmed you have your Unique Entity Identifier from SAM.gov, the process of submitting an application begins in Grants.gov. Once you locate this funding opportunity in Grants.gov, you will submit an SF-424 and an SF-LLL in Grants.gov. You must submit these required documents by the Grants.gov deadline to be considered. For the deadline, we suggest you try to submit at least 72 hours prior to provide you with enough time to correct any errors and to resubmit if necessary. It is okay to enter preliminary information into Grants.gov if you haven't fully determined your budget or your project scope. You will be able to edit and update all of your entries in JustGrants.

Once the application has been submitted and validated in Grants.gov, it will then be sent to JustGrants for completion. It may take several days for Grants.gov to complete validation and release it to JustGrants. The rest of your application is entered in JustGrants. Your entity information is populated based on entries made in SAM.gov and is--and used in Grants.gov. And JustGrants streamlines the process by allowing the ability to use web-based budget detail worksheets. Streamlined validation of your budget makes the process of clearing your new budget much faster. The JustGrants submission should include all items that are required on the solicitation and they are all final. DOJ expects to award grants and notify successful applicants no later than September 30th, 2024, and the start date of all projects should be on or after October 1st, 2024. Please note that successful applicants cannot begin working on the award until the budget has been reviewed and approved by OJP.

To meet the basic minimum requirements to advance to peer review and receive consideration for funding, your application must have these elements: the SF-424 and SF-LLL submitted in Grants.gov; the Proposal Abstract submitted in JustGrants; the Proposal Narrative, which should include the description of the issue, statement of the problem, the project design and implementation, the capabilities and competencies, and the plan for collecting the data for the solicitation performance measure all in JustGrants; and the Budget Web-Based Form, including the budget detail and the budget narrative is also submitted in JustGrants. Remember, if you fail to submit any of these required documents, your application will not be considered for funding, so please be sure to double check.

The applicant must complete the JustGrants Budget Web-Based Form. In the budget, applicants should break out their costs to reflect a 36-month total of the project activity. For additional information, you can see the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide and complete the application in JustGrants Budget Training. And there is a JustGrants training available on the application submission, Completing the [A] Budget Detail Form.

This OVC anti-trafficking solicitation requires a 25% cash or in-kind match. In other words, federal funds awarded under solicitations requiring match may not cover more than 75% of the total cost of the project being funded. There's more information in the

solicitation including a formula that you should use to determine the match--the amount of match required for your project. Note that the 25% match is calculated as 25% of the total project budget, including matching funds. It is not 25% of the amount you are requesting for a federal award. We often see applicants who are confused by this and who accidentally underestimate match because they do not use the match formula in the solicitation. So please review the solicitation carefully. You can find the formula on page 23 of the solicitation and that will show you how to calculate the match.

Please be sure to also review all unallowable costs listed on pages 21 and 22 of the solicitation. These include holding beds, providing stipends or incentives to participants [participate] in services, and any primary prevention activities.

We also recommend you carefully review all required attachments for the solicitation. This includes resumes, memorandums of understanding, time-task plans, and program logic models. Those required attachments can be found on pages 24 and 25 of the solicitation.

The application checklist at the end of each solicitation will list other documents to include. Use the checklist in your review prior to submitting your application to ensure you have attached all the documents necessary. Other resources to aid you in developing your application include the DOJ Application Submission Checklist, the JustGrants quick reference about application attachments, and there's a larger application submission job aid covering potential attachments that you may be asked to provide. You can find all of those links in the chat.

Now, we will explore the different resources available to you and information on the different systems you will touch in your application. So if you want to learn more about OVC's history and funding, you can find products and register for upcoming events in the OVC website. [https://www.ovc.ojp.gov]

A good starting point for applicants is the DOJ Grants Financial Guide, which serves as a primary reference manual to assist OJP, OVW, and COPS office award recipients and fulfilling their fiduciary responsibility to safeguard grant funds and ensure funds are being used for the purposes for which they are awarded. [https://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/index.htm] It compiles a variety of laws, rules, and regulations that affect the financial and administrative management of your award. References to the underlying laws and regulations have been provided in the guide as much as possible. This guide should be the starting point for all recipients and subrecipients of DOJ grants and cooperative agreements in ensuring the effective day-to-day management of awards. The top 10 topics in the guide are listed here on the slide and include items such as financial management systems, allowable costs, unallowable costs, federal financial reports, among others. And there's a link in the chat for you to lead you to the DOJ Grants Financial Guide as well.

The Office of Justice Programs Grant Application Resource Guide provides guidance to assist OJP grant applicants in preparing and submitting the application for OJP funding. [https://www.ojp.gov/funding/apply/ojp-grant-application-resource-guide] It addresses a variety of policies, statutes, and regulations that apply to many, or in some cases all OJP program applicants or to grants and cooperative agreements awarded in Fiscal Year 2024. Some OJP programs may have program solicitations that expressly modify a provision in this guide. And in such cases, the applicant is to follow the guidelines in the solicitation to any and such expressly modified provision. So please be sure to always check your solicitation as that will have the ultimate guidance for this specific award.

As we discussed earlier, before submitting an application you must register with the System for Award Management known as SAM, and you have to renew and validate your registration every 12 months. So remember to get started early as there are some delays or it takes a few business days to get this process done. You can find the link for SAM.gov in the chat. [https://SAM.gov] Once you're all done with SAM.gov, again, you proceed to Grants.gov. Under the applicants tab, you will find training and information on applying the Grants.gov system and the funding opportunity process.

Please be aware that all OJP solicitations have two deadlines that must be met to be considered for funding. The first is in Grants.gov and then a few days to a few weeks later, you will need to submit your full application in JustGrants. Once you submit in Grants.gov, please keep an eye out for an email confirming you have successfully submitted. If you do not successfully submit in Grants.gov, you will not be able to complete your JustGrants application.

The next system you will use is JustGrants, and JustGrants is intended to be an end-to-end grant management system that applicants and grantees will access and use throughout the grant cycle, from application to award closeout. [https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov] And JustGrants offers training resources on the DOJ website. You can explore the resources by topic. Typically, you will find an in-depth Job Aid Reference Guide that provides step-by-step instructions with screenshots about a process and short step-by-step videos which are meant to be used while you are working, and it can really help if you're in the middle of a JustGrants task and you just need to verify next steps. You will also find quick reference guides that will walk you through step-by-step through each specific task.

Two quick reference guides related to the application submission are the application attachments quick reference guide and printing an application quick reference guide. Additionally, JustGrants offers live sessions each week on four topics, such as JustGrants Office Hours on Application Mechanics, which again, take place every Wednesday from 2:30 to 4:00 Eastern Time. These live virtual sessions discuss everything you need to know on how to submit an application. We've listed the next two sessions here on this slide and you can find future sessions by clicking the link in the chat. [https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/training/training-virtual-sessions] Other topics

covered on different days include entity management on Tuesdays, award acceptance on Thursday, which is helpful for after you've been notified of an award, and even post-award management on Mondays. Again, please be sure to start your application in JustGrants as soon as possible to confirm you have access and do your best to submit your application well before the due date. OJP will only accept late applications if the applicant can demonstrate that there is a technical reason that you could not submit, so you will want to ensure that you have plenty of time to address any technical issues you may encounter.

Finally, I want to leave you with some important contact information. JustGrants provides technical assistance on submitting the full application; they can be reached by phone at the number listed on the screen [833-872-5175] or by email to JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov. When contacting any of these system help desks, please be sure to request a tracking number so that you can document that you sought assistance with your issue. This, again, is important in the event you need to document that you had a technical issue that prevented you from submitting your application.

The OJP Response Center is available to provide technical assistance and answer questions about programmatic requirements of the solicitation. They can be reached by phone at 800-851-3420 or email to grants@ncjrs.gov.

If you are a current grantee, we appreciate you understanding that your grant manager and other OVC staff cannot answer questions about an open solicitation directly. For purposes of fairness and transparency, if you reach out to us, we will have to refer you back to the OJP Response Center so that your question can be documented and addressed officially.

Finally, please keep in mind that the OJP Response Center is also who you need to contact within 24 hours of the Grants.gov or JustGrants solicitation deadlines should you experience any technical issues that prevented your application submission. Keep in mind you will need to be able to document any technical issues, which is why starting your application early and maintaining any tracking numbers, if you have reported an issue, is critical.

You can go social with OVC and stay up to date with any news and happening by following us on these social media websites. And again, thank you for your time and for your attention today. We are now going to take your questions, and I'll turn it over to Lindsay to answer any questions that may be in the chat or in the Q&A feature.

LINDSAY WALDROP: Thank you so much, Natalia. I really love one of the points that you made at the end, just reiterating that unfortunately, we are not able to answer questions outside of what's in the solicitation, so we may be continuing to refer you back to the solicitation, but that's the best we could do. But we would love to answer any questions that were not addressed or that we think we can help with at this time. So I'm

going to back and read through a few that were dropped into the chat during the presentation.

I had a question about eligibility and county governance. And again, per this solicitation, the lead applicant must be a state government due to the statewide scope of the project, or a Native American tribal government and their jurisdiction-wide scope.

So the second question is also related to eligibility, and whether the state government could be a pass-through. And again, we welcome more than one applicant, however, the primary must be the pass-through. An application should look for success at a statewide level with those partners.

And again, I've gotten a question about particular services or particular ways that the project might be applied, and again, we're just not allowed to answer those, so please make sure you send your questions to the OJP Response Center by phone at 1-800-851-3420 or at their email, grants@ncjrs.gov.

"What is the most common barrier hiccups you see for applicant?" That is a reflective question of a grant monitor. I think, as Natalia said, sometimes the mechanics can trip people up or just making sure they're hitting all those steps, so that's why I think we really encouraged you to attend those separate JustGrants mechanics trainings. But that is a personal opinion.

We just got a question in, saying "At the state level we're not allowed to solicit contractors outside of our bidding process. What documentation do you need of partnerships with nonprofits or multidisciplinary partners with who would receive the funding?" I can pull it quickly from the solicitation and tell you what page is that information would be on, but it would be an MOU or a letter of support. An MOU if there is funding or a letter of support for organizations if there's no funding going to. That should be towards the end of the solicitation in the--what needs to go in that section.

And next question, do--oops. "Do successful applicants need to include all objectives listed or some?" I would just reference reading very carefully the sections about objectives to make sure that--the way it's written but it should be written, "These are the objectives of the solicitation."

Next question we're reading is, "If the state is in the process of drafting law enforcement curriculum and if the curriculum covers children, youth, and adults, would a staff person working under grant be able to work on the curriculum?" And again, I can't really answer particulars about allowability or sort of how it would look in your community, so please reach out to the email that was provided.

And then there was a question about--there's a question about population-specific, "Would young people with system experience foster care, justice system, et cetera?"

Yes, that is the systems that we have seen in the project that are being touched through previous projects.

DARYL FOX: Lindsay, there was a couple questions directed in the chat about just the due dates, the two specific separate ones. I'm going to go through that slide if you wanted to just, kind of, discuss that on the Grants.gov and JustGrants for them.

LINDSAY WALDROP: Okay, I agree. Natalia, did you want to go back on any of this? Again, just a reminder about the--their information is due in Grants.gov on April 8th and then everything final is due in JustGrants on April 22nd. Is that correct, Natalia?

NATALIA AGUIRRE: That's correct, Lindsay. So on Grants.gov, the deadline is April 8th, 2024, at 11:59, and on there you would submit your SF-424 and SF-LLL. And you will submit preliminary budget and project scope, and then you submit all final documents on April 22nd, 2024, at 8:59 PM Eastern, and that's on JustGrants.gov, and that includes your final budget, all of your attachments, your program narrative, your abstract, all of that information. And I will pull up the one slide that kind of--and maybe Daryl you can pull up slide 20 for folks that I think gives a good overview of those pieces. Thank you.

LINDSAY WALDROP: Thank you, Natalia. And we got a question about, "Are proposed projects required to do comprehensive screening for trafficking?" And you will note in the section information--or the information about sort of what the project is intended to do, in the solicitation it says that each state develops its own model, they identify their own gaps, and their own response. So I--you can look in there and know specifics about requirements and your plan.

The next question, "Are foreign nonprofits eligible?" And again, per the solicitation, they need to be US state governments or tribal jurisdictions, and that could include US territories.

There is a question about accessing budget templates or time and task templates outside of JustGrants portal. Are they on the OVC website somewhere? I don't believe we have application templates available. However, again, you can look on JustGrants to see what's required and needed for that system.

I got a great question about, "If we apply for this solicitation, does it disqualify us from applying for other open OVC or OVW solicitations?" And it certainly does not. You are welcome to apply for more than one.

Okay. Well, I think that would conclude us for the day. Thank you so much, Natalia, for that great information, and I think, just a final reminder that if people do have questions that you think about after the call or during the application process, please contact the OJP Response Center or if you need technical assistance, please contact JustGrants.

DARYL FOX: Great. So on behalf of the Office for Victims of Crime and our panelists, we want to thank you for joining today's webinar. This will end today's presentation.