

**Memorandum of Understanding between
Webb County and Casa de Misericordia Domestic Violence Shelter
for a Grant Application to the Office on Violence Against Women
(OVW) FY 2017 to Improve Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual
Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and
Stalking Grant Program**

WHEREAS, Webb County—including through the Webb County Sheriff's Office—which assumes the responsibility for the development and implementation of the proposed grant project, and Casa de Misericordia Domestic Violence Shelter have come together to collaborate and to make an application OVW Fiscal Year 2017 Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking grant program; and

WHEREAS, the partners listed below have agreed to enter into a collaborative agreement in which Webb County will be the lead agency and named applicant and the Casa Misericordia Domestic Violence Shelter will be a partner in this application; and

WHEREAS, the partners herein desire to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding setting forth the services to be provided by the collaborative; and

WHEREAS, the application prepared and approved by the collaborative through its partners is to be submitted to the Office on Violence Against Women on or before February 16, 2017;

I) Description of Partner Agencies

Webb County, a local unit of government, has existed in South Texas with its county seat as Laredo, Texas, since its establishment by the Texas legislature in 1848.

Since that time, the Webb County has continually sought to provide safety and protection of all its citizens, especially victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

Established in 1998, Casa de Misericordia is a domestic violence shelter that assists victims of domestic violence with safety planning; information and referral; legal, medical and other forms of advocacy; shelter; crisis hotline; counseling and support groups; educational and life skills classes; and community presentations and education.

II) History of Relationship

Whereas the Webb County, including the Sheriff's Office, and Casa de Misericordia have worked together to address the issues of domestic violence for over nineteen (19) years; and

Whereas, the Webb County and Casa de Misericordia have worked in close collaboration since 2004;

Whereas, the Webb County and Casa de Misericordia have previously successfully applied for and managed grants together.

Whereas, the Webb County and Casa de Misericordia meet on a monthly basis;

Whereas, a senior management member of the Webb County Sheriff's Office also serves on Casa de Misericordia's board of directors.

III) Development of Application

Whereas Webb County—through the Webb County Sheriff's Office—developed the full grant application; and

Whereas the Webb County—through the Webb County Sheriff's Office—approached Casa de Misericordia with the proposal to partner for the successful submission of a grant application to the Office on Violence Against Women; and

Whereas, Casa de Misericordia participated in the development of the application by procuring letters of support, providing its budgetary needs, submitting a budget narrative, enlisting support from other service providers, and agreeing to enter into a formal MOU.

IV) Roles and Responsibilities

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby agreed by and between the partners as follows:

- 1) Webb County will serve as the lead applicant with the Webb County Judge serving as the authorized official in all items pertaining to this grant and handling all grant paperwork and management functions through all proper and appropriate divisions, including but not limited to the Webb County Sheriff's Office, the Webb County Auditor's Office, the Webb County Administrative Services, and the Webb County Purchasing Department. Casa de Misericordia will provide the appropriate and necessary paperwork for grant compliance through its partnership, including time sheets and other reimbursement paperwork.
- 2) Through grant funding, Webb County will provide an investigator that will be specifically and exclusively assigned to assist victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Furthermore, through its local budget, the Webb County Sheriff's Office will be providing said investigator with uniform, firearm, office space, vehicle, fuel/mileage, and other needed supplies, as necessary.
- 3) Casa de Misericordia will provide legal advocacy to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking including: working with victims to establish goals, helping victims explore and access available resources, safety planning, information and referral, court accompaniment, immigration advocacy, when available pro bono attorney referrals. Casa de Misericordia will leverage its resources for legal advocacy, including pro bono attorney referrals.
- 4) The Webb County and Casa de Misericordia will collaborate in the following manner: assistance to victims of domestic violence, expeditious investigation of domestic violence incidents, facilitation of legal representation/advocacy by third parties, timely submission of required grant reporting, timely submission of reimbursement request documentation; and any other applicable grant items.
- 5) The planning/development team for the Webb County includes Webb County Sheriff's Office Assistant Chief Wayo "Eduardo" Ruiz, Webb County Sheriff's Office Assistant Chief J.J.

Rendon, Investigations Division; Sgt. Investigator Silvia Morales, Special Victims Investigator; OVW-funded investigator Victor David Nenque; Ms. Claudia Lopez, Grants Account Supervisor, Webb County Auditor's Office; Ms. Esmeralda Melendez, Webb County Sheriff's Office Crime Victim Advocate; and Anita L. Guerra, Webb County Sheriff's Office Grant Writer. The planning/development team for Casa de Misericordia includes Ms. Maria E. (Nena) Arambula, Administrator and Grants Manager; Karen Pfitzer Martinez, Shelter Manager/Data Specialist; and Sister Rosemary Welsh, Casa de Misericordia Executive Director. These planning and development team members work extremely closely and regularly within their respective organizations both for the general administrative and management functions and for specific grant initiatives. Moreover, members of both organizations work with each other's organization on an on-going basis in a cooperative and genuinely mutually beneficial basis. Members of both management teams will work together and with grant-funded project staff to ensure to meet all necessary grant requirements in a timely manner, including an implementation and close-out meeting.

- 6) Furthermore, the Webb County and Casa de Misericordia are committed to work together in a collaborative manner for planning, developing, implementing, and successfully achieving grant goals and activities and, furthermore, to work to sustain the project once grant funds are no longer available.

V) Timeline

The roles and responsibilities described above are contingent on Webb County receiving funds requested for the project described in the OVW grant application. Responsibilities under this Memorandum of Understanding would coincide with the grant period, anticipated to start on 10/01/2017 and continue on for a minimum period of thirty-six (36) months.

VI) Commitment to Partnership

- 1) The collaboration service area includes Webb County, including the cities of Laredo, Rio Bravo, El Cenizo; rural communities of Aguilares, Bruni, Mirando, and Oilton; and 47 colonia communities.
- 2) The partners agree to collaborate and provide legal advocacy to victims of domestic violence pursuant to the program narrative of the grant application attached to this agreement.
- 3) Compensation for Casa Misericordia Domestic Violence Shelter's contribution to this project will be provided as outlined in the attached OVW budget detail worksheet.
- 4) We, the undersigned have read and agree with this MOU. Further, we have reviewed the proposed project and approve it.

Signed by:

Signed by:

Tano E. Tijerina
Webb County Judge
Webb County

Sr. Rosemary Welsh, RSM, RN,
Executive Director
Casa de Misericordia

Date:

Date: