

Justice System Sector Series 2013



Law Enforcement Guide to Safety and Economic Security for Victims of Violence Against Women



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About the Economic Security for Survivors Project and WOW

Recognizing that survivors' safety and their economic security are inextricably linked, the Economic Security for Survivors (ESS) Project promotes strategies that foster economic security within the justice system and in partnership with the non-profits that serve survivors. Established in 2010, the ESS project provides resources, education, training and technical assistance to transitional housing programs, direct service providers, state and local governments, and the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)'s Services Training Officers Prosecutors (STOP) Grant Program. For more information, visit <http://www.wowonline.org/economic-security-for-survivors/>

Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) works nationally and in its home community of Washington, DC to build pathways to economic independence and equality of opportunity for America's women and girls. Since 1964, WOW has helped women learn to earn with programs emphasizing quality jobs, gender equity and economic security across the lifespan. Recognized nationally for its training models, technical assistance and advocacy, WOW redefines what women and families need to be economically secure throughout their lifetimes. WOW remains integrally involved in national policy debates, and works closely with state partners to advocate on the state level. For more information, visit www.wowonline.org.

About the Justice System Sector Series and the Law Enforcement Guide

In 2012, the ESS Project released the [Economic Security and Safety Guide for the STOP Grant Program](#). It outlines strategies for the four STOP Sectors (law enforcement, prosecutors, courts and victim advocates) to improve victim economic security through the 14 STOP program purpose areas (PPAs). Building on this tool, the ESS project is producing the *Justice System Sector Series* of four guides for Law Enforcement, Prosecutors, Courts and Advocates. The goal is to provide information and support to these key groups so that they may better support a victim's economic security. Based on research, model policies from leading organizations and focus group meetings with key stakeholders, these user-friendly Guides provide specific suggestions and tools to address economic security within the existing job responsibilities of sector professionals at all levels.

The first installment is the ***Law Enforcement Guide to Safety and Economic Security for Victims***. The Law Enforcement Guide explores the role of officers in helping victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking both recover from violence and be safer in the future through economic security. It highlights how officers can improve victim economic security in their work both individually and in collaboration with other sectors. The orange boxes contain checklists for specific actions officers can take and **questions for officers to ask victims** that relate to their economic security. It also provides training guidelines, policy recommendations and a Law Enforcement Pocket Guide. Because each jurisdiction will be different, the recommendations may need to be tailored for the community's needs. The **primary audience** is law enforcement officers, supervisors and executives, and trainers. The **secondary audience** is STOP administrators, other justice system professionals and community advocates.

This is a process. While economic security work has important impacts for individuals, it may take time to see larger systemic changes.

Executive Summary

The safety of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking is inextricably linked to their economic security. Law enforcement can better protect victims and prevent future harm by understanding this link and its connection to the work of law enforcement. As the gateway to the criminal justice system, law enforcement plays a critical role in protecting the economic security of victims whether through collecting evidence, arresting for economic crimes or enforcing court orders. The **Law Enforcement Guide** outlines the economic issues facing victims and details the steps that law enforcement can take to address those issues. Rather than suggesting extra work, most of the recommendations in this Guide simply add an economic lens to activities that officers already do. The Guide contains **sections for law enforcement professionals at every level**, from tools for first responders to recommendations for supervisors and policy suggestions for executives.

Beyond the benefit to victims, considering economic security can make the intervention of each officer more effective, improve the success of the justice system and enhance community safety.

- Documenting costs and economic crimes will help **hold perpetrators accountable** for all crimes they commit by strengthening prosecution.
- Addressing economic security will help victims stay safer, ultimately **reducing the need** to call law enforcement for help in the future.
- Victims are more likely to **report additional or future crimes** if their trust in the justice system is improved by law enforcement recognizing and supporting their economic needs.

Economic security:
Having the ability to meet basic needs and save for emergencies and retirement.

The Guide begins by explaining why **law enforcement must address victim economic security** and explores the costs associated with violence against women. For example, victims may experience:

- Debt from healthcare, damaged property and security/relocation costs
- Dependency on the abuser for basic needs
- Job loss or lost wages
- Unfinished education or training
- Eviction and damaged tenant history
- Loss of personal property

In addition, **economic abuse** has long been used by abusers as a tool of power and control. Examples include the unauthorized use of finances, falsification of records and coercion into crime. These financial aspects of violence can thwart victims' ability to reestablish their life and move forward.

Chapter Two details what officers can do and ask in cases of violence against women from the initial call and follow-up investigation to the arrest. For example, officers can:

- Look for **red flags of economic abuse or dependency** at the scene, such as whether the offender took the only set of keys or credit card;
- Assess if the offender destroyed any property needed for immediate safety (getting to work/school, safe housing, paying bills, etc.); and
- Document evidence of stolen or damaged property, electronic surveillance, economic crimes and financial threats or intimidation.

Examples of Economic-Related Crimes:
*Destruction of Property
Electronic Surveillance
Forgery or Fraud
Theft or Identity Theft
Witness Intimidation*

In addition, victims will be more likely to cooperate with the investigation and trial if they are economically secure. The Law Enforcement Guide presents several ways that law enforcement can maintain that economic security by supporting the victim’s employment, education or housing. Lastly, victims will be safer if law enforcement officers check for outstanding **economic relief provisions in protection orders (POs)** when called to a scene and enforce them whenever possible.

Detailing the full scope of the violence, including economic abuse and crimes, will help the prosecution of the current case as well as inform future justice system responses. Chapter Three discusses the value of thorough **reports and forms** for the economic security of victims. Key recommendations include:

- Reports should contain all relevant economic security-related evidence and information from the investigation so that prosecutors can make informed decisions about charging and judges can order the most **appropriate sanctions**.
- Questions about economic impact should be added to existing **supplemental forms** for domestic violence and/or sexual assault.

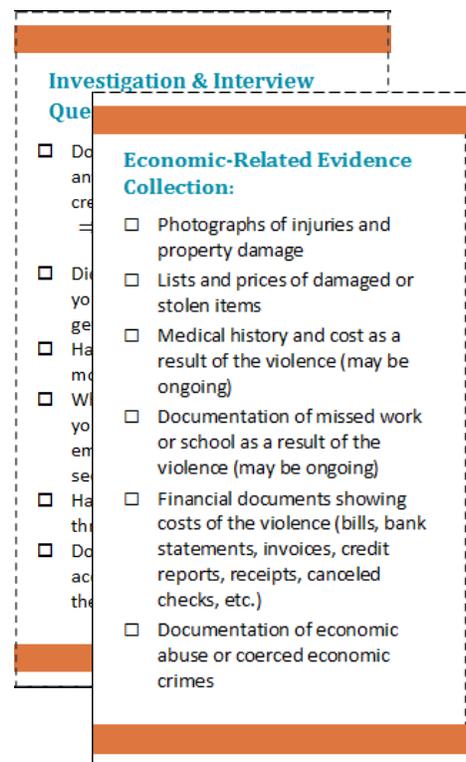
Economic security is best supported through **collaboration among justice system professionals**. Chapter Four outlines several ways that the work of law enforcement overlaps with prosecutors, judges, probation and parole officers, and advocates, and how they can support one another in addressing victim economic security. Key recommendations include:

- When available, law enforcement should partner with investigators in prosecution offices to supplement and support the **investigative work** around economic issues.
- Law enforcement can connect victims with **advocates** to identify local financial services, counsel victims on their economic relief options and support them through the justice system process.

Chapter Five offers suggestions for law enforcement supervisors and executives, as well as policymakers, to create strong and comprehensive **policies and protocols**. Key recommendations include:

- Update protocol to ask all victims questions to assess their economic security and how it has been impacted by violence.
- Mandate **training** for incoming and existing officers on the economic security needs of survivors.

The appendices of the Law Enforcement Guide contain several resources to help inform the response to victims’ economic security. The first two appendices present **training guidelines** and a case study. The **Law Enforcement Pocket Guide** in Appendix C (see excerpt to the right) is a small, user-friendly tool that can be given to responding officers and investigators. It consists of checklists for evidence collection, investigation and interview questions, and chargeable economic-related crimes. Designed for **STOP Administrators**, the final appendix recommends ways to support victims’ economic security within law enforcement by Program Purpose Area (PPA).



Introduction to Victim Economic Security and Law Enforcement

Victim Economic Security Matters for Law Enforcement

Economic insecurity makes a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking more vulnerable to harm by limiting the ability to escape or recover from violence and by increasing the [risk of injury](#). Offenders also often perpetrate economic crimes beyond physical and emotional abuse that severely undercut the economic security of their victims. The criminal justice system must view these financial issues as direct threats to a victim's safety. Adopting policies and practices that secure

Economic security means having the ability to meet basic needs and to save for emergencies and retirement.

economic justice for victims can reduce future or escalating violence and open the door to lasting independence. In domestic and dating violence, this independence may decrease the number of times a victim returns to an abuser, reducing the need for law enforcement to **continually return to the same home**. Although addressing the economic needs of victims has historically been seen as the role of social service organizations, the justice system has unique capacities to protect victims from the financial harm caused by violence in ways that service providers cannot.

Law enforcement can help keep victims economically secure through their regular job duties. As the gatekeeper to the criminal justice system, it is critical that law enforcement respond to protect the economic security of victims, whether through collecting evidence or enforcing court orders. These actions are not only necessary for the victim's safety, but can make the intervention of each officer more effective, improve the success of the criminal justice system, and enhance community safety. The following are just a few of the positive outcomes that may result from law enforcement support of economic security:

- Protecting victims' economic security can make them better able – and more likely – to cooperate and **testify in court**.
- Economic evidence and arrests for economic crimes can improve an officer's ability to **hold offenders accountable** by increasing the likelihood of successful criminal and civil court actions.
- Showing economic impacts and gathering evidence of economic crimes during the investigation allows prosecutors and judges to see the full context of the crime and **pursue the proper recourse**. For example, victims may receive needed restitution or economic relief for documented damages.
- Restitution and economic provisions in protection orders can help build future cases against offenders by showing past economic abuse or control.
- Victims will be **less vulnerable to homelessness or unemployment**, which are serious risk factors for further victimization of intimate partner and sexual violence.
- Victims are more likely to report additional or future crimes if their **trust in the justice system** is improved by law enforcement recognizing and supporting their economic security.
- **Fewer homicides, less violence and greater levels of economic security produce a safer and more stable community.**

Economic security is not the work of direct services alone. It may seem daunting, but the best interventions are things you are already doing.

Economic Security is Critical to Victim Safety

Domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking occur across all classes, races, ages and locations, yet there is a clear connection between victim safety and economic security. Economic insecurity is a key risk factor for domestic violence and sexual assault. [Low-income women](#) are more likely than middle-class women to suffer frequent or serious violence. [Nearly two-thirds](#) of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients report being abused. [Homeless women](#) are at higher risk for sexual violence, physical abuse and commercial sexual exploitation. Moreover, economic downturns make safety even more difficult for victims. One survey of domestic violence shelters revealed that [74% of victims](#) reported that they stayed with a domestic abuser longer because of economic reasons.

Beyond the increased vulnerability to harm caused by economic insecurity, violence itself can cause additional financial challenges. Victims of violence against women may experience financial consequences as a direct or indirect result of abuse. These can have a lasting impact on their ability to recover from violence, leave an abusive relationship or be independent.

Any victim of these crimes may experience:

- Job loss or lost wages
- Unfinished education or training
- Eviction and damaged tenant history
- Foreclosure or inability to pay off debt
- Damaged credit
- Loss of personal property or assets
- Inability to safely collect child support
- Dependency on abusers for basic needs

Offenders may also perpetrate economic abuses, many of which are crimes themselves, to intentionally cause the victim to be economically insecure.

What is Economic Abuse?

Domestic and dating violence abusers frequently use [economic abuse](#) to **gain power and control over their victims** and to prevent them from achieving self-sufficiency and financial independence. Because an abuser may have easy access to a victim's Social Security number, bank accounts and other personal financial information, victims are at greater risk of identity **theft and fraud***. Moreover, victims may be **coerced into financial crimes** like theft, shoplifting, or lying about finances out of a fear of violence and retribution by the abuser. Economic abuse may also take place with stalking and sexual assault. For example, a victim of sexual assault by a coworker may experience missed days of work or promotions.

Additional examples of economic abuse include:

- Compromising credit (*if through theft/misappropriation)
- Disrupting employment and/or school

The Cost of Violence Against Women

Domestic violence victims on average [lose 7.2 days of paid work each year](#), rape victims lose 8.1 days and stalking victims lose 10.1 days.

Rape can cost victims over [\\$145,000](#) in health care, lost wages and justice system costs in a lifetime.

[25% of victims](#) were asked to resign or were fired from their jobs due to stalking.

[28% of housing denial cases](#) involved domestic violence victims who were denied housing because of violence committed against them.

Victims of sexual violence or stalking at school are more likely to [drop out](#) of high school or college.

Intimate partner physical assault, rape and stalking cost society more than [\\$5.8 billion per year](#).

- Destruction of property*
- Undisclosed or forced bankruptcy (*if through theft)
- Misrepresentation about finances, thefts, documents
- Commercial sexual exploitation*
- Non-payment of debt when the abuser fails to pay or hides bills
- Conversion by claiming the victim's possessions as one's own or misusing the victim's possessions (*if it was used in a crime, was stolen or resulted in destroyed property)
- Appropriation of personal possessions by the abuser, either stolen, pawned, hidden or misused*

**If these occurred outside of an intimate relationship, they would automatically be charged as crimes.*

As a result of economic abuse, victims may experience financial consequences that have a lasting impact on their ability to heal and be safe in both the short and long term. Some possessions, like cars, uniforms and identification, can be essential to a victim gaining a job or **remaining employed**. Similarly, ruined credit reports can make renting a home, applying for college, receiving loans and even looking for a job very difficult. Ultimately, economic abuse may create a situation in which the victim is unemployed, homeless or unable to collect child support or benefits. This can cause dependence on the abuser to provide for basic needs. In addition, coerced economic crimes can lead to victims getting arrested, which places an undue burden on them while failing to hold the true offenders accountable (see page 16).

What is Violence Costing the Victim?

There is **extensive overlap between the occurrence of these crimes** as well as between the economic impacts that can take place in each. Victims may experience stalking or sexual violence within an intimate relationship, sexual assault victims may be stalked or harassed at school or work, and stalking may follow an abusive relationship or sexual assault. Each of these intersections further complicates their economic security. The following are simply a few examples to illustrate what the economic impact could look like within each crime. These examples are neither exhaustive nor exclusive.

For victims of **domestic violence**, economic security can be the single greatest factor in deciding to exit an abusive relationship. Especially for victims with children, they may consider suffering additional abuse in order to provide shelter and food for themselves and their children. Without the financial ability to leave an abuser and survive independently, a victim is at **greater risk of injury** and even death. Abusive partners frequently control resources such as vehicles, computers or phones that are necessary to escape and/or find work. They often also **control finances** like credit cards, access to bank accounts and the victim's paycheck. Lastly, domestic abusers may either prohibit or **interrupt work or school**. **Dating violence** victims can face similar controls on finances and resources, interference of work or school, and dependence.

What would you choose? Shelter and food for your kids or your own physical safety from violence?

For **sexual assault** victims, the dependency that intimate partners may share is more rare, but the economic impact of assault or rape can be just as devastating. Health care for an assault victim can be extremely costly and the full scope of **physical and mental health care** needs may not be fully known until long after the attack. Sexual assault victims may wait months or years to report the crime, reducing

Over 2/3 of rapes were committed by someone the victim knew.

Over 50% of rapes and sexual assaults took place at or within 1 mile of the victim's home.

their chances of economic relief through the court. Beyond the costs of health care and property damage, sexual assault has long-term effects on employment and education. If the assault took place at work or school, the trauma may cause victims to **resign or drop out**. If the perpetrator was an authority figure or a colleague, the potential for **continued harassment** may increase emotional harm while decreasing productivity. Even if the crime took place outside work or school, the physical and mental needs of victims may still result in the loss of a job or scholarship.

Stalking has severe and lasting economic impacts on victims. Most stalkers terrorize their victims in all aspects of their lives – at home, at work and in the community. Stalkers may gather information from victims' workplace, call or **threaten them at work**, wait in a parking lot or at a bus stop, damage or destroy property, break into their car or home, or flood them with email or text messages at work. As a result, victims may be **forced to move**, change or leave jobs, purchase expensive security systems (including surveillance cameras), change locks, cancel credit cards, and fix a stolen identity or bad credit scores. They may even have to completely **change identities**. Each of these actions can have a high cost.

What is Economic Security?

Victims who are economically secure have a greater chance of achieving immediate and future safety. As defined by WOW, economic security means having the income, assets and access to services to meet basic needs (housing, food, transportation, childcare, healthcare, household supplies and taxes), participate in the workforce and build savings over the lifespan.



WOW's Basic Economic Security Tables (BEST) Index^{TM1} finds that the greatest expenses for single adults are **housing** (\$642 per month) and **transportation** (\$516 per month). The greatest expenses for single parents are **childcare** (\$1112 per month) and housing (\$803 per month). These three large expenses – housing, transportation and childcare – are often cited as the most significant barriers that victims confront when attempting to escape violence or rebuild their lives.

From WOW's Living Below the Line report:

- **62% of women** live in economic insecurity in the US, compared to 46% of men.
- **82% of single mother families** live in economic insecurity in part due to the cost of child care.

¹ The BEST Index measures the costs of basic needs and appropriate savings for over 420 family types and at the local level. Visit www.basiceconomicsecurity.org to access data for your jurisdiction.

- **76% of Black women and 80% of Hispanic women**, who are more vulnerable to violence against women, are economically insecure.
- **32% of women** who work full-time still cannot earn enough to meet the BEST standard of economic security.

Basic Economic Security Tables, 2013

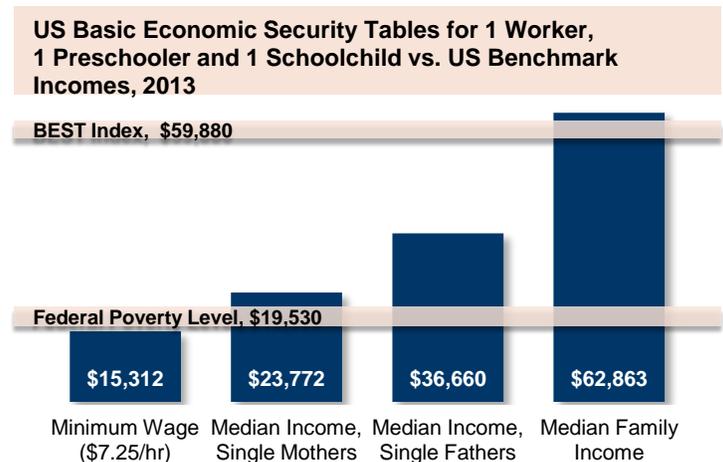
(Workers with Employment-based Benefits)

US, Selected Family Types

Monthly Expenses	1 Worker, 1 Preschooler, 1 Schoolchild		2 Workers, 1 Preschooler, 1 Schoolchild	
	1 Worker	1 Worker, 1 Infant	2 Workers	1 Worker, 1 Preschooler, 1 Schoolchild
Housing	\$642	\$803	\$642	\$803
Utilities	\$115	\$144	\$115	\$144
Food	\$264	\$379	\$484	\$765
Transportation	\$516	\$566	\$1,017	\$1,068
Child Care	\$0	\$621	\$0	\$1,112
Personal & Household	\$259	\$337	\$315	\$435
Health Care	\$161	\$329	\$374	\$540
Emergency Savings	\$76	\$122	\$112	\$183
Retirement Savings	\$87	\$87	\$102	\$102
Taxes	\$374	\$714	\$501	\$1,087
Tax Credits	\$0	-\$139	\$0	-\$267
Monthly Total (per Worker)	\$2,494	\$3,963	\$1,831	\$2,986
Annual Total	\$29,928	\$47,556	\$43,944	\$71,664
Hourly Wage (per Worker)	\$14.17	\$22.52	\$10.40	\$16.97

Moreover, many victims are either [unemployed](#) or earning too little – women make up [two-thirds of minimum wage workers](#) and the average income is \$23,638 for female heads of household²– and [social supports often fail](#) to make up the difference. This common struggle to meet even basic needs is a significant issue for victims and their ability to maintain safety. Victims of these crimes may have to forgo basic needs to cover health care or relocation costs. Intimate partner victims may reconsider leaving an abusive partner if they cannot survive on only one wage. For victims with medical needs, work interruptions or criminal records, the lack of economic security may be an overwhelming obstacle to fully recover from violence.

While it is not the role of law enforcement to help victims find better jobs, training or housing, they can still support a victim’s economic security and safety as a regular part of police work. The following chapters will detail exactly how officers and agencies can consider victim economic security throughout their daily activities.



² Calculated by WOW based on the American Community Survey.

Chapter 2: Addressing Economic Security within Core Responsibilities³

Investigation

From the initial call through the follow-up, law enforcement has very clear opportunities to uncover the economic effects of abuse during the investigation. Doing so will expand the scope and strength of the case against the perpetrator, which can increase the likelihood of keeping victims economically secure and safer. Officers routinely perform many of the recommendations in this section, but they may not realize the significant impact of these actions on economic security. Investigations of these crimes are complex and the suggestions in this Guide should not be taken as a complete list of how to investigate crimes of domestic or dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Rather, this Guide focuses chiefly on the **actions that directly or indirectly relate to economic security**.

Initial Response

Certain standard actions of dispatchers and first responders **already support victims' economic security**:

- Calling an ambulance gets the victim immediate help, which reduces complications and costs.
- Providing interpreters to limited English proficiency victims can reduce barriers to economic security by allowing the officer to ask about the [full extent of the crime](#), protecting confidentiality and [eliminating distortions](#) if an abuser or community member translates.
- Dispatchers who record verbatim any comments from the victim or another caller about damages, injuries and costs incurred can serve as evidence for restitution or economic relief.
- If given access to computerized data, dispatchers may be able to provide first responders with information to keep both the officers and the victim safe. For example, the economic toll of previous attacks on a victim, as seen through civil protection order (CPO) provisions, can show escalating violence that officers should be aware of when approaching the scene.

Dispatchers can also prepare responding officers to address economic issues. Repeated charges of stalking against the same perpetrator can alert officers to a pattern of violence and suggest the need to investigate the case in a certain way, such as looking for evidence of damage to security equipment or missed days at work.

As immediate safety is the first priority, responding officers should continue to focus on the victim's safety. Economic and financial questions should be addressed only after law enforcement has acted to keep all parties safe and has separated the individuals on scene. However, many times addressing economic security is **directly related to a victim's immediate safety**. In addition, officers should automatically inquire about the overlap of crimes, such as sexual assault or stalking within dating violence or stalking following a sexual assault, and the costs incurred by each.

Put yourself in the victim's place. What would you need to get by in an emergency? Where would you go?

³ The terminology and specific responsibilities of each job within a law enforcement agency will differ by jurisdiction. The exact response of officers should therefore be tailored to the unique organizational, legal and technological capacities of the agency.

Red Flags to Look for at the Scene	Possible Economic Implications
<input type="checkbox"/> Is the victim hesitant to let officers in the home?	A sign of concern about the landlord and fear of eviction. May also show fear of the abuser being arrested.
<input type="checkbox"/> Is the victim hesitant to have the offender arrested?	A sign of economic dependency. If the offender is in a position of power (employer, supervisor, administrator, coach, teacher, etc.), the victim may fear retaliation against their job, education or scholarship.
<input type="checkbox"/> Did the offender take or have the only car or house keys?	A sign of economic control. May prohibit the victim from going to work/school or reaching safety.
<input type="checkbox"/> Does the victim have nowhere else to go?	A sign of economic dependency and isolation. The victim may not have resources or control of finances for a hotel.
<input type="checkbox"/> Is the offender translating for a limited English proficiency victim?	A sign of economic dependency, inability to work or access health care, and control over immigration status. Huge potential for economic abuses in immigrant cases.
<input type="checkbox"/> Is the offender hesitant or unwilling to turn over their laptop or cell phone?	A sign of the offender hiding electronic surveillance, evidence of accessing the victim's bank accounts, or proof of economic crimes like theft, identity theft or forgery.
<input type="checkbox"/> Did the victim delay reporting the assault because of school?	A sign of fear that exposure of the assault would disrupt education and/or career. The offender may be someone at school or in a position of power.

First Responders: Recommended Economic-Related Questions to Ask Victims

- Does the offender currently have possession of any of your property? (Ex: Cell phone, credit cards, identification, keys, passports or visas, documents to collect benefits, etc.)
 - ⇒ If yes, retrieve these items prior to arrest and booking.
- Did the offender destroy anything necessary for your immediate safety? (Ex: Security system, locks, windows, etc.)
 - ⇒ If yes, how much will it cost to repair? Can someone cover the cost at this time?
 - ⇒ How long will it take to repair?
 - ⇒ Do you need a safe place to stay in the meantime?
 - ⇒ What is the cost of the alternative housing?
- Did the offender destroy anything that will keep you from going to work/school or paying bills?
- Do you need to notify your work or school that you may have to miss a few days? With your consent, do you need my help in any way?
- Have there been any costs associated with overlapping victimizations? (Sexual assault or stalking within domestic violence, stalking following a sexual assault, etc.)
- Is there anything that will keep you from calling for help in the future?
- Has anything gone missing or feel out of place in your home? (May indicate that a stalker has entered the residence and/or engaged in theft.)
- Do you feel unsafe at home?
 - ⇒ Do you want me to stay or help you gather any necessary items for a temporary stay away from home?
 - ⇒ Have you gathered any documents for you and your family, including social security cards, identification, passports or immigration visas? They may be needed for benefits, medical care or safety planning and leaving them with the offender may be unsafe.

Follow-Up Investigation

Officers can further explore questions about economic crimes or economic abuse during the follow-up investigation. Some questions may not have been appropriate or possible during the initial response and interview. However, economic crimes can add to the list of chargeable offenses, which may strengthen the case and the likelihood of conviction. Economic abuses or dependency can show a pattern that officers can use to help determine the predominant aggressor or document the need for restitution.

It is important to realize that victims may not recognize situations of economic abuse and stalking and so will not volunteer key information or evidence to law enforcement. As a result, officers must proactively and **routinely inquire** about them with targeted questions during the course of the investigation. While victims may not immediately know the answer to some questions about costs, it is still important for officers or advocates to ask so that victims are aware of the impacts and know to document the costs as they move forward.

At this time officers can also **inform victims of their options** for restitution, child support if relevant, and whether a CPO with economic relief is an option. Law enforcement victim witness specialists can further support victims' economic security by connecting them to community resources that can assist with economic needs. When appropriate, they can also coordinate with campus police and campus ethics boards.

Follow-Up Investigators: Recommended Economic-Related Questions to Ask Victims

- Have you had to change your routine due to the offender's conduct?
 - ⇒ What are the costs associated with that change?
 - ⇒ Has that change impacted your ability to maintain secure housing, employment or school attendance?
- Has the offender ever used finances to intimidate or threaten you?
- How has the abuse or violence impacted you economically?
 - ⇒ What out-of-pocket costs has the violence or abuse caused? (Bills, security equipment, emergency contraception, moving, etc.)
 - ⇒ Has the offender taken any of your money? Your paychecks? Other personal items?
 - ⇒ Does the offender know the passwords to your bank accounts, home or work computer, cell phone, or other technology? Did the offender threaten or force you to reveal them?
 - ⇒ Do you have access to your bank account and other finances? Does the offender?
 - ⇒ Has the offender forced you to miss work, leave your job or withdraw from school?
 - ⇒ Does the offender have keys to your home, work or car?
 - ⇒ Did the offender lie to you about your credit, bankruptcy, or bank accounts?
- Is the offender in a position of power over your job, school, scholarship or housing?
- If an immigrant, has the offender prevented you from gaining citizenship or a work visa?
- Has the offender forced you to commit any crimes, including economic crimes?
- Is there anything that will prevent you from cooperating in this investigation?
- Has the offender stalked you at the homes of friends, family, or neighbors? At your work, school or childcare provider? Across jurisdictions? What additional costs have these incurred for you?
- Are there police reports in other jurisdictions, regardless of resulting in a criminal or civil case?

Evidence Collection and Interviewing

During both the initial response and the follow-up investigation, officers can collect evidence and ask questions that will benefit the victim's economic security.

Thorough evidence collection is one of the best ways for law enforcement to preserve or improve a victim's economic security. First responders must have the economic impacts of abuse in mind from the onset and gather the necessary evidence at the scene because it will probably be quickly cleaned up or altered and may be too late to document. Other evidence may take longer to collect and will most likely be documented by the follow-up investigators.

Do not let the argument that it is "marital property" keep you from documenting damage.

While damage at the scene is usually documented merely as corroboration that an assault took place, it may also grant the victim greater access to legal recourse in the justice system. Collecting the proper evidence allows prosecutors to **request restitution** for the costs incurred by the victim. It enables judges to grant appropriate terms for a PO and **charge the offender** with every crime perpetrated.

For example:

- Evidence of physical injuries can help victims get restitution for the costs of health care, even keeping restitution open for ongoing and future health care costs from the violence.
- Evidence of damaged, destroyed or stolen property can result in court orders for the abuser to return or replace items that may be needed to maintain work, school or safe housing.
- Evidence of electronic surveillance can lead to financial relief for safety measures or relocation costs, the ability to break a lease early, and help changing banks or correcting damaged credit.

First Responders and/or Investigators: Recommended Economic Evidence Collection

- Take photographs of injuries and damaged property.
- If the injuries or property damage occurred outside, check neighboring businesses or residences for any security camera footage that may have captured it.
- Document the property in the offender's possession that belongs to the victim.
- Collect information, with corroboration from the victim, of property's value or repair cost.
- Document calls, emails, text messages and social media both at home and at work or school.
- Inquire about and collect financial documents showing related costs of the violence (bills, bank statements, credit reports, invoices, receipts, canceled checks, stolen pay checks, etc.).
- Document injuries from violence and the related health care costs.
- Obtain records of missed work or school (HR leave request forms, school attendance reports, security sign-in logs, etc.) as a result of the violence.
- Utilize forensic accounting to uncover cyberstalking/electronic surveillance, online economic crimes and identity theft. Show monitoring from the offender's work and home technology. On the victim's end, identify phone/ email spoofs, unauthorized GPS tracking and phone breaking.
- Document any measures taken by the victim to protect against violence or threats, such as security systems, moving to another residence, changing phone numbers, etc. Verify all costs of such measures (bills, receipts, bank statements, credit card reports, etc.).

Beyond serving as **witnesses** of the violence itself, certain individuals can provide information about the victim's economic insecurity as well as the economic abuses or costs inflicted by the offender. Beyond basic questions about the history of abuse or harassment that officers already routinely ask, the following inquiries may help assess the full economic impact of the violence and serve as additional evidence for economic relief.

- Employer and co-workers:
 - ⇒ Does the offender disrupt the workplace?
 - ⇒ Does the disruption impede the victim's ability to work or cause a decline in performance?
 - ⇒ Did the offender cause the victim to miss days of work?
- Neighbors:
 - ⇒ Has there been any previous law enforcement presence that might put the victim's housing stability at risk by violating lease policies against criminal involvement?
 - ⇒ Has there been property damage (broken windows or furniture, repair people, etc.)?
- Roommate:
 - ⇒ Has the landlord or housing manager threatened you or the victim with eviction due to violence, missed or late bills, or the presence of law enforcement at the home?
 - ⇒ Is the landlord or housing manager the perpetrator of the violence or harassment?
 - ⇒ Has the offender destroyed or damaged any property at home?
- School affiliates (ex. teachers/professors, administrators, classmates, Resident Assistant):
 - ⇒ Did the assault occur at school, school property or a school-sanctioned activity?
 - ⇒ Does the offender know how to access the victim's on-campus housing?
 - ⇒ Has the victim's class work or grades suffered since the assault?
 - ⇒ Is the victim's enrollment or school-based employment at risk because of the violence?
 - ⇒ What health care or economic support services has the school offered the victim?
 - ⇒ Have other students been harmed or impacted? Are other students aware of the assault? If so, how are they treating the victim?
- Offender:
 - ⇒ Do you have access to the victim's bank accounts, paychecks or other personal data?
 - ⇒ How often do you contact the victim at work?
 - ⇒ Have you threatened to fire/expel/reprimand the victim for reporting a sexual assault?
 - ⇒ Do you have any of the victim's property in your possession?

• • •
*79.6% of female
rape victims were
raped before the age
of 25.*
• • •

While necessary and often beneficial, these interviews may also have **unintended consequences**. Interviewing employers, coworkers or landlords who do not know about the crime could get the victim fired, evicted, or harassed and retaliated against at school or work. Each of these repercussions may severely damage the victim's economic security. They may also reduce the victim's willingness to work with law enforcement in the current case or in the future. Discussing these concerns with the victim first and **planning strategically** could mitigate the negative impacts.

Arresting

When making an arrest for crimes committed, officers can strengthen the case against the perpetrator by also documenting the full range of crimes that can be charged by prosecutors. Including the proper evidence in reports for all criminal acts related to the abuse will allow the offender to be tried for each and the victim to receive complete economic relief and restitution. In addition, if there is insufficient evidence of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking, arresting for an economic crime may still enable the offender to be held accountable. The specific statute of each crime and the arrest protocol may vary by jurisdiction.

This is not “piling on,” these are separate crimes. Offenders will feel empowered if you do not see the whole picture and they are ultimately let off.

Crimes with economic impacts or links to economic abuse include, but are **not limited to**, the following:

Crime	Impact on Economic Security
Breaking and Entering	Offenders can damage property or disable safety measures, leaving the victim vulnerable to theft or harm. Their crime may also increase the victim’s and other dependents’ anxiety/mental health care needs and require relocation.
Destruction of Evidence	Offenders can destroy evidence of economic crimes or documentation of the cost of the abuse (bills, photos, messages, etc.). They can also destroy evidence of economic threats that may constitute witness intimidation.
Destruction of Property/ Property Damage	Offenders may damage or destroy property, leaving the victim to pay to replace it. The offender’s damage may also keep the victim from work or school if the item was a mode of transportation, a computer or identification.
Electronic Surveillance	Offenders can determine the victims’ location, identification and/or financial account information. Offenders can verify if victims call for help and then either destroy economic evidence or economically intimidate victims. It can involve cell phone hacking, GPS or other technology at home or work.
Forgery	Offenders can forge paychecks or tax forms and open bank accounts or credit cards in the victim’s name.
Fraud	Offenders can commit benefit, tax, credit card, medical or employment fraud. Each can have lifelong impacts on a victim’s credit that is costly to repair and can hinder getting a job, loan or home.
Harassment	Offenders’ harassment can result in mental health costs for victims and expenses for safety planning or changing a regular routine. It can take place at work or school and can result in their interruption.
Identity Theft	Offenders can cause long-term damage to victims’ credit history, costs to change financial accounts and stolen resources.
Reckless or Negligent Injury	Offenders can cause costly physical and mental health care needs or inhibit victims from performing their jobs, resulting in lost wages or termination.
Stalking with Technology or Cyber-Stalking	Offenders may force victims to replace phones or computers, pay for security measures, change passwords or banks, or repair credit. Offenders may stalk at work or school. They can be separate crimes from stalking (see page 8).
Strangulation (Choking)	It often goes unrecognized and untreated by both the victim and first responders, resulting in costly health care needs or death. It is also a measure of increased risk and often leads to much more serious and costly harm.

Theft/ Robbery/ Larceny	Offenders may steal to get information or access to the victim with stalking, occur alongside a sexual assault or be used as economic abuse. In some economically abusive relationships, offenders may steal the victim's wages.
Trespassing	Offenders can trespass at the victim's home, work, property or that of family or friends. It may require buying security equipment, relocating or lost wages.
Threats	Offenders can threaten to kill or severely harm the victim, themselves or family members in order to get the victim to turn over financial documents, property or money. Minors may be especially vulnerable to threats.
Witness Intimidation or Threats	Offenders can threaten to get victims expelled/fired, to stalk them or to inflict costly harm to keep them from testifying or cooperating with police. Abusers can intimidate victim witnesses with economic threats to leave them destitute, destroy their property, not pay child support, disrupt school/work and interfere with immigration.

Though the arrest of a perpetrator can be important to preserve a victim's economic security, there are times when the opposite is true. An officer will have to make an arrest if there is probable cause that a crime was committed, but it is important to be aware of the economic reasons why a victim might not want this to occur. In any of these crimes, the offender may be in a position of power, which could cause the victim to **fear retaliation or job loss**. In a domestic or dating violence case specifically, the victim may be financially dependent on the offender, may fear retaliation, deportation or legal involvement, and may fear losing child support if the offender goes to jail and cannot work. Additionally, the most dangerous time for a victim of domestic or dating violence is during separation. A victim who is trying to leave may fear that an arrest could exacerbate the abuser and cause severe injuries or death. This underscores the value of **connecting victims to advocates** who may be able to mitigate these concerns.

Alternatively, wrongfully arresting the victims themselves, such as through **dual arrest**, can be extremely damaging to their economic security. While the number of dual arrests is [comparatively small](#), the economic impacts on a victim are vast with both short and long-term costs:

- Attorney fees, court costs and bail
- Loss of custody and/or child support
- Loss of a job or a scholarship
- Loss of welfare and services eligibility
- Eviction from housing
- Deportation or loss of visa
- Reduced credibility to get restitution, crime victim compensation and economic provisions within CPOs
- Life-long barriers to working and housing due to a criminal record, even without conviction

• • •
 26-27% of [same-sex cases](#) result in dual arrest versus 0.8% of male offender/female victim and 3% of female offender/male victim cases.
 • • •

Wrongfully arresting the victim or arresting the victim for acting in **self-defense** or for **coerced crimes** also impedes recovering from the costs of abuse and remaining economically secure. To prevent such damaging arrests, law enforcement must take steps to identify the predominant aggressor. Among many other considerations, officers can **use economic-related indicators** such as economic threats, economic dependency, economic abuse, or prior court orders of restitution and economic relief to identify the predominant aggressor and make an arrest decision.

Continued Support and Enforcement of Court Orders

Law enforcement officers are more likely to have a stronger case, and thus successful conviction of the perpetrator, when the victim is **willing and able to cooperate** with the investigation and trial. For example, officers will be better able to gather the appropriate evidence with the victim's assistance and will be more likely to ultimately close their cases if the victim is willing to testify in court. Such full participation in the case may require victims to be financially stable. This means having reliable **housing** and steady **employment** that allows them to take care of their food, shelter, health care and child care needs. There are simple steps officers can take to support these basic economic needs.

Beyond the Investigation: Recommendations to Support Victims' Economic Security

- ❑ Call or write letters **with the victim's consent** to the victim's school, landlord and/or employer to keep the victim economically secure during the justice system process.
 - ⇒ Tell the employer that the victim is doing everything possible to cooperate with the justice system process and that the employer should work with you and the victim instead of losing a valuable employee. It can help explain the victim's previous behavior and why the victim may have to miss additional days.
 - ⇒ Intervene with the landlord or connect the victim with help to move out of the home.
 - ⇒ Work with the victim advocate to determine whether your state allows victims to break a lease or take time off of work to deal with criminal or civil matters.
 - ⇒ Do not give specifics of the crime to keep the victim's privacy and avoid potential discrimination.
- ❑ Coordinate with campus law enforcement for college sexual assault cases and reach out to administration about other campus accommodations such as retaking classes or changing dorms.
- ❑ Share the history of violence, uncharged economic crimes and collected evidence of costs with civil courts to help secure CPOs with economic relief, consumer protections and other actions. These will make the victim more economically stable to assist with the criminal case and prevent future criminal cases.

Officers can also consider the following ways to address some of the victim's long-term safety and economic needs. Doing so will help to reduce the amount of time and resources that the victim will require of the department in the future because the victim will be able to remain more independent of the abuse. If a documented history of dependency or economic abuse goes unattended, officers will likely see an abusive intimate relationship continue because the abuser is able to maintain economic control. As a result, officers can expect to be called to the same scene again and again.

U and T visas are strong tools that law enforcement can use to help keep immigrant victims safer and more economically secure. Immigrant victims often stay in abusive relationships, avoid reporting crimes and go without care following an assault because of fear of deportation. Additionally, immigrant victims may not be able to work legally and thus may be economically dependent on an abusive partner or offending employer. Law enforcement personnel who fill out [visa certification forms](#) will

● ● ●
[U Visa Law Enforcement
Certification Resource
Guide](#)
[Tool Kit for Law
Enforcement Use of the U
Visa](#)
● ● ●

encourage victims to participate in criminal justice processes that could lead to restitution, protection from further harm, and an increased ability to support their own economic security through work. As a result, officers may improve the results of their investigation by keeping victims economically secure and promoting their cooperation. Utilizing U and T visas may also encourage other victims to come forward, making it easier to prosecute a case and promote community safety.

Enforcement of court orders is an essential part of keeping the victim safe and establishing the victim's trust in the criminal justice system. In fact, arresting for a protection order violation decreases the chance that the abuser will assault the partner again by [30%](#), which reduces the overall cost of injury and further criminal justice system involvement.

- Officers should check for outstanding economic relief provisions in protection orders whenever called to the scene of a crime both by asking the victim and by checking computerized information systems if possible.
- If called to the scene, officers should document violations of economic provisions of protection orders and give victims a copy of the report so that they may pursue the violation in court.
- Officers can remind judges of what provisions are non-arrestable and ask them to educate victims about these as well. This can take place during sentencing or as part of ongoing communication with the courts, such as within Coordinated Community Response (CCR) teams.
- Officers can work with judges in CCRs, trainings or court hearings to craft specific, enforceable conditions. For example, conditions that involve a payment from the offender to the victim should detail the exact amount, date and time, location, and security measures for the transfer.
- Depending on the jurisdiction, officers should respond quickly if the judge orders a Writ of Assistance to recover property or documents needed to help the victim avoid possible violence.
- If a judge holds an offender in contempt for failure to comply with **restitution** orders or economic relief provisions in a protection order, officers should arrest the offender quickly so that the victim may receive the economic justice to stay safer and more independent.
- When responding to calls involving violated protection orders, officers should not arrest the victims. This will irreparably damage their long-term economic security. Victims may have “violated” the order due to economic security needs, such as getting child support or necessary property back from the offenders.

Economic relief provisions of protection orders can be almost as important as the stay-away provision for the victim's safety.

Chapter 3: Reports and Forms

Report Writing

It is critical to include all relevant economic-related evidence and information from the investigation in reports for dating/domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking cases regardless of the arrest decision. If an arrest was made, prosecutors and judges will use the information contained in the report to make decisions about **bail, charging, convicting and ordering sanctions**. Without the proper evidence documented, prosecution cannot move forward to seek economic justice. Even if an arrest was not made, the reports could be of assistance if the victim chooses and is able to file a **civil action** against the perpetrator. Reports showing evidence of a history of abuse and/or the cost of the crime can make a difference in helping a victim pursue civil remedies in family law, immigration, civil protection, torts, consumer rights, insurance and credit, housing or employment matters. Police reports can also greatly help officers classify and close cases by encouraging suitable accountability and supervision. This will benefit the victim as well as the system. For example, thorough report writing and review help ensure that cases are coded properly so that victims and prosecutors may pursue appropriate economic justice.

Including economic-related information in reports also has value beyond the immediate case.

- Linking prior arrests for economic crimes in intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking cases will demonstrate a pattern of control that the offender had over possible previous victims and likely future victims.
- Dispatchers with access to reports can inform responding officers of key economic warning signs when returning to the same scene, as economic abuses can be seen as risk-factors for escalating violence.
- Law enforcement and the judicial system use data to ensure their own proper response to crime trends, such as economic crimes, and to assess their effectiveness in addressing victim economic security.
- Reports are used by law enforcement to provide **accurate reporting of these crimes** and their impact to policy makers and the general public.

• • •
88% of departments require an [incident report](#) for domestic violence calls.

63% require officers to use a supplemental form for domestic violence calls.

Forms

Many departments are already using a **supplemental form** for domestic violence or sexual assault. Questions about economic impact should be added to these forms and routinely asked. Officers should also include on these forms whether the victim needs additional support from law enforcement or other justice system sectors to maintain their employment, housing and enrollment in school, as these are key components to remaining economically secure and safe.

Crime Victim Compensation (CVC), restitution and protection orders can be requested by filling out certain forms. Each may help victims retain or regain economic security, but may come with barriers that law enforcement can help overcome. Barriers can include different eligibility rules, unrealistic time limits, filing fees that may be able to be waived for victims, and various processes for filling them out. Officers should immediately direct victims to an advocate for direct assistance with these matters.

Chapter 4: Working with Other Justice System Sectors

Law enforcement agencies should be actively involved in CCRs or other similar groups (SARTs, DVRTs, etc.) to create a consistent and effective systems-wide response to intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking. Additionally, if the agency has special units for domestic violence or sexual assault, the unit can focus on victim economic security or consult with local experts. Regardless of an agency's CCR engagement or capacity for specific units, individual officers can get involved. There are extensive overlaps between the roles of law enforcement and other justice system sectors in addressing victim economic security and many ways that they can support each other in this important work.

Working with Prosecutors

- When available, law enforcement should partner with the investigators within prosecution offices to supplement and support each other's investigative work around economic issues.
- Police reports and forms are critical for prosecutors to decide which crimes to charge and pursue in court, especially for economic or less obvious crimes beyond violence against women.
- Law enforcement can share information that will lead to requesting more appropriate sanctions for the offender and protection provisions for the victim.

Working with Judges

- Law enforcement officers can help judges make more informed decisions by including economic impacts and evidence in their reports and by filling out the proper forms.
- While testifying in trial, officers can use economic security, dependency and damages to paint a full picture of the impact of the violence so the judge can better hold the offender accountable.
- Law enforcement can educate and work with judges to create clear and specific orders in sanctioning that are more enforceable, particularly economic orders.
- Law enforcement should be a part of any court mechanism for enforcing restitution, especially when the court is faced with limited capacity to address compliance.

Working with Probation and Parole Officers

- Law enforcement and parole/probation officers may benefit from partnerships, collaboration and coordination to hold offenders accountable, especially if facing staff and budget cuts.
- If an offender violates an economic-based condition of probation, law enforcement officers should respond quickly to enforce it in order to best protect the victim's economic security.
- Law enforcement officers can support parole officers in enforcing all protection order violations.

Working with Advocates

- Law enforcement can connect victims with advocates to identify local services, counsel victims on their relief options, make referrals on their behalf in court and support them through the justice system process, ultimately keeping them more economically secure.
- Law enforcement can provide advocates with findings and evidence to help them fill out forms for CVC, restitution and civil actions.

• • •
65% of departments formed a partnership with a community-based victim [advocate group](#).
Only **13%** have advocates working within the department.
• • •

Chapter 5: Policies and Protocols for Law Enforcement Agencies

Policies and protocols are the foundation for ensuring equal and consistent consideration of economic security within domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking cases. Considering the benefits to victims, law enforcement officers and the criminal justice system as a whole, **each department should incorporate practices** that promote economic security into existing policies. Certain state or local policies should also be adopted that will better allow agencies to address victim economic security. In addition, the following situations have particularly strong impacts on victim economic security and often need a written and enforced policy.

- In many small and/or **rural departments**, there is often less training for officers and fewer resources for victims. Officers are also more likely to know the victim and/or perpetrator, which can lead to biased responses. As a result, it is critical to create a strong policy that dictates interactions and protocol, and to enforce it evenly.
- Implementing protocol for accessing computerized data or **information sharing** between agencies can greatly benefit economic security. For example, most stalking occurs over long periods of time and across jurisdictions so it is important to share information quickly between agencies. Unfortunately, only around [40% of departments](#) have in-field access to information on POs, calls-for service history and interagency data sharing.
- Policies on **officer-perpetrated sexual misconduct, domestic violence and stalking** are needed because victims of these crimes have even more barriers to safety and security. Due to the position of law enforcement, victims are less likely to report crimes out of fear of retaliation and of not receiving a fair investigation. Therefore, they are less likely to receive restitution, protection orders and other forms of justice to keep them safe and economically secure.

• • •
[77% of departments](#)
have written procedures
for domestic violence.
Large agencies are more
likely than small ones.
• • •

Economic Policy and Protocol Recommendations for Supervisors, Executives and Policymakers

- Update protocol to ask every victim questions to assess economic security and how it has been impacted by the violence or abuse. Include as part of standard investigative services.
- Mandate training on the economic security needs of survivors for incoming and existing officers.
- Track and connect previous convictions or arrests involving economic crimes like destruction of property. Linking prior arrests shows a pattern of control over victims.
- Improve access to in-field computerized information, especially for small and rural communities, so officers can access CPOs and better engage in inter- and intra-agency information sharing.
- Promote enforcing court-ordered economic relief conditions with regards to the victim's needs.
- Advocate to change state or local policy so that officers must enforce all court order provisions.
- Review the law and practice around filing fees for CPOs and review the VAWA certification requirements regarding victims not paying for protection orders.
- Refrain from arresting victims for "violating" their own orders of protection.
- Train on identifying the predominant aggressor, particularly using economic impacts and abuse, to reduce dual and erroneous arrests that severely damage victims' economic security.
- Institute mandatory regular reviews of cases with the prosecutor to understand why certain cases were declined and where economic security could have been addressed.

Most states have separate model policies for domestic/dating violence, sexual assault and stalking and most law enforcement agencies have separate protocols for each of these crimes. As a result, it is appropriate to offer examples of economic security-related policy recommendations for each crime.

Economic Policy Recommendations by Crime⁴

	Sexual Assault	Domestic/Dating Violence	Stalking
Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Include economic threats as examples of witness intimidation in sexual assault policy. <input type="checkbox"/> Include immediate economic costs in victim impact statements, but leave it open for future costs as well. <input type="checkbox"/> Train on the unique economic impact of sexual assault, in which there often is not a relationship like stalking or domestic violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a model policy to address economic crimes and intimidation within domestic violence and share with all departments. <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct regular fatality reviews and include indicators of economic abuse and economic insecurity. <input type="checkbox"/> Add a catch-all phrase to the statutory definition of domestic violence so officers can arrest for abusive strategies beyond physical violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a model policy to deal with economic crimes and intimidation in relation to stalking. <input type="checkbox"/> Train officers on new forms of stalking through technology that give access to economic information. <input type="checkbox"/> Include the immediate economic effects in stalking victim impact statements. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all crimes either economic or cost producing that constitute stalking are investigated and charged.
Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Add questions on finances to any sexual assault supplemental form and utilize often. <input type="checkbox"/> Collect data on the economic cost of sexual assaults for individual victims and for the community in both the short and long-term. <input type="checkbox"/> Collect data on the prevalence and cost of sexual assault within a dating or domestic violence relationship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Add a question or a check box on economic security and abuse to domestic violence supplemental report forms. <input type="checkbox"/> Collect data on the number of arrests for coerced economic crimes in relationships. <input type="checkbox"/> Collect data on the number of calls for officer enforcement of CPO and restitution violations in domestic and dating violence cases. <input type="checkbox"/> Collect data on the cost of DV coinciding with a sexual assault or stalking case. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Collect data on the economic crimes committed while stalking. <input type="checkbox"/> Collect data on the arrests for stalking at work. <input type="checkbox"/> Collect data on the number of calls for enforcement of restitution and economic relief violations in stalking cases. <input type="checkbox"/> Collect data on the frequency and cost of stalking alongside sexual assault, dating violence and domestic violence.
Officer-Perpetrated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Add economic measures to sexual offense policy. <input type="checkbox"/> If the victim is a fellow officer, add economic harm and workplace harassment to policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Include economic abuse and threats within agency policies on officer misconduct. <input type="checkbox"/> Cover the full range of abuse, including at the workplace, in domestic violence policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Implement policy on using police resources and power to access victims' economic data, electronically stalk or destroy evidence of economic crimes.

⁴ Not an exhaustive list or representative of full domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking policies.

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Appendix A. Gordon Family Case Study

After years of abuse, 13-year-old Chris Gordon's mother Nikki had separated from his father, George Gordon. Since then, George would wait in the parking lot of Nikki's office. She was terrified that she would lose her job after missing over a week of work to avoid him and recover from the violence. Due to the physical violence and his presence at work, she got an *ex parte* protection order. The order required George to stay away from Nikki's home and work. It awarded temporary custody of Chris to Nikki and required George to pay child support. Despite the stay-away order, Nikki still had trouble sleeping at night. George had run up all the credit cards and they were in debt. They were barely making ends meet. Then George drained her bank account, telling her it was still "his" money. One night, George showed up at Nikki and Chris' home. He smashed the locks on the door to get in and grabbed Nikki's phone before she could call for help. He started yelling at Nikki and throwing things at both her and Chris. Chris feared that this time his father would actually kill his mother. Chris ran to the back of the house and called 911.

Chris told 911 dispatch that his father was "out of control." The dispatcher could hear loud voices in the background. Dispatch told the responding officers this was the third call in 6 months from the residence and that the victim had an *ex parte* protection order in place against George. At the scene, officers secured the premises and interviewed the parties. They took pictures of Nikki's injuries, the broken locks, doorframe and windows, overturned furniture and the other items that Nikki said George damaged. Police also noted that Nikki's car had two flat tires.

Because it could take time to get the locks and windows fixed and because the officers could not guarantee that George would not be released on bail the next day, Nikki told them she wanted to go to her sister's house. They helped her gather some important documents and other items that she and Chris would need to get by, including birth certificates, passports, credit cards, medications, and her laptop. The officers gave her victims' rights information and referred her to a domestic violence program. They also told her that their agency's domestic violence advocate would contact her to help provide support and file forms to get reimbursement for some of the property George destroyed.

After determining that she did not need immediate medical care, the officers asked Nikki what happened that evening. She described the physical violence. The officer then asked her what else George had done to hurt her. He asked about the flat tires and the destroyed household items. The officer also asked if George had ever stolen any of her paycheck(s), taken her money or caused her to miss work. She answered yes and that she was afraid she was going to lose her job. She told him about her depleted bank account and the credit card debt.

The responding officers wrote the report and referred the case to Detective Jones in the Domestic Violence Unit. In addition to costs of past injuries, Jones uncovered receipts showing that Nikki had bought the cell phone, TV and other damaged items. Her cell phone revealed saved text messages like "if you call the police, you'll never see Chris again." Her cell phone also had GPS tracking installed. Emails he sent both before and after the arrest contained threats that filing the order against him was "the nail in your coffin" and violent images. Jones also secured the applications from the credit card company that showed that George forged her signature. Once Nikki was feeling more stable, Jones interviewed her again. Nikki said that George threatened to hurt Chris unless she gave him her bank passwords and credit cards. Jones also interviewed a neighbor who witnessed George slashing her tires and previous incidences of damage.

At the scene of the call, police initially arrested George for trespassing, violating the protection order, destruction of property, and assault and battery on Nikki. The investigation concluded that there was sufficient evidence to charge George with the following crimes: cyber-stalking (GPS, texts, emails), witness intimidation (threats on phone and email and witness testimony of the neighbor), theft (of paycheck), and fraud (credit cards). After the investigation, Det. Jones turned over the reports and evidence to the prosecutors to add to the court case. Doing so allowed them to request economic relief in a new permanent protection order in addition to restitution for the damaged items and past health care costs.

Following the arrest, Nikki was summoned to testify in court. She was worried she would lose her job if she took more time off. Detective Jones offered to call Nikki's employer to explain the situation. In a five minute phone call, Jones was able to keep her employed. He also wrote a letter to her landlord explaining the presence of law enforcement and got the fee for breaking a lease waived. In conjunction with the victim advocate in the agency, they were able to use Crime Victim Compensation to pay for to move Nikki out of the home while she and George were in court for the trial.

During sanctioning in the trial, Det. Jones worked with the judge to craft a new protection order with enforceable relief provisions. They designated the exact time, place, amount and procedure for George to pay restitution to Nikki. They set up regular court reviews of the case so that if George was not complying, law enforcement could get involved quickly before too much more damage to Nikki and Chris' economic security was done.

Unfortunately, because of the financial problems caused by George, Nikki still didn't feel like she could care for herself and Chris safely. Det. Jones gave Nikki copies of the investigation reports to use in a civil court case to put the credit card debt under George's name. She was also working to repair her credit report so that she would be able to rent a safe house in the future and take out a loan for Chris' college education.

Discussion Questions:

- How did law enforcement support the safety and economic security of Nikki and Chris?
- How did the roles of the various law enforcement professionals differ and/or overlap in this case?
- What else could each of them have done to protect or restore the economic security of Nikki and Chris?
- How did the actions of advocates, prosecutors and judges contribute to the work of law enforcement in this case?
- How could the other sectors have better supported the work of the law enforcement?
- How many of the actions within this scenario could take place in your department?
- What steps can you take to ensure you could support Nikki and Chris in similar ways within your department?

Appendix B. Training Guidelines

Suggested Content

Officers must be trained on the economic dynamics of abuse, particularly the economic implications of abuse, and on what they can do beyond standard operating procedure. Trainings should include:

- Numbers and figures on economic security needs (i.e. WOW’s BEST Index) to demonstrate the economic reality facing victims in each jurisdiction or state
- Fundamentals of economic abuse
- Victim accounts of the economic impact of violence and how law enforcement helped support their economic security
- Investigation checklists for law enforcement officers to address the economic security of victims
- Discussion of different economic-related crimes that can be charged
- Importance of report writing and forms, and what economic information to include
- Crime Victim Compensation, Protection Orders and Restitution
- Unique needs and law enforcement strategies for victims and offenders from special populations:
 - ⇒ [Immigrants](#)
 - ⇒ [Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer](#) (LGBTQ) people
 - ⇒ [Elders](#) or [adolescents](#)
 - ⇒ Those with mental health needs
 - ⇒ Those with substance abuse needs
 - ⇒ Those with existing criminal records
- Key special topics
 - ⇒ Marital or co-owned property
 - ⇒ Definition of co-habitation and rules on whether officers can make someone leave

● ● ●
“Most departments [recognize the importance of training](#) officers on domestic violence, but in practice the focus tends to be on recruits”
● ● ●

Timing and Structure

- Training should be for dispatchers, new recruits and in-service officers at all levels.
- Ideally law enforcement and advocate teams should co-lead the training, but it can also be conducted by coalitions, in-house trainers within departments, taskforces and CCRs.
- Training should be visual and interactive, such as a PowerPoint with embedded video, audio, case scenarios and mini-quizzes (depending on the length of the training).
- Training should include scenarios, both written descriptions to discuss and roll-play.

Forthcoming WOW Training

- Four modules: one roll-call and one full length module for both sexual and domestic violence.
 - ⇒ Roll-call: 20-30 minutes with options to cut it down to 10-15 minutes and let the communities pick with sections are most applicable
 - ⇒ Full-length: One or two 50-minute sessions with scenarios built in and stand-alone. It could be dropped into any existing training in the state.
- Presentation will be downloadable from the internet with supplementary tools and materials.
- There will be an accompanying train-the-trainer manual.
- Training will include the elements of the Law Enforcement Guide, but will also include places to insert state-specific laws and information.

Appendix C. Tool: Law Enforcement Pocket Guide

The Law Enforcement Pocket Guide is the perfect companion for **first responders and investigators** involved in sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and stalking cases. This small, user-friendly tool contains checklists for red flags at the scene, evidence collection, investigation and interview questions, and chargeable economic-related crimes. Access the full-sized and printable version of the Law Enforcement Pocket Guide at: <http://www.wowonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Law-Enforcement-Pocket-Guide-to-Victim-Economic-Security.pdf>

<p>Why Consider Victim Economic Security?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The safety of victims of domestic/ dating violence, sexual assault and stalking is inextricably linked to their economic security. ▪ Protecting victims' economic security can make them better able – and more likely – to cooperate with the investigation. ▪ Victims are less likely to return to an abuser or suffer additional attacks if officers take steps to support their economic security. ▪ Economic evidence and arrests for economic crimes can improve an officer's ability to hold offenders accountable by increasing the success of court actions. ▪ Securing economic justice for victims can boost future reporting. 	<p>Investigation & Interview Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Does the offender currently have any of your property? (Phone, ID, credit cards, keys, etc.) ⇒ Retrieve prior to arrest/ booking. <input type="checkbox"/> Did the offender destroy anything you need for immediate safety, to get to work/school, or to pay bills? <input type="checkbox"/> Has the offender taken any of your money, including paychecks? <input type="checkbox"/> What out-of-pocket costs have you incurred? (Bills, relocation, emergency contraception, security equipment, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Does the offender have keys to your home, work or car? <input type="checkbox"/> Do you have access to your bank account and other finances? Does the offender? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Have you been intimidated or threatened financially? <input type="checkbox"/> Are there any documents you need to collect and keep safe? (Visas, passport, social security card, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Have you had to take security measures or change your routine? ⇒ What costs were associated? ⇒ Did it affect your housing, school or job? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the offender know the passwords to your computers, accounts or phone? <input type="checkbox"/> Has the offender forced you to commit any economic crimes? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the offender in a position of power over your job, school, scholarship, or housing? <input type="checkbox"/> Will anything prevent you from cooperating with the investigation or calling in the future? 	<p>Red Flags of Economic Issues at the Scene of the Crime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Is the victim hesitant to let officers in the home? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the victim hesitant to have the offender arrested? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the offender take or have the only car or house keys? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the offender have the only credit card or is the only one with access to shared bank accounts? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the victim have nowhere else to go? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the offender translating for a limited English proficiency victim? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the offender hesitant or unwilling to turn over a laptop or cell phone? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the victim delay reporting the assault because of school or work-based concerns?

Economic-Related Evidence Collection:

- Photographs of injuries and property damage
- Lists and prices of damaged or stolen items
- Medical history and cost as a result of the violence (may be ongoing)
- Documentation of missed work or school as a result of the violence (may be ongoing)
- Financial documents showing costs of the violence (bills, bank statements, invoices, credit reports, receipts, canceled checks, etc.)
- Documentation of economic abuse or coerced economic crimes

Chargeable Economic-Related Crimes*:

- Assault and/or Battery
- Breaking and Entering
- Destruction of Property/ Property Damage/ Destruction of Evidence
- Electronic Surveillance or Cyberstalking
- Forgery
- Fraud
- Harassment
- Identity Theft
- Reckless or Negligent Injury
- Strangulation
- Theft/Robbery/Larceny
- Trespassing
- Wiretapping
- Witness intimidation or threats

* Beyond Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault & Stalking. Statutes may vary depending on jurisdiction.

To access the full Law Enforcement Guide to Safety and Economic Security for Victims of Violence Against Women, see:

<http://www.wowonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/WOW-ESS-Law-Enforcement-Sector-Guide.pdf>



Law Enforcement Pocket Guide:

Checklists to Support a Victim's Economic Security



Appendix D. Recommendations for STOP Administrators by Program Purpose Area

Program Purpose Area 1: Training

- Train law enforcement and coordinated community response teams, such as local task forces, on how to obtain full restitution for victims. This should include the development of forms and questionnaires to ask victims for details and receipts on how the perpetrator impacted their financial well-being. Examples of covered costs include destroyed private property, missed work, and physical and mental health injuries.
- Train law enforcement on how economic threats by an abuser often constitute witness intimidation, another domestic violence crime with which the abuser could be charged and which constitute grounds for a protection order; understand how these threats may endanger the victim and undermine a successful prosecution.
- Create training and resource toolkits for advocates within law enforcement that highlight community resources that provide economic help, such as job training, additional employment assistance, “time banks” and other innovative local programs, social program assistance, educational opportunities, etc.
- Incorporate economic abuse and financial ramifications into the training programs, seminars, and conferences already in place or planned for enforcement officers, so that they are able to see the intersection between domestic and sexual violence and economic harms.
- Inform all stakeholders of the existence of national, state and local resources that may support a victim’s economic security, such as job-sharing, scholarships, child support enforcement tools, transportation assistance, women’s entrepreneurship opportunities and other *non*-criminal justice system-based resources.
- Provide regular and ongoing updates on economic security and safety issues to subgrantees. In many states this is done in coordination with state coalitions.
- Create training for law enforcement on evidence collection, witness interviews, report writing, and other key points so that they can learn how to investigate economic crime perpetration and reduce the risk of violence to the survivor. Economic crimes include crimes that are financial in nature, such as credit card theft, as well as other crimes that impact financial well-being, such as stalking at work that leads to being reprimanded or fired. The training may range from a short roll call video to a longer interactive workshop to an online learning course.

Program Purpose Area 2: Specialized Units

- Make sure there is a person within each unit that has expertise on economic security and safety; if possible, fund a full- or part-time position to do this.
- Invite economic crimes experts to attend unit meetings or join the unit. Brainstorm as to how to make the domestic or sexual violence unit more effective with economic security and safety issues. For instance, many law enforcement agencies have “white collar” or fraud units. Discuss how batterers commit these crimes along with violent crimes so that the unit develops expertise around evidence collection and prosecution of both types.
- Focus unit activity on successful restitution requests, orders and collection.

Administrator Tip:
Require or make it a special condition in the subgrantee funding contract that all units funded by STOP show how they collaborate on economic safety and security matters.

- Consider coordinating with human trafficking or sex trafficking specialists and units within the department to ensure there is shared expertise within the domestic violence and sex crimes unit on trafficking as these issues can overlap.
- Add the topic of economic security and safety issues to every unit meeting and ensure the issue is assessed on every case by asking questions like:
 - Is she in danger of losing her job?
 - Can we do anything to make her workplace safer?
 - Who controlled the finances?
 - Did he ever force her to sign tax returns, credit card applications or anything else?
 - Did he steal her welfare/TANF card and benefits?
 - Did he destroy property?
 - Has the advocate done a restitution questionnaire with the victim?
 - The answers to these questions can also assist a battered immigrant survivor with a VAWA self-petition.
- Conduct specific unit training on economic security and safety. Sample topics include:
 - Enhancing evidence collection, such as photographing the destruction of property, utilizing forensic accounting, documenting violence and harassment at the workplace and the home.
 - Assessing the level of danger to the victim and her children by taking into account what, if any, types of economic abuse and control the batterer carried out against the victim and incorporating that into requests for bail and court-ordered conditions of release. This should include terms that require him to stay away from her and have no contact with her workplace.
 - Using evidence of economic abuse and intimidation (the threat of poverty) of the victim and the children to explain why a victim may have remained in or returned to an abusive situation. Without access to income, no credit history, loss of job and other economic problems, leaving an abusive partner is extremely difficult.
 - Exploring how providing for a survivor's economic security can make it easier for her to participate fully in the investigation and prosecution of the perpetrator.
 - Examining how witness/victim intimidation can include economic threats and hence endanger a victim as well as undermine a prosecution.

Program Purpose Area 3: Policies, Protocols, Orders and Services

- Review and, if needed, revise existing domestic violence, sexual violence, dating violence and stalking policies and procedures for. Make sure policies and procedures include the economic security and safety of the victim and her children and the prosecution of the perpetrator for these crimes as joint goals.
- Fund and support the development of a model policy for how courts, prosecutors, victim services and police can best recognize and respond to economic crimes and intimidation. STOP should
- Incorporate evidence collection and documentation of economic abuse and financial harm into protocols. This should include photographing the destruction of property, utilizing forensic accounting, and documenting violence and harassment at the workplace, not just in the home.
- Ensure that interview protocols incorporate questions that might reveal the occurrence of economic abuse, such as:

Administrator Tip:
 Consider hosting meetings of key stakeholders to review state and local policies and procedures.

- Do you have access to your bank account? Have you been denied access to a shared bank account?
- Has your partner taken out any credit cards in your name?
- Has your partner forced you to sign financial documents like credit card applications, loan applications or tax returns that you did not understand or did not want to sign?
- Does your partner deny you access to something that is yours, such as your car, ATM card, paycheck, or welfare benefits?

Program Purpose Area 4: Data Collection and Communication Systems

- Promote the expansion of data collection to include economic crimes committed by offenders of domestic and sexual violence, stalking and dating violence.
- Track and connect previous convictions or arrests involving economic crimes such as destruction of property. Linking prior arrests will demonstrate a pattern of control that the abuser had over the present victim and possibly previous victims.
- Fund a pilot project that would direct law enforcement agencies within a city, county or region to collect and share data on types of economic crimes that abusers commit against victims. These data would also be useful for the STOP Implementation Plan, would help evaluate programming in different jurisdictions, help states to compare work across jurisdictions to measure effectiveness and would aid in the development and dissemination of best practices.

Administrator Tip:
Fund one-time data system enhancements to implement the needed upgrades outlined above, especially if there are leftover or returned grant funds.

Program Purpose Area 6: Stalking

- Educate law enforcement to understand the large, lasting and devastating impact that stalking can have on a victim’s life, including her health, finances and safety.
- Tailor responses to stalking and violence to the survivor’s context, including specific intersections of culture, ethnicity, economic status and lives of those who are being assisted.
- Develop stalking training programs that reflect today’s realities of increasingly intrusive and efficient electronic and cyber technologies and how they are used to stalk and terrorize victims. Make sure that investigators understand and know how to assist victims to be safer from these intrusions.
- Ensure that the immediate economic impacts are included in victim impact statements and computed into requests for restitution. For instance, note the costs to a victim who was cyber-stalked who had to buy a new computer, Smartphone, spyware, or hire a tech expert to repair her system.
- Augment policies and protocols to make sure that all crimes that constitute stalking are investigated and prosecuted. Economic crimes, as well as other crimes that impact her financial well-being, include stalking her at work that leads to her being reprimanded or fired. Any of these could be included when charging stalking.

Program Purpose Area 7: Native Victims

- Tailor training programs and information regarding economic security and safety for survivors in Indian country to law enforcement both on and off reservations.

- ❑ Consider both the unique and common economic crimes that are suffered by Native and non-Native populations and the solutions needed to create or enhance safety and economic security for them.
- ❑ Convene a forum, meeting or other kind of gathering in partnership with tribal representatives or host a webinar to explore the issues facing Native women in your jurisdiction and what the STOP Grant Program can do to support this work.
- ❑ Incorporate the issues facing Native women who are victims of violence against women crimes in all training modules and protocols developed and funded under STOP. Include relevant information regarding prevalence of these crimes within your jurisdiction.

Administrator Tip:
Include American Indian and Alaska Native representatives in Implementation Plan development and execution of the Plan.

Program Purpose Area 8: Multidisciplinary Efforts

- ❑ Add economic security and safety to the agenda of each CCR meeting to create a forum to discuss how to better support survivors and how to investigate and prosecute perpetrators for economic abuse and crimes. Highlight the connections between economic security and physical safety.
- ❑ Invite people or agencies who work on economic issues, such as local workforce boards, chambers of commerce, unions, child support collections, insurance, transportation, tax and other accounting services and housing, to attend CCR meetings.
- ❑ Focus on workplace safety from violence in all areas of domestic, sexual, dating violence and stalking. Develop policies for [employers](#) to address these issues.
- ❑ Cross-train CCR team members on economic security and safety or develop modules for sector training on economic security and safety that helps each team member understand the roles that others play. For example, develop a protocol and training around restitution for survivors or focus on how perpetrators carry out economic crimes against victims such as stealing or forging credit cards/applications, destroying property, stalking and stealing public benefits.

Program Purpose Area 10: Older and Disabled Victims

- ❑ Integrate training materials to educate law enforcement how to recognize and investigate abuse and methods of control of older and disabled individuals, including economic abuse and the unique impacts that crimes may have on their financial well-being. Materials should illustrate how different economic abuse might look when it is perpetrated against an elder or disabled person. Include costs of crimes such as additional health care costs and access to benefits that are incurred because of this population’s vulnerabilities and needs.

Administrator Tip:
Invite experts on disability and elder issues to participate in STOP planning efforts as well as to become members of local and state CCR teams.

Program Purpose Area 11: Immigrant Victims

- ❑ Develop training for all persons who work or come in contact with immigrants. Elements of this training should include:
 - The rights and remedies that immigrant victims of violence have under the law and ways to connect them to an immigration specialist;
 - The impact that economic security has on the immigrants and their needs in that area;

- How to articulate economic abuse within the VAWA self-petitioning process; and
 - Information on specific vulnerabilities and issues that immigrants face, including unique or different cultural contexts and needs, so that they can effectively and safely assist them.
- ☐ Training should also include issues surrounding the services that are available to undocumented persons. For instance, victims are entitled to services at a domestic violence or rape crisis programs even if they are not documented. Law enforcement should also understand its obligations regarding reporting of undocumented persons to federal immigration authorities.
 - ☐ Develop training for law enforcement to heighten their level of understanding the burdens and challenges victims face by seeking help from or working with the criminal justice system. This includes knowledge of the constellation of very fragmented services that victims need to survive, such as telephones, transportation, access to services for obtaining a protection order or other services (attending hearings, child care), obtaining time off from work, or possessing a driver’s license (which one cannot get without a valid immigration document).

Administrator Tip:
Invite representatives from immigrant advocacy organizations to participate in the STOP Implementation Planning effort, local and state CCR teams and throughout STOP programming.

Program Purpose Area 13: Special Victim Assistants

- ☐ Provide training to whoever has the responsibility of protection order enforcement on all aspects of economic safety and security issues so they may be effectively enforced through contempt actions if violated.
- ☐ Make sure that the economic and financial issues are enforced and not minimized by law enforcement, prosecution or the courts.
- ☐ Review both the law and practice surrounding the filing fees for protection orders and include a section on the VAWA certification requirements regarding victims not paying for protection orders.
- ☐ Ensure that both the requested relief and the related enforcement is carried out consistent with regards to that survivor’s individual needs and culture by working closely with the survivor and others who are familiar with her situation.

Program Purpose Area 14: Victims of Law Enforcement Personnel

- ☐ Ensure that economic abuse and financial issues are included within law enforcement agencies’ policy or protocol on law enforcement as perpetrators of domestic violence. Specifically, policies and protocols should be re-examined to make sure that they recognize the spectrum of abuse, which includes intimidation and control of the victim by stalking her at her workplace, stealing, fraud and other crimes (or legal acts that nonetheless intimidate or control her through economic issues).
- ☐ Adopt explicit policies and protocols to protect victims who are sworn officers and whose abusers are fellow officers. Ensure that the policies and protocols include in the definition of “abuse,” on-the-job harassment and actions taken to harm the victim economically.
- ☐ Fund training programs to support awareness and action consistent with this program purpose area, including cross-training programs between law enforcement and non-profit domestic and sexual violence victim advocates on the impacts of economic crimes.