



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEWARK, NJ – September 27, 2022 - Essex County Family Justice Center is the recipient of one in only ten special 2022 Office for Victims of Crime grants awarded in the nation that will support accessible direct services for crime victims during 2022-2024.

On this date, Essex County Family Justice Center received notice that it has been selected to receive a \$400,000 multi-year grant from the federal Office for Victims of Crime towards expanding access to its services for victims of domestic violence, including those with limited or no English language proficiency.

The mission of Essex County Family Justice Center (ECFJC) is to enhance the safety and autonomy of domestic violence victims and their children by providing comprehensive and coordinated services in one location. In the aftermath of intimate partner violence, ECFJC reduces the barriers and fragmentation of conventional services by co-locating professionals from government, nongovernment, social service, civil legal, law enforcement, and other service providers at one site. To connect with ECFJC's live Domestic Violence Victim Advocates during business hours, or learn more about its full range of services, contact 973.230.7229 ext. 200, or go to www.essexcountyfjc.org/.

The Family Justice Center Model reduces the barriers and fragmentation of existing services and meets the diverse needs of victims of domestic violence by bringing government and non-government agencies together in one location. The U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women recognizes the Family Justice Center Model as a best practice in domestic violence intervention and prevention, resulting in reduced homicide; increase victim safety, increased autonomy and empowerment for victims, reduced fear and anxiety for victims and their children, increased prosecution of offenders, and increased community support for services to victims and their children. The Family Justice Center movement began with the opening of the San Diego Family Justice Center in 2002. Today there are Family Justice Centers in 43 U.S. states and 25 countries.

“On behalf of the Board of Trustees and employees of Essex County Family Justice Center, we are overwhelmed with gratitude to have this demonstration of confidence from the Office on Crime Victims for the work we do. This grant will help benefit the thousands of victims of domestic violence that we serve, with a focus on victims representing underserved, immigrants, and marginalized communities in Newark and Essex County”.

Mary Houtsma, ECFJC's Executive Director

About Essex County Family Justice Center (ECFJC)

Since its establishment in 2010, more than 9,600 victims have made over 26,700 visits to ECFJC. ECFJC's service partners include the Essex County Prosecutor's Office, Newark Police Division, Essex-Newark Legal Services, The Safe House, and Rachel Coalition. With more than 20 government and nongovernment partners, victims served at ECFJC have access to a full array of services developed from evidence-based best practices in domestic violence service delivery. ECFJC's comprehensive, coordinated services include medical/behavioral health screening with referrals to off-site healthcare providers, civil legal assistance on the restraining order process and family law matters, emergency food, housing, and transportation aid, counseling, prosecution assistance, and advocacy. ECFJC's culturally competent service delivery is provided by a trained, bi-lingual staff to meet the needs of victims representing all backgrounds.

About the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) supports programs and organizations that increase the availability of accessible, direct services and programs for victims of crime.

OVC is committed to advancing work that promotes civil rights and racial equity, increases access to justice, supports crime victims and individuals impacted by the justice system, strengthens community safety, and protects the public from crime and evolving threats, and builds trust between law enforcement and the community.

The 2022 Office for Victims of Crime funding program and its other funding instruments are designed to remove barriers that may prevent individuals from reporting crimes and accessing supportive services when they are harmed by improving and expanding the availability of accessible victim-centered, trauma-informed services for crime victims who are disabled, Deaf, hard-of-hearing, limited English proficient, blind and/or visually impaired.