

## **OVW Fiscal Year 2024 Local Law Enforcement Grants for Enforcement of Cybercrimes Program – Program Narrative**

### **Purpose of the Proposal**

The Michigan State Police (MSP) is a national leader among law enforcement agencies with a reputation for professionalism, excellence and supporting fellow law enforcement agencies throughout the state and country. The MSP is comprised of seven districts and 30 posts covering the state, as well as several specialized divisions providing primary investigation as well as investigative support for law enforcement agencies throughout the state.

The Computer Crimes Unit (CCU) was established in 2000 and is led by MSP and comprised of state, local, and federal agencies with a focus on preventing, interdicting, investigating, and prosecuting cybercrimes. CCU has eight offices across the state, with 62 MSP employees and 42 affiliates. CCU provides investigative support in seizure, acquisition, and forensic analysis of digital evidence and recognizes the necessity to strengthen existing resources to foster growth to help protect individuals from cybercrimes. CCU also leads an Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force and is the premier leader in cybercrime investigations and forensics for law enforcement in the state of Michigan, which has a population of 10,037,261<sup>i</sup>.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 5.7% of Michigan's population is of Hispanic or Latino origins, 50.3% of is female and 10.1% of persons under 65 years of age has a disability.<sup>ii</sup>

Michigan is not immune to violence against women, Michigan Incident Crime Reporting (MICR) is based on the collection of incident-based data voluntarily submitted by law enforcement agencies in Michigan. 2022 MICR Annual Report data shows 49,386 domestic violence incidents against women, 5,343 criminal sexual conduct incidents against females over age 10, and 18,160 intimidation/stalking incidents, and 607 Hate Bias incidents that include race, sexual orientation, religion, gender, and disability.<sup>iii</sup>

In 2022, CCU received 4,207 requests for assistance, served 235 warrants, completed 929 investigations, and received 17,984 cyber tips: between 1,800 and 2,000 cyber tips each month, a 58% increase in tips from 2021 to 2022.

CCU has identified a gap in its prevention capabilities and has partnered with victim advocate Crisis Aid International to improve accessibility to services for people with disabilities, including those who are hard of hearing, deaf or deafblind, and people with limited English proficiency, and to also educate law enforcement on how to effectively communicate and better serve these underserved populations when they are victims of cybercrimes.

The most current reporting available shows Michigan has over 49,125 adult migrant and seasonal workers and an additional 42,729 farmworker children under age 19 present in all 83 counties, many who are primarily non-English speaking<sup>iv</sup>. CCU has provided investigative support and technical assistance to law enforcement agencies for many domestic violence and criminal sexual conduct cases at seasonal migrant worker camps and experienced trouble communicating with victims due to the language barrier.

In 2020, it was estimated that 7.4% of Michiganders identified as hard of hearing, deaf or deafblind; nearly twice the U.S. national average of 4%.<sup>v</sup> The percentage varies from region to region however, an average of 17% of households in Michigan include at least one individual who is hard of hearing, deaf or deafblind.

The sophistication of cyber-suspects, as well as the sheer mass of digital evidence that must be analyzed, has created an investigative bottleneck that routinely hampers aggressive prosecution efforts. To conduct effective investigations, the CCU requires sufficient tools and advanced training to identify, track, and analyze the technology used by cyber-suspects (e.g., mobile devices, gaming devices, and unique storage devices).

The need to continually upgrade forensic and investigative hardware and software is imperative. As digital media sizes increase so does the need for greater processing power. The processors and memory in CCU's current aging equipment cannot keep up with the

processing needs of today's cases. This is compounded by the threat of imminent equipment failures on these systems, which are out of warranty. With ever-changing digital technologies, law enforcement must maintain state-of-the-art tools to assist in technology crime investigations as they relate to cybercrime. The CCU is particularly committed to obtaining training and equipment which will allow for the investigation and examination of mobile devices and emerging technology. MSP intends to replace current forensic computer systems with the most state-of-the-art hardware for evidence recovery that will provide uncompromised, high-quality data used in criminal prosecutions.

### **What Will Be Done**

With funding from the FY24 Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) grant, MSP will partner with victim advocate Crisis Aid International (ICA) to work to protect victims of cybercrimes, acquire forensic computer equipment necessary to conduct investigations and forensic analysis of evidence, increase education and training for state, local or tribal law enforcement personnel, and train personnel to utilize technology to assist in the investigation of cybercrimes and enforce laws that prohibit such crimes. Training will also be included to improve communication with limited or non-English speaking and hard of hearing, deaf or deafblind individuals. This proposed training and equipment will allow CCU to continue to identify and investigate online crimes to successfully prevent, interdict, and prosecute crimes against individuals.

Crisis Aid's seasoned staff, including the Director of U.S. Safe and the Law Enforcement Liaison, will provide advanced-level training and assistance to advocates, engaging with frontline professionals. This comprehensive initiative encompasses tailored educational presentations for law enforcement, medical professionals, frontline victim/social services, and key community entities linked to vulnerable populations. Topics covered include identifying technology-related stalking, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, sex trafficking (CST), and online child sexual exploitation (CSE). Trained individuals will be equipped to identify and

protect victims of cybercrimes, enforce related laws, and leverage technology for investigations. Additionally, specialized modules will be holistically developed and presented for law enforcement professionals, offering advanced-level guidance on victim response, reporting procedures, and accessing local resources.

A post survey/evaluation will be conducted to measure the attainment of key learning objectives outlined in each specific presentation.

1. 95% of participants will report enhanced ability to identify cybercrimes related domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, sex trafficking, child sexual abuse, or online child sexual exploitation.
2. 90% of participants will report enhanced ability to investigate cybercrimes against individuals, enforce and utilize the laws that prohibit cybercrimes against individuals, utilize technology to assist in the investigation of cybercrimes against individuals.
  - a. Court Personnel Specific: enhanced ability to prosecute and adjudicate cybercrimes against individuals.
3. 95% of participants will report they can recognize three distinct methods through which technology can facilitate victimization and better protect / safety plan with victims.
4. 95% of participants will report improved knowledge of digitally relevant advocacy resources and victim support services available to victims and how to refer to services.

MSP and ICA will conduct community-focused educational presentations and outreach, prioritizing underserved communities. These presentations aim to raise awareness of cybercrimes and their interconnections, emphasizing how technology is utilized to victimize individuals. By educating communities on cybercrime issues and available resources, these efforts will empower them to access support and assistance. Additionally, assistance will be provided to state, tribal, or local law enforcement agencies in educating the public to prevent, deter, and identify cybercrime violations against individuals. Education and outreach provided will focus on cyber-crime awareness and reduction, including relationship and internet safety. All

education and outreach will include information on accessing resources. Community-based presentations will be measured by numbers served and attendance.

Although the Spanish population is a relatively small percentage of Michigan's population, in a region like West Michigan with a substantial Spanish-speaking population, having conversational Spanish skills is not only beneficial for victim advocates but also for trainers providing education to victim service providers and law enforcement. These professionals need to effectively communicate with diverse communities to ensure that victims receive the necessary assistance and that perpetrators are held accountable. By equipping staff with conversational Spanish, we enhance their ability to reach and educate a broader audience, ultimately improving the response to and prevention of online child sexual exploitation, human trafficking, and sexual violence within Spanish-speaking communities. Additionally, professionally translating and printing victim service-related literature in Spanish ensures that crucial information reaches all members of the community, regardless of language proficiency, thus promoting awareness and access to support services for victims.

It is vital for law enforcement professionals to undergo basic Spanish training alongside utilizing interpreters for several reasons. While interpreters are crucial for accurate communication, law enforcement and advocates' proficiency in Spanish can significantly enhance trust-building, cultural competency, and rapport establishment with Spanish-speaking individuals in crisis intervention. This additional skill enables advocates and responders to offer immediate support, reducing potential communication barriers and ensuring victims feel understood and supported during critical moments.

Funding for training and outreach materials is crucial to enhance ICA organization's efforts in combating domestic violence, dating violence, sexual violence, abuse, stalking, and cyber-related sex trafficking. Printed materials provide tangible resources for individuals to access vital information conveniently, even offline or when not in direct contact with support services. These materials also raise awareness about available victim services, rights, and

educate communities on safety measures and survivor support options. Disseminating information in various formats is essential to reach vulnerable populations, including those with intellectual disabilities, promoting healthy relationships, and empowering individuals to recognize and respond to gender-based violence signs. These initiatives not only amplify our interventions but also contribute to building a more informed, supportive, and resilient community prioritizing safety, equality, and dignity for all.

Recognizing the unique knowledge and perspectives that survivors bring to the table and prioritizing their meaningful involvement throughout the project lifecycle will be paramount. Project partnering agency Crisis Aid empowers qualified survivors to serve as fully paid staff members in their Global Safe victim response programs, utilizing their firsthand experiences to inform program design, provide peer support, and deliver services tailored to the needs of survivors. By centering the voices and experiences of survivors, the project ensures that interventions are survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally sensitive, ultimately enhancing their effectiveness and relevance in addressing the complex challenges of cybercrimes.

CCU currently participates on multiple Coordinated Community Response teams across the state and networks with local Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) offices to discuss trends and gaps to improve the overall service provided. For example, Lt. Wesley Smith, Assistant Commander of MSP CCU/ICAC regularly meets with Lakeshore CAC to discuss issues they are seeing and how CCU can aid. Lakeshore CAC serves Manistee, Mason, and Oceana counties in west Michigan and the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians. This team includes social workers, law enforcement, prosecutors, medical examiners, and mental health professionals to provide a coordinated response to aid child victims and families of sexual abuse, physical abuse or if a child has witnessed violence. In addition, MSP has 14 victim advocates in the Grants and Community Services Division assigned to MSP posts throughout the state. Each victim advocate participates in multiple Coordinated Community Response teams, primarily related to

domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and CACs. While the primary goal for these teams is not cybercrimes, cybercrimes are part of the discussion for each team as technology has advanced and become so widely used among the public, there are cybercrime aspects to domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. There are currently two MSP victim advocates in each of MSP's seven districts, providing a statewide program.

This grant request includes cyber training courses which have a proven track record of providing quality hands-on and practical training for our investigative and forensic needs. These valuable courses of study will also allow our investigators to be able to provide valid and accurate courtroom testimony in criminal proceedings.

The CCU has identified new forensic computer systems which contain the necessary processing power to support the needs of today's computer forensic investigations. To maintain or exceed the current processing requirements of today's cases, forensic computers need to be routinely updated. Our forensic computers must have the capability to analyze cases involving artificial intelligence and machine learning cases, cloud-based digital evidence, Internet of Things(IoT) forensics, Peer-to-peer investigations, and network intrusion cases. Forensic computers built just a few years ago do not have the computing power to effectively tackle these challenges. For CCU to remain in front of the tidal wave of cases coming in our doors, forensic computers need to be replaced.

As technology evolves and the sophistication of crime increases, CCU is challenged to design models of service delivery grounded in evidence-based practice. This grant's project design embraces the need for greater awareness related to technology-facilitated crimes against individuals, as well as increased emphasis on the investigative model of dissemination, collection, evaluation, collation, analysis, and prosecution. This project will focus on the following activities:

**Goal 1:** Improve training for law enforcement personnel relating to cybercrimes against individuals.

- **Objective** – To increase and improve investigative efforts by providing training to allow personnel to identify and investigate cybercrimes against individuals and enforce laws that prohibit such crimes.
  - **Performance Measure** - Number of trainings provided.
  - **Performance Measure** - Number of trainees at each training.
- **Objective** – Provide training to state, local, tribal law enforcement personnel to identify and protect victims of cybercrimes through training developed by partner and victim service provider Crisis Aid International.
  - **Performance Measure** - Number of trainings provided.
  - **Performance Measure** – Number of trainees at each training.
  - **Performance Measure** – Number of law enforcement agencies in attendance.

**Goal 2:** Utilize technology to improve success in investigating and responding to cybercrimes against individuals.

- **Objective** – Upgrade forensic recovery computers to maintain state of the art technology hardware to support the needs of today's computer forensic investigations.
  - **Performance Measure** – Number of new forensic computers purchased.
  - **Performance Measure** – Number of advanced extractions completed.

**Goal 3:** To improve communication capabilities with limited or non-English speaking and hard of heard, deaf or deafblind individuals.

- **Objective** – To improve provide training to improve communication capabilities with limited or non-English speaking and hard of heard, deaf or deafblind individuals and translate victim services printed materials to reduce potential communication barriers.
  - **Performance Measure** – Number of trainings provided.
  - **Performance Measure** - Number of trainees at each training.
  - **Performance Measure** – Number of tangible products created.

- **Objective** – To conduct community-focused educational presentations and outreach, prioritizing underserved communities with ICA to raise awareness of cybercrime issues and available resources.
  - **Performance Measure** – Number of presentations given.
  - **Performance Measure** – Number of attendees.

### **Who Will Implement the Proposal**

The MSP CCU Executive Leadership Team consists of D/F/Lt. James Ellis and D/Lt. Wesley Smith. D/F/Lt. James Ellis is the Cyber CCU/ICAC Commander. He has over 30 years of service and experience with the MSP. D/Lt. Wesley Smith has over 26 years of dedicated service to the MSP, and over 10 years in the CCU/ICAC task force, the serves as the Assistant Commander. The grant project objectives will be managed by D/Lt. Wesley Smith.

The MSP was first awarded a U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) ICAC grant in 2000. With that initial grant, the MSP created the statewide MIICAC task force. The MSP uses DOJ grant funds to compensate overtime for forensic examiners; provide training and travel reimbursement to MIICAC law enforcement task force; and provide computer hardware/software support to 42 statewide affiliate partners including federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies.

CCU has always been directed toward developing cooperative partnerships with external law enforcement agencies to increase both the investigative and forensic capacity as they relate to technology facilitated crimes. Over the years, the number of requests for partnership and affiliation has increased. The MSP prides itself in the diversity and type of affiliates actively engaged with CCU.

The MSP has years of successful experience writing, implementing, and managing federal grant awards from multiple federal agencies, both formula and discretionary, and looks forward to the opportunity to continue good stewardship of federal funds. This project will be

implemented by the MSP CCU with MSP's Budget and Financial Services Division responsible for the financial management of the grant.

Ms. Cindy Mallot is the Director of U.S. Safe for Crisis Aid International and has over 30 years of experience in the field of victim services. She currently serves as the Director of U.S. Safe for Crisis Aid International. In this role she coordinates Crisis Aid's law enforcement, medical and community crisis response to victims of sex trafficking, online child sexual exploitation and child sexual abuse. This response includes co-development in partnership with St. Louis County Police Special Investigations Unit of the Children's Anti-Exploitation Partnership (CAP) Program focusing on intersecting prevention through intervention/crisis support to children and teens identified through internet crimes against children and CSE investigations and their families. Beyond her work at Crisis Aid International, Cindy serves as a national trainer for Sexual Exploitation Response Technical Training (SERTT) as well as Foundation United, where she imparts her expertise through professional training on sex trafficking, child sexual abuse, and online exploitation. Her passion for educating others has ignited positive change by raising awareness and equipping professionals to address these critical issues effectively.

Sgt. Adam Kavanaugh has 29 years of law enforcement experience and retired from the St. Louis County Police Department, Special Investigations Unit. He currently serves as the Law Enforcement Liaison for Crisis Aid International, a trainer Sexual Exploitation Response Technical Training (SERTT) as well as a Master Trainer for Foundation United. Sgt. Kavanaugh (RET) was the Commander of the Eastern District of Missouri Human Trafficking Task Force for 8 years and Deputy Commander of the Missouri Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force for over 16 years. Sgt. Kavanaugh (RET) was assigned as a task force officer with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) working in human trafficking and internet crimes against children. He worked in an undercover capacity for the St. Louis County Police Department, Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) throughout his law enforcement career. Sgt. Kavanaugh (RET) supervised undercover

officers for over 16 years and has trained thousands of law enforcement officers, medical professionals, and citizens in child exploitation and human trafficking. Sgt. Kavanaugh (RET) has received numerous awards for his years of service including the Distinguished Service Award from the Office of the United States Attorney for Eastern District of Missouri for his work with victims of Domestic Sex Trafficking in 2013.

In cooperation with the ICA, CCU will provide any support necessary to the evaluation of projects supported through this solicitation and managed by the US DOJ. Such support includes our availability to provide data and supporting documentation upon request. CCU will provide timely performance reports as required and current totals for all performance measures at any time the USDOJ requests.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/MI>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/MI/PST045223>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.michigan.gov/msp/divisions/cjic/micr>

<sup>iv</sup> [https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Doing-Business-with-MDHHS/Migrant-Affairs/2013\\_MSFW\\_Profiles\\_Study\\_496526\\_7.pdf?rev=d47139297bb9479eb07405251f322a34](https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Doing-Business-with-MDHHS/Migrant-Affairs/2013_MSFW_Profiles_Study_496526_7.pdf?rev=d47139297bb9479eb07405251f322a34)

<sup>v</sup> <https://michiganadvance.com/2019/09/18/deaf-deafblind-and-hard-of-hearing-michiganders-have-been-undercounted-and-overlooked/>