



GOVERNOR'S COORDINATING OFFICES

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES • SERVICE & VOLUNTEERISM • PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT
CRIME CONTROL & PREVENTION • SMALL, MINORITY & WOMEN BUSINESS AFFAIRS
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FROM: Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention

December 3, 2019

The Honorable Larry Hogan
Governor of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.
President of the Senate
State House, H-107
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Adrienne Jones
Speaker of the House of Delegates
State House H-101
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Family Law Article § 5-704.4(g)(1), GOCCP, Independent Evaluation Report on Services for Victims of Sex Trafficking (MSAR #12139)

Dear Governor Hogan, President Miller, and Speaker Jones:

In accordance with § 5-704.4 of the Family Law Article of the [Child Sex Trafficking Screening and Services Act of 2019](#), which established a Safe Harbor Regional Navigator Grant Program, please accept this letter as fulfillment of the required report.¹

Specifically, the *Child Sex Trafficking Screening and Services Act of 2019* requires the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (Office) to provide grant funding for services provided by the Safe Harbor Regional Navigator Grant Program by October 1, 2019. Pursuant to § 5-704.4(g)(1) of the Family Law Article, it also requires the Executive Director of the Office to submit an independent evaluation report with qualitative and quantitative data to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 1, 2019, and every two years thereafter, as it relates to whether services coordinated and provided by grantees under this section are available, adequate, and successfully serving children and youth who are victims of sex trafficking.

¹ Maryland General Assembly. (2019). [Chapter 559 of 2019 \(House Bill 827\), Child Abuse and Neglect - Sex Trafficking - Services and Investigations \(Child Sex Trafficking Screening and Services Act of 2019\)](#).

In response to the *Child Sex Trafficking Screening and Services Act of 2019*, the Office established the [Human Trafficking Regional Navigator Program Grant \(RNPG-VOCA\)](#) (previously known as the Safe Harbor Regional Navigator Grant Program) to develop a network of regional navigators to coordinate and/or provide identified or confirmed child sex trafficking victims with specific services (*as illustrated below*).

- Safety planning
- Basic living needs, not including housing
- Trauma counseling and mental health services
- Drug and alcohol treatment (i.e., substance abuse disorder treatment)
- Legal services
- Victim advocacy
- Case management

The primary purpose of RNPG-VOCA is to develop three pilot programs in three separate jurisdictions, and require law enforcement and local Departments of Social Services, who have reason to believe a certain child is a victim of sex trafficking, to notify a regional navigator in their jurisdiction to obtain needed services for the child.

In September 2019, the Office released a [FY 2019 Child Sex Trafficking Screening and Services Act Pilot Program Regional Navigator Program Grant \(RNPG-VOCA\) Notice of Funding Availability \(NOFA\)](#) to invite child advocacy centers, sexual assault crisis programs, or a qualified community-based victim service provider to apply for funds to develop a Regional Navigator Pilot Program. In November 2019, and in response to the eight applications received, the Office awarded a combined total of approximately \$400,000 in VOCA funds to the three pilot jurisdictions:

- Cecil County
- Montgomery County
- Washington County

The start date of the grant was November 1, 2019. Given this award, and on a quarterly basis, subrecipients will be required to submit performance measures and progress reports to the Office to provide an update on the implementation of the program within its jurisdiction. This data will ultimately be used to evaluate the program prior to its implementation statewide. Specifically, the Office will compile all quarterly submissions and data reported by jurisdictions as it relates to the prevalence of child sex trafficking to determine program effectiveness, and ways to improve the program for future funding opportunities. In doing this, the Office will create and implement a method to evaluate and report gaps in services in regional navigator's jurisdiction; and will compare the number of children served in those jurisdictions, both before and after program implementation, to determine its effectiveness.

The Office is currently coordinating with the three jurisdictions to ensure the program is uniform to provide a streamlined response. The Office is also partnering with the University of Maryland, School of Social Work as it relates to the [Child Sex Trafficking Victims Initiative](#) to collect data,

review screening materials for best practices for law enforcement, and establish a data collection process for the jurisdictions to ensure consistency.²

Based on the current efforts, our Office anticipates that the next report will capture more insight as it pertains to the evaluation of the three pilot programs, and a comparison of children served before and after program implementation.

Should you have any questions relating to the information provided in this report, please feel free to contact me at 410-697-9338.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.
Executive Director

cc: Sarah Albert, Department of Legislative Services (5 copies)

² It is important to note that the Child Sex Trafficking Victims Initiative “was established with funding from the Children’s Bureau and works to: improve victim identification through creation and statewide implementation of a screening tool to identify trafficked and at-risk youths; enhance victim response by equipping child welfare professionals with necessary knowledge” and skills, achieved “by developing new training curriculum and statewide training plan to reach all new and existing child welfare staff; and ensure victims receive comprehensive, trauma-informed care through capacity-building of service providers and targeting existing service and resource gaps.”