

RESOLUTION APPROVING MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CLEVELAND RAPE CRISIS CENTER, ASHTABULA COUNTY, ASHTABULA COUNTY PROSECUTOR AND HOMESAFE, INC. TO COLLABORATE ON THE GRANT PROJECT FY 2026 GRANTS TO IMPROVE CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT AND STALKING PROGRAM (ICJR) PROGRAM

WHEREAS, a Memorandum of Understanding has been presented for the approval of the Board, to-wit:

Scope: the MOU to support the grant application for the OVW FY 2026 Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking Grant Program

Partners: Cleveland Rape Crisis Center, 2937 W. 25th St., 2nd Floor, Cleveland, OH 44113
Ashtabula County Commissioners, 25 W. Jefferson St., Jefferson, OH 44047
Ashtabula County Prosecutor, 25 W. Jefferson St., Jefferson, OH 44047
Homesafe, Inc., PO Box 702, Ashtabula, OH 44005

Cost: No cost to the county, county to receive \$50,000 for 3 years if the grant is received.

Term: if the grant is received, this MOU would coincide with the grant period anticipated to be 10/1/2026 through 9/30/2029; and

WHEREAS, the Cleveland Rape Crisis Center will serve as the lead agency and named applicant who holds primary responsibility for application development; and

WHEREAS, the other agencies named above will be partners in the application and project; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, By the Board of Commissioners of Ashtabula County, Ohio that the Memorandum of Understanding as noted above is approved in accordance with the copy now on file in this office.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of the Board, on behalf of the Board of Commissioners of Ashtabula County, is authorized to execute any and all necessary documents.

**ASHTABULA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
CERTIFICATION PAGE**

Resolution No. 2026-352

August 18, 2026

RESOLUTION APPROVING MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CLEVELAND RAPE CRISIS CENTER, ASHTABULA COUNTY, ASHTABULA COUNTY PROSECUTOR AND HOMESAFE, INC. TO COLLABORATE ON THE GRANT PROJECT FY 2026 GRANTS TO IMPROVE CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT AND STALKING PROGRAM (ICJR) PROGRAM

Upon the motion of J.P. Ducro IV, seconded by Kathryn L. Whittington.

VOTE:

Casey R. Kozlowski
Kathryn L. Whittington
J.P. Ducro IV

Aye
Aye
Aye

CERTIFICATE OF CLERK

IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of a resolution acted upon and duly passed by the Board of County Commissioners of Ashtabula County, Ohio, on the date noted above.



Crystal Sturgill, Clerk of the Board
Board of County Commissioners
Ashtabula County, Ohio

Memorandum of Understanding

Between

Cleveland Rape Crisis Center [lead applicant], Ashtabula County, the Ashtabula County Prosecutor's Office, and Homesafe, Inc.

August 12, 2026

WHEREAS, **Cleveland Rape Crisis Center, Ashtabula County, the Ashtabula County Prosecutor's Office, and Homesafe, Inc.** have come together to collaborate on the grant project FY 2026 Grants to Improve the Criminal Justice Response to Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual assault, and Stalking Program (ICJR Program); and

WHEREAS, the applicant and partners have entered into a collaborative agreement in which **Cleveland Rape Crisis Center** will be the lead agency and named applicant and the other agencies will be partners in this application and project; and

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

WHEREAS, the application prepared and approved by the collaborative through its partners is to be submitted to the Office on Violence Against Women on or before August 20, 2026.

I) Description of Partner Agencies

Cleveland Rape Crisis Center (CRCC) functions to support survivors of rape and sexual abuse, promote healing and prevention, and advocate for social change. CRCC was founded in 1974 in response to Northeast Ohio's persistent and growing need for services to support survivors of rape and sexual abuse. Over the last 51 years, CRCC has grown from a grassroots, volunteer-run hotline, to a 70-employee nonprofit and national leader in providing counseling services, victim assistance in the justice system, and 24-hour services to survivors of rape and sexual abuse across four counties.

Ashtabula County is overseen by a three-member Board of County Commissioners, the main administrative agency of the county. The Board of Commissioners approves the annual budget, levies taxes for county purposes, issues bonds for capital improvements, and serves as the purchasing and contracting agent for the County.

Ashtabula County Prosecutor's Office provides the citizens of Ashtabula County with a safe effective and sustained justice system representing the rights and interest of the citizens, office holders and victims of Ashtabula County, including victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The Prosecuting Attorney acts as the chief law enforcement officer for the County.

Homesafe, Inc. (Homesafe) is a domestic violence shelter and service provider with over 40 years of experience providing services to survivors of domestic violence in Ashtabula County. The agency's mission is to provide emergency shelter and support services to survivors of domestic violence throughout Northeast Ohio. While CRCC has experience and expertise in serving survivors of sexual violence of all kinds, Homesafe brings vital expertise and experience in serving survivors of domestic and family violence.

II) History of Relationship

When CRCC expanded service delivery into Ashtabula County, the agency focused heavily on cultivating relationships with other organizations in order to learn more about needs within the county and any gaps in services. These connections included local law enforcement, the Prosecutor's Office, and Homesafe. As its relationships within the county grew and need for services became more apparent, CRCC opened a standalone office in Ashtabula County in 2017.

As time progressed, county agencies identified a need for a formal multi-disciplinary team and the benefits that formal relationships would offer. The Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) was established in 2020. Having the team in place assists in the effort to reach as many survivors of sexual violence and domestic violence as possible, while ensuring that these survivors receive all the comprehensive services they need.

Through CRCC's current ICJR award (ending 9/30/2026), the partners advanced this collaborative work, strengthened coordination among participating agencies, and supported survivor-centered improvements in Ashtabula County's response to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The proposed project is intended to continue and build upon existing ICJR-funded work by sustaining the collaborative structure, maintaining specialized coordination, and further developing training, policy review, and systems-improvement activities.

This continuation project will enable CRCC and its partners to sustain and expand collaborative efforts in Ashtabula County in order to:

- Enhance criminal justice responses to incidents of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking through building upon the knowledge of law enforcement staff and updating of relevant agency policies and procedures.
- Continue and strengthen the multi-disciplinary team in the county to review sexual assault and human trafficking cases quarterly.
- Increase in the number of survivors served by CRCC in Ashtabula County, directly related to the embedding of a dedicated Advocacy Coordinator within the county.
- Tailor training to fit the needs of various law enforcement groups to enhance their understanding of engaging with survivors of sexual assault and rape, including topics such as trauma response, victim engagement, implicit bias, and trauma-informed interviewing.

III) Development of Application

CRCC is the lead applicant in the proposed continuation project and holds primary responsibility for application development. The application builds upon the partners' existing collaborative work under CRCC's prior ICJR award. CRCC communicated with partners to discuss continuation project goals, structure, lessons learned, and relevant timelines. Collaboration will continue throughout the grant period. The partners agree to collaborate and provide support services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking pursuant to the program narrative of the continuation grant application.

IV) Roles and Responsibilities

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

Cleveland Rape Crisis Center will continue to provide project management efforts related to the grant through the dedicated Advocacy Coordinator. This full-time position will continue to fill the coordinator requirement for the grant and will correspond with OVW and TA providers throughout the funding period. CRCC will also provide additional staff time, equipment, and supplies as needed to complete continuation project activities. CRCC will also continue to lead the county's SART.

Ashtabula County will continue to provide support for the project and will participate in trainings, as appropriate, and will utilize their positions to encourage continued participation and improvements in the overall systems which victims encounter.

Ashtabula County Prosecutor's Office will continue to receive funds to support a part-time coordinator position who will work closely with CRCC's Advocacy Coordinator. The individual will aid with scheduling, training, and policy review efforts detailed in the continuation grant application.

Homesafe will continue to provide services including shelter, crisis intervention, case management, victim advocacy, trauma counseling, and coordination of care for victims. The agency will receive funding through this continuation grant that will cover a portion of a Trauma Therapist within CRCC's Ashtabula office.

V) Timeline

The roles and responsibilities described above are contingent on Cleveland Rape Crisis Center receiving continuation funds requested for the project described in the OVW grant application. Responsibilities under this Memorandum of Understanding would coincide with the continuation grant period, anticipated to be 10/1/2026 through 9/30/2029.

VI) Commitment to Partnership

1. The collaboration service area includes Ashtabula County, Ohio.
2. The partners agree to continue collaborating and providing support services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking pursuant to the program narrative of the continuation grant application.
3. Compensation for partners will be provided as outlined in the grant budget and Attachment 1.
4. We, the undersigned, have read and agree with this memorandum of understanding. Further, we have reviewed the proposed continuation project and have approved it.

By



Nicole McKinney-Johnson
President & CEO
Cleveland Rape Crisis Center

8/12/2026

Date

By



Casey R. Kozlowski
President of the Ashtabula County Board of
Commissioners

8-18-26

Date

By

April R. Grabman
Prosecuting Attorney
Ashtabula County Prosecutor's Office

Date

By

Julie Sundquist
Executive Director
Homesafe, Inc.

Date

**ASHTABULA COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS
Casey R. Kozlowski
Kathryn L. Whittington
J. P. Ducro IV**



**25 W. Jefferson St.
Jefferson, OH 44047-1092
Phone: (440) 576-3750
Fax: (440) 576-2344
commissioners@ashtabulacounty.us**

August 18, 2026

Director
Office on Violence Against Women
145 N Street, NE
Suite 10 W.121
Washington, DC 20530

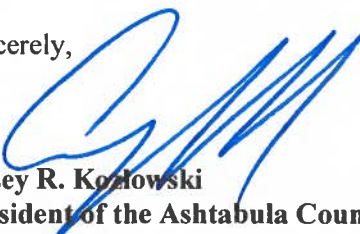
Re: Certification of Eligibility

Dear Director:

As President of the Board of Commissioners of **Ashtabula County**, I certify that:

1. The laws or official policies of **Ashtabula County**:
 - a. encourage arrests of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking offenders based on probable cause that an offense has been committed; and
 - b. encourage arrests of offenders who violate the terms of a valid and outstanding protection order;
2. The laws, policies, or practices and the training programs of Ashtabula County discourage dual arrests of offender and victim;
3. The laws, policies, or practices of **Ashtabula County** prohibit issuance of mutual restraining orders of protection except in cases where both parties file a claim and the court makes detailed findings of fact indicating that both parties acted primarily as aggressors and that neither party acted primarily in self-defense;
4. The laws, policies, and practices of **Ashtabula County** do not require, in connection with the prosecution of any misdemeanor or felony domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking offense, or in connection with the filing, issuance, registration, modification, enforcement, dismissal, or service of a protection order, or a petition for a protection order, to protect a victim of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, that the victim bear the costs associated with the filing of criminal charges against the offender, or the costs associated with the filing, issuance, registration, modification, enforcement, dismissal or service of a warrant, protection order, petition for a protection order, or witness subpoena, whether issued inside or outside the state, Tribal, or local jurisdiction;
5. The laws, policies or practices of **Ashtabula County** ensure that:
 - a. no law enforcement officer, prosecuting officer or other government official shall ask or require an adult, youth, or child victim of a sex offense as defined under Federal, Tribal, state, territorial, or local law to submit to a polygraph examination or other truth telling device as a condition for proceeding with the investigation of, trial of, or sentencing for such an offense; and
 - b. the refusal of a victim to submit to an examination described in subparagraph (a) shall not prevent the investigation of, trial of, or sentencing for the offense.

Sincerely,



Casey R. Kozlowski
President of the Ashtabula County Board of Commissioners

**ASHTABULA COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS
Casey R. Kozlowski
Kathryn L. Whittington
J. P. Ducro IV**



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August 18, 2026

Director
Office on Violence Against Women 145 N Street, NE
Suite 10 W.121
Washington, DC 20530

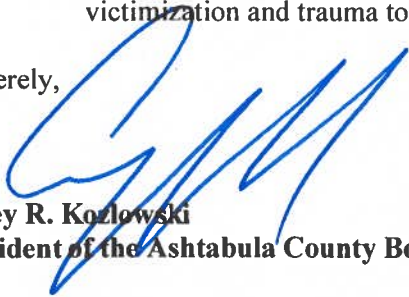
Re: Prosecution Certification

Dear Director:

As President of the Board of Commissioners of **Ashtabula County**, I certify that **Ashtabula County** is currently and fully in compliance with 34 U.S.C. 10461(c)(1)(F) and that the laws, policies, and practices of **Ashtabula County** ensure that prosecutor's offices engage in planning, developing, and implementing:

- a. training developed by experts in the field regarding victim-centered approaches in domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking cases;
- b. policies that support a victim-centered approach, informed by such training; and
- c. a protocol outlining alternative practices and procedures for material witness petitions and bench warrants, consistent with best practices, that shall be exhausted before employing material witness petitions and bench warrants to obtain victim-witness testimony in the investigation, prosecution, and trial of a crime related to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking of the victim in order to prevent further victimization and trauma to the victim.

Sincerely,


**Casey R. Kozlowski
President of the Ashtabula County Board of Commissioners**

**ASHTABULA COUNTY
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August 18, 2026

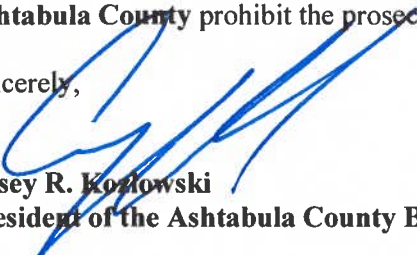
Director
Office on Violence Against Women 145 N Street, NE
Suite 10 W.121
Washington, DC 20530

Re: Minor Certification

Dear Director:

As President of the Board of Commissioners of **Ashtabula County**, I certify that the laws, policies, and practices of **Ashtabula County** prohibit the prosecution of a minor under the age of 18 with respect to prostitution.

Sincerely,


Casey R. Kozlowski
President of the Ashtabula County Board of Commissioners