![OAESV - Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence]

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Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence Receives $700,000 DOJ Grant to Address Housing Needs for Sexual Assault Survivors

Independence, OH – The Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence (OAESV) is proud to announce the receipt of a $700,000 grant to address the critical housing needs of sexual assault survivors in Ohio. This funding, advocated for by Senator Sherrod Brown in his FY 2024 Congressionally Directed Spending Requests and administered by the Office for Victims of Crime of the Department of Justice (DOJ), will enable OAESV to expand its current housing program by establishing a rapid rehousing project specifically for survivors of sexual violence.

"This investment will support important work helping survivors recover from violent crimes and abuse," said United States Senator Sherrod Brown. "This is about supporting survivors and ensuring that they have a safe, stable place to call home."

Jazmin Vera, OAESV's Housing & Economic Empowerment Manager, says, "This grant is a transformative step in addressing the housing needs of sexual violence survivors. Safe and stable housing is essential to healing. This funding allows survivors access to the safe housing they deserve, allowing survivors to rebuild their lives with dignity and security and to move forward in their healing journey."

With a significant lack of sexual assault-focused housing options in Ohio, this project aims to address historically unmet needs by providing safe housing solutions for survivors of rape and other forms of sexual violence. Using this proven intervention, OAESV will support individuals transitioning out of shelters, off the streets, or away from unsafe housing situations. The program will offer short-term support, assistance in finding permanent housing, and financial aid for moving costs and deposits to reduce the likelihood of housing insecurity.

In Ohio, OAESV is federally designated as the training and technical assistance provider for the state's 36 rape crisis centers. In 2022, OAESV began providing housing services to survivors of

sexual violence through its Meaningful Housing Access Program. It is the first and only service provider offering this type of service exclusively for victims of sex crimes in Ohio.

This funding represents a crucial investment in Ohio's commitment to healing and safety for crime victims. Over a 36-month period, the project will mitigate barriers and provide a continuum of care for survivors of sexual violence as they heal and recover. Services will be prioritized in counties with housing insecurity issues, rural areas, and counties that have been deeply impacted by the housing instability caused by COVID-19. OAESV will collaborate with rape crisis centers to receive referrals and work with local advocates to ensure survivors receive comprehensive and wrap-around advocacy services.

OAESV's President & CEO, Rosa Beltré, adds, "As we continue our mission to support survivors of sexual violence, this funding is a beacon of hope for many who have faced not only the trauma of sexual assault but also the instability of housing insecurity. Survivors deserve safe spaces where they can heal, and this grant allows us to provide that essential support. We are deeply grateful for the Department of Justice and Senator Brown's advocacy, which enables us to expand our reach and address this critical need in our state. Survivors are at the heart of everything we do, and this project is another step in ensuring they have the resources they need to reclaim their lives with dignity and safety."

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Interviews available upon request.

As Ohio's statewide coalition, OAESV uses an anti-oppression lens to advocate for comprehensive responses and rape crisis services for survivors and to empower communities to prevent sexual violence.