

## EMERGING ISSUES FOR IMPROVING THE LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE: THREE NEW REPORTS NOW AVAILABLE

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*Courtesy of Principal Deputy Director Bea Hanson, Ph.D., of the Office on Violence Against Women*

OVW is pleased to announce the release of several documents that address emerging issues related to improving the law enforcement response to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. The documents reflect input from diverse stakeholders and were developed in conjunction with OVW's national technical assistance providers.

- **Body Worn Cameras** – The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) hosted a roundtable, in conjunction with OVW, to bring stakeholders together to discuss how law enforcement's use of body worn cameras presents both opportunities and complex challenges that must be carefully considered as this technology evolves and the use of these cameras become more commonplace. The roundtable report, [Deliberations from the IACP National Forum on Body-Worn Cameras and Violence Against Women](#), highlights the importance of addressing the privacy rights, safety and autonomy of victims of domestic and sexual violence as agencies develop policies and protocols and the importance of developing those policies in collaboration with advocacy organizations and other community and criminal justice partners.
- **Open Police Data Initiatives** – The National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV), in partnership with OVW, brought together advocates, experts on victim privacy and safety, researchers and data experts to discuss how open police data initiatives can impact the privacy and safety of intimate partner violence victims, and how open police data can benefit the victim services field and the public. Based on stakeholder input from the roundtable and other focus groups, NNEDV, in collaboration with the Police Foundation, published [How Law Enforcement Agencies Releasing Open Data Can Protect Victim Safety and Privacy](#). The document explores issues to consider as communities begin using mechanisms that increase transparency of law enforcement responses while also protecting victim privacy and confidentiality. It suggests practices and protocols that balance the potential value of open data with potential negative consequences of sharing the data publicly.
- **Identifying and Preventing Gender Bias in Policing** - In December 2015, the Department of Justice issued "[Identifying and Preventing Gender Bias in Law Enforcement Response to Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence](#)" to highlight the need for clear policies, robust training and responsive accountability systems. In August 2016, the Battered Women's Justice Project, in partnership with OVW, led a roundtable with stakeholders (including law enforcement, advocates and researchers) to discuss and develop concrete recommendations and strategies to integrate and implement the eight guiding principles in the Justice Department's guidance. The roundtable participants discussed how law enforcement agencies and sexual and domestic violence advocates can use the guidance to promote systemic changes within law enforcement agencies. A summary of the roundtable discussion, [Ending Gender Bias in the Law Enforcement Response to Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence](#), is now available on the [Battered Women's Justice Project website](#). Additional resources can be found on [OVW's gender bias webpage](#) and on [IACP's Police Response to Violence Against Women webpage](#). Additionally, in October 2016, OVW and the [Office for Victims of Crime](#) announced that they had awarded 10 grants worth \$9.85 million to various national and local organizations who will use the funding to implement the Justice Department's guidance and develop resources to assist other jurisdictions in their efforts. Read more about the awards in the [press release](#).

OVW hopes that these documents and tools will be helpful for law enforcement and victim advocacy organizations across the country as they continue to work together to strengthen a coordinated community response, improve policies to respond to emerging issues and enhance services and support for victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking.

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