

American Rescue Plan State Fiscal Recovery Fund Recommendation Cover Sheet

Please submit this document with any recommendations for funding from Rhode Island's allocation of federal fiscal recovery funds available through the American Rescue Plan Act. This information will be made available to the public along with any detailed documents submitted that describe the proposal. It is encouraged that such documents identify clear goals and objectives and quantifiable metrics.

This is not a formal request for funds, and submission of recommendations does not guarantee a response, public hearing, or appropriation from the General Assembly.

Name of Lead Agency: Day One

Additional agencies making recommendation (if applicable): _____

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Brief Project Description (attachments should contain details)

Day One recommends a State Fiscal Recovery Fund investment of \$3 million in to address the needs of child and adult victims of sexual violence.

Total request: \$ 3,000,000

One-time or Recurring Expense? One-Time Expense

ARPA Eligibility Category (check all that apply) – See link for further information

<https://www.rilegislature.gov/commissions/arpa/commdocs/Treasury%20-%20Quick-Reference-Guide.pdf>

- Respond to the public health emergency and its economic impacts _____
- Premium pay to eligible workers _____
- Government services/state revenue replacement _____
- Water/sewer/broadband infrastructure _____



December 22, 2021

The Honorable Ryan W. Pearson
Chairman, Finance Committee, Rhode Island Senate
The Honorable Marvin Abney
Chairman, Finance Committee, Rhode Island House of Representatives
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: American Rescue Plan Act State Fiscal Recovery Fund Investment Recommendations

Dear Chairman Pearson and Chairman Abney:

On behalf of Day One and the thousands of Rhode Islanders we serve each year, I am submitting this letter to the Rhode Island Legislature requesting the allocation of \$3 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to address the needs of child and adult victims of sexual violence statewide.

Aligned with the purpose of the American Rescue Plan, the \$3 million State Fiscal Recovery Fund investments we propose herewith will make a positive impact on the State's health and future recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic by helping to deliver critical supports and services to Rhode Islanders who have been affected by sexual assault, abuse, and exploitation.

As you may know, Day One was established in 1973 as the Rhode Island Rape Crisis Center. Day One is, and for nearly 50 years has remained, the only agency in the state organized specifically to deal with issue of sexual violence as a community concern. Day One provides critical trauma-informed clinical treatment and crisis intervention, as well as court, law enforcement, and legal advocacy services to Rhode Islanders who have been impacted by sexual violence. Serving residents of all ages – from preschool children to elder adults – we also advocate for public policy, legislative, and systemic changes that affect how the state handles cases of sexual assault, abuse, and exploitation through professional training, prevention education, and public awareness campaigns.

Similar to those served by other nonprofits in the state, the coronavirus public health crisis has had a profound effect on the thousands of Rhode Islanders who rely on our programs and services. Since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, Day One has provided direct services to 6,679 children and adults. Twenty months on, we continue to see a sharp increase in requests for clinical treatment from victims struggling to deal with their trauma in isolation. We have also seen a surge in the number of children disclosing abuse and adults accessing the Victims of Crime Helpline, which provides crisis intervention and advocacy. Our staff have been amazing, stepping up to ensure we are able to support all victims despite the overwhelming need, but government services/state revenue replacement funds are essential to ensuring we continue to meet the demands for these critical services.

Day One remains as committed as ever to providing comprehensive, trauma-informed support for all who need us; however, deep cuts in federal and state funding over the last two years have been devastating. With

a mission to prevent sexual violence and support and advocate for those affected by it, not surprisingly, Day One's largest stream of revenue is Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding, granted by the U.S. Department of Justice through the Rhode Island Department of Public Safety. Deep cuts to VOCA funding over the last two years (35% in 2020 and 57% in 2021) have decimated Day One's Victims of Crime Helpline, Adult Advocacy, and Clinical programs. Over the last ten months, the agency has also experienced a 21% reduction in staff due to attrition, but several key positions remain unfilled because funding for them was slashed. At a time when the state can least afford to be without such services, an American Rescue Plan State Fiscal Recovery Fund investment of \$3 million will not merely offset these significant losses in grant income and staffing, but also, and most importantly, help build the sustainability and infrastructure needed to expand critical programming and services for victims of sexual violence, their families, and their loved ones.

The vulnerability of the survivor population has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health emergency. In a newsletter published by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) only weeks into the pandemic, NSVRC's Chief Operating Officer stated that times of social unrest and crises are linked to increased risk of sexual assault and abuse. The stress, fear, and sense of hopelessness associated with a community crisis can motivate and create opportunities for people who perpetrate violence and abuse. Social distancing continues to limit access to clinical services, medical care, and community supports of all kinds. All too often, people have had to quarantine in unsafe situations. As NSVRC's Chief Operating Officer noted early on in the crisis, the most vulnerable face the greatest challenges. People who have disabilities, chronic health conditions, insecure housing, or are unable to work due to illness or quarantine are facing even more difficulties.

With the passage of the American Rescue Plan Act and the infusion of substantial financial resources ARPA provides, Rhode Island has the opportunity to invest a sizeable portion of these funds in impactful programming that supports survivors of sexual violence with hope, healing, and action.

As the state continues to grapple with COVID-19 and all nonprofits stretch our resources to meet the extraordinary needs of our clients, Day One asks for the Legislature's assistance in helping the thousands of Rhode Islanders who need our support. Requested funds will ensure continued provision of the best care and services possible for victims of sexual assault, abuse, and exploitation into the new year and far beyond.

With one in every six American women, one in every 33 men, one in four young girls, and one in six boys sexually assaulted or abused each year, sexual violence is a public health crisis onto itself. Those impacted are our family members, neighbors, and friends. We must do everything in our power to prevent and combat sexual violence; those who are affected by sexual assault, child abuse, and sex trafficking deserve nothing less.

As the State evaluates how best to allocate ARPA relief funding, we urge you to invest in Rhode Islanders who have been victimized by sexual violence when they need our support most. Day One strongly recommends funds from the American Rescue Plan Act go to support victim services, advocacy, and prevention work aimed at ending sexual violence.

Respectfully submitted,



Peg Langhammer
Executive Director



Addressing the Needs of Child and Adult Victims of Sexual Violence Statewide

RECOMMENDATIONS for American Rescue Plan Act State Fiscal Recovery Fund Investments

HOPE

\$1,000,000 to Offset Drastic Cuts in VOCA Funding

Restore Staffing to Pre-COVID Levels to Keep Up with the Unprecedented DEMAND for Victim Services

Increase Staffing Levels to Meet the SURGE in Need for Crisis Intervention Services

Build Sustainability and Create LASTING and Equitable IMPACT and GROWTH in Programming and Resources

HEALING

\$1,500,000 to Expand Critical Programming

Increase Capacity to Offer Child Victims of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation ESSENTIAL Clinical Evaluation and Treatment and Criminal Justice Advocacy

Restore FULL RANGE of Victims of Crime Helpline Services

Revitalize the Law Enforcement Advocacy Program to Serve ALL 39 Police Departments

Expand Access to Tele Mental Health Services to Reach ALL Child and Adult Victims with DESPERATELY NEEDED Trauma-Informed Clinical Services

ACTION

\$500,000 to Prevent Sexual Violence

Build Coalitions to UNITE Efforts Across Rhode Island to Address Sexual Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, and Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment



AGENCY OVERVIEW

Day One's **mission** is to reduce the prevalence of sexual abuse and violence and to support and advocate for those affected by it. Established in 1973 as the Rhode Island Rape Crisis Center, Day One is the **only** agency in the state organized specifically to deal with issue of sexual assault as a community concern. We provide clinical treatment, crisis intervention, court, law enforcement, and legal advocacy, as well as prevention education services to Rhode Islanders of all ages – from preschool children to elder adults. As the state's Sexual Assault Coalition, Day One advocates for public policy, legislative, and systemic changes to improve Rhode Island's response to cases of sexual assault and abuse. We also educate the public about sexual violence, human trafficking, and child exploitation.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, Day One has provided direct services to 6,679 children and adults through our **advocacy** and **clinical** programs.

Children's Advocacy – 826 children and their non-offending family members/caregivers (804 unduplicated)

- ✓ Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) – **586**
- ✓ Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) – **218**
- ✓ Technology-Facilitated Exploitation/Child Pornography (CP) – **22**

Adult Advocacy – 4,631 adults

- ✓ Human Trafficking (HT) – **37**
- ✓ Law Enforcement Advocacy (LEA) – **3,999**
- ✓ Helpline (HL) – **190** (go outs to hospitals and police stations)
- ✓ Office of Victim Services (OVS) – **400**

Clinical – 1,244 Rhode Islanders

- ✓ Children – **351**
- ✓ Adults – **693**
- ✓ TTEAM – **135**
- ✓ Prison – **65**

We also conducted hundreds of **virtual workshops**, serving a total of:

- **2,552** students, parents, school faculty, and staff through our **prevention education** programming; and
- **2,950** multidisciplinary team members, including court personnel and representatives from local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, child protective services, the medical and mental health communities, and community-based organizations, through our **professional training** program.