

March 18, 2021

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

Re: *Improving Criminal Justice Responses Program
Certification of Eligibility*

Dear Director:

As the County Administrator of Pinellas County, I submit this letter to certify to the following:

1. The laws of the State of Florida or official policies of **Pinellas County**:
 - a. encourage or mandate arrests of domestic violence offenders based on probable cause that an offense has been committed;
 - b. encourage or mandate arrests of domestic violence offenders who violate the terms of a valid and outstanding protection order;
2. The laws, policies, practices, and training programs of the State of Florida or of **Pinellas County** discourage dual arrests of offender and victim;
3. The laws, policies and practices of the State of Florida or of **Pinellas 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 the State of Florida or of **Pinellas 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; and

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5. The laws, policies, and practices of the State of Florida or of **Pinellas 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,



Barry A. Burton
County Administrator

APPROVED AS TO FORM

By: Matthew Tolnay
Office of the County Attorney