

## **Promising Practice**

### **The Hope Card Project: Addressing Protection Order Enforcement Issues**

In 2004, John Oliveira, a former Special Agent with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, in collaboration with the Crow Nation of Montana, created the Purple Feather Campaign. Over time, the project expanded statewide and became known as the Hope Card Project. The Hope Card sought to address several issues that hindered protection order enforcement, particularly for protection orders issued by tribal courts. These problems included failure to recognize and enforce valid orders, the inability to locate or decipher critical data on the order, and the inability to review lost or damaged pages of an order.

The Hope Card allows anyone who has a non-temporary valid civil protection order to obtain a Hope Card that summarizes the protection order's critical information. A Hope Card is not a substitute for the protection order; it offers victims a durable and convenient means of carrying pertinent information regarding an existing order. The design of the Card combines law enforcement's immediate need for information in response to a domestic violence incident with a victim's need for safety, convenience, and wraparound services.

The Card uses a standard format, shape, and size that make it easily identifiable by law enforcement. Approximately the shape and size of a credit card, the Hope Card is made of sturdy plastic. Its size and durable surface allow it to be easily carried and concealed by the survivor without the burden of having a multi-page paper order that could be lost or damaged.

The Card displays essential protection order data in a concise and easy-to-read format. Each Card contains the issuance and expiration dates, information about the issuing court, and identifying information on any other protected parties. The opposite side of the Card lists identifying characteristics of the Respondent, including a photograph, when available. It also includes specific terms of the order.

The Hope Card is a valuable tool in assisting first responders. When responding to potential protection order violations, the Hope Card's design provides law enforcement with critical information on the parties and the order without having to decipher or search through numerous pages. At the scene of a domestic violence incident, law enforcement should use the card as a reference to the original protection order.

Frequently victims of domestic violence face economic challenges when leaving abusive situations. To address this, there has been discussion about expanding the Hope Card Project to provide economic resources to Card recipients fleeing abusive relationships. The Hope Card creator, John Oliveira, is seeking to expand the project by collaborating with local governments, businesses, and non-profit agencies to create a voucher-based debit card function for the Card. If the project were expanded, the Card would be used as a voucher for survivors to obtain emergency services such as lodging, meals, transportation, and medical care. Survivors would be able to get immediate services conveniently and discreetly by presenting the Card to participating organizations.

The Crow Nation was the first tribe to use what became the Hope Card and the State of Montana was the first state to implement it. With the assistance of that state's Office of Victim Services (OVS), the Hope Card Project continues to thrive. The states of Indiana and Idaho now issue the Hope Card as well. Several other jurisdictions are considering implementation of the program. Montana OVS provides technical assistance to those interested in implementing the Hope Card Project.

If your jurisdiction is interested in the Hope Card or to receive technical assistance contact:

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