



Monroe County Department of Planning and Development
50 West Main Street
Rochester, NY 14614

Re: Letter of Support Willow Domestic Violence Center's application for ARPA funding

July 28, 2022

Dear Selection Committee:

Coordinated Care Services, Inc (CCSI) is pleased to provide this letter of support for Willow Domestic Violence Center's response to the Monroe County American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding Opportunities RFP. Willow is the only service provider licensed by the NYS OCFS to provide a complete continuum of residential and non-residential services for survivors of domestic violence in Monroe County. A deep community asset, Willow's mission is to prevent domestic violence and ensure every survivor has access to the services and supports needed along their journey to a safe and empowered life.

As we have seen across Monroe County, COVID-19 greatly impacted survivors of domestic violence. Restrictions implemented to stop the spread of COVID-19 appear to have exacerbated an already rampant domestic violence epidemic. Instances of domestic violence increased 8.1% nationally after stay-at-home orders took effect in March 2020. Willow experienced an uptick of 18% in outreach to the 24-hour Hotline through December 2020. This increase has remained consistent through 2021 and 2022.

Over a decade's worth of research demonstrates that a Family Justice Center model – having multiple agencies “under one roof” – provides a more supportive environment for domestic violence survivors, increases efficiency in service provision and behavioral health supports, reduces survivor recantation, and increases prosecution of offenders. According to the 2021 Family Justice Center Framework Impact Report, Family Justice Centers contributed to a 90% drop in DV homicides in the City of San Diego, a 75% reduction in domestic violence homicides in Alameda County (CA), and a 51% drop in Brooklyn (NYC).

If funded, CCSI is committed to working in partnership with Willow to design an evaluation plan that will track and measure critical outcomes toward meeting the goals of the Bring Monroe Back initiative and the specific outcomes involved with improving our community's response to domestic violence. By implementing a Monroe County Family Justice Center, utilizing a data-driven approach to measuring outcomes and making constant improvements to quality, we hypothesize that Monroe County will see similar improvements as those in communities like San Diego, Alameda County, and Brooklyn. These improvements could not be more well-timed, on the heels of a pandemic that put many of our helping systems into disarray. This project seeks to align and coordinate those systems, and CCSI is thrilled to support the effort.

We are proud to partner with Willow on their proposed project. This project will strengthen and solidify existing resources and programs to effectively implement a cooperative Center to address family violence. This innovative project is synergistic with CCSI's own focus on trauma-informed solutions – which will bring back and improve Monroe County's public health and public safety.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Anne Wilder
President