



NNEDV

The National Network to End Domestic Violence's **20th Annual Domestic Violence Counts Survey**

NNEDV.org/DVCounts ★ #DVCounts

Survey FAQs and Definitions of Terms

Frequently Asked Questions

Please ensure that the person completing the survey has access to these frequently asked questions (FAQs). Review the FAQs before entering your data online. If you have additional questions, please contact your state or territorial coalition or NNEDV at DVCounts@NNEDV.org.

All survey materials are available at NNEDV.org/DVCounts2025.

The survey link will be live beginning at 8:00 a.m. EDT on Thursday, September 11, 2025.

Survey Logistics

Q. Can I start my 24-hour survey period any time as long as it's 24 hours long?

A. No. Because we want a count of the number of people served by all local programs in the same 24-hour period, we need your program to collect the information during the **24-hour survey period between 8:00 a.m. EDT on Wednesday, September 10 and 7:59 a.m. EDT on Thursday, September 11**. Refer to the Survey Packet and Instructions (available at NNEDV.org/DVCounts2025) to see when you should begin your 24-hour survey period based on your time zone.

Q. What can I do if I'm not sure what time zone I'm in?

A. If you are uncertain about which time zone your program is located in, you can Google "What is the time zone in [FILL IN YOUR CITY + STATE/TERRITORY]." Or use [this link](#) to see the time conversation for your city by adding your location.

If you do not have internet access or are unable to determine your time zone, please contact your state or territorial coalition.

Q. Why am I unable to open the link to the DV Counts survey?

A. The DV Counts Survey link is not "live" until the morning after the survey day. If you are still having trouble accessing the link after 8:00 a.m. EDT on September 11, 2025, contact DVCounts@NNEDV.org.

Q. Do I need to register to participate in DV Counts?

A. No. The only requirement for DV Counts participation is that one of your program's primary purposes must be the provision of domestic violence services. Each year, the 56 state and territorial coalitions send NNEDV a list of identified domestic violence programs in their state or territory. Generally, most participating programs are included on these lists, meaning that your information will already be loaded into our survey system. However, if your program is not included on your coalition's list, but you are still a primary-purpose DV program, you are still welcome to participate.

Program Information

Q. Our domestic violence program has more than one location. If we are combining the number of people we serve from different locations, which ZIP code do we use when entering the data online?

A. Use the ZIP code of your administrative office. If there is no specific "administrative office," use the ZIP code of the office where your Executive Director is located.

Q. When I go to submit my data online, my program's name is not listed online as an option to choose. Can I still participate?

A. Yes, if one of the primary purposes of your program is to provide services to victims of domestic violence, you can participate. Before adding your program's name, however, please check to make sure you have selected the correct state or territory. Also, if your program name has changed, check to see if we listed your program by its old name. If your program is still not listed, choose "Other" and type in your program name and the first name, last name, and email address for a point of contact (POC) for your organization. The POC is typically an Executive Director, Associate Director, or Program Director.

Q. My program is a dual domestic violence and sexual violence program or a dual domestic violence and homeless program. Should I respond to this survey?

A. Yes. However, please count only the number of domestic violence survivors and their dependents to whom you provided services on the survey day. You should also be sure to identify your program type in question 5 of the survey.

Q. My program is housed in a larger community program (e.g., a YWCA). Do I count the services that only my program provided or should I include the larger community program?

A. Please count the number of domestic violence survivors and their dependents to whom **your program** provided services on the survey day, **not the services that were provided by the larger community organization** as a whole. You should also be sure to identify your program type in question 5.

Services Provided

Q. My program does not have a shelter. Should I respond to this survey?

A. Yes. You can fill out many of the other sections of the survey. Please count the number of domestic violence survivors and their dependents that you served on the survey day in any capacity.

Q. My program only served a few people today. Do I really need to fill this out?

A. Yes! We want to count every survivor served on this day. While it might seem like your numbers are small, your participation has a huge impact! It's really powerful (and more compelling to policymakers and others) for NNEDV to be able to say that 100% of the programs in each state/territory participated. Please fill out this survey so we can include your program's services in our count of domestic violence services.

Q. We didn't serve anyone today. What should I do?

A. We understand that circumstances beyond your control may result in your program having unusually low numbers or no data to report on the survey day. Even if you did not provide any services on the survey day, your answers to the general questions are still helpful and, by responding, you will help your state/territory be one step closer to achieving a 100% participation rate.

Q. Do our "success" and "unmet" narrative answers need to be from the survey day, or can they be from any day?

A. To the extent possible, please try to share a success story from the survey day itself. You can also think more broadly about successes to include things such as finally hiring a new person to fill a long-vacant spot, which will increase service delivery. We are also happy to hear stories that are as simple as, "we were able to answer every hotline call that came in today" or "we were able to provide a survivor and their children with a safe place to sleep" since these still demonstrate what your program can accomplish when you have the resources you need.

How Should We Count...?

Q. Should we count individuals served in our batterer intervention services?

A. No. Please do not include any individuals exclusively served in a batterer intervention program in your survey day numbers.

Q. Some survey questions include “in the past 12 months” as the timeframe. What does “in the past 12 months” mean?

A. Ideally, we would like to capture data from the 12-month period prior to, and including, the survey day. However, we understand this is not possible for many programs. Therefore, programs are welcome to use their data from the calendar year (2024) or from their prior fiscal year. The most important is to **ensure the data for this question is for a 12-month period**. In the report, it will be framed as “in the past 12 months.”

Q. Does it matter if the survivor is helped in-person, over the phone, by text, by email, or by chat?

A. No. All types of contact still count.

Q. Does it matter if the person we helped on the survey day is a first-time client or an ongoing client?

A. No. Helping either type of client still counts.

Q. Do I need to provide any information that identifies survivors individually?

A. No. We only need aggregate counts of the number of people who used your domestic violence program services on the survey day. Please do not provide any details or real names in any section that might compromise the confidentiality of any client in your program.

Hotlines

Q. If on the survey day, a DV service provider has multiple conversations with the same survivor to provide ongoing help, how would the program count that? (Example: The advocate is creating a safety plan and the survivor calls three times, each time with different ideas of what to include in the plan, does this count as three requests or one?)

A. That would be considered a non-residential service. However, to the best of your ability without violating the survivor's privacy, make sure to only count them once, even if they and the advocate have multiple conversations that day. If possible, the survivor should only be counted once for any non-residential services requested/provided because we are seeking an unduplicated count of survivors and their dependents accessing domestic violence services.

Q. We have a text line; should I include these texts when I count our number of hotline contacts?

A. Yes, but count the entire text conversation as one hotline contact, if possible, regardless of how many texts the advocate exchanged with that specific victim during the survey day.

Q. Should I only count completed hotline conversations? What about hang-ups or prank calls?

A. Please count ALL hotline contacts you receive during the survey period, including from survivors in crisis, from friends or family, or from contacts to your main office number looking

for the hotline. This can include full conversations, incomplete conversations, AND hang-ups. If you are reasonably able to exclude prank calls from your data, please feel free to do so.

Public Training Sessions

Q. We did a training today for our volunteers. Does that count as a public training session in question 10?

A. Yes. Please count the number of volunteers who attended this training and include this as a training session.

Q. We were interviewed on the radio or by a reporter during the survey day. Does that count as a public training session?

A. No. While working with the media is important, interviews should not be counted as training sessions.

Q. We provided training at a conference today. Do we count the number of attendees who attended the entire conference or just the number of attendees who attended our training/session?

A. Only count the number of attendees who attended your training/session, not the total number of attendees who attended the conference.

Unmet Requests and Waiting Lists

Q. We have a waiting list for shelter, legal representation, etc. Should we consider all of the people on our waiting list when we count the “unmet requests” for services or should we only count those individuals who we added to the list during the 24-hour period?

A. You should count ALL of the people on your waiting list as having unmet requests for services since they would not be on the waiting list if you had enough funding/services/housing to meet their needs.

Q. Who should we count as having an “unmet request” for service?

A. You SHOULD include individuals who requested a service you could not provide even if you did provide another service. For example: A survivor requested individual counseling. You don't currently have any appointment times open, but you were able to suggest that the survivor attend a support group. Since the initial request was for individual counseling, the initial request from the survivor was not met and should be counted as an unmet request. This survivor would be counted as served in non-residential services (through the support group) AND as one unmet request for service.

You SHOULD NOT include individuals who had needs that were outside the scope of the domestic violence-related services that your program provides. For example, if someone is

asking for help applying for food stamps but the individual has no domestic violence history and is not in need of any services related to domestic violence, this would not be counted as an "unmet request" since this is outside of the scope of your program's domestic violence services.

Q. Do referrals count as unmet needs?

A. This depends on your program. "Unmet" refers to individuals whose primary needs could not be met by your program because of resource constraints (e.g., no space, time, staff, or money). For example, if you **would** offer Service X but funding restricts it or if you have been unable to fill a staff position to meet this need, and you had to make a referral instead of providing a service, that would be an unmet need. However, if you **would not** offer Service X no matter what, and would make a referral no matter what, that would not be an unmet need and would not be counted in the survey. For example: Your organization doesn't provide legal representation and never has, always providing referrals to legal aid; this would not be an unmet need. However, if your organization provides legal representation but cannot accept new clients or recently lost your staff attorney, this would be an unmet request.

Housing

Q. Our program only provides shelter or housing referrals, not actual shelter or housing. How do we count survivors who request these referrals?

A. Please count all shelter or housing referrals as non-residential supportive services, since your program is not providing the actual shelter or housing. If your program is specifically designed for referrals only, then your only unmet requests would be if someone requested a referral and did not receive one.

Q. How do we capture rapid re-housing (RRH) services?

A. Programs that provide rapid re-housing (RRH) funds or other rental subsidies should count these services under "Number of people served in transitional housing or other housing" **only if** the funds/subsidies come from your program. If **another organization** provides the funds/subsidies for rent, and your program is providing housing advocacy, support, or non-monetary services, that would instead be non-residential.

Submitting Your Survey

Q. I've collected the data. Now what do I do?

A. Go to NNEDV.org/DVCounts2025 and enter your responses. The online survey form is identical to the packet. Simply enter your answers in the designated spots. If you have trouble viewing the webpage, please contact DVCounts@NNEDV.org.

Q. I don't have internet access. How do I submit my numbers?

A. If you are unable to enter your data online, fax your survey to 202-747-7626. Please use the fax cover sheet provided in the Survey Packet and Instructions (available at [NNEDV.org/DVCounts2025](https://nnedv.org/DVCounts2025)) if you must fax your form. Please ensure the entire survey is included in your fax submission.

Q. Can I get a copy of the survey form I submitted for our program's records?

A. After you click Submit on the form, you will see a confirmation message. At this point, you have the option to copy the link to view your submission. From this link, you can export your responses to PDF. You can save the link (quick tip: email it to yourself) and preview it anytime afterward. If you are unable to retrieve your submission, please contact DVCounts@NNEDV.org.

Q. Should I fax a copy also, even if I fill out the survey form online?

A. No. We prefer that you just fill out the survey form online. If you do not have internet access, please fax the entire survey form with the fax cover sheet in the Survey Packet and Instructions (available at [NNEDV.org/DVCounts2025](https://nnedv.org/DVCounts2025)).

Q. I made an error on my data/I submitted a blank copy/I did not complete my survey, and the survey collector says I already submitted it. What do I do?

A. If you completed and submitted your survey and you saved the link to view your submission (provided after you submit), go back to that link and you can request to edit the form by clicking on the "Request Edit" button at the top of the form page.

If you completed and submitted your survey but did not save the link to view your submission, please email DVCounts@NNEDV.org.

If you are still working on your survey and clicked **Save and Exit**, you would have been asked to create a password in order to complete the survey. After saving your password, you would have been provided a link to continue with the survey. In addition, an email was sent to the email address listed on your survey form with a link to complete the survey. Use that link to finish your survey and, when you're done, click Submit.

If you are still working on your survey and clicked **Save and Exit** but do not have access to the link, you can go back to the original survey link, select from the dropdown menus to select your State and Organization Name. You will need your password to finish your survey.

Please see a video tutorial of these options [here](#) (in English with screen recordings) and email DVCounts@NNEDV.org with any questions.

Q. How do I know if NNEDV has received our data? Should I call NNEDV to ask?

A. When you submit your survey, you will receive a confirmation at the email address listed on your survey form. If you received this email, NNEDV has received your data and there is no need to call/email us and ask. If we haven't received your data, NNEDV or your state or territorial coalition will contact you to remind you to submit your data.

Q. I've received an email telling me to submit my data but I know I already did. What should I do?

A. Occasionally, during the submission period, NNEDV will send out an email to our DV Counts listserv reminding people to submit. If you know you have already submitted your data, you can ignore the email. Since there are nearly 2,000 local programs, it is easiest to utilize our listserv for gentle reminders, instead of emailing each program individually.

Q. Who sees the data that I submit?

A. Only the DV Counts team at NNEDV will see the data that you submit. No one else will ever see your program's specific data. If you hear from a coalition staff person reminding you to submit data, it is because NNEDV has asked the coalition staff person to contact you. That person will not see your actual data.

Q. When will the final DV Counts report be released?

A. It typically takes us four to five months to analyze the data and write the report. NNEDV will publish the report on NNEDV's website ([NNEDV.org/DVCounts](https://nnedv.org/DVCounts)) and provide a link via the DV Counts listserv the following spring after the survey is conducted.

Contact NNEDV's DV Counts Team with any questions not addressed above.

Email: DVCounts@NNEDV.org

Definitions of Terms

Please review the following definitions to understand the terms used in this survey. If you have additional questions regarding definitions, please consult the frequently asked questions (FAQs) section above. If you still have additional questions, please contact your state/territorial coalition or NNEDV at DVCounts@NNEDV.org.

Please note that many of these terms can and do apply simultaneously to the same services, depending on the structure of your program, the services, and the victims and survivors you are serving.

24-Hour Survey Period: The one-day count begins at 8:00 a.m. EDT on Wednesday, September 10 and ends 24 hours later at 7:59 a.m. EDT on Thursday, September 11. If you are in a different time zone, you will begin at a different time; please see the Survey Packet and Instructions (available at

NNEDV.org/DVCounts2025) to determine what time you should start the survey.

Alternatives to the Criminal Legal System (Transformative, Restorative Justice): Any support your program provides to victims and survivors seeking alternate responses (meaning non-carceral, or beyond the criminal legal system) to heal from the abuse and to hold abusers accountable.

Bilingual Support: Any support your program provides to victims and survivors in more than one language. For the purposes of this survey, neither language is required to be English.

Children's Support: Any support your program provides to, or on behalf of, any child or children, regardless of whether they are related to adult victims and survivors served by your program.

Court Accompaniment or Legal Support: Any support your organization provides (aside from Legal Representation) to, or on behalf of, victims and survivors navigating the court systems or seeking other forms of legal help and support. This may include assistance in obtaining legal documents, providing emotional support in court, helping a survivor obtain a protective order, and similar services.

Culturally Specific Service: A program led by and for a traditionally underserved or marginalized community. As [defined](#) by the U.S. Department of Justice, culturally specific programs are those "addressing the critical needs of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking victims in a manner that affirms a victim's culture. [...] Culturally specific community-based organizations are more likely to understand the complex, multi-layered challenges and obstacles that victims from their communities face when attempting to access services. Culturally specific community-based organizations are also better equipped to form essential relationships and engage their communities in the creation and implementation of services relevant to the diverse and unique needs of the victims."

Direct Cash Assistance: Financial assistance provided directly to survivors by your organization. This can include actual cash, financial assistance with miscellaneous costs or bills, and/or gift cards for things like groceries, gas, etc. This assistance is typically low-barrier with few "strings" attached and generally does not require survivors to justify their need, to disclose how they spent the money, or to repay the money to your organization.

Emergency Shelter: Emergency shelters are intended to provide a short-term living space for individuals in response to an immediate crisis. When we ask for the number of adults and children who accessed emergency shelter services from your program, we include stays in safe homes as well.

Financial Literacy/Budgeting: Any support that your program provides to victims and survivors related to financial literacy, financial education, budgeting, and related topics.

HIV/AIDS Information and/or Support: Any support that your program provides to victims and survivors related to HIV/AIDS (i.e., HIV testing, HIV prevention info, re-linkage to care for HIV care). For the purposes of this survey, a victim or survivor does not need to be living with HIV/AIDS in order to receive this service.

Hotel/Motel Stay: When emergency shelter is at capacity, some programs will utilize hotels or motels to house survivors. In response to COVID-19, NNEDV has broken out the hotel/motel stays into its own column to capture these numbers.

Hotline Contacts/Calls/Texts/Chats/Emails (also called "Crisis Calls"): Hotline contacts refer to contacts made to a hotline number for any purpose, including but not limited to: crisis intervention, requests for support by survivors, requests for support by friends or family of survivors, or requests for information. Additionally, please count crisis contacts that come into your main office line, even if the contact didn't come through your hotline. If possible, please count the entire text/chat/email conversation as one hotline contact regardless of how many texts/chats/emails the advocate exchanged with that specific victim during the survey day. Hotlines do NOT have to be 24/7 in order for their conversations to be counted.

Job Training/Employment Assistance: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, victims and survivors seeking employment, needing uniforms or equipment in order to secure or keep employment, etc. or any job training programs provided by your program to victims and survivors. Please do not count job training programs that are provided by another organization separately from your program.

Legal Representation by an Attorney: A licensed attorney, either employed by, or otherwise paid by, your program to provide legal representation to victims and survivors. Please do not count referrals to lawyers at other organizations that are separate from your program.

Matched Savings Programs and/or Microloans: Any matched savings dollars or microloans provided by your program to victims and survivors. Individual matching and/or repayment requirements may vary. Please do not count this money if it is provided by another organization separately from your program.

Media/Press Response or Outreach: Any media or press response, outreach, pitching, or other related engagements that your program does, in any physical or digital format.

Non-Residential Supportive Services: A non-residential service is any domestic violence-related service that is not emergency shelter, transitional or other housing, or hotel or motel stays. It commonly includes services like counseling, transportation, legal advocacy, etc.

Onsite Medical Services: Medical services that your program provides to victims and survivors onsite. Please do not count medical services that are provided by another organization completely separate from your program. *(There may be different program or partnership models that apply here! If needed, please contact DVCounts@NNEDV.org for additional guidance in counting these services.)*

Prevention and/or Educational Programs: Any programming that your program provides addressing basic education around domestic violence. For the purposes of this survey, both curriculum developed by your program, and curriculum developed by another program and/or adapted by your program, may be counted.

Primary-Purpose Domestic Violence Program: For a local program to qualify for participation in the Domestic Violence Counts survey day, one of its primary purposes must be the provision of domestic violence services. The purpose of DV Counts is to gather an unduplicated count of people accessing nonprofit domestic violence advocacy services. The program can be part of a larger nonprofit agency, but you must only count the DV survivors served on DV Counts survey day. DV Counts is not intended to count the number of victims who may visit an emergency room, police department, or criminal justice agency on that day, since it may be possible that a survivor visits an emergency room and then a domestic violence program on the same day.

Public Training Sessions: Public training sessions refer to training specific groups or the community at large (not to your own staff) that increase public awareness about domestic violence, improve responses to survivors, enhance services, and/or mobilize action. Some examples may include police training, community forums, presentations to students, or volunteer training.

Safe Exchange/Visitation: Any support that your program provides related to the safe exchange of children between parents and/or facilitating visitation between children and parents. For the purposes of this survey, a formal custody agreement is not required.

Support for Animals: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, animals connected to victims and survivors and their children, including both domestic pets and livestock/farm animals. This may include on-site kennels or finding temporary foster families for pets while families are in shelter.

Support Related to Address Confidentiality: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, victims and survivors learning about and/or enrolling in address confidentiality programs, etc.

Support Related to Child Welfare/Protective Services: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, victims and survivors and/or their children who are engaged with child welfare or protective services.

Support Related to Disability Issues: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, victims and survivors with disabilities. For the purposes of this survey, the disability may be self-identified and does not require an official medical diagnosis.

Support Related to Health Care or Health Care Systems: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, victims and survivors navigating physical or mental health care or health care systems. Examples: Finding and securing medical care, navigating insurance, or accessing medical records.

Support Related to Housing/Landlord: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, victims and survivors regarding housing, coordinating with a landlord to secure housing, etc.

Support Related to Immigration: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, immigrant victims and survivors, meaning any individual who is not a citizen or national of the United States. For the purposes of this survey, this also includes refugees, asylum seekers, newcomers, individuals with unknown or unofficial immigration status, and temporary workers. Example: Filing a

VAWA self-petition or seeking an immigration attorney. *(Note: This is a different service from “Culturally Specific Services to Immigrant Survivors,” which are services “by and for” immigrants, as defined above; however, both may be provided simultaneously.)*

Support Related to Public Benefits/TANF/Welfare: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, victims and survivors navigating the process of getting or keeping public benefits, such as, but not limited to, SNAP, TANF, WIC, etc.

Support Related to School Systems: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, victims and survivors and their children navigating any school or educational systems, helping with any challenges that arise in these systems, etc.

Support Related to Substance Use: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, victims and survivors pertaining to substance use, including drugs and/or alcohol. *(NOTE: This support is not limited to survivors struggling with substance use but may also include providing information on navigating substance use with family/friends.)*

Support Related to Technology Use: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, victims and survivors experiencing technology-facilitated abuse, seeking tech-specific safety planning, receiving technology as part of a safety plan, and related concerns.

Support to Older/Elder Victims of Abuse: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, older or elderly victims and survivors. We use the definition within the Violence Against Women Act 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(11), which considers an elderly person to be 50 years of age or older.

Support to Teen/Young Adult Victims of Dating Abuse: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, teen or young adult victims or survivors of dating abuse or dating violence. Generally, these victims are approximately 13-24 years of age, but please include any victims that your program counts as part of this age group.

Support to Trafficking Victims: Any support that your program provides to, or on behalf of, a victim or survivor of human trafficking, including sex and/or labor trafficking.

Therapy/Counseling (for Adults, or for Children or Youth): Therapy or counseling services that your organization provides directly, including both individual and group sessions. Please do **not** count sessions that are provided by another organization separately from your program.

Third-Party Translation/Interpretation Services: Any services related to translation or interpretation where your program works with a translator or interpreter (or a program providing translation or interpretation) that is **not** part of your program (i.e. a third party).

Transitional Housing or Other Housing: “Transitional housing” is temporary housing designed to house residents while helping them transition into permanent living arrangements. Many transitional housing options last up to 24 months. “Other housing” includes rental assistance, rapid re-housing,

homelessness prevention programs, permanent supportive housing, or other housing that is provided by domestic violence organizations.

NOTE: Please ensure that the persons you are tracking as receiving “other housing” are not tracked as receiving “non-residential” services. This will ensure that the count of survivors served is unduplicated. Additionally, programs should only count survivors in this category who are receiving housing **provided by a domestic violence program**, not another housing program. **If your program provides non-residential advocacy services to a survivor who is accessing another organization’s housing support, please count that survivor in the “non-residential” category.** Please only report an “unmet request” for housing when a survivor requests a type of housing that your organization provides but could not provide on the DV Counts Day.

Transportation: Any services that your program provides to victims and survivors related to transportation. This may include both direct provision (i.e. giving a victim a ride in a vehicle owned by your program) and indirect provision (i.e. paying for a survivor to fill their gas tank so they may drive their own car).

Unmet Requests for Service: This term refers to individuals whose primary needs could not be met by your program because of resource constraints (e.g., no space, time, staff, or money). In other words, this **SHOULD** include individuals who were turned away or who you referred to another agency due to your own program’s resource constraints.

NOTE: When counting individuals whom you were unable to serve, you should **NOT** count individuals who make requests outside the scope of your program’s domestic violence-related services. For example, if someone is asking for help applying for food stamps but has no domestic violence history or requires no assistance related to domestic violence, the person should not be counted as having an “unmet request” for service since the request is outside the scope of your program’s domestic violence-related services.

You should count **ALL** of the people on your waiting list as having unmet requests for services, since they would not be on the waiting list if you had enough funding/services/housing to meet their needs. Please include individuals who requested a service that you could not provide even if you did provide another service. (For example: A survivor requested an attorney to help with divorce and custody. Your attorney is completely booked, so you provide safety planning and a referral to legal services. Since the initial request was for an attorney, the initial request from the survivor was not met.)