

# 2008

Domestic Violence Counts  
The National Census of Domestic Violence Services

# Massachusetts Summary

On September 17, 2008, 47 out of 52, or 90%, of identified domestic violence programs in Massachusetts participated in the 2008 National Census of Domestic Violence Services. The following figures represent the information provided by 47 participating programs about services provided during the 24-hour survey period.

## 1,553 Victims Served In One Day

695 domestic violence victims found refuge in emergency shelters or transitional housing provided by local domestic violence programs.

858 adults and children received non-residential assistance and services, including individual counseling, legal advocacy, and children's support groups.

### Percentage of Participating Programs Providing These Services On the Census Day

81%	Individual Support or Advocacy
55%	Legal Accompaniment/Services
53%	Children's Support or Advocacy
51%	Group Support or Advocacy
51%	Emergency Shelter (including hotels or safe houses)
40%	Advocacy Related to Immigration
36%	Advocacy Related to Mental Health
30%	Transitional Housing

## 550 Hotline Calls Answered

Domestic violence hotlines are a lifeline for victims in danger, providing support, information, safety planning, and resources. In the 24-hour survey period, domestic violence programs answered more than 23 hotline calls every hour.

## 669 Educated in Prevention and Education Trainings

On the survey day, 669 individuals in communities across Massachusetts attended 32 training sessions provided by local domestic violence programs, gaining much needed information on domestic violence prevention and early intervention.

## 292 Unmet Requests for Services In One Day

Many programs reported a critical shortage of funds and staff to assist victims in need of services such as transportation, childcare, language translation, mental health and substance abuse counseling, and legal representation. Of these unmet requests, 213 were from victims seeking emergency shelter or transitional housing.

Programs reported that lack of staffing was a reason that they could not meet domestic violence victims' request for services. 62% of programs have less than 20 paid staff, including 38% of programs that have less than 10 paid staff. The average starting salary of a full-time, salaried front-line advocate is \$28,910.

## Attorneys

Victims of domestic violence often need legal assistance with restraining orders and civil and family court matters. Of programs that participated in the Census, only 18% of programs reported being able to regularly connect a victim requesting legal assistance with an attorney.

*"A client in a very dangerous situation dropped her restraining order against the abuser because she knew that without him she would not be able to pay the rent. She'll lose her home and be homeless."*

*"We received a call from a woman who was being stalked and attacked by her ex-husband. She and her children wanted to leave the area, but we only had one room available, so we had to refer them to another shelter."*