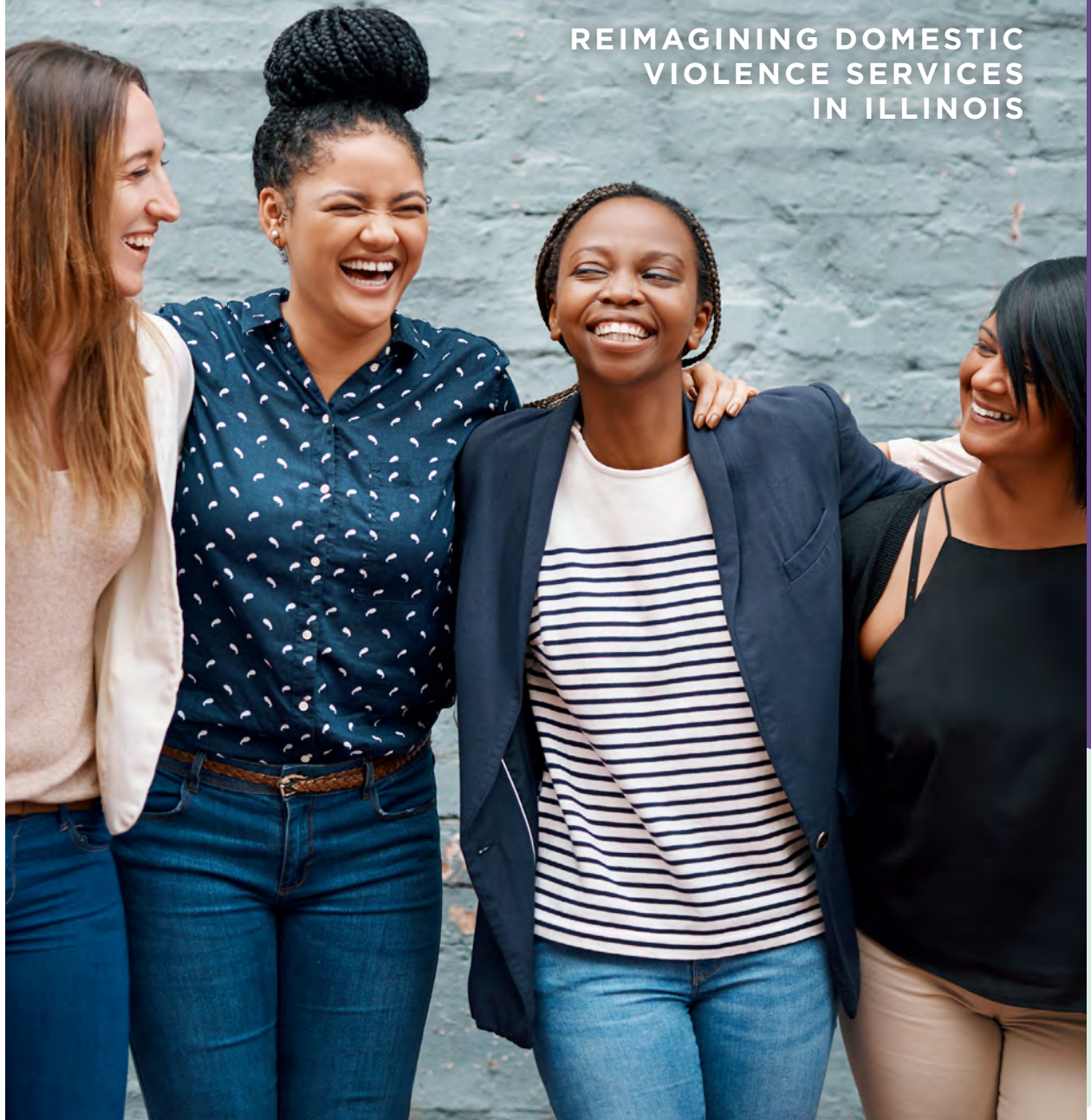


Meeting the Needs of Survivors

REIMAGINING DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE SERVICES
IN ILLINOIS



Introduction

This report was commissioned by the Michael Reese Health Trust (Michael Reese) and completed by staff from The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence (The Network).

This report was published in October 2020.

Each year, millions of Illinoisans are impacted by Domestic Violence.

Domestic violence, sometimes also called intimate partner violence, domestic abuse or relationship abuse, is a pattern of physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological behaviors used by one partner to maintain power and control over another partner in an intimate relationship.

In 2019, the Chicago Police Department made 10,095 domestic violence related arrests and throughout the entire state of Illinois, 39,500 survivors of domestic violence received support services.

Based on a study conducted by the CDC of national rates of interpersonal violence, it is estimated over 2 million women and 1 million men in Illinois have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime.

To meet the immediate and long-term needs of victims, service providers need access to greater funding and the ability to flexibly use funds for increased impact and innovation in supporting survivors of domestic violence.

In addition to outlining various types of funding for domestic violence and the limitations they impose, this report also provides examples where funders and providers across the country found creative solutions to those limitations Illinois could seek to embrace.

The report also includes several case studies where service providers have been able to produce innovative program designs that not only serve more survivors of domestic violence, but also support the multiple needs survivors often face.

Finally, **we make recommendations on how Illinois can adopt some of these models and methods funders and providers could follow to achieve greater impact, ultimately changing the future of those affected by domestic violence.**

Through this report, we hope funders and providers can work together to change the landscape of domestic violence in the state of Illinois, bringing an end to this epidemic.



Michael Reese Health Trust

Michael Reese is a philanthropic organization working to put everyday health within everyone's reach in the city of Chicago. Michael Reese supports cross-sector solutions to domestic violence and addresses the long-term needs of survivors.

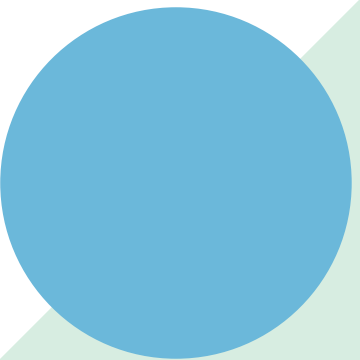


The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence

The Network is a coalition of over 40 diverse organizations and individuals that provide domestic violence-related services in the Chicago metropolitan area. The Network is dedicated to improving the lives of those impacted by domestic violence through education, public policy and advocacy, and the connection of community members to direct service providers.

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Domestic Violence Funding Sources and Limitations



**This graphic shows the largest sources of funding but is not all inclusive*

PUBLIC FUNDING

Federal Funding

The largest source of funding for domestic violence service providers comes from federal dollars¹ with the vast majority coming from three funding streams:

1. VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT (VOCA)

VOCA was created by Congress in 1984 to provide support to state and local programs that assist victims of crime. VOCA helps victims deal with the tangible costs of surviving a crime, such as medical bills, counseling services and lost wages.

2. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA)

VAWA was signed into federal legislation in 1994 and seeks to improve criminal justice and community-based responses to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.

3. FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND SERVICES ACT (FVPSA)

FVPSA was authorized in 1984 and supports lifesaving services including emergency shelters, crisis hotlines, counseling and programs for underserved communities through the US, American Indian and Alaska Native communities and territories.

In FY19, the Federal Government spent a combined \$4.1 billion on these programs nationally with \$94.4 million allocated to the state of Illinois.

FUND	FED VS. STATE	FY2019	FY2018	FY2017	FY2016
VAWA ²	Federal (millions)	\$558.3 ³	\$553.4 ⁴	\$534.8 ⁵	\$533.4 ⁶
	Illinois (millions)	\$4.7 ⁷	\$5.3 ⁸	\$5.1 ⁹	\$5.3 ¹⁰
VOCA ¹¹	Federal (billions)	\$3.353 ¹²	\$4.436 ¹³	\$2.237 ¹⁴	\$2.653 ¹⁵
	Illinois (millions)	\$87.2 ¹⁶	\$128.8 ¹⁷	\$71.7 ¹⁸	\$87.2 ¹⁹
FVPSA ²⁰	Federal (millions)	\$180.3 ²¹	\$173.1 ²²	\$164.2 ²³	\$163.8 ²⁴
	Illinois (millions)	\$3.5 ²⁵	\$3.4 ²⁶	\$3.4 ²⁷	\$3.4 ²⁸

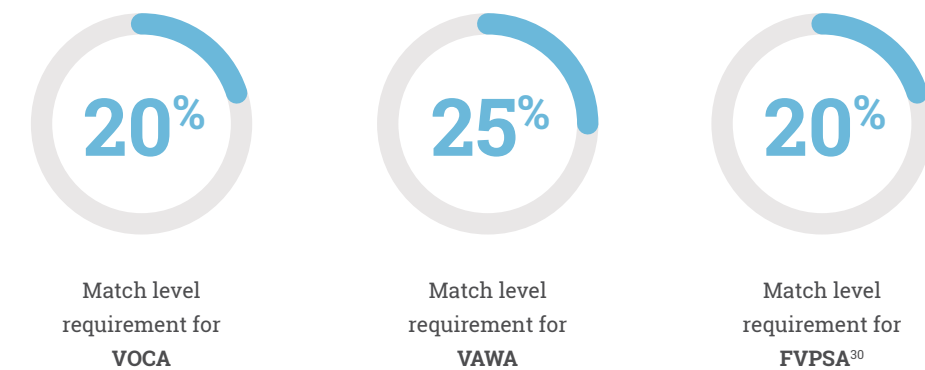
These federal funding streams are administered to direct service providers by state agencies which then report back to the Federal Government.

In Illinois, the primary recipient of pass-through federal funds is the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA). The Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) allocates funds from VAWA to state agencies like ICJIA which then administers the funds directly to service providers. Some state agencies choose to contract with state coalitions to distribute funds to service providers. ICJIA designates the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV) as the lead entity to distribute VAWA and VOCA funding to domestic violence service providers.

The Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) is another federal pass through grant that supports states and federally recognized Tribes, increases awareness of domestic and family violence and engages in prevention activities. Similarly to VOCA and VAWA reporting processes, state administering agencies must report on subgrantees' use of FVPSA funds. State administrators are required to submit annual reports on funded activities and the impact these activities had on individuals and communities.²⁹

State Funding

States also provide funding to domestic violence service providers, typically through federal grant match dollars. Each state is required to match federal grant funding at a certain match level.



This requirement can be met with either cash or in-kind contributions including volunteer hours, space and materials. Waivers are available for this match if the requirement cannot be met by the state due to hardship with proof of attempts to find other funding sources.

States rely on multiple sources of revenue to support funding of services to victims of domestic violence. These sources of revenue include state appropriations to a general fund, permanent fund dividends, special funds, taxes, trust funds, and dedicated funding from fees on services. An analysis

of state funding for domestic violence programs conducted by Duke University found that the most common sources were general and special funds, with over 33 states relying on this form of funding for domestic violence service.³¹

General and special funds are funding sources established by state legislatures. Money in the general fund is used to support anything not associated with another designated funding source. Special funds are established for a specific purpose, such as funding domestic violence. The second most common source of funding is fees on services, with one primary example being marriage license fees. Twenty-eight states, including Illinois, and the District of Columbia utilize marriage license fees to provide funding for domestic violence services.³²

Limitations to Federal and State Funding

Governmental grants are often laden with administrative requirements and restrictions on funded activities. Application for a usage of these funds can be prohibitive to smaller organizations due to the administrative requirements. VOCA and FVPSA awards cap administrative expenses at 5%, which most states fully utilize before passing through the funds to state coalitions or providers.³³

VAWA funds restrict administrative costs to 10%.³⁴ This small administrative allocation limits the state agencies' ability to conduct strategic planning, monitor grantees, conduct needs assessments and develop system automation that would help them more efficiently and effectively allocate funds. Any increase in these activities would require an increase in the federal grant allocation to ensure funding for direct services is not impacted.

Applying for federal funds such as VAWA and VOCA in Illinois through ICJIA is more complicated. ICJIA asks providers to take numerous steps to "pre-qualify" for grants, and then apply for each grant or program separately. This pre-qualification process is required in the state of Illinois per the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act.

Some states, such as Colorado, have recognized the burdens that extensive administrative requirements have on providers and have successfully consolidated federal grant applications. Colorado has been able to combine the applications for VOCA, VAWA and the State Victim Assistance and Law Enforcement (State VALE) funding into a single application to ease the burden on providers.³⁵

PRIVATE FUNDING

Philanthropic Funding

While public funding is utilized for many core services to domestic violence survivors, providers often seek funding from private and public foundations to begin new programs, create a more flexible service model or fund programs not approved by the government granting agencies.

Foundations can provide financial support in multiple ways. Some funding is awarded through competitive, unrestricted grants. Other foundations may specify a specific use for the funds.

One study found that philanthropic funding for domestic violence services is most often used to support direct services, including counseling, legal assistance, housing and health services.³⁶ Foundations most often provide grants for programs seeking innovative ways to improve services. Typically this innovation falls into one of three categories: developing culturally responsive services, increasing the economic security of survivors or raising awareness.³⁷

Limitations to Philanthropic Funding

Foundations providing unrestricted grants often devote only a small fraction to domestic violence organizations.³⁸ Foundations split their funding between many worthy causes and domestic violence organizations must compete for limited funding.

Of all philanthropic giving, only 12% goes to human services, and an even smaller fraction is devoted to domestic violence services.³⁹

Giving from philanthropy has been increasing in Illinois since 2007, reaching \$5.1 billion in 2017.⁴⁰ Grantmakers located in Illinois make up 60% of grants to organizations located within the state.⁴¹ However, grants from Foundations in Illinois are primarily awarded to Chicago organizations over organizations in other parts of the state. In Illinois, 69% of foundation giving goes towards human services, including domestic violence.⁴² Data on the proportion of human services funding that goes towards domestic violence services is not readily available.

In 2018, as foundation giving rose, giving to human service organizations remained relatively stagnant, decreasing by 0.3%.⁴³

Philanthropic funding is also limited in availability. Many foundations limit spending to the federal minimum requirement of 5% of their endowment. This restriction allows the foundation to continue to exist but limits how much funding can be provided to domestic service providers. Endowments may also come with specific requirements on how the funding must be used which is typically hard to alter. Between restrictions on how funds are spent and the wide variety of causes that philanthropic funding serves, there is a very limited well of private funding for domestic violence. These limitations highlight the need to maximize federal and state dollars and strategically use funding for innovative services, as outlined throughout this report.



Individual Funding

Individual funding is when a person provides a direct donation to the charity of their choice. Of all the funding types, individual funding provides the most flexibility to providers.

One study of giving in Illinois found donors give, on average, 3% of their household income, which means organizations must rely on the highest-level earners for substantial donations.⁴⁴

Limitations to Individual Funding

Funding from individual donors can be limited in availability with many charitable organizations competing to get donations from a small pool of donors. One study estimated that the top 4% of households accounted for 40% of charitable giving.⁴⁵ In 2018, the total amount of funding given by individuals decreased by 1.1%.⁴⁶

Individual donors only give a limited percentage of their income, and most donors give in the area in which they live. In Illinois, this limits funding available for the suburbs, as wealth is highly concentrated in neighborhoods around Chicago. An estimated 63% of donations that come from individuals who live or work in Chicago go to Chicago-based organizations. Southern Illinois is home to 12% of the state's highest donors. Throughout the state, individual donors give to a wide variety of causes, with only 12-15% going to human services.⁴⁷

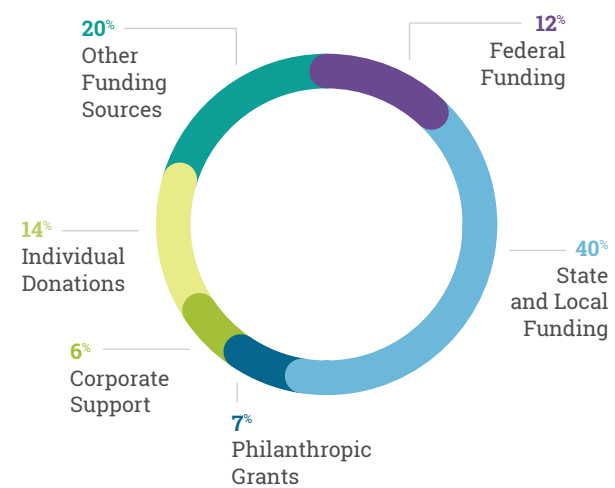
FUNDING IN ILLINOIS

Like all states, Illinois relies on a combination of funding sources to support the provision of services to domestic violence victims. In Chicago, federal, state, and local government grants provide 35% of revenue for human service organizations. In the Chicagoland suburbs, the federal, state and local government provides a combined total of 26.3% of funding to providers, while in other parts of the state, government entities provide 20% of the total human services funding.⁴⁸

Average funding of a domestic violence shelter in Illinois

A recent study compared sources of funding for domestic violence by state through the reporting of a selection over 1,000 shelters across the country.

This study indicated the average funding for domestic violence shelter in Illinois is comprised of:⁴⁹



Creative Funding in Illinois

Providers in Illinois can also utilize dedicated revenue streams to support services to victims of domestic violence. The primary example of this form of funding is the short-term rental surcharge in the City of Chicago, most commonly known as the "AirBnB tax." In 2018, Mayor Emmanuel increased the surcharge to be placed on home shares from four to 6%, estimating an additional \$1.3 million of revenue to be designated towards domestic violence shelters. The funding focuses on increasing the city's domestic violence shelter bed capacity.⁵¹ Illinois also collects fees from marriage and civil union licenses, of which \$5 goes into a Married Families Domestic Violence Fund. For the 2020 fiscal year, the \$300,000 was given to five organizations. Two serve Cook County, while the other three provide services throughout the state.⁵²

Funding Case Studies

This section provides several case studies of funding models that have helped alleviate the restrictions of traditional funding models by finding solutions to common administrative problems, expanding the availability of funds or developing methods to fund more innovative programs. It also includes opportunities for the state of Illinois to create better and more diverse funding solutions.

CASE STUDY ONE

Consolidated Grant Applications

Recognizing the administrative burden for service providers of funding application processes, in 2010 the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice Office for Victims Programs developed a consolidated grant funding process.

This process allows organizations that serve victims to complete a single application for VOCA, VAWA and the State Victim Assistance and Law Enforcement (State VALE).⁵³

Colorado developed this application by restructuring internal processes for the Colorado Office for Victims Programs, including updating applications and aligning funding cycles, restructuring review boards and revising grant reporting processes. **The revised application process provides greater customer service and functionality to direct service providers, maximizes the use of funds, creates a more efficient allocation of funds, avoids conflicts in funding processes, minimizes time service providers spend on grant applications and helps to prepare for future improvement.**



Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA)

To address some of the repetitive requirements of grant administration in Illinois the Management Improvement Initiative Committee was formed. This committee paved the way for the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA), signed into law in 2014. This act established consistent requirements for all grants, compliant with federal regulations. GATA does not serve to set management rules, but adopts the Uniform Requirements set under federal grant guidance.

This system has been acknowledged as increasing effectiveness, improving compliance, and eliminating redundancies. GATA works across agencies to allow for information sharing, resulting in increased transparency of fiscal processes.⁵⁴

However, the application of GATA has limited the flexibility of funding awarded to service providers and

has restricted the State's ability to effectively award funding quickly and efficiently in times of crisis or when additional funding becomes available. The rigidity of the system limits the ability of providers to respond quickly to survivor needs. In addition, when excess funding is available and additional needs emerge, providers are often unable to apply for the funding due to the length of time required for GATA compliance.

Illinois could explore the use of GATA requirements to build out a consolidated grant application, keeping in mind the limitations of this system. The usefulness of such an application would be dependent on monitoring agencies. Therefore, the application would need to be developed with monitoring agencies in mind and with consideration to the restrictions on all funding.

CASE STUDY TWO

Web-based Systems

Another solution to the administrative burdens often placed on direct service agencies is web-based systems. Recognizing this benefit, Arizona's Department of Public Safety's Crime Victim Services created a web-based automated system for grant management of VOCA funding.

The system allows subgrantees to verify eligibility, submit applications, confirm allowable expenses and amounts and submit financial and program reports. It also enables the state to conduct peer reviews, create contracts, measure outcomes, collect other data, provide feedback to applicants and give reimbursements.⁵⁵

Not only does this technology allow for quicker processing and more efficient grant management, it also leads to more efficient disbursement of funds and allows the Arizona Crime Victim Services to better evaluate subgrantee applications and make more informed decisions.

According to Kate Lyon, the VOCA Program Administrator in the Arizona Department of Public Safety, this use of technology has helped make grant distribution more efficient and has drastically cut down on staff administrative errors present in the previous distribution system. This system is also preferred by the direct service agencies that receive VOCA funds because it extends funding periods from one year to three years, giving many agencies the peace of mind that they will have continuous funding and allowing them to focus on service provision instead of fundraising.⁵⁶ At this time, this system is only in place for VOCA funds.⁵⁷

ILLINOIS OPPORTUNITY



Improving GATA

A web-based system in Illinois could work to increase efficiency and flexibility as it did in Arizona. As mentioned in the previous study, funding applications in Illinois must meet GATA compliance. Providers have reported that this system is too rigid and takes a great deal of time to complete, limiting the amount of funding that reaches survivors. An online system would help make the application process more efficient and provide rapid feedback on funding questions, such as allowable expenses. This would help providers explore different uses of funding and get funds dispersed in a quick and efficient manner while still maintaining GATA compliance.

CASE STUDY THREE

Needs Assessments

In 2013, the Iowa Attorney General's Office of Crime Victim Assistance Division (CVAD), in partnership with Iowa's Coalition Against Domestic Violence, conducted a comprehensive needs assessment and created a Strategic Funding and Services plan for victim services.⁵⁸

This needs assessment found that shelters were underutilized and a large financial burden due to the 24/7 staffing and the cost of security needs.⁵⁹

To remedy this, Iowa adopted a "housing first model" which recognized that emergency shelter is not necessarily the best fit for clients. This service model incorporates different forms of housing such as a 24/7 emergency shelter, safe homes, hotel/motel, financial housing assistance, transitional housing and measures to keep victims in their homes. Additional services may include assistance with a protective order, transportation, car repairs and employment training.

Iowa's model equally distributed services by region so that each of the state's six regions received equal services, with mobile advocacy being used in more rural areas. **This restructuring was very effective and clients served increased by 45% from 2013 to 2016 (from 20,616 to 29,805).**⁶⁰

While assessments such as the ones modeled in Iowa take time and money, they help state agencies better understand the needs of clients and effectively allocate money to meet them.

ILLINOIS OPPORTUNITY



ICJIA Victim Service Provider Survey

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) is currently conducting a victim service provider survey. The goal of this survey is to gain information on victims' needs, how they are being met and where there are gaps in service. The survey is available for agencies that provide services to victims to complete on a voluntary basis.⁶¹ This survey will hopefully provide data on current needs and lead to changes in how Illinois provides services to victims, resulting in more efficient use of funds and better services for victims.

CASE STUDY FOUR

Strategic Plans

In 2005, Washington State released its Strategic Plan for Victim Services, which was developed in collaboration with victims, advocates and service providers.

Since the plan's creation, the state's Office of Crime Victims Advocacy has worked hard to ensure all state-funded service providers align with the core purpose of the plan; that "every victim of crime has victim-centered, culturally appropriate and accessible services available anytime and from anywhere in the state."⁶²

To help them achieve that goal, Washington released its Indicators of Successful Programs, which set clear expectations for subgrantees on outreach, service provision and grant compliance. These indicators also help the state agency make funding decision. Determining which programs should receive new or continued funding can be a challenge for state agencies but is a vital step in ensuring that victims receive all the assistance they need. These indicators, in addition to clarifying expectations for subgrantees, help to resolve the challenge of deciding funding allocations.



HEALS Project

In 2013, Illinois was provided a six-year grant from the Office of Victims of Crime to conduct research through the Illinois Helping Everyone Access Linked Systems (Illinois HEALS) project. HEALS staff conducted surveys of service providers to learn more about service availability and current collaboration and referral procedures.

Their findings identified five areas for further research and action:

1. **CONDUCT A MORE DETAILED STUDY** of how different service providers assess individuals for victimization.
2. **EXPLORE INFORMATION SHARING PROCESSES** between agencies and how this impacts family member involvement in services.
3. **FACILITATE COLLABORATION** between different agencies that may work with victims.
4. **RESEARCH THE CAPACITY OF AGENCIES** to meet the needs of both adult and child victims.
5. **RECOGNIZE HOW FAMILIES AS A WHOLE ARE IMPACTED** by violence and how all members can be involved in healing.⁶³

If further research was conducted, the results could serve as a starting point for Illinois to develop a comprehensive, efficient strategic plan for providing domestic violence services that meet the breadth of victims needs.

CASE STUDY FIVE

Diverse and Creative State Funding

Two states with diverse statewide funding for domestic violence services are Florida and Hawaii. Both states have five unique sources for state funding.

Florida has a court fee, marriage license fee, divorce certificate fee, a jury contribution option and a tax on food and beverage sales. The jury contribution option is a choice given to those who are selected for jury duty to donate the money typically used to compensate them for their time to domestic violence shelters. The tax on food and beverages is optional for counties to implement. If they choose to implement the tax, the money raised goes towards local domestic violence service providers.

Hawaii has a marriage license fee, a divorce certificate fee, a unique death certificate fee and a birth certificate fee. Hawaii's fifth fee is a compensation fee from misdemeanor and felony convictions that goes towards its Crime Victim Compensation Commission. It is estimated that these fees could reach nearly a million dollars if properly collected.⁶⁴

Additionally, Hawaii utilizes special funds for prevention and intervention. These funds come from the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Special Fund that Hawaii established in 1997 and are controlled by the Department of Health. The fund gains revenue through taxpayer income taxes that can be designated to the fund and fees.⁶⁵ Having a variety of funding sources helps to ensure adequate funding for domestic violence service providers.

ILLINOIS OPPORTUNITY



Marriage License Fees

In New Hampshire, marriage license fees fund fourteen different domestic violence agencies. Agencies report the funds help alleviate burdens from reduced state funding.⁶⁶ An increase on license fees in 2015 allowed an additional \$45,545⁶⁷ per year to each agency. Illinois could explore a similar increase in its fees to expand funding for survivors. Last year there were over 75,000 marriages in Illinois.⁶⁸ If each couple had paid an additional \$5 per license it would have amounted to an additional \$375,000 of available funds.

CASE STUDY SIX

Foundation Funding

Some foundations have provided technical assistance and capacity building support to help nonprofits improve administrative functions.

The Roddenberry Foundation created a 12-month fellowship program for the executive directors of nonprofits with budgets of \$2 million or less that aims to provide \$50,000 in funding, one-on-one professional coaching and larger development opportunities with the goal of improving the programs overall success through the expansion of their administrative capacity.⁶⁹ This foundation goes beyond the provision of funds to assist programs in achieving sustainable success through the development of their administrative capabilities.

Philanthropic giving to organizations in Illinois follows patterns seen across the US with emphasis on direct service organizations that have a standing record, with a smaller selection funding innovative, new programs.

ILLINOIS OPPORTUNITY



Chicago First Fund

A local program that was more focused on innovative solutions was the Chicago FIRST fund. In 2018, the Michael Reese Health Trust, Crown Family Philanthropies, Polk Bros. Foundation and Chicago Foundation for Women led an effort to pool foundation grants to launch the Family and Interpersonal Resilience and Safety Transformation (FIRST) Fund to support collaborative new approaches to domestic violence. The FIRST fund provided organizations with awards from \$5,000 to \$25,000.⁷⁰ This fund was formed in response to a 2017 domestic violence needs assessment. It supported a wide selection of innovative initiatives to address domestic violence, looking to bring new potential partners to the table.⁷¹ Ultimately, this effort was not sustained beyond one year but should be considered for replication.

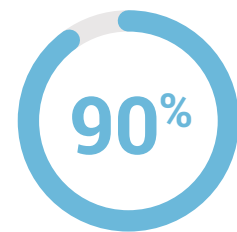


Reimagining Funding to Change the Future of Domestic Violence in Illinois

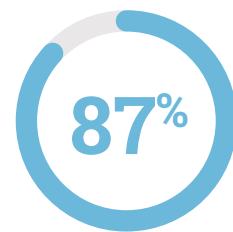
Traditionally, the need for domestic violence services have been met through domestic violence shelters. This model of service emerged in the 1970s with early shelters responding to physical impacts of domestic violence, difficulties inherent in leaving home and relocating to unfamiliar surroundings and supporting children who came with mothers.

Over the years, shelters have expanded in both the services they provide and who they serve. Modern-day shelters provide safe accommodation in a confidential location for victims to avoid additional violence as traditional shelters did. They also work to increase awareness and understanding of domestic violence in the community, help clients navigate the court system, provide counseling, economic assistance and more.⁷²

One study of a New York City shelter showed:



of participants felt the shelter increased safety for their child(ren)



of participants felt the shelter improved their own personal safety.⁷³



It also showed that shelter participants had lower rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) after leaving the shelter.⁷⁴



LIMITATIONS TO THE SHELTER MODEL

Despite the importance of shelters in service provision for domestic violence, they also have many limitations. The first is limited capacity.

According to the National Network to End Domestic Violence, in Illinois in 2018, there were an average of 165 unmet requests for service in a single day.

These unmet requests include those for shelter, transportation, childcare, legal assistance and other requests. 59% of these requests were related to shelter or housing.⁷⁵

According to data from the Illinois Criminal Justice Authority, in 2019 4,033 adults and 4,018 children were turned away from domestic violence service providers throughout the state.⁷⁶

A second limitation to shelters is the challenges participants often face after departure. Participants in the same New York study cited on page 27 reported facing housing instability and lack of access to basic necessities following their stay at a shelter.⁷⁷ This instability resulted in 11% of clients returning to the abusive situation.⁷⁸

Another significant limitation is that the same shelter structure that seeks to provide confidentiality and protection can restrict survivors. **The physical locations of shelters can sometimes be inaccessible or difficult to reach for victims, limiting a victim's ability to stay connected to a job, school, resources and family/support systems in their own community.**

In a survey conducted at domestic violence shelters, residents reported losing contact with their support systems due to distance, inability to have visitors, curfews, rules regarding family supervision of children and other confidentiality regulations.⁷⁹

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OUTCOME MEASURES REPORT

Domestic violence victims often present with many immediate needs, several of which can take priority over moving into a shelter. The Domestic Violence Outcome Measures Report, a study of Illinois domestic violence victims, found that 46% of victims reported counseling or therapy as their primary need.⁸⁰ Just over 30% reported a need to find permanent housing.⁸¹ Other high rated needs include help with credit history, financial planning, access to food and clothing and finding work.⁸² Almost 23% of participants reported a need for assistance with filing for divorce⁸³ and 30% reported needing assistance with visitation or child custody.⁸⁴ One Kentucky based study found that 75% of victims did not request shelter.⁸⁵

Domestic violence victims are individuals facing a wide range of obstacles in need of multiple types of support. In order to meet these unique needs, it is time to explore other uses of funding. Any services provided must be firmly rooted in meeting the needs that survivors identify for themselves, not a one-size fits all, preordained model of services.

The following section of the report begins that exploration by providing an overview of case studies of locations using a variety of funding sources, both public and private, in innovative ways to address domestic violence. These cases should serve as potential avenues of service, but certainly not the only ones.

CASE STUDY ONE

Housing First Model

Funding: Private and VOCA

The Domestic Violence Housing First Model⁸⁶ was started by the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence with support by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and state and federal funding.

The guiding principle behind Housing First is that access to housing is a human right.⁸⁷

This model offers flexible financial assistance that helps victims retain their current residence or find permanent supportive housing (PSH) with less reliance on shelters. The funding is also available to those relocating out of shelters.

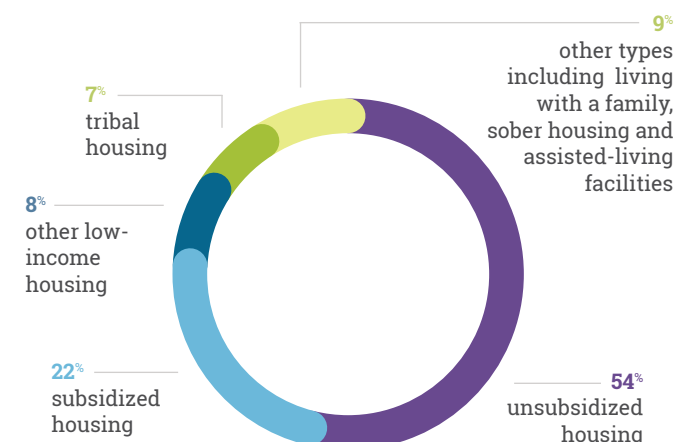
The program relies on VOCA funding to support housing stability and helps victims receive benefits they are eligible for such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) to address urgent housing needs. The program is similar to rapid re-housing programs that provide financial assistance, case management and assistance finding affordable housing for those with an immediate need. Evaluations have shown **the rapid re-housing model has reduced homelessness amongst families and veterans.**⁸⁸ **When combined with a trauma-informed approach, survivor-driven advocacy and community engagement, the Housing First Model effectively meets the multiple needs of domestic violence survivors.**

In addition to meeting needs of survivors, the Housing First Model can be a cost-effective way to serve survivors who have experienced chronic homelessness due to abuse. Through the provision of permanent housing and supportive services to maintain housing, the costs associated with repeated use of shelters, transitional housing systems, mental health and substance abuse services are eliminated. **In Denver, Colorado, the Housing First Model saved the city \$15,733 per person per year in terms of public costs by assisting individuals in a way in which they no longer relied on**

other city services such as emergency room services and behavioral health services, and were less likely to be involved in the criminal legal system. These savings were used to offset the cost of housing individuals in the program, \$13,400 per individual, while still ultimately saving \$2,373 in taxpayer dollars per individual in the program each year.⁸⁹

The Housing First Model has also had great success in Washington state. Of the clients who received comprehensive services from a provider for at least six months, 95% retained permanent housing. Similarly, for those who received services for 12 months, 97% retained permanent housing.

Housing types varied in:⁹⁰



Clients, especially those coming from Native communities or small rural areas, also reported feeling less isolation and grief as they were able to remain connected to their communities.

The program has also given advocates more time to spend on community involvement and raising awareness. This in turn has led to an increased community response to domestic violence. **Clients have reported that permanent housing away from those who harmed them has led to healing from trauma as well as addiction.** The program also helps to provide culturally specific services and be all gender inclusive.⁹¹

In addition to the work in Washington, many domestic violence organizations in other states have implemented the housing first model with success. In 2016, California became the first state to use federal Victims of Crime Act dollars to support the domestic violence Housing First model.⁹² This California pilot program gave funding to seven domestic violence agencies who were able to help 234 families with 169 of those families receiving final housing outcomes within the year and 106 of those families were able to stay in their original homes.⁹³

CASE STUDY TWO

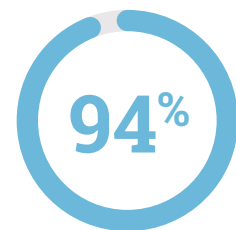
Flexible Funding

Funding: Private and VOCA

Another approach to providing safe housing for victims of domestic violence outside of shelters is flexible funding which can be used a variety of ways.

One example is third party payments for rent, childcare, medical payments, car repairs, tuition and more. This type of payment is given directly from the service provider to the business or landlord on behalf of the survivor. In addition to third-party payments, organizations can provide a credit card to the survivor to be used for necessities or cash to be used in a similar manner. **Survivors often face barriers to these resources due to poor credit, limited work history or even a criminal record due to the abuse. This flexibility allows for a more efficient use of funds that is more effective in meeting the unique needs of survivors.**

One example of the success of flexible funding is the District Alliance for Safe Housing (DASH) program in Washington, D.C. By combining federal funding with support from local foundations, DASH was able to launch the Survivor Resilience Fund, a flexible source of support for domestic violence survivors. Public funding could be utilized for more traditional housing costs, such as rent and safety deposits while private funds could be used for other expenses that support victims' safety and security.



of clients had received housing within six months of funding⁹⁴

Flexible funding pools remove restrictions and allows for rapid assistance by combining available resources. Studies of international aid have shown that giving funds directly to those in need provides a greater impact than giving other resources.⁹⁵

In 2016 the Federal Office for Victims of Crime clarified the use of VOCA funding to include supporting housing needs for victims of domestic violence. The new rule supports the use of VOCA funds for flexible funding and states that VOCA funds can be used for expenses such as travel fees, rent, security deposits and utilities, among others.⁹⁶ Most flexible funding programs combine private and public funding sources. States with these programs include California, Colorado and Minnesota.⁹⁷



CASE STUDY THREE

Mobile Advocacy

Funding: Private

In 2018, the Center for Women and Families (CWF), an organization located on the border of Kentucky and Indiana, closed their Indiana shelter and transitioned to a mobile advocacy system.⁹⁸

This decision came after realizing that during fiscal year 2017, the ten room shelter only served 86 adults and 62 kids while community outreach services helped 569 people.⁹⁹ These numbers led the CWF to decide the shelter was not adequately addressing the needs of the community and the financial overhead of maintaining the shelter building limited the agency's ability to perform outreach in the community.

The mobile advocacy model is more flexible than a typical shelter model and allows for domestic violence services to be partnered with other types of services. Doing this gives survivors the option of greater privacy and discretion in receiving services.¹⁰⁰ These models also help build capacity for other services within the community and focus on meeting individual victims' needs whenever and wherever they feel comfortable.

Another benefit the CWF discovered through mobile advocacy was the ability to cast a wider net, including: people who are questioning if their relationships are abusive, individuals who are not ready to leave their abusers and people who are less likely to find success in a shelter setting (such as victims with severe mental health diagnoses, victims who use substances and victims who would struggle with shelter stay limits). Shelly McDonald, CEO of the CWF, said "every victim deserves services, not just the most financially insecure or the ones with the highest risk of lethality."¹⁰¹ This mindset has allowed the agency to place more emphasis on the emotional needs and whole well-being of victims rather than only physical safety.



Although the agency's campus no longer houses a shelter, if immediate relocation is needed, hotel vouchers or provider referrals to other programs are offered. Additionally, they offer transportation funding that allows victims to access other housing options and integrate the rapid re-housing model as needed. McDonald claimed that **in only six months, the program was able to help more clients and give those clients more personalized services than was possible in a year with the shelter model.** Client and staff feedback has been overwhelmingly positive: clients appreciate the convenience and staff appreciate that the work is less physically and emotionally draining than shelter work.¹⁰² Inspiration for this model was taken from successful mobile advocacy programs that have been established in Arizona and Iowa.¹⁰³



When a survivor is incarcerated, there is often a direct relationship between the abuse survivors experience and the crime with which they are charged. Many survivors find themselves behind bars as a result of defending themselves against their abuser or being coerced into welfare fraud, selling drugs, driving a get-away car, false reporting or perjury.¹⁰⁵

Incarcerations impact a victim's life in many negative ways, including loss of credibility, employment capabilities, ability to receive public benefits and housing, ability to vote, termination of parental rights and deportation. **In addition to assisting a survivor with any civil concerns, it is important that programs inform survivors about the impact that incarceration, arrests and legal proceedings may have on the survivor's day-to-day life. The link between incarceration and domestic violence indicates that it is vital that domestic violence services be provided to those who are incarcerated.**

In California, incarcerated survivors initiated a support group in the prison system to help address this link, which they had experienced firsthand. The program, Convicted Women Against Abuse, holds meetings twice a month for the women to come and share their experiences. Since forming, the group has worked with legislators and local domestic violence agencies to advocate for policies and increased understanding of this issue. They have worked with pro-bono lawyers to earn clemency for some participants.¹⁰⁶

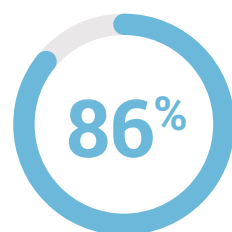
Domestic violence services to incarcerated survivors can often be funded through public funding, such as VOCA. Hawaii utilizes VOCA funding to provide services for incarcerated victims of domestic violence. This funding is used to mirror services offered to those who are not incarcerated. It is not used for "prison purposes."¹⁰⁷

CASE STUDY FOUR

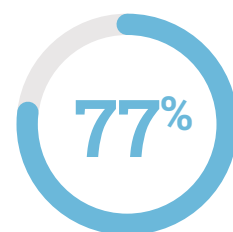
Assistance to Justice Involved Survivors

Funding: VOCA

The incarceration rate of survivors is astronomical.



of cisgender women experiencing incarceration have experienced sexual violence prior to their incarceration



of cisgender women experiencing incarceration have experienced intimate partner violence prior to incarceration¹⁰⁴

CASE STUDY FIVE

Community Outreach

Funding: Private and VOCA

Not all victims seek out services on their own. For service providers to reach those victims that might not otherwise utilize their services, it's essential providers do community outreach. The barriers that prevent victims from seeking services include: a mistrust of police, immigration, language barriers, disabilities, financial means or location of service providers.

In Vermont, providers and officials observed a growing immigrant and refugee population, but noted few were seeking services. To address this problem, the Center for Crime Victim Services partnered with the Vermont Folklife Center to establish the New Neighbors Project. The project utilized VOCA funds as well as funders of the Vermont Folklife Center, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Vermont Community Foundation and the Vermont Arts Council. The project works to explore the musical traditions of those who have resettled in Vermont.¹⁰⁸

The Center for Crime Victim Services used the project to produce a video about victim rights that was broadcast on local television and distributed to service providers. Videos were available in six languages and presenters included people from the target communities. In addition to the videos, a novella was produced for migrant farmworkers.¹⁰⁹ The Vermont project is a strong example of conducting outreach in ways that best meet the unique needs of a community. Unfortunately, data on the outcomes or efficacy of this program is not currently available.



CASE STUDY SIX

Workforce Training and Employment Assistance

Funding: Private

An essential part of domestic violence services is giving survivors the tools they need to succeed on their own.

One common example of this is workforce training programs. These programs are vital to addressing the negative impacts of domestic violence on economic security. Traditional workforce training programs often do not address unique concerns related to domestic violence which is essential to keep victims safe and increase program completion.¹¹⁰

One organization that offers a workforce training program and domestic violence services is the YWCA of Cincinnati. The YWCA offers occupational skills training and financial education. Those enrolled in the program have access to childcare and transportation assistance. In one year, the program served 187 adults.¹¹¹ The program serves individuals considered high-need who have minimal work skills and typically do not have a high school diploma. By offering GED preparation and job finding assistance, the program helps participants find a paying job as quickly as possible while simultaneously planning and working towards larger career goals. A key part of the program is building respectful relationships with all participants and case managers that work closely to meet everyone's needs. While data was not readily available on employment retention rates for this program, similar programs have reported first year retention rates of 94-95%, compared to 50% for entry level workers not enrolled in employment programs.¹¹²

The YWCA's program was able to better address the connection between economic insecurity and domestic violence through funding from the Women's Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation and Partners for a Competitive Workforce. With this funding, the YWCA launched the Intimate Partner Violence Screening Project in 2016. Recognizing that domestic violence interferes with training program completion, the project trained staff to screen participants for domestic violence, create a supportive environment, handle domestic violence disclosures and refer clients to services.

The YWCA now screens all participants in their workforce trainings for domestic violence and can directly provide services to those who need them.

These additional services include shelter services, transitional housing, batter intervention services, crisis lines and court advocacy.¹¹³

ILLINOIS OPPORTUNITY



Employment Training for SNAP Recipients

The Illinois Department of Human Services in partnership with the National Able Network and support from private funders recently expanded employment training opportunities for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients. The program, SNAP to Success, combines federal funding and resources from community agencies. SNAP to Success works with participants to find long term careers. The new expansion centralizes monitoring, reporting, provider selection and other program requirements, with the intention of allowing more agencies to participate.¹¹⁴ This program does not focus exclusively on domestic violence survivors but given the large number of survivors who utilize SNAP, agencies could potentially integrate SNAP to Success into domestic violence service models.

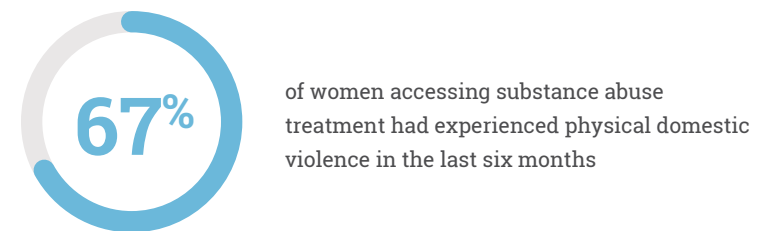


CASE STUDY SEVEN

Substance Abuse/Mental Health Services

Funding: Private

Domestic violence and substance abuse often go hand in hand.

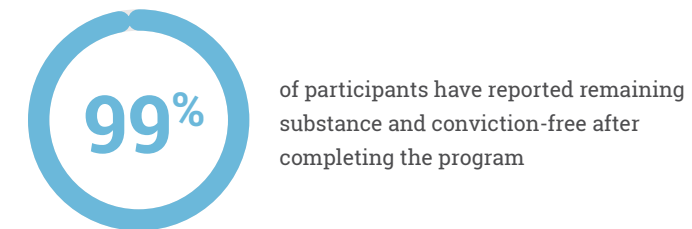


Similarly, high rates of a history of substance abuse have been shown in those seeking domestic violence services.

Some individuals use substances as a coping mechanism for the trauma, while others may be coerced into substance use and abuse by their partners as a method of control. Yet, many shelters and domestic violence service agencies do not have programs established to address this problem.

One approach to address the connection to substance abuse is the Women’s Integrated Treatment model. The model was developed at the KIVA Women and Children’s Learning Center in California and has since been adopted by organizations throughout the US. The KIVA Women and Children’s Learning Center is funded through corporate and philanthropic grants.¹¹⁶ **The model applies cognitive-behavioral and relational approaches to therapy sessions. The curriculum includes a focus on trauma and coping skills and helps participants have healthy expressions of their emotions.**

The program is not considered a treatment for trauma and should be combined with other domestic violence services.



The program is also associated with an improved level of depression and fewer trauma symptoms.¹¹⁷

CASE STUDY EIGHT

Prevention

Funding: FVPSA, State/Local and Private Funding

In addition to assisting victims, an important part of domestic violence work is prevention efforts.

In response to research indicating domestic violence is most prevalent in adolescence and young adulthood before it begins to decline with age,¹¹⁸ the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has created The Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA) Impact program. DELTA funds state domestic violence coalitions and local Coordinated Community Response Teams to implement strategies and approaches designed to prevent intimate partner violence.¹¹⁹ These strategies include:

- **TEACHING** safe and healthy relationship skills
- **ENGAGING** influential adults and peers (men and boys as allies and bystander education)
- **DISRUPTING** the developmental pathways toward partner violence through family education and early engagement
- **CREATING** protective environments (in schools, neighborhoods and workplaces)
- **INCREASING** economic support for families
- **SUPPORTING** survivors to increase safety and lessen harm.¹²⁰

The program receives FVPSA funding.¹²¹

In addition to national programs, some individual states have also implemented their own domestic violence prevention programs. An example of such a program is Massachusetts' REACH Program. REACH trains community members and a variety of professionals including police departments, medical professionals, social service agencies, military personnel, local businesses and corporations, college campuses and faith organizations on what domestic violence is, how to spot the signs, where to refer someone for services and how to help.

REACH success since 2015:¹²²

5,974

youth trained on healthy relationships and dating violence

5,393

adults trained on dating and domestic violence

344

community events hosted for youth

356

community events hosted for adults

Although this is quite a significant number of people reached, the agency decided that domestic violence prevention is better achieved through more in-depth training of at-risk communities in a "shower approach" instead of a wide reaching "sprinkle approach." Though the agency predicts that this will be a more effective method, the change is too new to have quantitative data to back up this prediction.

Another branch of REACH is its youth program called Peers Against Violence (PAVE). **This program teaches youth and adults who work with youth about teen dating violence and healthy relationships and encourages them to take part in prevention.** PAVE partners with schools to create lasting change using prevention programs tailored to the needs of each community. Through workshops and long-term support, PAVE assists school administration, faculty and parents in understanding dating abuse and adolescent relationships.¹²³ REACH relies on mixed funding sources.

In 2018, the program received:¹²⁴

\$1M+

from state and local contracts

\$475K+

from fundraising events

\$339K+

from individual donors

\$346K+

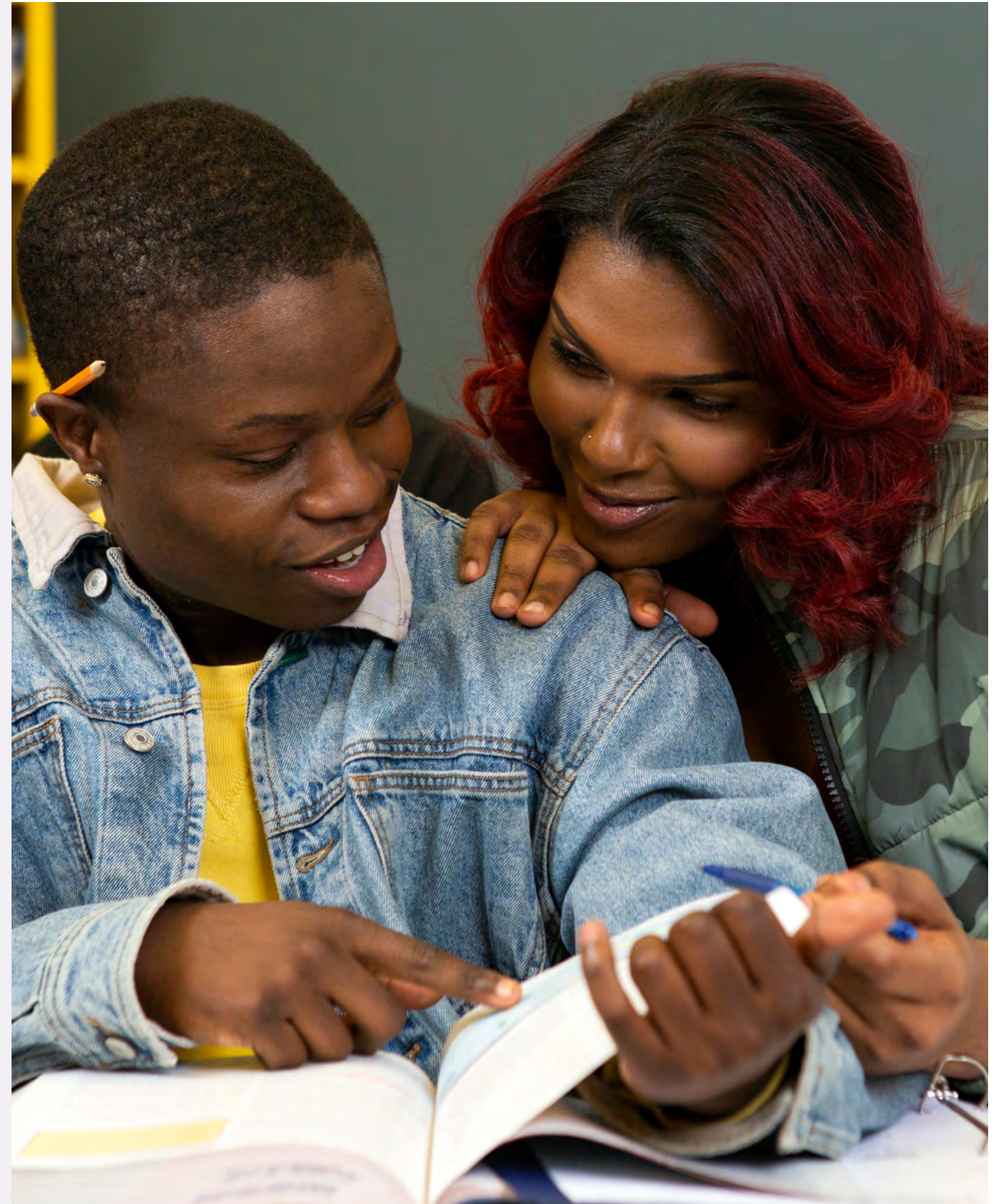
from corporate and foundation support

ILLINOIS OPPORTUNITY



REACH in Illinois

The REACH program has also been implemented in Illinois. Between Friends, a Chicago based organization, uses this model to educate young people about healthy relationships and signs of abuse. The organization works with Chicago Public Schools to provide workshops for students in grades 6-12. They examine boundaries, consent and conflict resolution. Additionally, they provide information on resources for any young person who may need services.¹²⁵



CASE STUDY NINE

Restorative Justice

Funding: Local and VAWA

With its rise in popularity for addressing other crimes, there has been a push by many advocates to find ways to make restorative justice work for domestic violence cases.

Restorative justice, which involves rehabilitating offenders through a process of making amends to the injured party and the community, has in some instances proven to be more effective than the traditional criminal justice system.¹²⁶

Several states have found ways of utilizing restorative justice for domestic violence.

In California, this work is done by the Restorative Justice Project. This program was built through collaboration with Creative Initiatives and the Family Justice Center. The Family Justice Center receives grants from local development funds, the Kaiser Permanente Northern California Community Benefit Program, as well as OVW funds. Staff from the project train community partners who are part of their National Restorative Justice Diversion sites on restorative justice methods so that advocates can offer this method of non-state intervention for their clients. **This training includes helping these sites establish pre-charge diversion programs. They focus on accountability and constructive non-punitive responses to wrongdoing. This work helps to reduce incarceration and disparities in the criminal legal system.**¹²⁷

In Minnesota, Men as Peacemakers is utilizing the restorative justice approach by facilitating domestic violence restorative circles. Men as Peacemakers receives corporate and foundation support for their programs. **The programs goals are to keep victims safe, prevent additional violence**

and develop communities in which victims and those who have caused harm can thrive. The restorative circles work with those who have caused harm to accept accountability, repair harm they have caused and create plans for living non-violently moving forward. The circles include volunteers from the community who have used violence in a relationship and are trained in domestic violence dynamics and community dialogue.

The circles are typically part of probation requirements. They meet once a week for a period of up to six months. Circle staff and participants work together to develop goals and agreements on living nonviolently and steps to repair harm at the end of the program. These goals are then built into the probation conditions.

Participants then follow-up with the program once a month to ensure they are meeting this agreement. Men as Peacemakers is also funded through a combination of grants and corporate support.¹²⁸

CASE STUDY TEN

An International Highlight

In addition to programs in the United States, many places across the world have found innovative approaches to addressing domestic violence.

Australia, for instance, has many unique programs. **One trial program they have just launched is providing housing, behavioral services and support services to perpetrators of domestic violence. This approach allows victims and children to remain in their homes.** There are similar small trials of this approach throughout the country.

The programs all maintain that victim safety is the priority, and the victim can still receive supportive services. This program is funded through the South Australian government which allocates four million Australian dollars for shelter accommodation; a proportion of this money will be used for this new housing approach.¹²⁹

Another innovative program is Leaving Prison Leaving Violence which seeks to address the correlation between domestic violence and incarcerated women. As women are released from prison, the program provides supportive services such as housing resources, health care and connection to domestic violence advocates to prevent their return to a violent situation.¹³⁰ Leaving Prison Leaving Violence is funded through an innovative grant from Women NSW. The program is new, and data on its impact is still forthcoming.

ILLINOIS CHALLENGE



Funding Supervised Visitation & Safe Exchange Programs

Supervised Visitation & Safe Exchange programs are a necessary service in ensuring safety for victims of domestic violence. These programs allow for safe and healthy co-parenting relationships, parent and child counseling, and supportive family reunification after separation. Three programs in the City of Chicago and one program in Lake County currently exist, funded through a variety of private sources. The Chicago based programs were initially incubated with a mix of public (City of Chicago-obtained federal grants) and private investment as these programs have been routinely denied state funding. However, the federal grants were not eligible for renewal as the program was no longer in the pilot phase. Individual private support has waned due to the lack of commitment in the public sector to mainstreaming this service, despite the evidence of its success in safeguarding survivors of domestic violence.

DATA LIMITATIONS

The cases of innovation listed in this report such as the Housing First Model or Mobile Advocacy are challenging traditional models of domestic violence services by diversifying services provided for survivors, expanding the scope of prevention programs and even challenging how domestic violence is discussed on a national scale.

These innovations are necessary and vital for the elimination of domestic violence, but many of the programs are still too new to have produced long-term (more than one or two years) outcome data, making the reporting and potential replication of these programs challenging. Despite this lack of long-term outcome data, we have attempted to obtain as much data as possible by contacting representatives from each program referenced so that their innovations may be better understood. While these programs are currently evidence-informed instead of fully evaluated, the learnings are promising and significant enough to encourage replication.





Recommendations for Next Steps

While there has been great innovation in domestic violence services, there is still much work to be done to provide comprehensive services to all victims.

Grant administrators, victim service providers and allied professionals must come together to determine how funding restrictions can be reduced to support innovative models of service delivery that best meet the needs of victims, perpetrators and their families.

Here are specific recommendations for grant administrators and service providers in Illinois to begin implementing similar programs.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CONTINUE TO SUPPORT EXISTING SERVICES THAT MEET THE IMMEDIATE NEEDS OF SURVIVORS.

Current services and shelters are widely used and still provide a great deal of assistance to survivors. As new approaches are explored, these programs must be sustained with administrative support and funding. The demand for domestic violence services continually exceeds the capacity to provide these services.

Additional support strategies must be explored to help meet this need in addition to exploring innovative models of service provision that can help supplement these services.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES FOR GRANTS AND OTHER FUNDING SOURCES FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICE PROVIDERS MUST BE FLEXIBLE AND ALLOW FOR AN INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH TO SERVICES.

As demonstrated in this report, there are many innovative approaches to domestic violence service provision but implementing them is sometimes hindered by a lack of funding and administrative restrictions on available funds. Funds are often limited to traditional forms of service provision preventing innovation.

Funders should be responsive to the desire of service providers to better meet the needs of individual survivors through new approaches and support research and data collection of these models.

3. EXPLORE SOLUTIONS TO STREAMLINE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS AND ALLEVIATE THE ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN.

A common source of

administrative burden is the time and capacity it takes for service providers to complete numerous grant applications and report results to a variety of funders. In this report several potential solutions to this issue were explored, including consolidated and web-based grant applications.

State agencies and grant administrators should explore these methods of streamlining administrative processes and limit the required documentation.

4. EXPAND THE ALLOWABLE USAGE OF FUNDS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EFFORTS.

Providing funding for administration allows for more strategic planning, better monitoring of direct service programs and potential for conducting need assessments and other analyses of services. As explored in this report, these tools allow for more cost effective and responsive services models. This support will ultimately increase assistance and services for survivors.

Funders should allow grants to be applied toward administrative costs for better service models.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS NEED TO INCREASE DEDICATED FUNDING FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES.

As highlighted in this report, government funding is still the largest portion of funding for service providers. This funding, however, still fails to allow providers to meet the needs of survivors.

The State of Illinois must increase funding for human services to fully meet the needs of survivors.

2. POLICIES RELATED TO BOTH SERVICE PROVISION AND PROTECTIONS FOR SURVIVORS MUST BE INCLUSIVE OF ALL SURVIVORS AND THEIR DIVERSE NEEDS, SPANNING NOT JUST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES.

This includes developing policies and programs to provide safety and stability of survivors through meeting economic and physical needs.

Policies related to housing and livable wages are just as vital to survivors as traditional service models.

3. FUNDING MUST SUPPORT PREVENTION AND SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WHO CAUSE HARM.

These services should be included in funding designated to reduce prison populations. This report has explored different methods of services for those who cause harm including restorative justice programs.

These programs should be funded by the state and designed to meet the specific needs of individuals who cause harm related to domestic violence.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. PRIORITIZE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND HOMELESSNESS.** While all the innovative approaches included in this report should be explored, one area that is consistently connected to domestic violence is lack of housing. As demonstrated in this report, domestic violence and homelessness are deeply intertwined and the traditional shelter model does not have the capacity to meet the need of the numerous survivors seeking housing solutions. This report highlighted the Housing First model and flexible funding that can be used to assist with rent and offer housing outside of traditional shelters. These models have demonstrated effectiveness and should be implemented in Illinois.
- 2. REACH SURVIVORS WHERE THEY ARE AT.** Models of service that reach survivors where they are at such as mobile advocacy efforts and innovative uses of technology are vital for reaching survivors who may not otherwise access services. In 2020, with stay-at-home orders going in place across the country due to COVID-19, the importance of flexible models to reach survivors became even more evident. Providers have relied on technology out of necessity to offer services using telephonic or web-based models that could be potentially expanded and utilized in the future to reach survivors who may have physical barriers to service, such as proximity to service providers or a lack of transportation.
- 3. THIS IS ONLY A STARTING POINT.** The programs highlighted in this report should serve as a starting point, but are in no way comprehensive of the efforts of service providers to innovate the ways they serve survivors of domestic violence. Current service programs should be explored to determine ways in which they can be expanded to include the innovative approaches outlined in this report and new approaches should continue to be explored. Programs should draw on the work being done in other fields and existing research to best serve survivors.



ADDENDUM

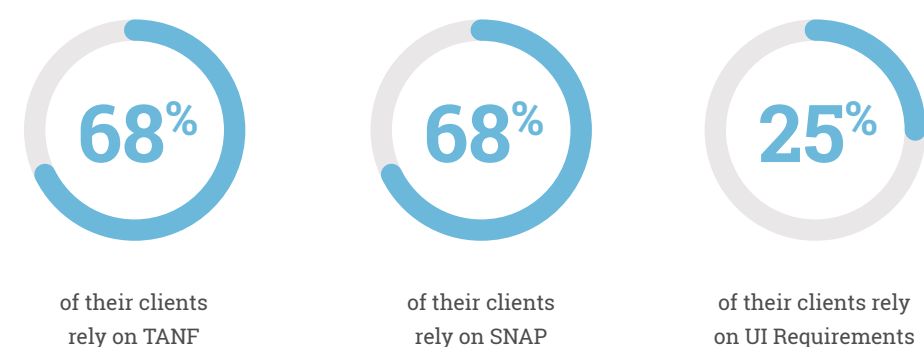
Services to Victims

During the research for this report, additional data was found that highlighted significant issues around funding provided directly to victims through compensation and public assistance programs.

This addendum provides an overview of that information to supplement the funding programs outlined in the report. Further research into these programs and the most effective implementation strategies should be conducted.

PUBLIC BENEFITS ASSISTANCE

In addition to assistance from service providers, victims may seek public benefits assistance, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Unemployment Insurance (UI). A survey by the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRCDV) found that to address their needs and establish safety and security agencies reported:¹³¹



However, these programs can often put victims at risk.

Federal requirements for TANF require that all people receiving benefits comply with child support enforcement. States have the option of placing similar requirements on programs like SNAP.¹³² In a case of domestic

violence, this requirement can pose a serious safety threat. Address requirements may not accept a shelter location and documentation may be sent to an outdated address where an abuser may reside.¹³³ Issues most often stem from child support enforcement. An attempt to collect child support can lead to additional violence or another potential incidence of disclosing the victim's new location.¹³⁴

The Family Violence Option of TANF requires that a domestic violence waiver be provided for the child support enforcement "where compliance with such requirements would make it more difficult for individuals receiving assistance under this part to escape domestic violence or unfairly penalize such individuals who are or have been victimized by such violence or individuals who are at risk of further domestic violence."¹³⁵ Data shows that despite an estimated 50% of women receiving cash assistance having experienced domestic violence, 33 states reported less than 1% of cases utilizing this waiver, and only a handful reporting more than 2%.¹³⁶ Screening for domestic violence is limited and often victims will have to "prove" the violence through documentation they may not have.¹³⁷ Victims also may not want to disclose their experience with domestic violence as they do not feel safe or view the system as unsympathetic.¹³⁸ Even if they are determined to qualify for the waiver, many victims still report the process as not working for them.¹³⁹

ILLINOIS

Victims in Illinois rely on public benefits in addition to assistance from service providers to have safety and security. Illinois had adopted Family Violence Option waivers for access to these benefits. In Illinois, these cover time limits, work requirements and child support enforcement. Screenings for domestic violence should occur in all instances of public benefits and if there is a domestic violence presence, referrals should be made to service providers.¹⁴⁰ As discussed above, waivers often do not work as intended. Like many states, Illinois still requires evidence to support the claim of domestic violence. This evidence includes a police or government report, documentation from a service provider, a written statement by a third party or other evidence.¹⁴¹

In 1984, as part of VOCA, the Crime Victims Fund was established. VOCA provides matched funds to state programs.¹⁴² The Illinois Crime Victim Compensation program can provide up to \$27,000 to cover expenses related to a crime, including mental and physical health services, lost wages and funeral expenses.¹⁴³ A recent study, however, showed that Illinois residents are some of the least likely to access these funds. Only an estimated 6% of violent crime cases lead to an application for victim compensation.¹⁴⁴ This is due to many barriers, such as poor outreach, long wait times and restrictive criteria that often wrongly exclude people.¹⁴⁵

The current application process can take up to two years to complete, which is far from being able to meet the needs of victims.¹⁴⁶ There are currently efforts underway to simplify the application and process for receiving crime victim compensation.

PUBLIC BENEFITS ASSISTANCE SOLUTIONS

As highlighted above, most state waivers to public benefit requirements such as child support enforcement, which put victims at risk, do not work as intended and leave victims still at risk. A solution used by several states to alleviate this problem is to find a middle ground between seeking child support with normal procedures and a full waiver for the requirement. States instead work to develop plans for seeking child support that are tailored to victim needs and resolve common problems such as address protection and warning before action is taken.¹⁴⁷

One state that has utilized this approach with some success is Texas. The Texas Get Child Support Safely program was created by the Attorney General's Child Support Division and the Texas Council on Family Violence. The secure website provides information for victims about applying for TANF and other public benefits, safely obtaining child support, preparing for court and other pertinent procedures.¹⁴⁸ In addition to this collaboration, to help train court personnel, Texas has developed the Texas Family Violence Benchbook.¹⁴⁹ The book outlines best practices in handling domestic violence in child support cases, including allowing the victim to attend via telephone or video, providing victim advocates, allowing the victim to have support families attend any hearings, never leaving the parties alone, providing security be present and escorting the victim from the courthouse.¹⁵⁰ Additional training and collaboration allows the victims to receive the benefits that stem from child support and public benefits without having their safety or security at risk.

EXPEDITED COMPENSATION

Delaware had developed a Victim Compensation Fund system that allows them to process applications in a matter of hours. Delaware's system alleviates the burden of obtaining information from different law enforcement and government agencies. They do this by having a single information system that law enforcement, criminal and corrections agencies utilize and by providing compensation investigators full access to be able to immediately review pertinent information for determining a victim's eligibility. Delaware has also lifted some restrictions on compensation for

victims under the age of 18, including not requiring a police report. They allow compensation to be used for psychological assessments and therapy.¹⁵¹ This allows the state to quickly help meet the mental health needs of victims.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCACY AND MEDICAID

In 2015 the Center for Medicare and Medicaid announced that survivors of abuse or spousal abandonment were able to enroll in health insurance through either their state's health insurance exchange or through the federal exchange, even outside of the annual open enrollment period. The announcement also ensured domestic violence no longer counts as a pre-existing condition, and that screening and counseling for domestic violence are primary prevention services and thus essential health benefits. Any service considered an essential health benefit is reimbursable to the provider and does not require member cost-sharing.¹⁵²

In order to better understand the reimbursement, or lack thereof, for domestic violence advocacy in Medicaid, the Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (OCADSV) contracted with Health Management Associates Community Strategies (HMACS) to conduct a study within Oregon. While the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) allows Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) to reimburse for domestic violence advocacy, CCOs see barriers to using capitation dollars to pay for these services. One barrier to reimbursing domestic violence advocacy is the lack of quantitative data that proves providing referrals and advocacy to survivors reduces the high costs associated with domestic violence.

A reason that little quantitative data exists is because public documentation could put survivors at risk as well as break confidentiality. The idea of prevention and early engagement with those affected by domestic violence as a way to reduce health care utilization and thereby costs is becoming more popular. Despite this new popularity, in order for more states to move towards reimbursement of domestic violence advocate services, domestic violence advocates need to work to align systems and build relationships with healthcare organizations.¹⁵³



Endnotes

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