

NNEDV

# 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Counts Report

NATIONAL NETWORK TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



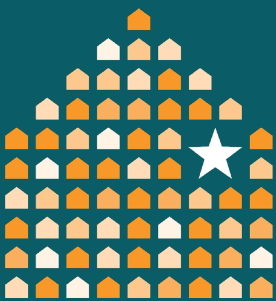
**24-HOUR SURVEY**  
of Domestic Violence  
Shelters and Services

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To the advocates at the 1,707 programs that participated in this year's Domestic Violence Counts: Thank you for shining a light on your lifesaving work.

To the survivors reading this report: Thank you for your courage, whether you've chosen to share your story or not. We see you, we believe you, and we honor you.



**NNEDV**  
NATIONAL NETWORK  
TO END DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE

 National Network to End Domestic Violence  
1325 Massachusetts Avenue, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Washington, DC 20005  
(202) 543-5566  
[NNEDV.org/DVCounts](https://NNEDV.org/DVCounts)  
[DVCounts@NNEDV.org](mailto:DVCounts@NNEDV.org)

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

In Just One Day .....	1
National Summary .....	2
Victims Served .....	4
Spotlight on Federal Funding .....	9
Devastating Unmet Needs .....	11
Services Provided .....	17
Summary Data .....	19

*The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Counts Report is made possible by:*



# In Just One Day...

**On September 10, 2025, 84,146 domestic violence survivors across the country reached out to local programs for help.** On that day, the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) conducted our 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Counts Survey, a one-day, unduplicated count of domestic violence services requested and received across the United States.

Of the 2,002 domestic violence programs and shelters identified<sup>1</sup> nationwide, **1,707 programs (85%) in all 56 states and U.S. territories participated.** For two decades, Domestic Violence Counts has been the premier trusted source of data on the lifesaving services domestic violence advocates provide to survivors every day.

Every year, Domestic Violence Counts shares stories of both hope and heartbreak – from advocates connecting survivors and their children with lifesaving assistance, to programs being forced to turn away survivors who urgently need help.<sup>2</sup> NNEDV publishes this report to educate the public about survivors' needs and to push for policymakers at every level of government to advance policies that can make a difference.

***Despite their tireless efforts, advocates and programs simply do not have enough resources.***

This lack of resources and funding has devastating consequences for victims and their children. It leaves survivors with no real options, forcing many to stay in abusive situations or risk homelessness. Additional resources must be provided, system-wide responses must be improved, and barriers to safety and justice must be eliminated to ensure that all survivors have access to resources and that no program is ever forced to turn away a victim in need.



✘ “Survivors in our community continue to show remarkable resilience, but their safety depends on the availability of immediate, accessible, and fully funded services. Every call to our hotline represents a life at risk and a person reaching for hope. **Stable funding and investment in domestic violence programs are not only lifesaving; they are essential for breaking the cycle of abuse, creating safer futures, and ensuring that every person seeking safety can find it.**” – Louisiana advocate

<sup>1</sup> For a program to qualify for participation in the Domestic Violence Counts Survey, one of its primary purposes must be the provision of domestic violence services.

<sup>2</sup> Quotes have been edited for length and to protect victims' and survivors' anonymity.



# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COUNTS REPORT NATIONAL SUMMARY

On September 10, 2025, **1,707** out of **2,002 (85%)** identified domestic violence programs in the United States participated in NNEDV's Domestic Violence Counts Survey: a one-day, unduplicated count of adults and children seeking domestic violence services. During the 24-hour survey period, participating programs served **84,146** victims, were unable to meet **13,018** requests for help, and shared the following additional information.

### 84,146 Victims Served

**53,590** adults and children found refuge in emergency shelters, transitional housing, hotels, motels, or other housing provided by local programs.

**30,556** adults and children received non-residential supportive services like court accompaniment, transportation, bilingual support, and more.

received **2,424** contacts; and NNEDV's WomensLaw Email Hotline received **21** contacts.

This represents an average of **989** contacts every hour of the survey day, or **16** contacts every minute. Domestic violence hotlines are lifelines for victims, providing support, information, safety planning, and resources via phone, chat, text, email, and more.

Table 1: Top Services Provided on 9/10/25	% of Programs Providing Services
Emergency Shelter	71%
Court Accompaniment or Legal Support	47%
Transportation	45%
Bilingual Support	43%
Support Related to Mental Health	40%
Therapy/Counseling for Adults	40%
Children's Support	39%
Support Related to Housing/Landlord	39%
Transitional or Other Housing (run by DV program)	39%
Support Related to Public Benefits/TANF/Welfare	36%

### 18,843 People Educated

Programs provided **808** educational sessions and trainings to **18,843** members of the public, addressing topics like domestic violence prevention and early intervention. Community education is essential to raising awareness about domestic violence and promoting available resources.

### 13,018 Unmet Requests for Services

Programs were unable to meet **13,018** requests for help from victims because they lacked sufficient resources, funding, and/or staffing. The majority of these unmet requests (**58%**) were for emergency shelter, hotels, motels, transitional housing, and other housing.

Survivors and their children need a safe place to stay as they escape abuse and rebuild their lives. Programs need increased funding to provide shelter, housing, safety planning, and other services to all survivors seeking help while also working toward preventing violence in their communities.

### 23,747 Hotline Contacts Received

Local programs' hotlines received **20,930** contacts; state- and territory-wide hotlines received **372** contacts; the National Domestic Violence Hotline

✘ "We remain deeply committed to providing lifesaving services and support to survivors of domestic violence, despite the growing challenges and critical lack of sustainable funding facing our program. **Behind every number in this report is a human being: a survivor seeking safety, dignity, and a chance to rebuild.** Continued investment in domestic violence programs is not just urgent; it is essential to the well-being, growth, and resilience of our community." – *California advocate*



“A survivor shared with our shelter staff that her child’s birthday was coming up. She felt terrible because she wasn’t able to plan a party, and she already felt bad for taking her child out of their home. Our staff collected décor, cake, and gifts, and the survivor shared that she was overwhelmed with kindness and generosity. **She said it was the first time she felt like she truly made the right decision, and that she and her child were going to be okay.**”

- FLORIDA  
ADVOCATE



**REAL  
STORIES**

“One survivor arrived at our shelter with her child, saying it was the first time in years they felt truly safe. They met with a case manager, created a safety plan, and began planning solutions. In just 24 hours, fear gave way to relief and possibility.”

- Nevada advocate

“Through months of persistence, applications, and advocacy, a mother in our shelter worked with her case manager to find stable housing. She was recently approved and can furnish her new home with items from our organization. This milestone is a testament to her determination and the consistent support we provided her.”

- Alaska advocate

**Domestic Violence Programs Provide Refuge in Times of Crisis**

Abusers work to build and maintain power and control over their partners, making it difficult or even dangerous for victims to get help and escape. Programs need adequate funding and resources to meet the needs of every survivor who reaches out for support.

Table 2: Victims Served on 9/10/25	Emergency Shelter	Transitional or Other Housing	Hotel/Motel	Non-Residential Supportive Services	TOTAL
Adults	12,049	13,566	986	24,536	51,137
Children	11,409	14,634	946	6,020	33,009
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23,458</b>	<b>28,200</b>	<b>1,932</b>	<b>30,556</b>	<b>84,146</b>

*Answering the Call*

Domestic violence hotlines are often the first point of contact for survivors seeking help. On September 10, 2025, local, state, territorial, and national domestic violence hotlines received **23,747** calls, chats, texts, emails, and more, averaging **989** contacts per hour or **16** contacts per minute.

**Shelter and Housing Provide Safety and Pathways to Stability**

Access to a safe place to stay is often a survivor’s most immediate need. However, years-long waitlists, a lack of affordable housing, imperfect housing histories caused by abuse, and other factors can create overwhelming barriers that survivors can’t navigate alone.

Many domestic violence programs offer emergency shelter, hotel or motel stays, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, and other housing options to help survivors find a safe home. Addressing survivors’ housing needs requires intentional, sustained partnerships and substantial investments at the federal, tribal, state, territorial, and local levels.

Domestic violence advocates work hard to help survivors secure housing. A **Colorado** advocate shared: “While staying in our shelter, one survivor was able to continue working, begin healing, and ensure her children attended school. With the help of our advocates, the family transitioned into rapid re-housing and now has a permanent home where they are thriving. She shared: ‘I have never received support like this anywhere else.’”

*Opening the Door*

On September 10, 2025, adults and children found refuge in local programs’ emergency shelters (**23,458 victims**), transitional or other housing programs (**28,200**), and hotel and motel stays paid for by local programs (**1,932**).

Of all participating programs, **71%** provided emergency shelter, **39%** provided transitional or other housing services, and **17%** provided hotel or motel stays.

An **Arizona** advocate shared: “After more than a year of stalking and harassment, we connected a survivor and her children to emergency shelter, case management, and housing resources. She is preparing to transition into

safe housing, and she shared: ‘Without this place, me and my kiddos wouldn’t have the chance at a new beginning. The kindness and care you showed went a long way.’”

### Comprehensive, Compassionate Support

Many domestic violence programs offer a wide range of non-residential supportive services like transportation to appointments, legal support through divorce and custody proceedings, counseling, support groups, and more.

An advocate in **Oregon** said: “A survivor shared how scared and overwhelmed she felt about going to court, saying she felt like she was carrying the weight of the world alone. Our advocate sat beside her, explained each step, gave her encouragement, and helped her process the experience afterwards. She told us: ‘For the first time, I felt like someone believed me and was standing with me. My kids and I finally feel like we can breathe again.’”

Advocates are uniquely equipped to provide trauma-informed services. An advocate in **Texas** shared: “We provided a survivor and her children with housing, emotional support, a safety plan, counseling referrals, and legal advocacy. She let us know that our dedication and kindness saved her life and helped her start a better life for her children. She wanted us to know that this was the first time in a long time that she had truly felt supported and safe.”

### Helping Survivors Heal

On September 10, 2025, programs provided **30,556** adults and children with non-residential supportive services.

Table 3: Top Non-Residential Supportive Services Provided on 9/10/25	% of Programs Providing Services
Court Accompaniment or Legal Support	47%
Transportation	45%
Bilingual Support	43%
Support Related to Mental Health	40%
Therapy/Counseling for Adults	40%
Children’s Support	39%
Support Related to Housing/Landlord	39%

A survivor told an advocate in **Indiana**: “I came to the shelter with nothing but my kids and the clothes on our backs, terrified and ashamed. The staff welcomed me without judgment. For the first time in years, I felt safe enough to sleep through the night. The advocates helped me find counseling, file for an order of protection, and start looking for housing. They reminded me that I deserve safety and respect. The shelter wasn’t just a roof over our heads; it was the first step toward rebuilding a life free from violence.”

On September 10, 2025, advocates connected **7,188** survivors with social services and public benefits like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Section 8 housing, Social Security, Medicaid, and food banks. These government assistance programs, designed to help low-income community members, can make a measurable difference for victims of abuse.

### Ending Violence Starts with Community Education

Domestic violence advocates understand the importance of engaging communities, raising awareness, and educating young people to prevent abuse before it happens.

When programs are sufficiently funded and staffed, advocates can dedicate more time, beyond crisis response, to building partnerships and educating community stakeholders, helping survivors receive a trauma-informed response at every step of their journey to safety.

A **Virginia** advocate said, “We have built strong community partnerships that enhance survivor safety and healing. Local businesses and foundations have donated time and resources, the food bank ensures families have reliable access to meals, local colleges provide internship opportunities, and more. Despite these successes, survivors’ needs continue to outpace available resources.”

### Forging Connections and Expanding Knowledge

On September 10, 2025, advocates provided **808** educational sessions and trainings to **18,843** members of the public to expand awareness, increase knowledge about available resources, and build community support for victims and survivors.

An advocate in **Nebraska** shared: “We developed a comprehensive prevention model that addresses domestic violence at every level. We’re simultaneously supporting survivors, holding offenders accountable, mobilizing community intervention, and preventing future violence. By addressing root causes alongside crisis response, we’re not just responding to violence. We’re dismantling conditions that allow it to flourish.”

## REAL STORIES

*of safety and support*

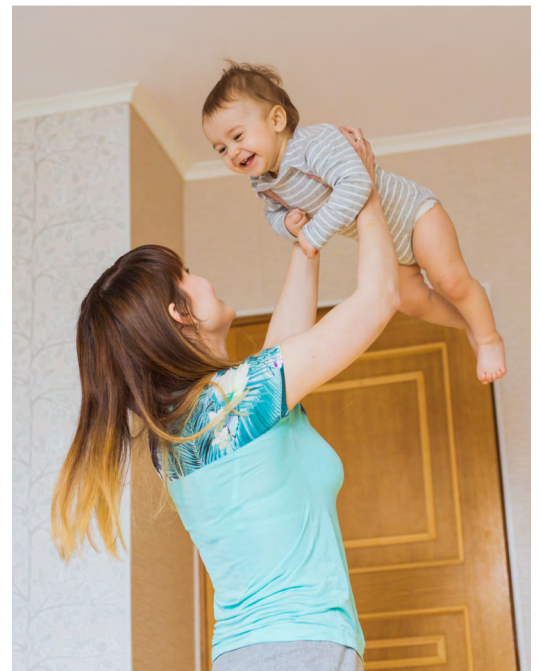


“Our housing team met with a client who has been struggling with a cancer diagnosis. She expressed that **having stable housing and support from our organization has allowed her to worry less** about her living situation and therapy needs, and that she feels well supported during this time.” - *New Mexico advocate*

“One survivor called our hotline after her food stamp benefits were cut off. Our advocate listened with compassion, guided her through reapplication, and connected her with an emergency food box. Without this support, she and her child might have gone hungry or been forced to return to an unsafe situation. **She later said, ‘It wasn’t just about the food – it was about knowing someone cared.’**” - *West Virginia advocate*

“A young survivor and her siblings sought our services, saying they had no hope left. We worked to reestablish stability, hope, and empowerment through individual counseling, safety plans, court accompaniment, and support with basic needs. She recently shared: **‘We love your team. We couldn’t have asked for better people to have supported us through it all.’**” - *Idaho advocate*

“I can’t believe I’m safe in my own apartment: a place where I’m not walking on eggshells, where I don’t have to worry about being controlled or trapped. That feeling of peace and safety is something I didn’t think I’d have again, and it means everything to me. I truly don’t have the words to fully express what your kindness, guidance, and encouragement have meant. **Every step of the way, you’ve helped me believe in a future beyond survival.**” - *Survivor (as told to a Vermont advocate)*



## REAL STORIES

“We serve a culturally specific population, including undocumented survivors who already face significant barriers. We provide all services in two languages. **If federal funding is reduced, many of these survivors will lose access to the critical support they currently receive.**”

- *New Jersey advocate*

“Since a recent emergency order brought more federal agencies to patrol DC, we have observed a significant decrease in walk-in visitors to our clinics that primarily serve immigrant clients. **There is a heightened fear among our clients,** and we had at least one young immigrant detained despite having no history of criminal activity.”

- *District of Columbia advocate*

### Immigrant Survivors Deserve Safety

Many abusers choose to exploit a victim’s immigration status as a way to maintain power and control. This can include refusing to file for a victim’s legal status, threatening to report a victim to law enforcement, or weaponizing language or cultural barriers in order to keep victims afraid to seek help.

An **Illinois** advocate shared: “The chilling effect of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s presence undermines safety, justice, and healing for immigrant survivors. Many survivors avoid going to domestic violence agencies or courthouses out of fear of detention, deportation, or family separation. This prevents them from filing police reports, obtaining orders of protection, or accessing other vital social services, and abusers often exploit this fear to maintain control.”

Federal law has improved assistance and services for immigrant victims through tools like Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) self-petitions and U visas. However, as the Alliance for Immigrant Survivors (AIS) reports,<sup>3</sup> recent changes to federal immigration policies “are negatively impacting the help-seeking behaviors of immigrant survivors.” Of the advocates AIS surveyed, **50%** reported that immigrant survivors with concerns about contacting the police or going to court ultimately chose not to, due to fear.

Culturally specific programs that support immigrant survivors can make a significant difference. A **Georgia** advocate shared: “One immigrant survivor was so afraid to leave her home that she avoided seeking medical care during her pregnancy. We listened to her fears and connected her with one of our partners, where she felt safe and supported. For too many immigrant women, the fear of being visible and asking for help is overwhelming. Having our advocates by their side helps them on their journey to find safety and justice.”



<sup>3</sup> Alliance for Immigrant Survivors (2025). [Fear and Silence: 2025 Insights from Advocates for Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Human Trafficking](#).

# REAL STORIES of unmet needs



“One survivor was working hard to rebuild her life despite significant health challenges. What she wanted most was to move into her own apartment to rest, heal, and regain her independence. Unfortunately, due to the severe shortage of affordable housing and limited financial assistance, we were unable to help. **Her story reflects the ongoing struggle many survivors face when stability is just beyond their grasp, despite their courage and determination to move forward.**”

- *Mississippi advocate*

“Funding remains our biggest hurdle. With reduced federal support, it is increasingly difficult to sustain staffing and meet the rising needs of survivors in our community. In a rural region where housing, transportation, and mental health resources are already limited, these funding cuts have a direct impact on survivors’ safety and stability. **Continued investment is critical to ensure programs like ours can remain accessible and responsive 24/7.**” - *New Hampshire advocate*

“Victims and survivors deserve sustained, trauma-informed investment in the programs that support their healing and safety, **especially in underserved territories, where resources are often stretched thin.** Meaningful policy reform must be accompanied by robust support for culturally responsive services that acknowledge and respect the diverse experiences of survivors. And we must invest in prevention and education to ensure that future generations grow up in communities free from violence.” - *U.S. Virgin Islands advocate*

“**We work with our partners** who provide direct services to victims of domestic violence.” - *American Samoa advocate*

“Our commonwealth is experiencing a severe economic downturn. Our tourism industry hasn’t recovered following COVID-19. Pass-through funds to our only shelter are on hold, which puts our shelter in jeopardy. Local officials have found funds to tide us over, but they are insufficient. **Programs in the U.S. territories face unique challenges on a daily basis. We often feel forgotten.**” - *Northern Mariana Islands advocate*



**“Without federal funding, our agency will cease to exist. There is no other domestic violence program in our rural service area, and there would be nowhere for our clients to go. Our federal funding cannot be replaced with philanthropy and other grants.”**

**- MINNESOTA  
ADVOCATE**



## SPOTLIGHT ON FEDERAL FUNDING

Federal funding is vital for survivors of domestic violence and the programs that support them. The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA), the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), and other federal funding form the backbone of our nation’s response to violence and our commitment to survivors’ safety, stability, and recovery. These dollars save millions of lives each year by funding shelters, legal support, housing, counseling, prevention, and other essential services.


**The survey day took place nine months into a year marked by significant turmoil at the federal level.** Attempted funding freezes, grant cancellations, the removal of funding opportunity notices, and a lengthy government shutdown added chaos, frustration, and fear on top of the challenges that programs, advocates, and survivors already face on a daily basis.

Any delay or reduction to federal funding jeopardizes vital services and risks the lives of victims and their children. Without access to services, victims struggle to find safety, regain their independence, and rebuild their lives. Survivors, advocates, and programs deserve better.

**“Federal funding cuts directly impact our capacity to provide comprehensive victim services. We were forced to close our counseling centers, eliminating 21 advocates’ jobs and greatly reducing local resources. Survivors who are trying to mitigate the lasting impact of domestic violence no longer have access to these vital services.”** - *Alabama advocate*

**“When funding cuts and shutdowns threaten critical services, our agency is reminded daily how essential our resources are to saving lives. Every bed, every advocate, and every program represents safety, stability, and hope for survivors. Our programs often serve as the only lifeline for those seeking safety. Continued federal investment in domestic violence services is not only a matter of sustainability, but a matter of survival.”**  
- *Michigan advocate*

**“Federal cuts ripple quickly through our programs. While we can absorb short-term losses, sustained reductions require shifting priorities, reducing staff, and lengthening wait times for survivors. We are serving more survivors than ever before, with rising costs, complexities, and demands. Sustained and increased federal funding is a cost-effective investment in safer, more resilient communities.”** - *Utah advocate*

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a bright yellow knit sweater, dark pants, and light-colored sneakers, sits on a roll of burlap. She is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The background is a field of debris, including wood and metal, under a clear blue sky.

**“Hurricane Helene completely devastated our region. Survivors were stranded in their homes with abusers, and our county’s low-income and affordable housing vacancy rate is nearly 0%. We saw higher Danger Assessment scores, more requests for shelter, and increased abuse. We are hopeful that recovery resources will bring more affordable housing, but that remains to be seen.”**

**- NORTH CAROLINA  
ADVOCATE**

## REAL STORIES

“Domestic violence programs are lifelines, yet we operate under constant strain. Survivors depend on us not just for safety but for housing, counseling, legal advocacy, and healing. **Federal commitment is essential to ensure every survivor, in every community, can access safety, dignity, and justice.**”  
 - Connecticut advocate

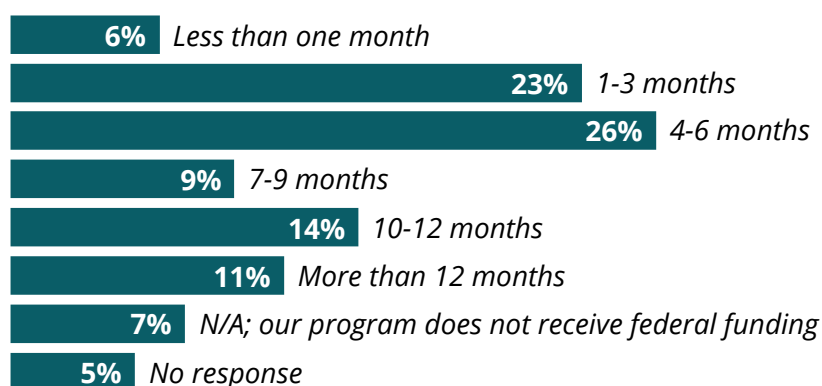
“Over the past year, **88% of shelter requests on our hotline went unmet due to a lack of capacity.** Survivors are reaching out and doing exactly what the system asks of them, but when beds are unavailable, the process breaks down. They are left with limited options and forced to remain in dangerous situations or risk homelessness.”  
 - Rhode Island advocate

### Insufficient Resources Lead to Devastating Unmet Needs

It’s unthinkable that any domestic violence program would ever have to turn away a survivor in need. However, many programs struggle to maintain stable funding, leaving them no choice but to cut services, lay off staff, and tell survivors that no help is available.

An **Arkansas** advocate shared, “We regularly turn away survivors because every bed is full, and every staff member is stretched thin. If federal and state funding continues to decline, there will be fewer safe places for survivors to go, fewer advocates to answer calls, and fewer counselors to walk beside them through healing. Shelters like ours are not luxuries. We are lifelines. The loss of even one program can mean the difference between life and death.”

### Participating programs were asked how long they could sustain their services if their federal funding was reduced by 50% or more:



If these reductions took place, within six months, **54%** of programs would close. Within one year, **77%** of programs would close.

Programs also reported the impacts that would likely occur in the next 12 months if these reductions occurred: staff layoffs or reductions in staff hours (**77% of programs**), reduced, suspended, or eliminated services (**75%**), delayed services and/or longer wait times (**65%**), and complete program closures (**25%**).

### Unanswered Requests for Help

On September 10, 2025, programs did not have the resources to meet **13,018** desperate requests for help from victims.

Table 4: Unmet Requests on 9/10/25	Emergency Shelter (29%)	Transitional or Other Housing (22%)	Hotel/Motel (7%)	Non-Residential Supportive Services (42%)	TOTAL
Adults	2,402	1,646	373	4,262	8,683
Children	1,396	1,164	514	1,261	4,335
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,798</b>	<b>2,810</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>5,523</b>	<b>13,018</b>

✘ “We are experiencing overwhelming demand, but we’re constrained by limited funding, shelter space, and staff capacity. Survivors often go without critical support due to these shortages. Our team is stretched thin, doing all we can with what we have, but it’s not enough. Increased, flexible funding is essential, not just for beds, but for staffing, advocacy, and long-term stability. **Survivors shouldn’t have to wait for safety. We need support now to continue this lifesaving work.**” – *Washington advocate*

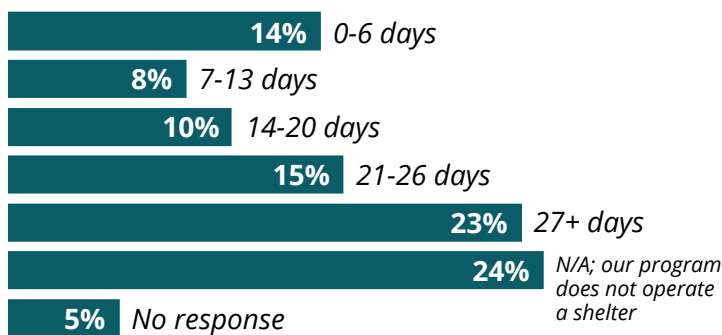
### Safe Housing is Difficult to Obtain

Without a safe place to live, many survivors are unable to leave abusers, hold down a job, enroll their children in school, and build stable lives that allow them to heal. A lack of affordable housing nationwide means that advocates often struggle to help survivors find a place to call home.

On September 10, 2025, the majority of survivors’ unmet requests (**58%**) were for emergency shelter, hotels, motels, transitional housing, and other housing. These **7,495** unmet requests left survivors and their children without a safe place to stay.

A **Massachusetts** advocate shared: “Emergency shelters are now full more often than not, leaving survivors with nowhere to turn. Rent prices are at record highs and far beyond what most survivors can afford as they try to rebuild their lives. Survivors aren’t just searching for housing; they’re navigating a system full of barriers, where urgent needs are met with long waits, closed doors, and limited support. The path to safety shouldn’t be this hard.”

### Participating programs were asked, if they operated shelters, how many days of an average month their shelter was at capacity:



Without safe, affordable housing, many survivors stay in shelters, hotels, or motels for long stretches of time, which can delay their healing and prevent shelters from offering space to other survivors in need. While many programs offer transitional

housing, short-term rental assistance, and other options to bridge gaps, these in-demand programs are often at capacity with long waitlists.

Advocates work hard to connect survivors with housing. In **Hawaii**, an advocate reported: “Our county’s ongoing housing and cost-of-living crisis means our clients’ need for support extends beyond the acute crisis phase. With limited transitional housing units and reduced funding, survivors are often forced to choose between returning to unsafe situations or homelessness, frequently meaning the stabilization they worked so hard toward while in shelter can quickly deteriorate.”

Even when survivors secure housing, they often continue to rely on services from programs to maintain stability. An advocate in **Wyoming** shared: “A client and her children successfully transitioned from shelter into a safe, stable, and affordable home. We worked closely with her to address safety, goals, financial sustainability, and her housing search. We continue to secure funding that provides up to three months of housing assistance, giving our clients a strong foundation for their finances, independence, and security.”

### Loss of Housing Services

**528** programs reported reducing or eliminating housing services due to staffing or funding in the past 12 months.

Table 5: Housing Services Reduced or Eliminated due to Staffing/Funding in Past 12 Months	# of Programs Reducing or Eliminating
Hotel/Motel Stay	245
Transitional or Other Housing (run by DV program)	111
Support Related to Housing/Landlord	84
Emergency Shelter	70
Support Related to Address Confidentiality	18

✘ “As the only domestic violence shelter within a four-county radius, we are at capacity nearly every day. Each call we receive represents someone in crisis, but too often, we must turn survivors away because we have no space left. Our dedicated staff work tirelessly, often with limited funding, to provide shelter, counseling, advocacy, and support. Yet, the financial strain is constant. **Shelters like ours are lifelines. Without sustainable funding, survivors are left with nowhere to turn.**” – *Ohio advocate*

### Staffing Challenges Exacerbate Unmet Needs

Most domestic violence programs rely on local, state, territorial, and federal government grants, along with private donations, to keep their doors open. With budget cuts constantly looming, programs often can't provide staff – many of whom are survivors themselves – with competitive wages and benefits, leading to high turnover in positions already prone to burnout and vicarious trauma.

Among participating programs, the average reported starting hourly and salaried wages for a full-time, front-line advocate were **\$19.07** and **\$45,298**, respectively. The lowest reported hourly wage was **\$9.00**; the lowest reported salary was **\$21,600**.

An advocate in **Missouri** reported: “We are overworked, understaffed, and afraid to hire anyone with forecasted budget cuts. We quite literally are facing the challenge of paying staff or paying the bills. Funding cuts are hurting survivors, our community, our local economy, and our livelihood. Our staff is primarily made up of people who have been there, overcome, and are now trying to help others do the same. It is very discouraging.”

This year, participating programs reported that their most frequently reduced or eliminated non-residential supportive services were therapy or counseling, direct cash assistance, transportation, and legal representation by an attorney.

### Lack of Therapy Delays Healing

Not all tactics of abuse leave physical wounds. Abusers rely on a wide array of emotional and verbal methods of harm and control, causing many victims to feel powerless and trapped in the relationship. Even when survivors are physically safe from an abuser, the emotional scars can take years to heal.

When local programs have the funding and staff to provide therapy, support groups, and other counseling services, survivors are able to heal, build community, and develop tools for resilience. However, many programs can't afford to pay counselors and therapists a living wage, and other staff members may not have sufficient training or capacity to fill the gap.

A **New York** advocate shared: “One client began her job search, but she realized it was surfacing traumatic memories, and she needed counseling to process her trauma. Due to federal funding decreases, we had to cut multiple counseling positions, and we couldn't provide her with this service. Without the health care she needs, her job search and path to financial security are on hold indefinitely.”

### Loss of Therapy Services

In the past 12 months, due to staffing or funding, **119** programs reported reducing or eliminating therapy or counseling for adults, and **102** programs reported reducing or eliminating therapy or counseling for children or youth.

✘ “The uncertainty of funding and the constant day-to-day changes are extremely difficult. Human service programs should be able to focus on serving without constant fear and instability. We are helping some of the most vulnerable members of our communities – individuals who have already faced unimaginable fear and trauma. **Those in positions of power should be our allies in this work, not contributors to the fear we are striving to overcome.**” – *Maryland advocate*

### Lack of Direct Cash Assistance Worsens Barriers

Survivors need substantial economic resources to safely leave an abusive partner. Rent, legal expenses, childcare, and other costs can quickly deplete a survivor’s savings, and many victims also experience financial abuse, leaving them without savings to begin with.

Direct cash assistance (or “flexible funds”) provided by local programs can include cash and gift cards for survivors to meet these needs quickly and efficiently, without having to justify their needs or repay the money. Research suggests that even “relatively small” amounts of money can help survivors, particularly when it comes to avoiding homelessness.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, these funds may be among the first to be depleted or cut entirely when programs face tight budgets.

An **Iowa** advocate shared: “One of our greatest challenges is the lack of flexible funding to help survivors with critical needs like rent and security deposits. Without this support, many survivors face stigma, bias, and impossible hurdles as they try to rebuild. Direct financial assistance helps break down barriers and allows survivors the opportunity to secure safe housing, regain independence, and begin the journey of healing.”

#### Loss of Direct Cash Assistance

In the past 12 months, due to staffing or funding, **155** programs reported reducing or eliminating direct cash assistance.

### Lack of Transportation Impacts Safety

Having reliable, affordable transportation options can help survivors leave abusers, access services and appointments, and even relocate to keep themselves and their children safe. Transportation can make a particular difference in rural areas, where public transportation and rideshare options may be limited or nonexistent.

When survivors can’t access transportation, they often rely on local programs. However, these services can be prohibitively expensive. Programs may not have the funding or staff to maintain multiple vehicles, or they may not be able to afford even a single bus or plane ticket that will bring a survivor to safety.

A **Tennessee** advocate shared: “A client came to us after years of abuse, feeling hopeless, ashamed, and unsure of what to do next. After walking through her options, she decided to flee to another county. We provided a gas card and food for the trip and helped her create a plan. She told us that this time felt different because she finally had real help, resources, and hope. She said we helped save her life.”

#### Loss of Transportation Services

In the past 12 months, due to staffing or funding, **121** programs reported reducing or eliminating transportation services.

<sup>4</sup> Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative, University of California San Francisco (2024). [Toward Safety: Understanding Intimate Partner Violence and Homelessness in the California Statewide Study of People Experiencing Homelessness.](#)

✘ “Victim service providers are saving lives every day. Reaching out for help when you’re in a dangerous situation is one of the hardest things a victim can do. It risks their safety and the safety of their friends, family, and coworkers. Entire communities are impacted when violence occurs. No one should live in fear of what they will return home to or if they will lose their life to domestic violence today. **Supporting victim service providers is supporting the health and safety of communities across the country.**” – *South Dakota advocate*

### Lack of Legal Representation Jeopardizes Stability

For many survivors, leaving an abusive relationship entails lengthy and expensive legal proceedings. Filing for custody or divorce, obtaining a protective order, pursuing criminal charges – these and other essential processes can quickly eat up a survivor’s time, energy, and money.

Many abusers have greater funds, resources, and abilities to weaponize the court system against their victims. When local programs can provide legal representation, survivors have a better chance of achieving legal outcomes that support their safety and healing. But when lawyers are cut from a program’s budget, survivors are left vulnerable.

A **Maine** advocate shared: “We were unable to secure funding for a survivor’s legal counsel. Her former partner had been withholding contact with their child. Without an attorney to advocate for her, she was unable to effectively communicate her situation, and he was left with full control over access to their child.”

#### Loss of Legal Representation Services

In the past 12 months, due to staffing or funding, **113** programs reported reducing or eliminating legal representation by an attorney.

### Reduction or Elimination of Essential Support

Altogether, **664** programs reduced or eliminated at least one non-residential supportive service in the past 12 months due to staffing or funding.

Table 6: Top Non-Residential Supportive Services Reduced or Eliminated due to Staffing/Funding in Past 12 Months	# of Programs Reducing or Eliminating
Direct Cash Assistance	155
Transportation	121
Therapy/Counseling for Adults	119
Legal Representation by an Attorney	113
Therapy/Counseling for Children or Youth	102
Prevention and/or Educational Programs	96
Childcare/Daycare	90
Bilingual Support	84
Court Accompaniment or Legal Support	82
Support Related to Immigration	71
Support Related to Mental Health	69
Culturally Specific Services to Immigrant Survivors	64
Children’s Support	63

Domestic violence programs help our country move toward a future where everyone can live safely and access supportive resources and services. Funding helps make this future possible. Learn more and join us: [NNEDV.org](https://www.nnedv.org)

If you have experienced abuse, you’re not alone, and help is available: [NNEDV.org/GetHelp](https://www.nnedv.org/GetHelp)

If someone tells you that they have experienced abuse, listen without judgment, support them, and encourage them to seek services if it’s safe for them to do so: [NNEDV.org/WhatIsDV](https://www.nnedv.org/WhatIsDV)



“One client shared how hard it had been to keep food on the table for their children. With our food program, they were able to bring home a week’s worth of groceries. **They told us the relief was immediate – no more skipping meals so their kids could eat first.** This simple support brought comfort, dignity, and hope to a family in need.”

- MONTANA  
ADVOCATE

# SERVICES PROVIDED

Table 7: Services Provided by Local Programs		% of Programs Providing Service on 9/10/25	% of Programs Offering Service throughout Past 12 Months <sup>5</sup>	% of Programs Reducing or Eliminating Service due to Staffing/Funding in Past 12 Months <sup>5</sup>
Housing and Shelter Services	Emergency Shelter	71%	80%	4%
	Hotel/Motel Stay	17%	61%	14%
	Support Related to Address Confidentiality	19%	67%	1%
	Support Related to Housing/Landlord	39%	76%	5%
	Transitional or Other Housing (run by DV program)	39%	51%	7%
Services for Marginalized Survivors	Bilingual Support	43%	76%	5%
	Culturally Specific Services to Asian/Pacific Islander Survivors	9%	31%	2%
	Culturally Specific Services to Black/African American Survivors	21%	43%	2%
	Culturally Specific Services to Immigrant Survivors	26%	51%	4%
	Culturally Specific Services to Latino/Latina/Latinx Survivors	27%	51%	3%
	Culturally Specific Services to Native American Survivors	8%	33%	1%
	Support Related to Disability Issues	24%	70%	2%
	Support Related to Immigration	21%	64%	4%
	Support to LGBTQ+ Victims of Abuse	21%	76%	2%
	Support to Older/Elder Victims of Abuse	25%	76%	2%
	Support to Teen/Young Adult Victims of Dating Abuse	20%	72%	3%
	Support to Trafficking Victims	18%	70%	3%
	Third-Party Translation/Interpretation Services	16%	65%	3%
Services for Children	Childcare/Daycare	17%	40%	5%
	Children's Support	39%	69%	4%
	Safe Exchange/Visitation	6%	21%	2%
	Support Related to Child Welfare/Protective Services	18%	62%	3%
	Support Related to School Systems	24%	68%	3%
Health Care Services	HIV/AIDS Information and/or Support	3%	30%	1%
	Onsite Medical Services	3%	16%	3%
	Support Related to Health Care or Health Care Systems	18%	61%	2%
	Support Related to Mental Health	40%	79%	4%
	Support Related to Substance Use	18%	60%	2%
	Therapy/Counseling for Adults	40%	66%	7%
	Therapy/Counseling for Children or Youth	23%	53%	6%
Financial Services	Direct Cash Assistance	16%	45%	9%
	Financial Literacy/Budgeting	19%	69%	4%
	Job Training/Employment Assistance	17%	58%	3%
	Matched Savings Programs and/or Microloans	1%	9%	2%
	Support Related to Public Benefits/TANF/Welfare	36%	79%	2%

Table 7 (continued): Services Provided by Local Programs		% of Programs Providing Service on 9/10/25	% of Programs Offering Service throughout Past 12 Months <sup>5</sup>	% of Programs Reducing or Eliminating Service due to Staffing/Funding in Past 12 Months <sup>5</sup>
Legal Services	Alternatives to the Criminal Legal System (Transformative, Restorative Justice)	6%	21%	2%
	Court Accompaniment or Legal Support	47%	89%	5%
	Legal Representation by an Attorney	11%	29%	7%
Other Services	Media/Press Response or Outreach	10%	60%	3%
	Prevention and/or Educational Programs	32%	81%	6%
	Support for Animals	14%	50%	3%
	Support Related to Technology Use	15%	61%	2%
	Support to Active Duty or Veteran Victims in U.S. Armed Forces	5%	42%	1%
	Transportation	45%	89%	7%

## **REAL STORIES** *of lost funding and resources*



**“We faced a significant risk of losing funding due to federal budget cuts, including the possibility of reducing more than 50% of our staff.** Thanks to the approval of no-cost extensions and additional support from the Transitional Housing program, it was possible to maintain active operations and ensure continuity of services. Nevertheless, we remain in a vulnerable position due to the federal government shutdown and pending approvals for other federal grant proposals.”  
*- Puerto Rico advocate*

**“Due to federal funding cuts, our housing authority stopped accepting domestic violence voucher referrals, and we are no longer able to help multiple individuals and families access safe housing.** With funding cuts impacting our partner agencies, folks are reaching out to us to address food insecurity and housing support. We try to assist, but we cannot keep up with the need.” *- North Dakota advocate*

**“Funding is always a challenge. We continue applying for grants and looking for ways to fill the gaps that we anticipate every year. Programs like ours are a lifeline for many people in our community. We make a difference, save lives, and allow people to heal and lead healthy, productive lives. We need funding to continue to do this.”**  
*- Oklahoma advocate*

<sup>5</sup> “Past 12 Months” refers to the 12-month period prior to, and including, the survey day.

## SUMMARY DATA

State or Territory	Response Rate <sup>6</sup>	Adults Served	Children Served	Total People Served	Service Requests Unmet	Hotline Contacts Received	People Educated	People Served in Shelter	People Served in Transitional Housing or Other Housing	People Served in Hotels or Motels	People Served in Non-Residential Supportive Services
AK	100%	413	224	637	34	173	0	311	156	6	164
AL	100%	270	586	856	38	73	532	189	115	1	551
AR	84%	288	180	468	141	132	167	280	46	4	138
AS	100%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AZ	89%	836	561	1397	189	204	234	562	298	22	515
CA	60%	2,911	1,915	4,826	605	1,167	1,247	1,209	1,437	183	1,997
CO	65%	501	243	744	183	306	106	221	127	4	392
CT	93%	740	377	1,117	26	524	277	200	410	14	493
DC	88%	588	202	790	12	103	14	50	289	0	451
DE	67%	118	105	223	3	11	0	47	50	4	122
FL	85%	2,087	1,709	3,796	186	567	295	1,534	1,782	4	476
GA	84%	1,221	1,038	2,259	284	674	1,535	685	573	34	967
GU	100%	26	35	61	46	2	145	45	0	0	16
HI	82%	307	344	651	59	67	67	138	308	0	205
IA	100%	592	473	1,065	50	602	119	218	316	44	487
ID	85%	343	168	511	319	123	79	114	124	41	232
IL	96%	2,405	1,370	3,775	555	777	1,798	869	1,185	111	1,610
IN	100%	1,583	876	2,459	153	568	1,089	885	524	3	1,047
KS	91%	477	250	727	56	186	310	281	126	1	319
KY	100%	881	530	1,411	222	177	184	480	295	19	617
LA	100%	414	391	805	54	221	64	275	263	22	245
MA	98%	1,254	536	1,790	873	597	354	316	355	54	1,065
MD	100%	1,008	441	1,449	75	318	159	311	231	34	873
ME	100%	401	138	539	71	90	11	94	159	5	281
MI	91%	1,600	1,478	3,078	1,086	1,070	211	1,065	999	321	693
MN	66%	1,338	608	1,946	793	936	295	492	458	30	966
MO	88%	1,201	892	2,093	599	433	175	729	588	20	756
MP	100%	25	41	66	0	1	0	7	59	0	0
MS	100%	202	146	348	68	49	77	118	144	0	86
MT	53%	186	146	332	8	103	51	118	85	4	125
NC	81%	980	610	1,590	170	604	145	683	393	21	493
ND	94%	257	87	344	52	129	213	40	103	0	201
NE	95%	376	396	772	66	217	325	110	249	12	401

State or Territory	Response Rate <sup>6</sup>	Adults Served	Children Served	Total People Served	Service Requests Unmet	Hotline Contacts Received	People Educated	People Served in Shelter	People Served in Transitional Housing or Other Housing	People Served in Hotels or Motels	People Served in Non-Residential Supportive Services
NH	92%	157	65	222	19	82	24	62	54	2	104
NJ	84%	902	413	1,315	116	593	386	241	222	201	651
NM	90%	407	364	771	108	248	162	282	329	31	129
NV	100%	290	161	451	21	235	87	215	97	20	119
NY	87%	5,088	3,662	8,750	787	1,451	1,228	2,189	4,327	120	2,114
OH	100%	1,739	1,241	2,980	159	740	680	1,135	792	24	1,029
OK	73%	548	203	751	476	186	135	315	98	70	268
OR	75%	1,517	1,203	2,720	728	602	91	308	1,693	80	639
PA	93%	1,746	1,053	2,799	356	782	893	726	1,060	53	960
PR	64%	197	213	410	7	48	180	43	157	0	210
RI	100%	770	287	1,057	62	135	11	98	471	1	487
SC	100%	327	299	626	140	122	178	130	204	37	255
SD	81%	235	149	384	19	98	55	250	5	12	117
TN	100%	612	321	933	46	308	572	335	243	7	348
TX	92%	5,681	3,252	8,933	1,957	1,848	2,027	2,310	3,904	25	2,694
UT	93%	595	369	964	217	381	622	219	394	3	348
VA	82%	984	603	1,587	121	483	267	505	230	85	767
VI	100%	20	18	38	2	41	42	7	10	2	19
VT	92%	215	87	302	15	90	29	104	45	38	115
WA	78%	1,628	1,080	2,708	354	607	160	495	1,045	33	1,135
WI	85%	1,194	668	1,862	192	737	640	592	416	36	818
WV	100%	345	137	482	29	164	82	134	140	23	185
WY	100%	111	65	176	11	117	14	87	17	11	61
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>51,137</b>	<b>33,009</b>	<b>84,146</b>	<b>13,018</b>	<b>21,302</b>	<b>18,843</b>	<b>23,458</b>	<b>28,200</b>	<b>1,932</b>	<b>30,556</b>

✘ “Our work reminds us daily that safety is not only the absence of harm, but the presence of care, connection, and opportunity. Through culturally specific, community-based advocacy, we meet people where they are and walk beside them toward stability and healing. Yet, the progress we make is too often constrained by funding freezes and policy limits that undermine survivor-centered work. Sustained and flexible investment is essential – not as charity, but as accountability for the systems that caused harm. True national commitment means honoring the labor of healing and ensuring that every survivor, and every community that rises with them, can truly flourish.” – *Wisconsin advocate*

<sup>6</sup> The response rate refers to the percentage of identified primary-purpose local domestic violence programs in the state or territory that participated in the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Counts Survey.

# REAL STORIES

of challenges and resilience



“As funding declines, the complexity and urgency of survivors’ needs have rapidly accelerated. Our staff regularly takes on additional duties, compromising the delivery of trauma-informed, person-centered care and exacerbating burnout and turnover. **Survivors deserve timely, comprehensive support.** The systems that serve them must be adequately resourced to ensure their safety and healing.” - *Kentucky advocate*

“We help survivors obtain protective and restraining orders, but we continue to face limited resources and increasing demand. **Greater funding and support for legal advocacy are essential** to help us meet the growing needs of survivors seeking protection through the court system.” - *Guam advocate*

“We continue to face significant challenges due to limited funding resources, and the need for services far exceeds the resources currently available. Instead of introducing innovative programs or expanding our reach, we’re often focused solely on maintaining critical services. **Survivors and victims trust that we will show up, listen, and do everything we can to support them through some of the most difficult moments in their lives.** That trust is what keeps us going, and it’s why continued federal and state investment is so crucial.” - *Pennsylvania advocate*

“A mother and her children were homeless after fleeing their abuser, and they finally found help in our shelter program. **The mother shared that ‘it feels like the shackles have been lifted.’** They were able to move into transitional housing and begin rebuilding their lives.” - *Delaware advocate*

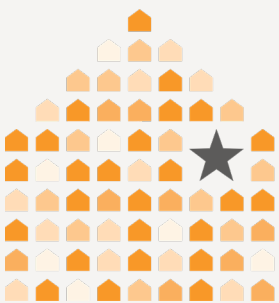
“One survivor’s voice trembled as she explained her situation on our hotline. Our advocate listened patiently, offering emotional support and reassurance. We helped her develop a safety plan and provided housing resources. Thanks to her courage and our support, she felt a glimmer of hope. **She recognized that she wasn’t alone and that there was a way out.** The call marked the beginning of her journey towards a safer and happier future, where her voice was heard and her safety prioritized.” - *Kansas advocate*





“Your program gave me my life back. I was provided with a safe place, food, clothing, counseling, and great advice. I learned that I do matter and that love does not hurt. For the last ten years, I’ve been homeless due to abuse, and you helped me secure housing. I’ve never had my own apartment before. **If not for your program, I’m sure I would not be alive.**”

- SURVIVOR (as told to a South Carolina advocate)



**NNEDV**  
NATIONAL NETWORK  
TO END DOMESTIC  
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National Network to End Domestic Violence  
1325 Massachusetts Avenue, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Washington, DC 20005  
(202) 543-5566  
NNEDV.org/DVCounts  
DVCounts@NNEDV.org

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