

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COORDINATING COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL
YEAR
2023



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CHAIR'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the members of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, we are pleased to present the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2023. The Annual Report includes statistical information on incidents of domestic violence, and services offered for victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. For criminal statistics and Protection from Abuse statistics, we offer a five-year snapshot in order to view trends, and we can see that again this year, reporting of criminal incidents to the police has decreased while the filings for a civil protective order have increased. Both trends are worthy of closer examination as part of the DVCC's statutory duty to "continuously study court services and procedures, law enforcement procedures and protocols, and the criminal justice data collection and analysis as it relates to domestic violence." The decrease in the number of calls to the police, while we have an ever-increasing number of civil petitions suggests that we need to continue to provide services to survivors and training to those who assist in the fight against domestic violence. While there is always more work to be done to improve our system in Delaware, the exceptional commitment of all of our partners will lead us to success.

The Council hired a new Executive Director this past fiscal year. Angela Seguin, with over twenty years of advocacy experience, joined the DVCC in October, and had to tackle the immediate task of filling vacant positions at the Council. The DVCC is now fully staffed for Fiscal Year 2024, with talented and enthusiastic members. Lauren Cuevas, Sara Paris, and Francisca Moreno are full time staff for the Council, with Libby Neuner serving in a contractual capacity as Coordinator for the Family Justice Center Project, and Debra Reed and Timothy Valeski sharing a contractual position as Coordinators of the DV High Risk Team. Each team member has taken on their assigned committees and initiatives with vigor and we look forward to the success of the agency in the year ahead.

We take this opportunity to thank all of our partners who have committed to the indefatigable task of fighting domestic violence with the sincere hope that one day we will be able to proclaim that there were no incidents of domestic violence in our great state.

Chief Judge Michael K. Newell
Chair

2023 COUNCIL MEMBERS

CHAIR

Honorable Michael Newell
Chief Judge, Family Court

VICE-CHAIR

Laura Graham, Esquire
At-Large Member

Honorable Bryant L. Richardson, Member, Senate

Honorable Nicole Poore, Member, Senate

Honorable Krista Griffith, Member, House of Representatives

Honorable Michael Smith, Member, House of Representatives

Honorable Jan Jurden, President Judge, Superior Court

Honorable Carl Danberg, Chief Judge, Court of Common Pleas

Honorable Kathleen Jennings, Attorney General, Department of Justice

Honorable Nathaniel McQueen, Secretary, Department of Safety and Homeland Security

Honorable Kevin O'Connell, Chief Defender, Office of Defense Services

Honorable Monroe Hudson, Commissioner, Department of Correction

Honorable Josette Manning, Secretary, Department of Services for Children, Youth & Their Families

Master Corporal Andrea Warfel, Appointed Representative of the Law Enforcement Community

Dr. Josephine Mokonogho, At-Large Member, Representative of the Medical Community

Professor Dana Harrington Conner, At-Large Member

Melissa Pennachi, At-Large Member

Ariana Langford, At-Large Member

Professor Jennifer Naccarelli, At-Large Member

STAFF MEMBERS

Angela Seguin, Executive Director

Lauren Cuevas, Social Services Senior Administrator

Sara Paris, Planner IV

Francisca Moreno, Trainer/Educator

Debra Reed, DV High Risk Team Coordinator

Timothy Valeski, DV High Risk Team Coordinator

Libby Neuner, Family Justice Center Project Coordinator

Vacant, Administrative Specialist

VISION STATEMENT

The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (DVCC) is a state agency legislatively created to improve Delaware's response to domestic violence and sexual assault. The DVCC brings together all stakeholders including service providers, policy-level officials, and community partners to eradicate domestic violence. The DVCC is committed to leading the nation through innovative legislative action, community education, and an outstanding coordinated system response to violence in families and the community.

STATUTORY DUTIES

13 Del.C. § 2103 (1-6)

The Council shall:

1. Continuously study court services and procedures, law-enforcement procedures and protocol, and criminal justice data collection and analysis as it relates to domestic violence;
2. Effectuate coordination between agencies, departments and the courts with victims of domestic violence and abuse;
3. Promote effective prevention, intervention and treatment techniques which will be developed based upon research and data collection;
4. Recommend standards for treatment programs for perpetrators of domestic violence to the Department of Health and Social Services, Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families and the Department of Correction;
5. Review and comment upon legislation relating to domestic violence introduced in the General Assembly at the request of any member of the General Assembly or on its own initiative; and
6. Improve the response to domestic violence and abuse so as to reduce the incidents thereof.

DVCC COMMITTEES

Much of the work done by the DVCC is accomplished through committees made up of Council members, DVCC staff, first responders, service providers, policy-level officials, and community members. This collaborative approach has helped establish supportive ties in the community for victims of violence, identify areas of need, and implement policies and procedures beneficial in combatting domestic violence in Delaware.

Animal Abuse & DV Link

Chair Honorable Michael Newell
Designee Chair Honorable Jennifer Ranji

Children and Domestic Violence

Chair Honorable Josette Manning

Criminal Justice

Chairs Honorable Jan Jurden, Debra Reed, and Master Corporal Andrea Warfel
Designee Chair Linda Carmichael, Esquire

Elderly & Domestic Violence

Chair Honorable Nathaniel McQueen
Designee Chair Kimberly Chandler

Immigration

Chair Laura Graham, Esquire

Legislative Drafting & Review

Chair Honorable Krista Griffith

Medical

Chair Josephine Mokonogho, MD

Public Awareness/Education

Chair Honorable Carl Danberg

Training

Chair Honorable Michael Newell
Designee Chair Eleanor Torres, Esquire

Treatment

Chair Honorable Monroe Hudson
Designee Chair Melissa Kearney

Family Justice Center Steering Committee

Chair Laura Graham, Esquire

Domestic Violence Intervention Certification Panel

Fatal Incident Review Team (FIRT)

Chairs Honorable Jan Jurden, Deputy Attorney General Jenna Milecki, and Professor Dana Harrington Conner
Designee Chair Melanie Ewing-Lahutsky

ANIMAL ABUSE & DV LINK COMMITTEE

In April 2022, Judge Jennifer Ranji of Family Court organized a half-day training event which brought together attorneys and professionals in the domestic violence, animal welfare, and child welfare sectors to learn how these cross-sector professionals can recognize and intervene in all types of abuse. Recognizing the links between animal abuse and other forms of abuse, and the important role pets play in families, can help each of these respective organizations identify earlier interventions to avoid harm and achieve better outcomes for families. The group attending the training identified shared goals and four clear areas of focus: Legislation, Policy Development, Cross-Sector Trainings, and Public Awareness. And in order to engage in this work, the Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence Link Committee was established by the DVCC in September 2022. The Committee's first meeting was held on January 26, 2023. The primary focus was a package of three potential bills addressing animal abuse and domestic violence.



Advocates and legislators at the bill signings for SB71, SB70, and HB95.



From left to right: Judge Jennifer Ranji, Sen. Nicole Poore, Gov. John Carney, Sen. Stephanie Hansen, Rep. Krista Griffith.

FY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Once drafted by the committee, the bills were sent to the DVCC's Legislative Committee and then recommended to the DVCC. SB70, SB71 and HB95 were all introduced in March. DVCC voted to support the bills and all three passed and were signed by Governor Carney on June 27, 2023.

SB70 added acts committed against a person's companion animal or service animal to the list of abuses for protection from abuse orders.

SB71 requires law enforcement and child welfare agencies to report any suspected animal mistreatment to the Office of Animal Welfare.

HB95 enables Family Court to award possession of companion animals, and provision of care for those animals, when dividing marital property after considering the wellbeing of the companion animal.

Judge Ranji and Chief Judge Newell spoke about Delaware's work on the link at the Delaware Bench and Bar Conference in June, and Judge Ranji spoke on the topic again at the annual conference of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges in July.

CHILDREN & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMITTEE

The Children and Domestic Violence Committee brings together representatives from the Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families (DSCYF), the General Assembly, Family Court, the Department of Justice, law enforcement, advocates, and community partners to examine services and system gaps for children experiencing domestic violence.

FY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During FY23, the committee finalized and voted to approve the revised “Model Policy for Responding to Student Misconduct in Schools” that was previously titled the “Guidelines to Responding to Teen Dating and Sexual Violence in Delaware Schools.” This committee also began working on a recommendation given to the DVCC by the Fatal Incident Review Team. The recommendation reads “The DVCC should increase efforts to enhance the awareness of the interventions for children who experience intimate partner violence and trauma between service providers, child welfare professionals, law enforcement, and other key stakeholders.” Members of the committee worked with DVCC staff to compile a list of existing resources for children who have experienced trauma and either experienced or witnessed intimate partner violence in their homes. The Committee then began discussing how to increase awareness of and access to those resources.



CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

The focus of the Criminal Justice Committee is to continuously review the justice system's response to domestic violence and sexual assault in order to identify and implement improvements to the criminal justice system through policy development. This committee brings together law enforcement, the courts, the Office of Defense Services, the Department of Justice, the Department of Correction, Delaware Criminal Justice Information System (DELJIS), advocates and community partners to resolve issues specific to the needs of those affected by domestic violence.

FY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This committee continues to receive regular reports from the Domestic Violence High Risk Team (DVHRT) on the Team's work and receives regular data from Superior Court on Lethal Violence Protective Orders and Weapons Relinquishment Orders. This year, the Committee began working on drafting a comprehensive strangulation protocol for law enforcement and first responders to utilize when responding to domestic violence-related strangulation cases. This project has received support from the Delaware Police Chiefs' Council and is an ongoing collaboration between the Delaware Department of Justice, law enforcement, medical professionals, and advocates to improve the health/safety of survivors of strangulation.

Additionally, the Committee discussed the service of default and ex parte Protection from Abuse Orders within the Justice of the Peace Court and expanding that to the Court of Common Pleas. The Sexual Violence Protective Order that provides protection for victims of sexual assault and other non-consensual sexual conduct went into effect during FY23, and this committee continues to have conversations around the order's implementation throughout the state.



ELDERLY & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMITTEE

The Elderly and Domestic Violence Committee continuously review data and information about the prevalence of domestic violence against aging Delawareans, the unmet needs of elderly victims, existing services and programs, and the experiences of elderly victims. The Committee is made up of representatives from the Department of Safety and Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, law enforcement, advocates, and community partners.

FY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Committee only had the opportunity to meet once during Fiscal Year 2023 due to staffing changes and vacancies. However, during this meeting, the Committee established some important objectives, including promoting education and training on financial exploitation and elder abuse, ensuring that all outreach materials are accessible, and choosing a more relevant committee name that accurately reflects the community. The Committee plans to explore other topics such as behavioral health and substance use, and plans to conduct a needs assessment survey.

1 IN 10

*Americans aged 60+
have experienced some
form of elder abuse.*

-The National Council on Aging

IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE

Working with immigrant victims of domestic violence and sexual assault brings additional barriers and challenges. Immigrant victims often feel trapped in abusive relationships because of immigration laws, language barriers, social isolation, and lack of financial resources. In addition, the immigrant population is less likely to report violence out of fear of law enforcement and deportation. The Immigration Committee, made up of service providers, law enforcement, advocates, and survivors of domestic violence, discusses the additional barriers confronting immigrant victims and works to effectuate change.

FY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Committee continued to be apprised of all Federal immigration issues impacting immigrant survivors in our state. The Committee discussed a multitude of policies that directly impact immigrant victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in order to better educate and support the community. Most notably, committee members planned for how they would mobilize in collaboration to if and when immigrants arrived in Delaware by plane or bus, transported from other states. Delaware's service providers were ready to respond, if needed, and proved how fast organizations and groups that serve immigrants in Delaware can organize and coordinate resources. Delaware continues to show that we are a welcoming place for immigrants and that we understand the unique barriers immigrant victims of domestic violence and sexual assault may face.

Other examples of collaborative efforts happened when the Public Health Emergency ended in May 2023, resulting in individuals and families who received emergency benefits, in particular DV survivors, needing to reapply for those critical benefits. Additional barriers such as unstable housing and language access were obstacles for immigrant survivors applying for benefits. The Committee coordinated efforts and planned for ways to increase language access and support for survivors who were reapplying for public benefits.

This group continues to highlight the importance of community collaboration and coordinating resources. While resources that are specific to immigrants and those who speak different languages are not as easily accessible, the commitment to work together in order to serve all immigrant survivors is strong.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

The Legislative Drafting and Review Committee reviews proposed legislation addressing domestic violence and sexual assault and considers legislative initiatives to be supported by the DVCC. Participation on the committee includes representatives from the General Assembly, the Department of Justice, the courts, law enforcement, civil legal professionals, victim advocates, and community partners.



Advocates and legislators at the bill signings for SB71, SB70, and HB95.



Left to right: Gov. John Carney, Sen. Stephanie Hansen, Rep. Krista Griffith, and DVCC ED Angela Seguin.

FY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

On October 10, 2022, Governor Carney signed **HS1 for HB264 with HA1** into law, effectively creating civil Sexual Violence Protective Orders. As of April 10, 2023, survivors are able to petition for Sexual Violence Protective Orders in Superior Court.

During FY23, four bills that were endorsed by the Legislative Committee were passed by the General Assembly. Three of these bills came from the DVCC's Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence Link Committee. The fourth came from the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

SB70 – added acts committed against a person's companion animal or service animal to the list of abuses for protection from abuse orders.

SB71 – requires law enforcement and child welfare agencies to report any suspected animal mistreatment to the Office of Animal Welfare.

HB95 – enables Family Court to award possession of companion animals, and provision of care for those animals, when dividing marital property after considering the wellbeing of the companion animal.

HB184 – updated definitions in the Labor Code and amended the statute to make it clear that a report to police does not have to be provided to an employer to verify that the employee has experienced domestic violence; documentation from other reliable professionals like victim advocates, medical providers, mental health professionals or court documentation is enough to support the employees' experiences and prohibit workplace discrimination such as denial of employment opportunities, firing, requiring the employee to take leave, denial of reasonable accommodations, etc.

MEDICAL COMMITTEE

The presence of domestic violence is a serious social determinant of health that affects the well-being of millions of people each year. Domestic violence occurs across boundaries of race, class, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Potential health consequences of domestic violence may include cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, reproductive, musculoskeletal, and nervous system conditions. Additionally, patients impacted by domestic violence may experience depression, sleep disturbances or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and survivors are at higher risk for engaging in health risk behaviors such as smoking, substance use, and unsafe sexual practices.

The Medical Committee, made up of health care providers, advocates, service providers, and other interested parties, acknowledges the profound difference that health care providers can make by screening for domestic violence and providing resources. The Committee seeks to provide accessible information and education to health care providers in Delaware regarding the screening and treatment of patients experiencing domestic violence.

FY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This year, the Committee focused on outreach to expand committee membership to include a variety of health professionals. This is an ongoing initiative as the committee would like to have a diverse membership that is representative of medical disciplines that are most impacted by Domestic Violence.

The Medical Manual, updated in 2021, has been disseminated at conferences such as the Victim Services Conference and Delaware Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Integration Summit. A Training to complement the medical manual has been developed and the Committee's goal is to start offering it next fiscal year.



PUBLIC AWARENESS & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Committee brings together representatives from the courts, law enforcement, healthcare, Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families, advocates, and community partners to promote awareness and education about domestic violence, sexual assault, and resources available to victims.

FY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The DVCC staff remained actively involved in awareness efforts throughout Fiscal Year 2023. In partnership with the Colonial School District and First State Military Academy, DVCC staff conducted educational workshops on intimate partner violence, healthy relationships, consent, and teen dating violence. They also staffed outreach tables at events like the Resource Fair at Sussex Technical High School, the Victim's Service Conference held by the Delaware Criminal Justice Council, the Safe Space Coalition Conference held by Delaware State University, and the Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Integrations Summit. Additionally, the Committee continued its social media campaign to reach more Delawareans. The campaign focused on survivors from marginalized communities who have historically been underserved, and provided information on intimate partner violence resources in Delaware. The Committee plans on resuming meetings for Fiscal Year 2024 and furthering their reach.



TRAINING COMMITTEE

The Training Committee was established to identify domestic violence and sexual assault training needs throughout the State and to develop specific and multidisciplinary training. The goals of the Committee include offering evidence-based instruction about domestic violence and sexual violence, serving as a referral source for anyone seeking instruction on responses to domestic violence or organizational training requests, collaborating within systems to effectively disseminate information, best practices, research and trends in the field, and to be a space where professionals can collaboratively create, explore and share training technologies, methods, and opportunities for professional development.

FY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Committee continues to work with other departments and agencies within Delaware to provide information and opportunities to build the skills needed to work with survivors of domestic violence. In October 2022, the Committee played a role in supporting the Family Justice Center's Strategic Planning Event, followed by a full-day multi-disciplinary training on strangulation. DVCC staff also facilitated three presentations of Domestic Violence 101 for new staff with Career TEAM. Additionally, DVCC Executive Director Angela Seguin served on a panel moderated by DVCC Vice Chair Laura Graham and Council Member Secretary Manning, presented to medical professionals on "The Impact of Domestic Violence on Families" in April 2023. The event was part of the "Grand Rounds" series sponsored by the Nemours CARE team and Forensic Nurse Examiner Program. The Committee is eagerly looking forward to setting its priorities for the upcoming Fiscal Year 2024.



DVCC outreach table at Law Enforcement Training on Strangulation, October 2022.



TREATMENT COMMITTEE

Ensuring the quality and effectiveness of offender treatment is essential to promoting violence-free behavior and enhancing victim safety. The Treatment Committee develops and reviews Domestic Violence Intervention (DVI) policies and procedures (Domestic Violence Intervention Standards) which mandate specific credentials, education, and training for treatment service providers as well as outlines the components required for program content. The Domestic Violence Intervention Standards seek to increase victim safety by eliminating violence in intimate relationships. Interventions focus on holding offenders accountable for their behavior by teaching new skills and monitoring behavior while participating in intervention programs. The Committee continuously monitors changes in the field and is committed to providing the best intervention programs possible.

FY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A pilot program, operated by Turning Point at People's Place to provide domestic violence treatment to inmates incarcerated at Sussex Correctional Institution (SCI), was completed. Traditionally, DVI has only been offered at the community level with referrals from the Courts or Probation and Parole. This program is a first of its kind to deliver DV Intervention in a Level V facility. Due to its success, this program is set to continue in the upcoming fiscal year.

Delaware's Domestic Violence Intervention Standards were first adopted in 1994 and last updated in 2011 by the DVCC's Treatment Committee and the updates were approved by the DVCC in 2012. In 2016, evaluation of Delaware's DVI Program began with the overall goal of demonstrating the program's accomplishments, effectiveness and recommendations for improvement. In 2019, the Treatment Committee convened a workgroup made up of representatives from Family Court, Department of Corrections, Office of Defense Services, existing and prospective DVI Programs, Delaware Prevention and Behavioral Health Services, and victim services, to review, evaluate and update the 2011 DVI Standards to reflect current and emerging practices in the field of domestic violence intervention. This initiative restarted in 2023 and will be completed in the fall of 2023.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION CERTIFICATION PANEL

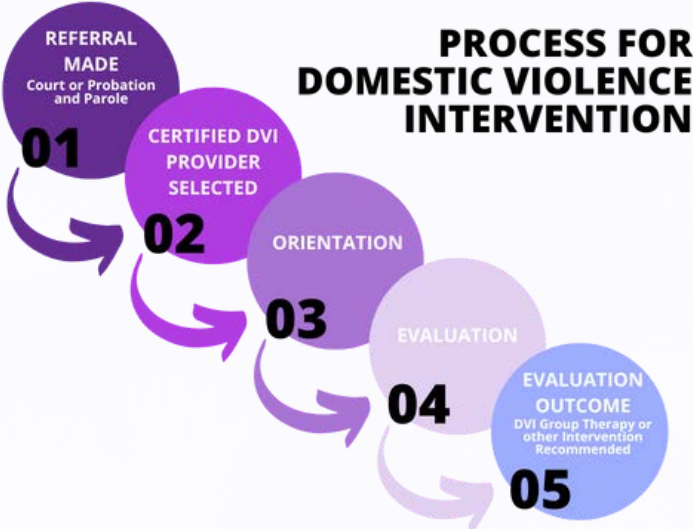
The Domestic Violence Intervention Certification Panel (formerly named the Batterers' Intervention Panel) is a subcommittee of the Treatment Committee. The Panel is responsible for ensuring that treatment programs meet all specified requirements of the Domestic Violence Intervention Standards prior to being added to the list of Certified Treatment Programs.

The Panel is made up of eleven members from designated agencies as prescribed by the Certification Rules and Procedures. The panelists include representatives from Family Court, the Department of Justice, Probation and Parole, Youth Rehabilitation Services, the Office of Defense Services, the Department of Correction's Treatment Unit, the Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services of DSCYF, three representatives from Certified Intervention Programs, and a victim advocate from an agency or organization that works directly with domestic violence victims.

FY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The DVCC Certification Panel held this year's review on March 29, 2023. Three certified intervention programs, CHILD Inc., People's Place and Dover Air Force Base, were reviewed. These programs all met the requirements for recertification. The DVCC did not receive applications from new programs this year.

On May 22, 2023, the DVCC approved the Panel's recommendation and recertified all three programs through June 30, 2024.



FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER STEERING COMMITTEE

In September of 2021, the DVCC established the Family Justice Center Steering Committee to explore the feasibility, impact, and steps needed to establish one, or more, Family Justice Centers in Delaware to support victims of interpersonal violence. Governor Carney recognized the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on increasing rates of domestic violence and approved the DVCC as a recipient of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for the Family Justice Center study. The DVCC contracted with the Family Justice Center Alliance (Alliance), a program of the Alliance for HOPE International, for their expertise, consultation, and technical assistance to guide Delaware through this process.

A Family Justice Center (FJC) provides one place for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse to receive the life-saving services currently available in their community from both non-profit and governmental agencies. The FJC model creates a collaborative, family-friendly, victim-centered, trauma-informed, hope-centered environment, in which a multidisciplinary team of professionals works together in one, centralized location to provide coordinated services to survivors of family violence. The framework brings the services together for survivors and their children, allowing them to go to one place – as opposed to multiple locations - for all their services, and creates a community for survivors long after the crisis is over. The FJC model is identified as a best practice in the field of domestic violence intervention and prevention services by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.



FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER STEERING COMMITTEE

FY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1) In the summer of 2022, the DVCC obtained funding to contract with an architectural expert in order to conduct a feasibility study for the FJCs in Delaware. In December 2022, the State chose Tevebaugh Architecture to conduct the FJC feasibility study to determine geographic location of the FJCs in each of the three counties, architectural needs based upon advocate and community input, and availability of sites that could house an FJC in each of the three counties. Since that time, Tevebaugh has been working with the DVCC, the FJC Steering Committee, the FJC Steering Committee Workgroups, and allies and stakeholders to evaluate the need in Delaware for services, understand how those services are best delivered, and assess space and logistical needs in order to provide a thorough and robust Feasibility Study Report.

2) On October 17th and 18th the DVCC held Strategic Planning sessions with over 60 advocates and allies in attendance, including State Cabinet Secretaries, Legislators, Judges, Law Enforcement Officials, Victim Advocates, Prosecutors, and Non-Profit Service Providers and Agency representatives. The Technical Assistance Team from the Alliance for HOPE led the group in development of a shared mission and vision of a statewide framework for an FJC in Delaware. Six workgroups were established, and each group outlined key goals, objectives, and tasks to accomplish and began recruiting appropriate workgroup members. The Alliance and the DVCC released a [Strategic Planning Report](#) summarizing the mission, goals, and next steps.



Stakeholders and advocates at the New Castle County visioning session.



From left to right: Chief Judge Michael Newell (Chair of the DVCC), Laura Graham, Esq. (Vice Chair of DVCC), and Rep. Krista Griffith (DVCC Council Member).

FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER STEERING COMMITTEE FY 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

3) In the Spring of 2023, members of the Family Justice Steering Committee, along with representatives of Tevebaugh Architecture visited several established FJC sites both virtually – Milwaukee, Wisconsin and Fort Worth, Texas – and in person – Manhattan and Brooklyn, New York – in order to learn more about funding, structure, staffing, services provided, on-site collaboration, and outcomes for survivors. The in-person and virtual tours also included a comprehensive dialogue with leadership at each of the established sites, so that the FJC Steering Committee and Tevebaugh representatives could hear about lessons learned, best practices, and other resources.

4) County-specific Visioning Sessions were held and facilitated by Tevebaugh on June 2nd and June 9th, and allowed stakeholders -- those who indicated a willingness to be on-site at an FJC, and those who indicated that they would refer survivors to the FJC -- to provide additional input regarding the needs of survivors in each county. The information gleaned from the visioning sessions will guide Tevebaugh with their feasibility study report, outlining location and building options for the three Delaware FJCs, which will be released in the early fall of 2023.


INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE ANALYSIS OF PRETRIAL SAFETY STUDY (IPV-APS)

The DVCC has partnered with a team of researchers at Arizona State University (ASU) and University of Central Florida (UCF) on their grant-funded “Intimate Partner Violence Analysis of Pretrial Safety Study” (IPV-APS). The research study will examine the ability of the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) to inform pretrial decision-making in intimate partner violence cases, and provide Delaware with state-specific data on best practices. Specifically, the researchers aim to:

- Examine the ability of the LAP to predict both victim-reported IPV and DV reported to law enforcement during the pretrial period and one year post arrest;
- Understand which factors predict safety during the pretrial period;
- Understand how information flows through the system; and
- Develop IPV-specific guidance for the use of assessments by criminal justice decision-makers.

ASU was approved for their research grant in May 2021, and the project began in Delaware in FY 2023. The research team of Dr. Jill Messing (ASU), Dr. Bethany Backes (UCF), and Jill Etienne (ASU) delivered an update on the project to the DVCC at the December 2022 Quarterly meeting. In March 2023, two significant advances were made in this project: first, the Delaware Criminal Justice Information System (DELJIS) staff began work on the data encryption needed to be able to make data available to the researchers. Second, a webinar meeting was held with Victim Service Specialists from law enforcement agencies throughout Delaware to provide an orientation regarding the project, explain the benefits to survivors who participate, and provide access to forms and scripts that Victim Service Specialists could use. Victim Service Specialists began offering to victims the option to be connected with the researchers for participating in the study on April 1, 2023. A follow up meeting with Victim Service Specialists was held on May 18, 2023 to check in on the progress. Some adjustments were made and additional resources were provided by the research team.

The study has been launched in Delaware and in one other state. The researchers’ goal is to have a total of 200 study participants, and they anticipate it will take about a year to reach that number.



ABOUT THE STUDY

To understand survivor safety during the pretrial period, researchers will ask domestic violence survivors if they would like to participate in a research study.

- This study will last 1 year.
- Participants will be asked to complete a weekly survey.
- The research is voluntary and confidential.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Proclamation Signing

Domestic Violence Awareness Month provides an opportunity for citizens to learn more about preventing domestic violence and to show support for the agencies and organizations that provide critical advocacy, services, and assistance to victims. Governor Carney signed the Proclamation on October 12, 2022.



Stakeholders and advocates at the Domestic Violence Awareness Month Proclamation signing in 2022.

TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Proclamation Signing

Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Awareness Month provides an opportunity for citizens to learn more about preventing dating violence among adolescents, promoting healthy dating practices, as well providing services and assistance to victims. Governor Carney signed the Proclamation on February 7, 2023.



Stakeholders and advocates at the Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month Proclamation signing in 2023.

OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

The DVCC Outstanding Community Service Award for 2023 was presented to Melissa Pennachi.

The Council annually recognizes individuals, or programs, that demonstrate outstanding service in supporting those impacted by domestic violence and sexual assault. Melissa started in this field at the Delaware Department of Justice, where she worked tirelessly on behalf of victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault as they worked through the criminal legal process. She went on to work for Delaware State Police before finally settling into her current role as the Victim Service Specialist for Newark Police. Melissa has been an inspiration to student interns and fellow advocates in the field. She has served as Co-Chair of the Delaware Victims' Rights Task Force since 2017.

Her nominator, Jennifer Kutney-Soper of the Attorney General's Office, said: "As an advocate, she works every day to ensure that victims are treated fairly, regardless of their circumstances. She has been instrumental in working on legislative changes that have put in place policies and laws to better protect people who have been victims of crime, including testifying to the State Senate when they passed the legislation that began Sexual Violence Protective Orders to be issued by Superior Court just this past June [2022]."

Melissa is an excellent collaborator, having partnered with several colleagues to present webinars and professional presentations at conferences. She is on the faculty of the Delaware Victim Assistance Academy, investing time and energy into training newcomers in the field. Kutney-Soper said "The field of domestic violence victim services, as well as victims and survivors in the State of Delaware, are better off because of Melissa's hard work and dedication over the years."



Vice Chair of the DVCC Laura Graham (Left) presents 2023 Outstanding Service Award to Melissa Pennachi.

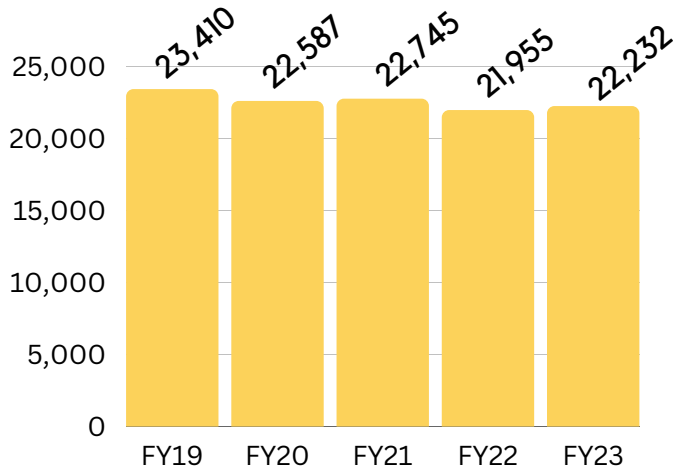
Year In Review

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATISTICS

Criminal domestic violence incidents are those in which a crime is committed or alleged. Non-criminal domestic violence incidents are those in which there is police contact, but no crime was alleged, e.g., a verbal argument without any reported threats. Incidents of domestic violence can be perpetrated against an intimate partner or a family member. The data on pages 22 through 24 reflect incidents involving a family member, which can include an intimate partner.

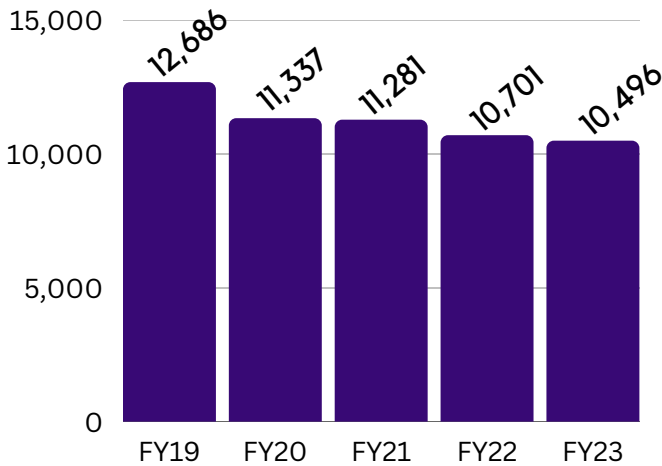
Criminal and Non-Criminal DV Incidents

In FY2023, there were a total of **22,232** combined criminal and non-criminal domestic violence incidents reported in Delaware.



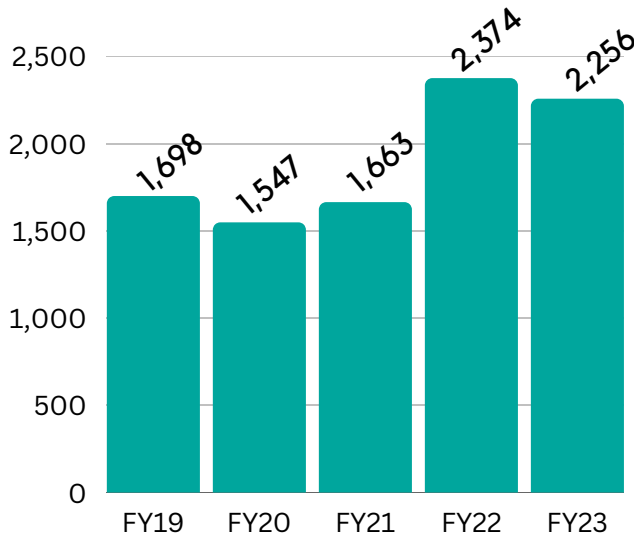
Criminal DV Incidents

In FY2023, there were a total of **10,496** criminal domestic violence incidents reported in Delaware.



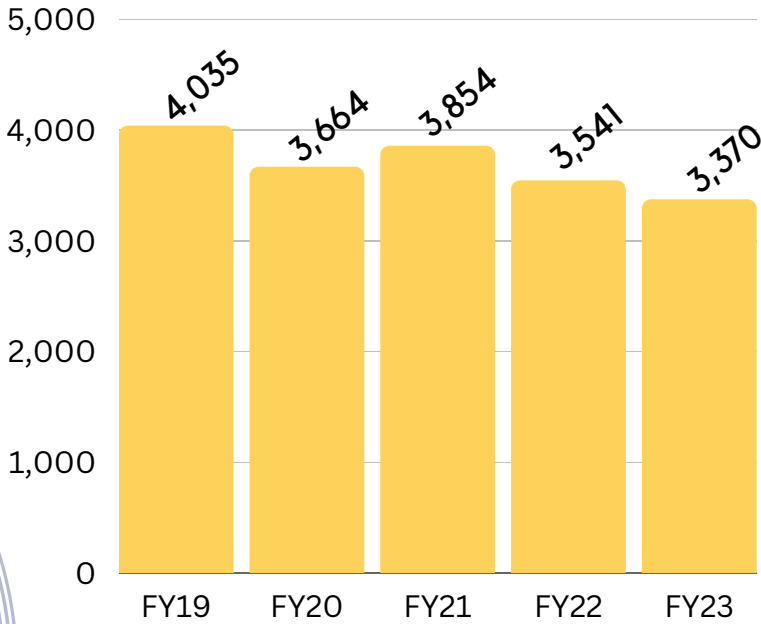
Criminal DV Incidents with Injury

Of the **10,496** reported criminal domestic violence incidents in FY2023, **2,256 (21.5%)** resulted in physical injury to the victim.



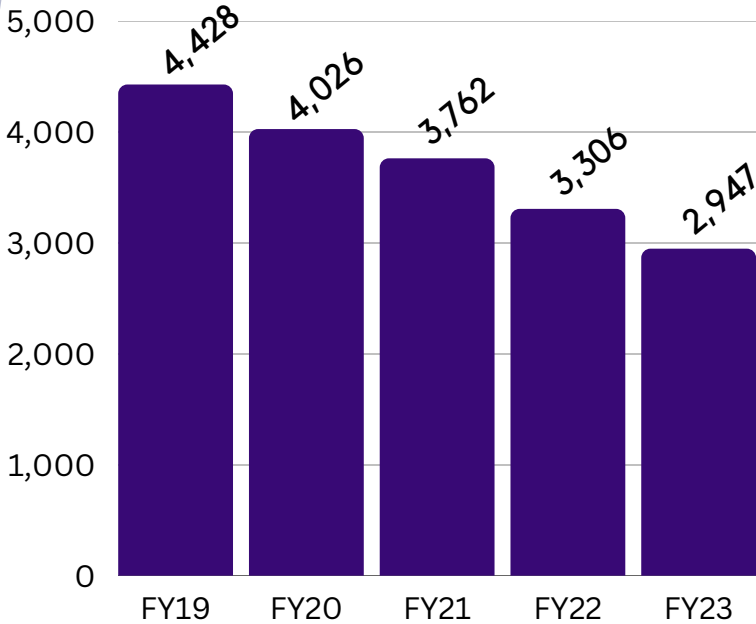
Year In Review

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATISTICS



Prior Police Involvement

In FY2023, **3,370 (32.1%)** of the criminal domestic violence incidents had prior police involvement.



Involved a Violent Act

In FY2023, **2,947 (28.1%)** of the criminal domestic violence incidents involved a violent act.

Year In Review

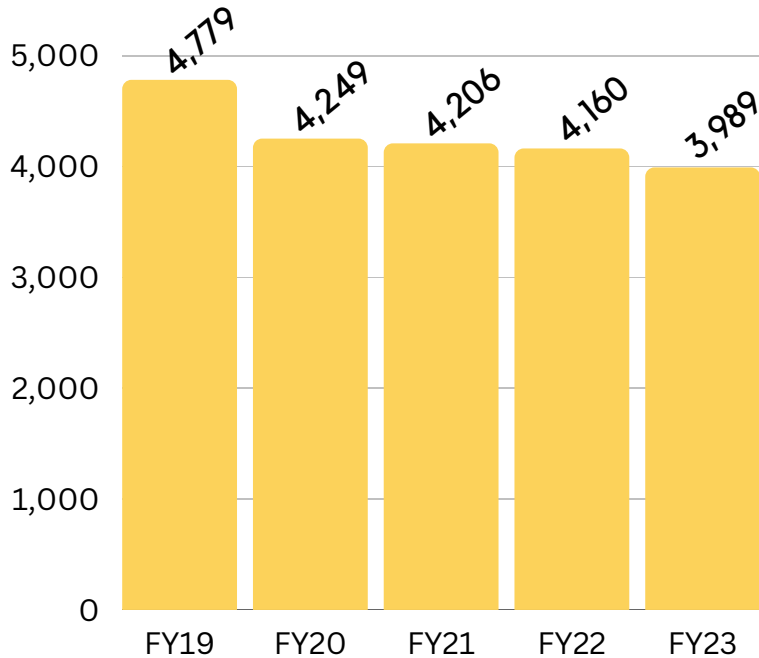
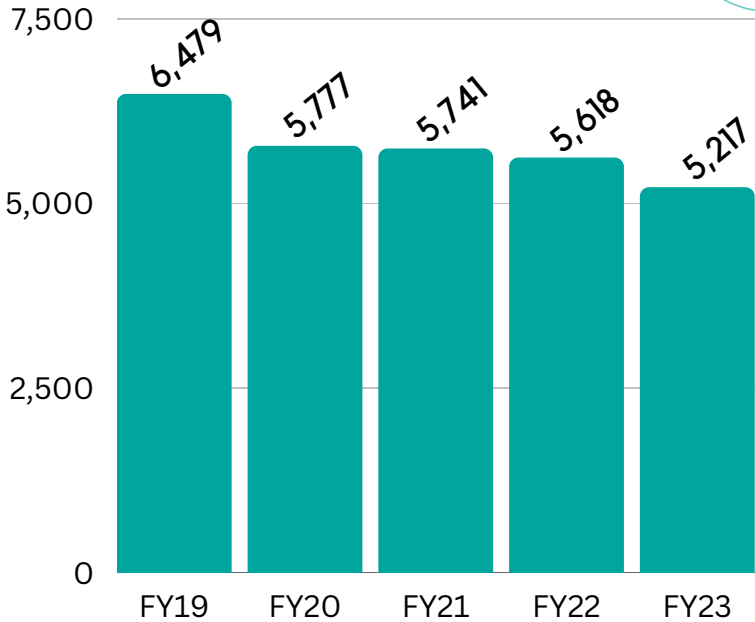
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATISTICS

Resulted in Arrest

In FY2023, **5,217 (49.7%)** of the criminal domestic violence incidents resulted in an arrest.

Children Present

In FY2023, **3,989 (38%)** of the criminal domestic violence incidents happened with children present.



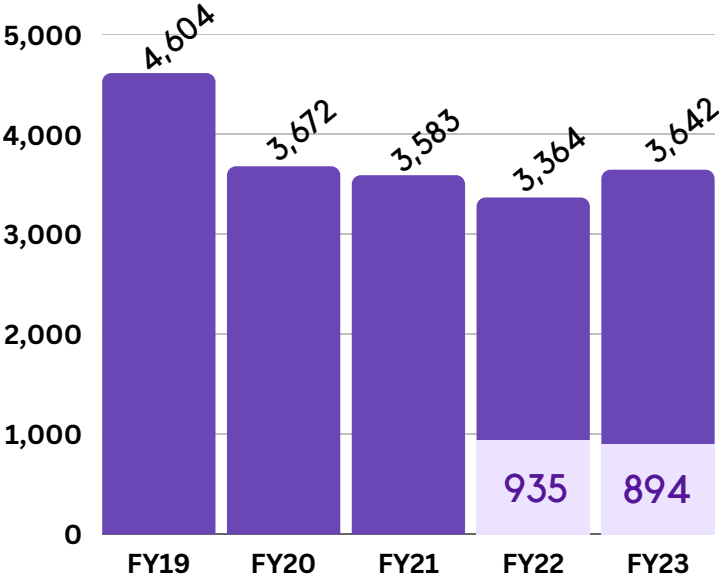
The DVCC collects this data from the Domestic Violence Incident Report captured in CJIS.

Year In Review

INTIMATE PARTNER CRIMINAL STATISTICS

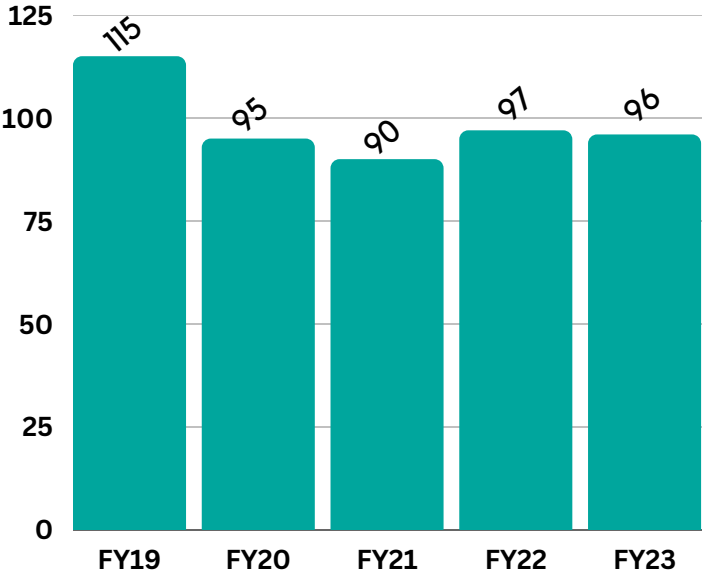
Incidents of domestic violence can be perpetrated against an intimate partner or a family member. Intimate partners can include current and former spouses, current and former dating couples with or without a child in common, and adolescent dating couples. Intimate partners may be the same gender.

In FY2023, of the intimate partner criminal incidents reported, **2,745** of the victims were female and **975** of victims were male.



In FY2023, of the 10,496 criminal incidents reported, **3,642** were between intimate partners.

Of those reported in FY2023, **894** indicated physical injury to the intimate partner victim.



Dual arrests occur when police officers arrest both intimate partners involved in a domestic violence incident.

In FY2023, there were **96** dual arrests made by law enforcement.

Year In Review

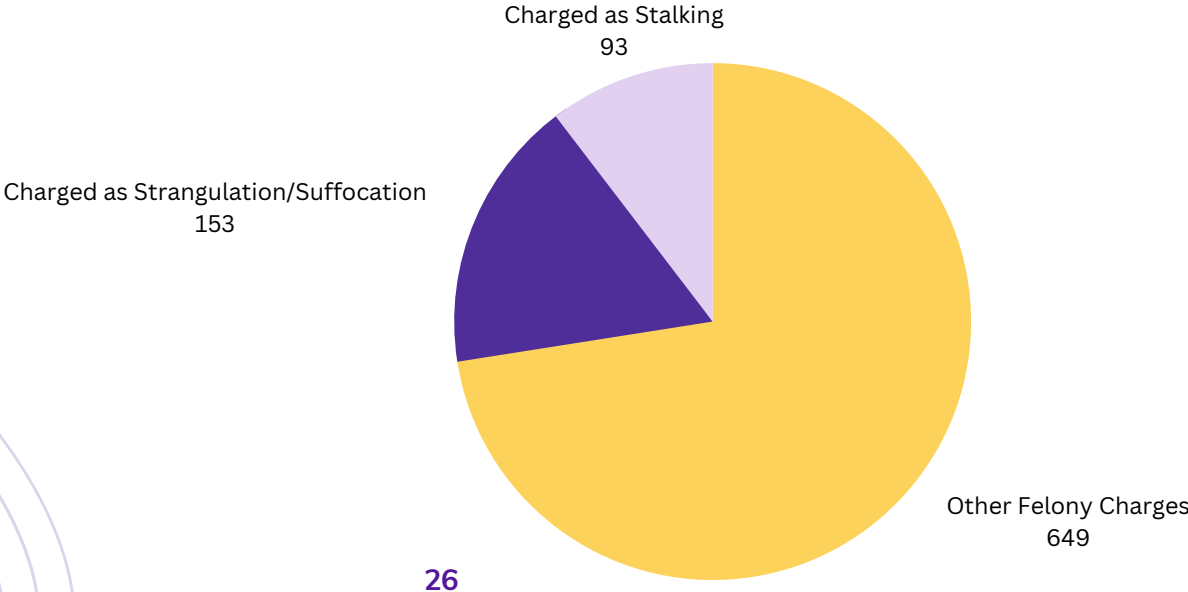
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Domestic Violence Unit

The Domestic Violence Unit is a part of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice (DOJ). The Criminal Division is responsible for the prosecution of criminal cases throughout the State. Its mission is to represent the State in criminal cases, and in so doing safeguard the human rights of victims and their families. This responsibility includes the preparation and presentation of criminal cases before Superior Court, the Court of Common Pleas, Family Court, and in some matters, before the Justice of the Peace Courts.

The DOJ is working on statewide training in domestic violence for prosecutors and utilizing trained prosecutors to uniformly handle Domestic Violence cases throughout the state. The DOJ is also adding processes that will include a special focus on Stalking, Strangulation, and Domestic Violence offenses involving a firearm in all three counties, as those are linked to lethality, to ensure that cases are evaluated consistent with the most serious cases seen by the DOJ. The anticipated process would evaluate certain felony DV cases similar to how homicide cases are reviewed for resolution decisions.

The Domestic Violence Unit in New Castle County (NCC) has made efforts to better track strangulation and stalking data with the goal of extending tracking throughout the state. In Fiscal Year 2023, the NCC DV Unit received a total of **895** felony domestic violence cases. Those include intimate partner violence, crimes against new partners, as well as familial violence. Of those felony cases, **93** (approximately 10%) were charged by police as stalking and **153** (approximately 17%) were charged as strangulation/suffocation by police. DOJ frequently reviews misdemeanor and felony cases within the unit to add charges of strangulation/suffocation and stalking where appropriate. Those are not reflected in these numbers.



Year In Review

SUPERVISED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENDER DATA

Probation and Parole has a specialized Domestic Violence Unit in each county with probation officers specially trained in the dynamics of domestic violence. Domestic violence cases are assigned to the DV Unit based upon criteria including offense, victim/offender relationship, and active PFA orders. The philosophy of the Probation and Parole DV Unit is to hold the offender accountable and maintain victim safety. In addition, Victim Service Agents are available to serve as a liaison between victims and probation officers and provide guidance through the criminal justice system once an offender is placed on community supervision.

1,080 Domestic violence offenders supervised in New Castle County.

11 Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases

618 Victims Served by Victim Service Agents

402 Domestic violence offenders supervised in Kent County.

5 Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases

344 Victims Served by Victim Service Agents

601 Domestic violence offenders supervised in Sussex County.

7 Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases

259 Victims Served by Victim Service Agents

Year In Review

LETHALITY ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL

The Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) provides an effective method to identify victims of domestic violence who are at the highest risk for being seriously injured or killed by an intimate partner. A risk assessment is completed by law enforcement at the scene of a domestic violence incident, and the victim is immediately connected to the local domestic violence hotline for safety planning purposes.

During the 2022 calendar year, utilization of the LAP statewide by police officers on scene held steady at **84%** of the time. For January-June 2023, the LAP was used **80%** of the time.

CAPITOL POLICE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAM

Capitol Police operates the Domestic Violence Intervention Program (VIP) to provide escort, accompaniment, and other support to those who need to use Delaware Courts for any domestic-related issues. This statewide program allows anyone to make a referral for a domestic violence victim to receive police accompaniment to and from a court hearing.

During FY23, the VIP program received **178** new VIP referrals, and provided **158** clients with enhanced safety and/or protection as they conducted their business at various courts around the state. Victims who responded to surveys have been so grateful for the protection offered by this service. Many spoke about the VIP program in terms of giving them the strength to come to court and face their abusers without fear of being revictimized.

For more information about the VIP, please visit <https://capitolpd.delaware.gov/dv-vip/index.shtml>

Or Scan Below



Year In Review

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HIGH RISK TEAM

Research has shown that intimate partner domestic violence homicides are often predictable; and if they are predictable, they are preventable. The DVHRT Model leverages that predictability by incorporating an evidence-based risk assessment into a community's domestic violence response system to identify and intervene in the most dangerous cases. The Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) recognizes the DVHRT Model as a "leading promising practice" in intimate partner homicide prevention.

The concept for a DVHRT was originated by the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center in Newburyport, MA in 2005. The model was adopted and successfully implemented in several jurisdictions around the country. The DVHRT Model consists of four central strategies: early identification of high-risk cases through risk assessment, engagement of a multi-disciplinary team, ongoing monitoring and management of offenders, and the connection of victims to domestic violence services. Although adaptations to the original model have been tailored to fit Delaware's structure and community needs, the DVHRT operates under the same guiding principles and goals to increase victim safety and offender accountability.

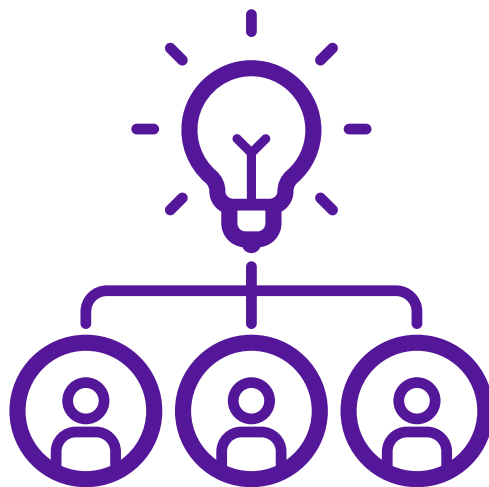
After extensive planning, through a partnership with the Delaware State Police, Dover Police, Probation and Parole, the Attorney General's Office, and People's Place II, Inc., the DVCC launched a pilot Domestic Violence High Risk Team (DVHRT) in Kent County in 2020. That team has continued and in 2023, Smyrna Police Victim Services joined the DVHRT.

The DVHRT manages critical information in high-risk cases to identify and close the systemic gaps where homicides occur. Delaware's DVHRT utilizes the Lethality Assessment Protocol and the Danger Assessment Protocol to identify which cases pose the greatest risk of serious re-assault or lethal violence to domestic violence victims. Victim advocates, officers at the scene, and probation officers all regularly conduct these assessments to identify high risk cases, providing a formalized process for communication across disciplines. Team members work in consultation to develop individualized intervention plans that will interrupt the cycle of escalating violence.

All cases reviewed by DVHRT result in one of three outcomes, either: a) DVHRT determines that all appropriate services are in place, thus "closed" with the Team but remains active with partner agencies, or b) the victim refuses services, thus "closed" with DVHRT, or c) the case is retained by DVHRT for additional monitoring. Customized interventions (either through cases retained by DVHRT or services already rendered through partner agencies) will be offered to victims to alleviate the risk of future harm.

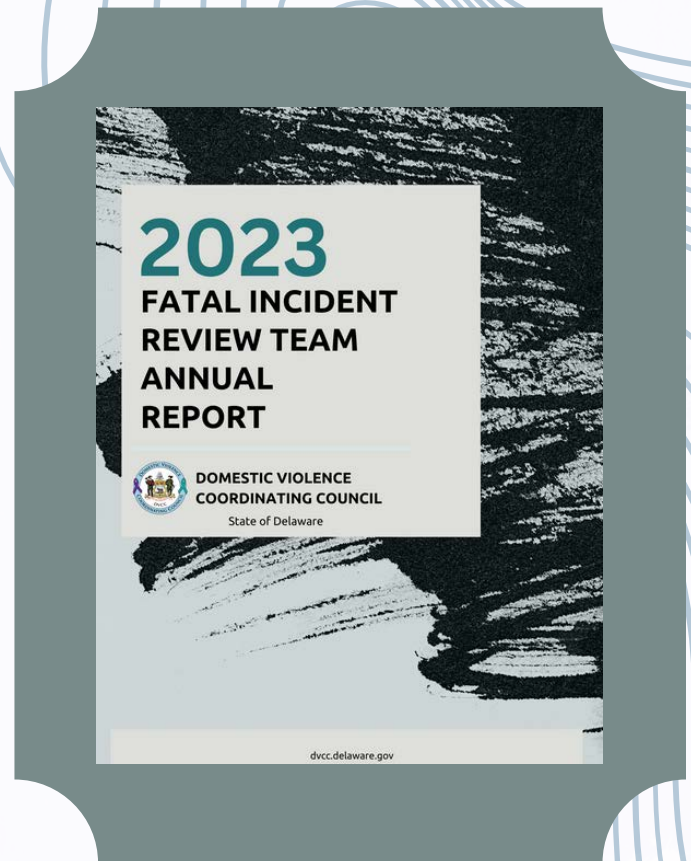
Since the implementation of the program, the DVHRT has been operating with a Coordinator who receives referrals of Kent County cases identified as high risk through the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) and then conducts a secondary assessment to prepare cases for a monthly review by the DVHRT. From 2020 -2022, close to 6,000 Kent County cases were identified as high risk through the LAP, conducted by police officers on the scene. Because the Coordinator receives referrals on high-risk cases statewide, the team was able to determine that there is a nearly equal number of high risk cases in Kent and Sussex Counties. Therefore in 2023, a second Coordinator was added who will begin a preliminary review of Sussex County high risk cases. The long-term goal is to have a DVHRT in each of the three counties.

During the reporting period of July 2022 through June of 2023, the DVHRT Coordinators have reviewed **462** high risk cases. Of those cases reviewed, **160** met the threshold to go to the Team for consideration with **28** cases being retained for continued status updates. Cases are monitored for six months during which time team members report on case activity, follow-up actions, and other relevant information. Further, the Coordinators check the criminal history status of the offenders each month. If there are no further incidents during the six months of monitoring, the case will be closed. If new incidents occur during the six months of monitoring, the case will continue to remain open with the Team. The DVCC has been able to implement this project with funding support through a subgrant by the Criminal Justice Council, through the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), VOCA —Victims Assistance Formula Grant Program.



FATAL INCIDENT REVIEW TEAM REPORT

The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council's Fatal Incident Review Team (FIRT) was established by statute in 1996 and became the first statewide team in the country. FIRT members are dedicated professionals who conduct system audits of state agencies and private organizations that had contact with the victim and/or perpetrator to assess the system's response. Although domestic violence fatality reviews are retrospective in nature, their purpose is prospective, focusing on identifying trends, patterns and obstacles in services, assessing agency interventions, and developing practical recommendations aimed at improving the system and preventing future injury and death. In 2009, the General Assembly granted FIRT the authority to conduct near-death reviews. These reviews enhance the Team's ability to improve Delaware's response to domestic violence with the knowledge that can be gained from speaking directly with the domestic violence survivor about the incident, the history of violence, system involvement, and awareness of resources.



The 2023 FIRT Annual Report is available online at the [DVCC website](#). This report provides a summary of the Review Team's activities and accomplishments over the last year; statistical data for the domestic violence fatalities that occurred in calendar year 2022; and information and recommendations from the death and near-death cases that were previously reviewed.

Year In Review

STATEWIDE PFA OUTCOMES

A Protection From Abuse (PFA) Order is a civil order issued by the Family Court that provides protection from harm by a family member or household member. In addition to family and household members, persons living separate and apart with a child in common, or persons in a current or former substantive dating relationship may file for a PFA Order. The Court may order the offender to stay away from the person being abused; provide exclusive use of the home or possessions; award temporary custody, child support or spousal support; or payment of expenses. Additionally, the offender may be ordered to surrender firearms, and/or to seek treatment from a DVCC-certified Domestic Violence Intervention Program.

Upon a finding that aggravating circumstances exist, the Court may grant no contact relief for as long as reasonably necessary to prevent further acts of abuse or domestic violence up to and including a permanent or lifetime order.

Lifetime PFA Orders Issued in FY2023



16



10 New Castle County
3 Kent County
3 Sussex County

Year In Review

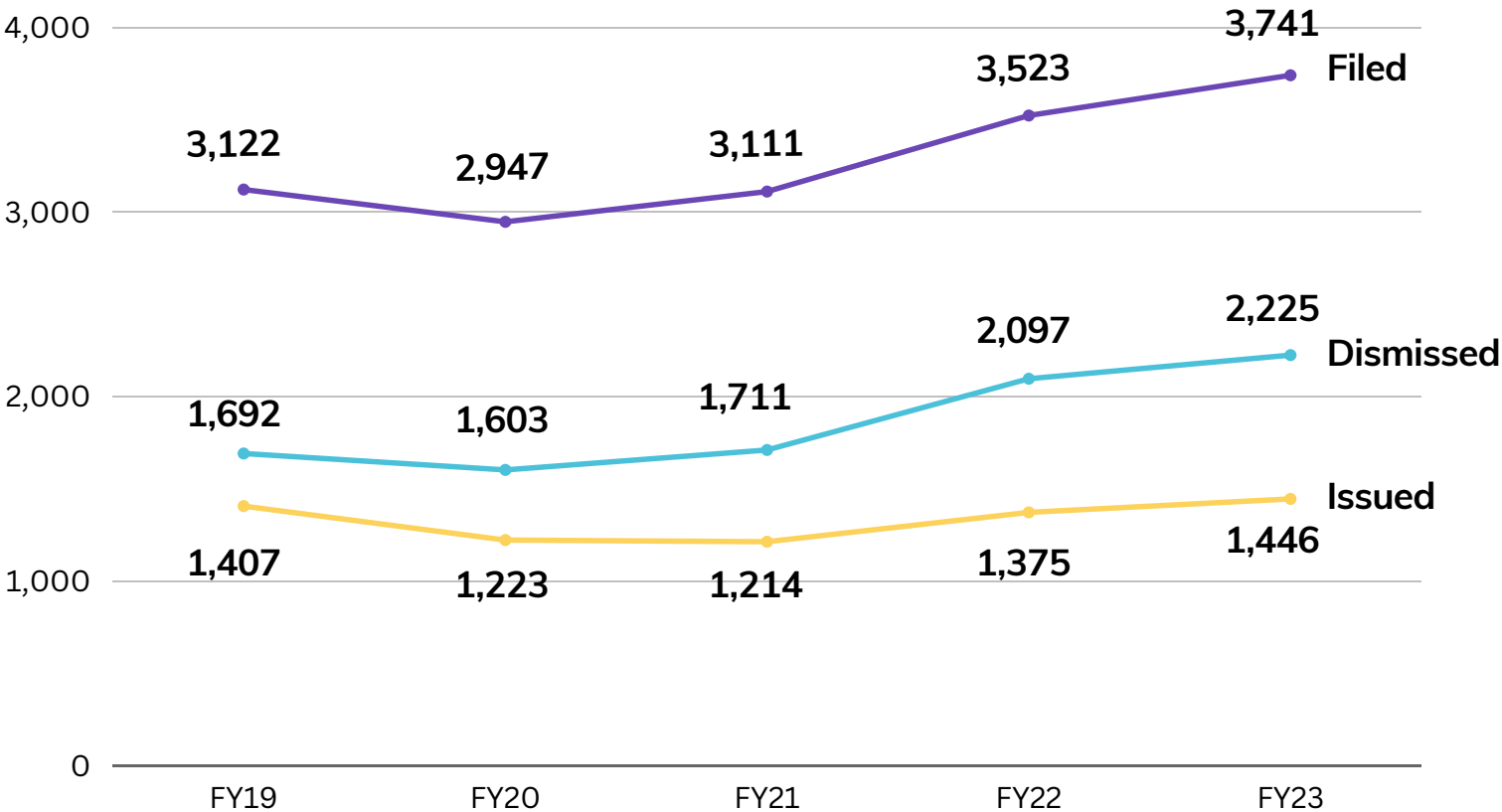
STATEWIDE PFA OUTCOMES

A PFA Order can be issued by Family Court in one of three ways:

- The Court finds by a preponderance of the evidence following a hearing that domestic violence has occurred; or
- The Respondent consents to the entry of an order; or
- A default order is entered when the Respondent fails to appear for a hearing after proper notice.

A PFA petition may be dismissed for one of three reasons:

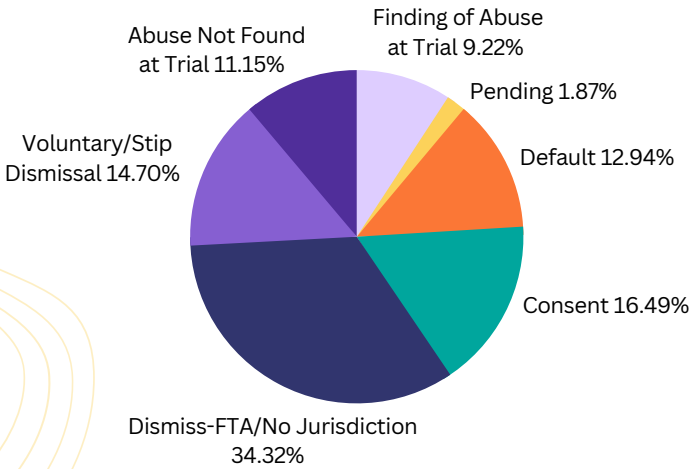
- The Petitioner failed to appear for the hearing; or
- The Petitioner voluntarily withdrew the petition before the hearing; or
- Abuse was not found by a preponderance of the evidence following a hearing.



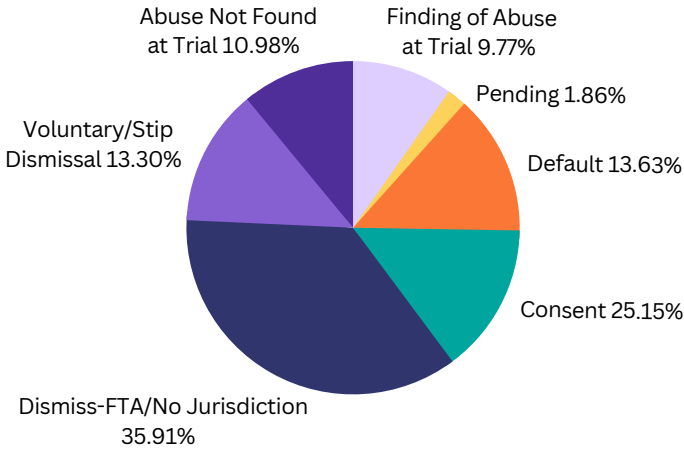
Family Court processed **3,741** petitions, which were filed statewide during FY2023. This was a 6.2% increase from FY2022. Of those petitions filed, **1,446** final orders were issued and **2,225** petitions were dismissed.

Year In Review STATEWIDE PFA OUTCOMES

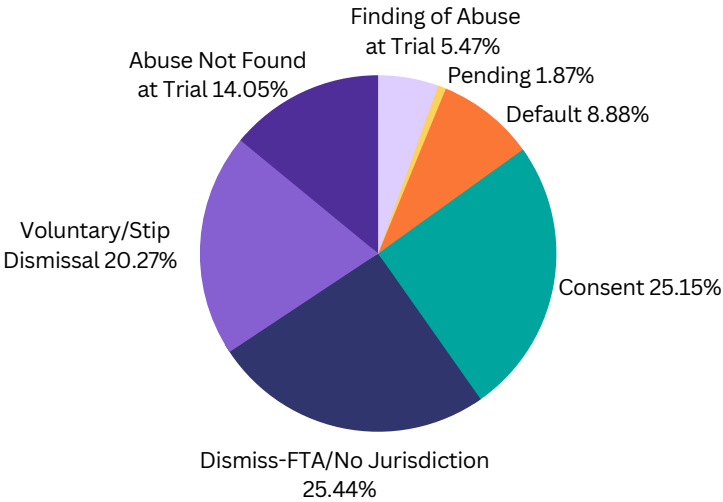
FY23 Statewide PFA Outcomes



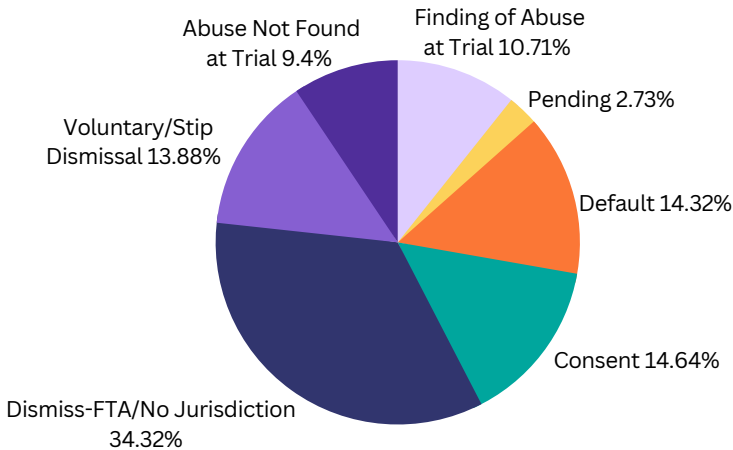
FY23 New Castle County PFA Outcomes



FY23 Sussex County PFA Outcomes



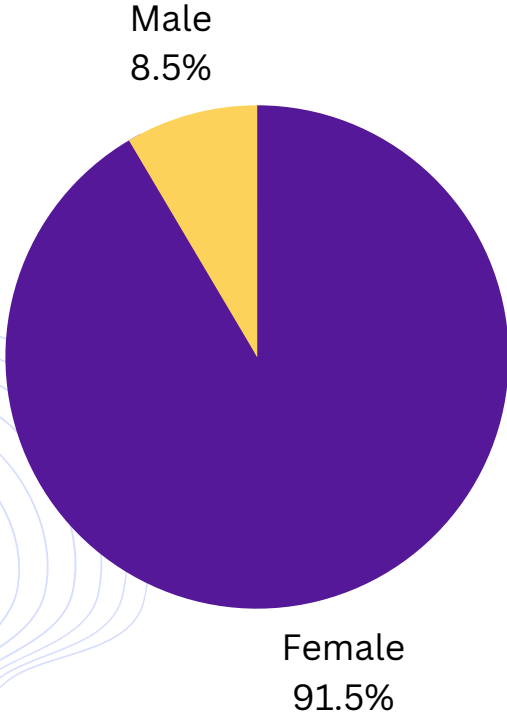
FY23 Kent County PFA Outcomes



Year In Review

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCACY PROGRAM

The Domestic Violence Advocacy Program provides free services to help intimate partner victims of domestic violence navigate the court system. CHILD, Inc. is the statewide provider of these services with an advocate located at the Family Court in each county. The program assists victims with safety planning, answering questions about the court process, filing petitions, and providing a supportive presence at court hearings.



1,093 Petitioners served statewide in FY2023

464 Petitioners served in New Castle County

349 Petitioners served in Kent County

280 Petitioners served in Sussex County

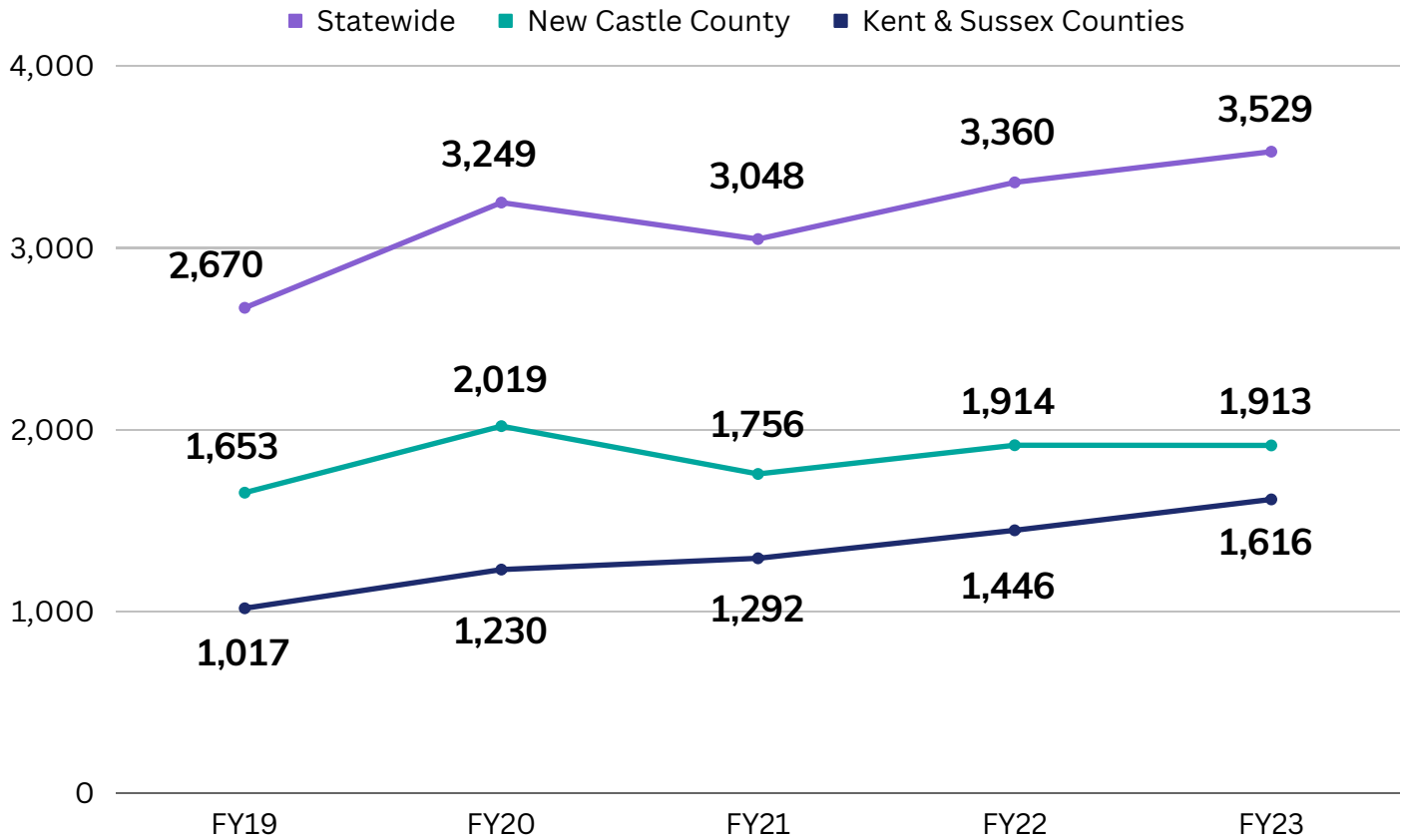
<u>New Castle County</u> 302-255-0420	<u>Kent County</u> 302-672-1075	<u>Sussex County</u> 302-856-5843
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Year In Review

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE STATISTICS

The Domestic Violence Hotlines are an important resource available to victims of domestic violence in Delaware. The hotlines, which are available in all three counties, are confidential and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Hotlines are staffed by trained professionals who assist in safety planning, offer emergency shelter when appropriate, and refer victims to available resources. Services are available for victims who do not speak English and for those who are hearing impaired.

Number of Hotline Calls by County Per Year



In FY2023, there were a total of **3,529** calls received by the Domestic Violence Hotlines statewide. There were **1,913** calls to the Domestic Violence Hotline in New Castle County and **1,616** calls to the Domestic Violence Hotlines in Kent and Sussex Counties. There were **250** Lethality Assessment Protocol calls received by the hotline in New Castle County, and **218** Lethality Assessment Protocol calls received by the hotlines in Kent and Sussex counties.

Year In Review

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTER STATISTICS

Two agencies, CHILD, Inc. and People's Place II, offer shelter and transitional housing in confidential locations throughout Delaware. When needed to address safety, male victims are provided emergency shelter in hotels. In addition to providing emergency shelters in trauma-informed settings, domestic violence shelters offer safety planning, case management, advocacy, counseling, child care, job assistance, and more.

Individuals Sheltered Statewide

	CHILD, Inc.	People's Place II SAFE & Abriendo Puertas	
	New Castle County	Kent County	Sussex County
Females Sheltered	148	52	60
Males Sheltered	0	0	0
Children Sheltered	120	48	68
Total Sheltered	268	100	128

Individuals Provided with Hotel Stays Statewide

CHILD, Inc. New Castle County			People's Place II - SAFE Kent County			People's Place II - Abriendo Puertas Sussex County		
Female	Male	Children	Female	Male	Children	Female	Male	Children
22	8	23	96	8	104	1	0	2
Total: 53			Total: 208			Total: 3		

Year In Review

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RAPID REHOUSING STATISTICS

CHILD, Inc. offers a Rapid Rehousing Program in New Castle County. The program is funded by a grant through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Designed for families who are experiencing homelessness and need temporary assistance in order to obtain and retain housing, it is an evidence-based approach that aims to end homelessness as soon as possible. Rapid Rehousing helps to provide supportive services to families in need so they can regain stability. Child, Inc.'s program focuses on families who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, who have no other residence, and who lack resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

The Rapid Rehousing Program provides assistance in the search for safe and affordable housing, assistance connecting with landlords and finding the best placement options, and monetary assistance for moving costs. Rapid Rehousing staff develop a unique plan for each client to provide rental assistance at varying duration, based on each client's needs. The staff also assist with navigating barriers that clients may face, especially by connecting them to community resources that can help maintain their housing.

	CHILD, Inc.
Adults Served	37
Children Served	63
Total Served	100

Year In Review

LEGAL SERVICES FOR VICTIMS

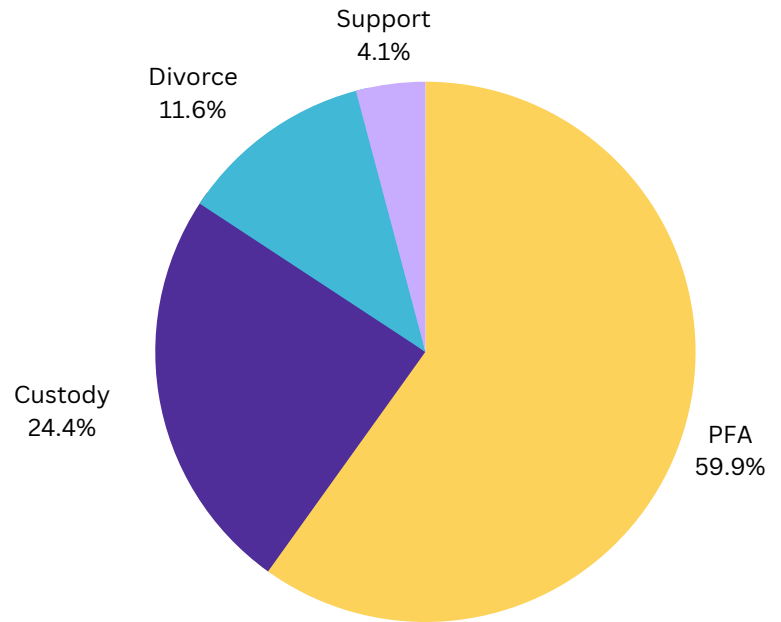
In Fiscal Year 2023, Community Legal Aid Society (CLASI) provided representation and guidance in **965** cases for survivors of domestic violence statewide. Of the **965** cases, **578** were PFA cases, **235** were custody/visitation cases, **112** were divorce cases, and **40** involved child support.

In addition, CLASI provided advice and referral to **268** survivors of domestic violence. Of those **268** cases, **199** involved PFA cases, **47** involved custody/visitation, **13** involved divorce, and **9** involved child custody.

Delaware Volunteer Legal Services (DVLS) provides free representation in New Castle County to victims of domestic violence. In Fiscal Year 2023, pro bono and staff attorneys provided advice, brief services, and representation to **160** victims through the PFA Pro Bono Program in obtaining protection orders. Pro bono attorneys also represented **11** other clients with PFA matters, custody/visitation, and divorce matters. In-house staff attorneys provided representation, advice, or brief services on **353** additional PFA, custody, and divorce matters.

The Delaware Civil Clinic (DCC) at Widener University Delaware Law School provides practical legal experience to law students, admitted to the limited practice of law, pursuant to Delaware Supreme Court Rule 56. The interns are directly responsible for client legal matters and legal research, under close supervision by the program's director and a staff attorney. In the Fall of 2022, the DCC provided legal advice, assistance, research, and referrals to survivors of domestic violence seeking civil orders of protection from abuse, child custody, and/or visitation, as well as other community resources for a total of **2,340** hours of legal research and services.

Cases Represented by CLASI in FY23



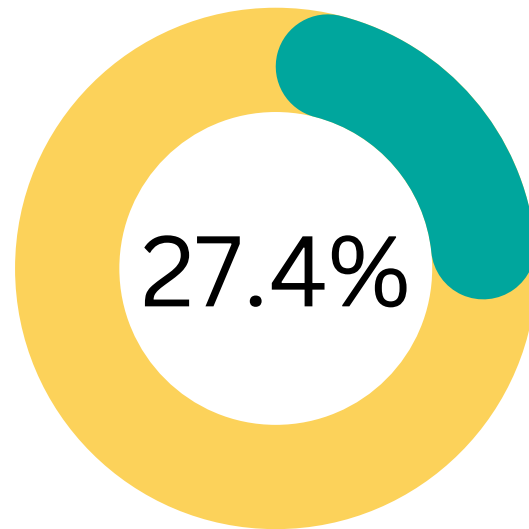
Year In Review

VICTIMS' COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Delaware's Victims' Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP), through the Department of Justice, is a federally-funded program providing financial assistance to crime victims and their families.

The purpose of VCAP is to alleviate some of the financial burdens faced by victims— those that are directly related to the specific offense—by providing compensation for certain pecuniary losses. Compensation may be available for the payment of medical and dental expenses, mental health counseling, prescription medication and eyeglasses, loss of earnings, loss of support, temporary housing and moving and relocation costs.

During FY2023, VCAP rendered a total of **2,509** payments to, or on behalf of, victims of crime. Those payments totaled **\$2,318,056.73**. Of those payments, **\$635,650.01 (27.4%)** were for victims of domestic violence.



For more information about Delaware's VCAP, please visit
[https://attorneygeneral.delaware.gov/vcap/.](https://attorneygeneral.delaware.gov/vcap/)

Year In Review

VICTIM INFORMATION & NOTIFICATION EVERYDAY

VINE and VINE Protection Order (VPO)

Victim notification in cases involving domestic violence can be critical to a survivor's ability to make well-informed decisions regarding their safety. The Delaware Criminal Justice Information System (DELJIS) operates the Delaware VINE (Victim Information and Notification Everyday) System. VINE is an automated service that lets victims and survivors track offender's custody status or court case. The VINE Protective Order (VPO) is a free and confidential service that allows petitioners to register for notification when a protective order (Ex-Parte or Final) has been served by law enforcement. VPO also provides advance notice when the protective order is about to expire.

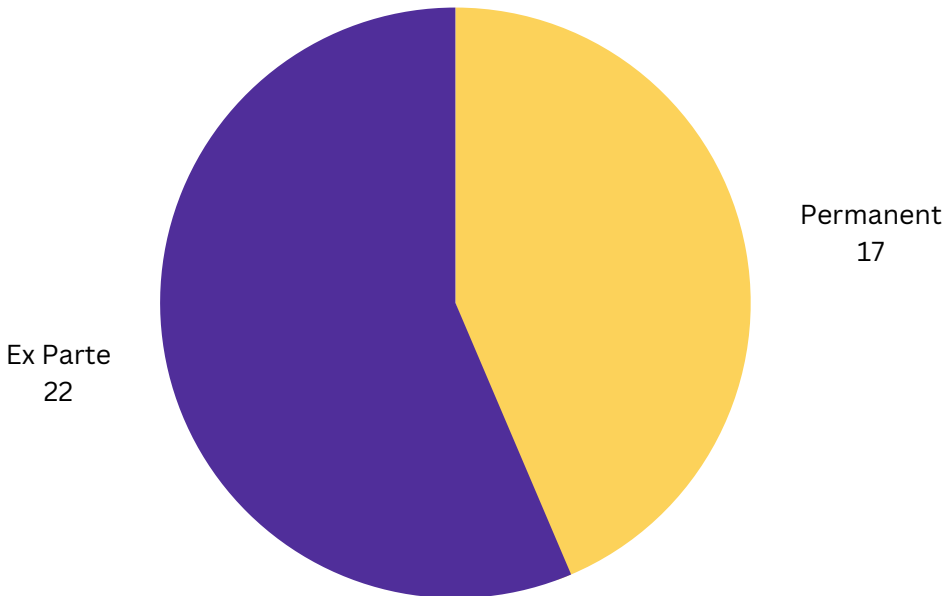
Victims are not automatically registered for VPO upon issuance of a protective order. It is the victim's choice to register for this service. Knowing when the order has been served helps victims create safety plans and take additional precautions to protect themselves.

For FY2023, the VINE VPO program made **39** successful notifications related to protective orders, **22** regarding ex parte orders and **17** regarding permanent orders. There were **12** unsuccessful notifications.

For more information about Delaware's VPO, please visit:

<https://deljis.delaware.gov/vines.shtml>

VPO Program Order Notifications

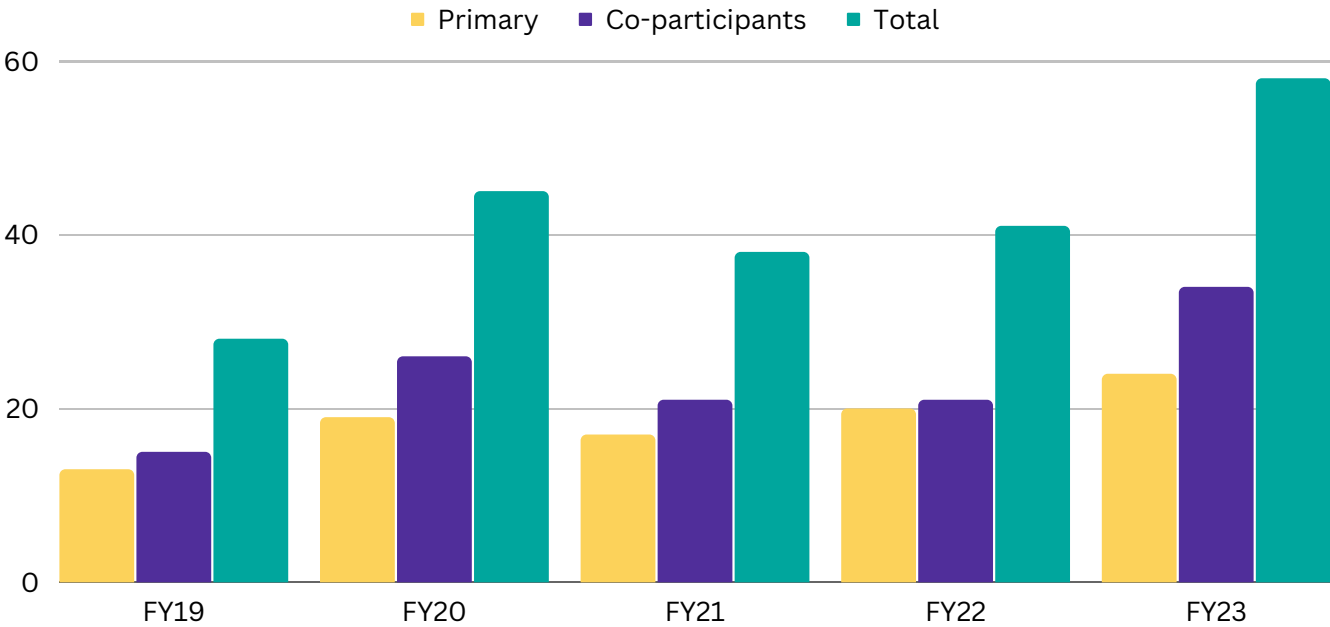


Year In Review

ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM

The Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) provides participants with a legal substitute address and a confidential mail-forwarding system. Survivors use the substitute address when they create or change public records. For example, participants can place the substitute address on their driver's license or state ID. Participant mail goes to the substitute address and is routed to the ACP. The ACP then forwards participant mail to their actual address.

The ACP started enrolling victims in 2011. For Fiscal Year 2023, the ACP had **24** primary participants and **34** co-participants, for a total of **58** active participants statewide. A co-participant is a member of the same household as the primary victim.



For more information about the Delaware Address Confidentiality Program, please contact the Delaware Department of Justice Victim/Witness Assistance Program at one of the three locations throughout the state.

<p><u>New Castle County</u> 820 N. French St Wilmington, DE 19801 800-870-1790</p>	<p><u>Kent County</u> 102 W. Water St Dover, DE 19904 800-870-1790</p>	<p><u>Sussex County</u> 114 E. Market St Georgetown, DE 19947 800-870-1790</p>
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Year In Review

FAMILY VISITATION CENTER PROGRAM STATISTICS

Family Visitation Centers provide safe, supervised visits between visiting parents and their children, as well as supervised exchanges of children between parents for off-site visits. Visitation Centers are designed for families with a history of violence, including intimate partner violence, or in other situations when there is a concern for the child's welfare. Families are most often referred by Family Court or the Division of Family Services (DFS), but families may also self-refer. Staggered arrival and departure times along with separate entrances for parents promote safety for families. Family Visitation Centers employ experienced security guards for the safety of children and parents.

Family Visitation Centers provide a continuum of services designed to help address custody and visitation issues in families with a history of domestic violence and abuse. Each Center provides a safe, structured, and nurturing environment where children can maintain or re-establish a relationship with a non-custodial parent. The Centers are equipped with age-appropriate toys, games, and crafts. Trained staff supports parents in engaging children in activities and positive interactions.

The Delaware Family Visitation Program is a federal and state-funded program for the operation of the Family Visitation Centers. The Delaware Department of Health and Social Services/Division of State Service Centers (DHSS/DSSC) administers the program on a contractual basis with CHILD, Inc. and Family Visitation Centers at People's Place II. The Centers in Delaware are located at CHILD, Inc. (Main Office), the Hudson State Service Center, the Dover Center, the Milford State Service Center, and the Adams State Service Center.

On-Site Individually Supervised Visitation

100% continuous supervision by trained staff is provided for one family in a separate room.

On-Site Group Supervised Visitation

Trained staff monitors up to two unrelated families within one room.

Monitored Exchanges Off-Site Visits

Facilitation of monitored exchanges ensures regular off-site visitation without adults having contact. Children can be exchanged on-site for both pickup and drop off.

Year In Review

FAMILY VISITATION CENTER PROGRAM STATISTICS

Services Provided by Family Visitation Centers in FY2023

	CHILD, Inc. New Castle County	People's Place II Kent County	People's Place II Sussex County	Total Statewide
Visitation Exchanges	434	413	361	1,208
Group Visits	436	216	138	790
Individual Supervised Visits	380	581	186	1,147
Children Served	101	135	58	294
Visiting Parents Served	126	123	48	297
Non-Visiting Parents Served	130	126	48	304
Total Parents Served	256	249	96	601
Total People Served	357	384	154	895

Year In Review

DIVISION OF FAMILY SERVICES STATISTICS

The Division of Family Services (DFS) is a division within the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families (DSCYF). The Mission of the DFS is to promote the safety and well-being of children and their families through prevention, protection, and permanency. DFS screens for domestic violence when an allegation of child abuse or neglect is reported to the DFS hotline.

In FY2023, DFS received **24,389** reports alleging child abuse or neglect. Of those, **7,665** were accepted for investigation. Of those reports accepted for investigation, **1,328** also alleged domestic violence.

Domestic Violence Liaison Program

The Domestic Violence Liaison Program is a partnership of DFS, CHILD, Inc. and the SAFE Program of People's Place II, Inc. Domestic violence advocates from CHILD, Inc. and the SAFE Program co-locate at DFS offices to provide on-site case consultation, safety planning, support and supportive counseling, home visits, information and referral, and advocacy for the non-offending parents and their children.

In FY2023 there were:



Year In Review

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Trauma-informed therapeutic services are essential to help children who have witnessed domestic violence recover from the trauma it causes. Counselors providing these clinical services use age appropriate techniques including play therapy for younger children. Safety planning, working through feelings related to the violence, and developing skills to break the inter-generational cycle of violence are the focus of this healing therapy. In New Castle County, services are provided by CHILD, Inc. In Kent and Sussex Counties, Turning Point at People's Place II provides these services to children. The data below reflects children served in FY2023.

	Helping Children Heal CHILD, Inc.	Turning Point People's Place
Children/Adolescents Served	64	19
Parents/Caretakers Served	63	8
Total Served	127	27

Year In Review

TREATMENT PROGRAM STATISTICS

In FY2023, there were three certified treatment providers offering Domestic Violence Intervention programs (formerly Batterer's Intervention Programs) in Delaware. Each of these programs followed the guidelines established through the Domestic Violence Intervention Standards and were certified by the DVCC's DVI Certification Panel. The three programs are CHILD, Inc., in New Castle County; Turning Point at People's Place II in Kent and Sussex Counties; and the Family Advocacy Center at Dover Air Force Base*.

	CHILD, Inc.		Turning Point People's Place		Turning Point People's Place		
	New Castle County		Kent County		Sussex County		SCI***
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Probation Evaluated	148	18	78	21	98	15	N/A
With PFA Order Evaluated	80	27	26	1	13	3	N/A
Court Ordered	108	14	12	3	15	6	N/A
Self Referral	0	4	2	0	0	1	N/A
Participated in Group Intervention	336	64	113	32	105	23	24
Completed Intervention	167	22	57	23	57	16	22
Total Served**	501	84	161	34	163	27	24

*The Family Advocacy Center at Dover Air Force Base is only for military personnel. Data is not provided.

**The number of people served includes those who attended orientation, had an evaluation, intake, or completed the program.

***Sussex Correctional Institute - pilot program in Fiscal Year 2023

RESOURCES & INFORMATION

If you are in danger, please call 911.

Hotline Numbers

DV Hotline, New Castle County

302.762.6110

DV Hotline, New Castle County Bilingual/ Español

302.672.6110

DV Hotline, Kent and Sussex Counties

302.422.8058

Abriendo Puertas/ Bilingual DV Hotline, Kent and
Sussex Counties

302.745.9874

Contact Lifeline

1.800.262.9800

Sexual Assault Response Center at YWCA Delaware

1.800.773.8570

National DV Helpline

1.800.799.7233

National Sexual Assault Helpline

1.800.656.4673

National Suicide Hotline

1.800.273.8255

Capitol Police

Domestic Violence Intervention
Program (VIP)

150 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd

PO Box 1401

Dover, DE 19901

<http://capitolpd.delaware.gov>

DVCC Information

DVCC Main Office

900 N. King Street, Suite 300

Wilmington, DE 19801

DVCC Kent & Sussex Office
Milford State Service Center

Annex

13 S.W. Front St.

Milford, DE 19963

Phone: 302.255.1700

<http://dvcc.delaware.gov>



RESOURCES & INFORMATION

You Are Not Alone...

Domestic violence is not just violence leading to physical injuries. It is a pattern of abusive behavior used to gain control over another person that can include: threats, intimidation, emotional, sexual, or economic abuse; deprivation; social isolation; destroying property; abuse of children or animals; or repeated battering and injury.

Over time the abuse usually becomes more frequent and more severe. It does not go away without intervention. Children can be devastated by domestic violence. They are hurt by seeing or hearing the violence and they are more likely to be victims of violence if they are being abused.

Help is available! An ideal first step is to call the DV Hotline, and an advocate can answer questions, offer resources and information, connect callers with shelter if needed, and more.

Safety Tips

To increase safety including the safety of children:

Have important numbers accessible (i.e. 911, family members, etc.).

Ask a neighbor to be aware of suspicious activity taking place.

Plan an escape route in case of an emergency and practice the plan with children.

Think in advance of safe places to go with the children in a hurry.

Leave extra money, car keys, clothing and copies of documents with a trusted person.

Call a Domestic Violence Hotline for assistance in planning and to get connected to other services and resources.

If there is danger, try to use a safer computer to which the abusive person does not have direct or remote access.

ADDENDUM

CORRECTION TO THE FY2022 ANNUAL REPORT DATA VICTIM INFORMATION & NOTIFICATION EVERYDAY

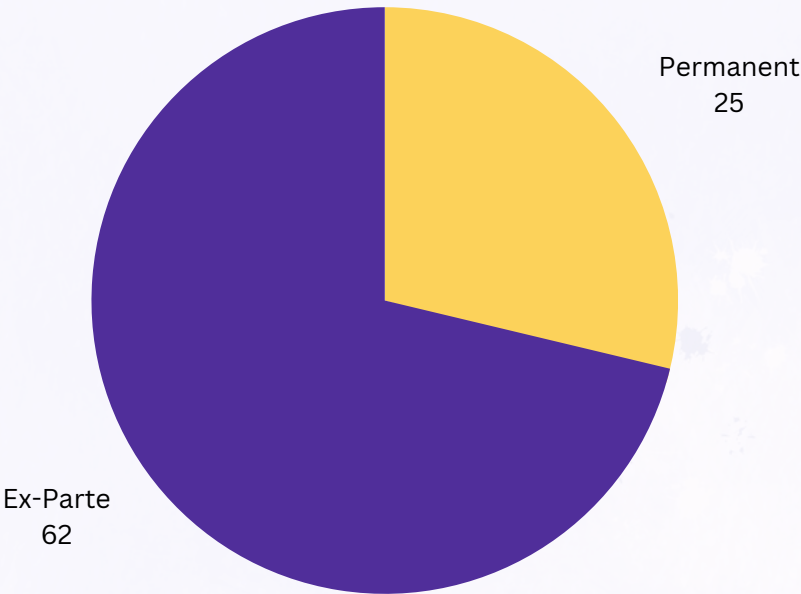
VINE and VINE Protection Order (VPO)

Victim notification in cases involving domestic violence can be critical to a survivor's ability to make well-informed decisions regarding their safety. VINE is an automated service that lets victims and survivors track offender's custody status or court case. The VINE Protective Order (VPO) is a free and confidential service that allows petitioners to register for notification when a protective order (Ex-Parte or Final) has been served by law enforcement. VPO also provides advance notice when the protective order is about to expire. **We regret that the data from VINE for FY2022 was published incorrectly in last year's Annual Report. Please see the corrected information below.**

Victims are not automatically registered for VPO upon issuance of a protective order. It is the victim's choice to register for this service. Knowing when the order has been served helps victims create safety plans and take additional precautions to protect themselves.

For **FY2022**, of those registered, the VINE VPO program made **87** successful notifications related to protective orders, **62** notifications about ex-parte orders and **25** about permanent orders. There were **20** unsuccessful notifications.

VPO Program Order Notifications FY2022





www.dvcc.delaware.gov
