

# Economic Justice as Violence Prevention

*Increasing safety in our communities*



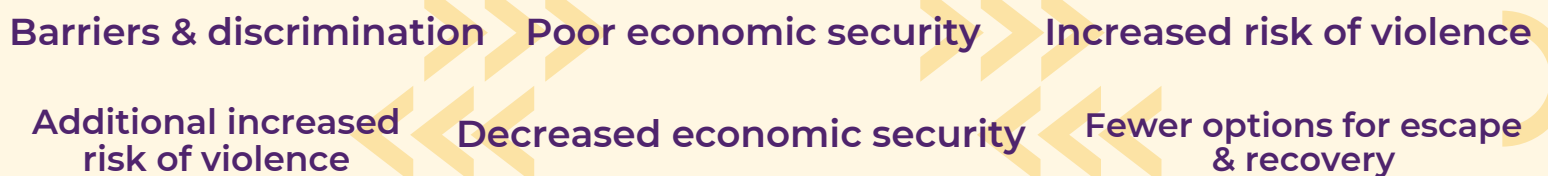
## Impacts of Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence

25% of women and 14% of men in the US will experience violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

In the US, 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have experienced some form of physical sexual violence in their lifetime.<sup>2</sup>

Sexual and intimate partner violence have lasting effects on our communities, including physical, emotional, psychological, and economic impacts. The estimated economic cost of sexual violence per victim is more than \$122,000 over a lifetime.<sup>3</sup>

The good news is sexual and intimate partner violence can be prevented, and economic justice can be a part of that solution.



## What is economic justice?

Economic justice means that all people, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and other identities, have equal access to participation in the economy. Economic justice contributes to a healthy and stable economy by ensuring that everyone is paid a livable wage and has access to the things we all need to thrive – for example safe, affordable housing.

Economic justice is a vital determinant in violence prevention. Healthy, flourishing economies produce healthy, flourishing communities that exist without the presence of violence. Financial stability allows people from all walks of life the opportunity to invest in themselves, their communities, and their workplaces.

In 2020, the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence (DCADV) conducted a policy scan to identify policies in Delaware and beyond that contribute to economic justice and security. We've identified three areas that can enhance the economic justice and security efforts across the state. (Please note: This is not an exhaustive list.)



# Policy Examples

## Workplace Policies

**Paid time off and family leave.** Paid time off and leave policies protect jobs and the financial status of employees. Paid leave policies are beneficial to all employees, but especially to parents and caregivers due to it granting time to attend to personal responsibilities while maintaining financial support and the ability to remain engaged with the workforce, for example, picking up children from childcare or attending medical appointments. This continued participation in the workforce as a result of paid and family leave policies ensures that people are able to financially provide for themselves and their family which contributes to healthy economics and communities.

In addition, the workplace can play a key role in supporting survivors as they seek safety and address the violence in their lives. Paid leave policies can also minimize discrimination that survivors may face while also holding their job to ensure financial security.<sup>4</sup>

**Equal pay.** Instituting workplace policies that provide livable wages ensures that individuals do not have to work multiple jobs to provide for themselves and their families. Unfortunately, it has been common practice for women to receive less pay than men for performing jobs that require similar skill sets. Equal pay policies ultimately promote gender equity which produce healthy economies.<sup>5</sup>

## Government and State-Level Policies

**Affordable healthcare access.** Expanding healthcare access will allow more hard-working individuals who fall within the coverage gap a chance to qualify for and receive health insurance, which can help provide more people with access to preventative health care. Receiving preventative care will enable illnesses to be prevented or recognized early on which will allow for more effective treatments that may move an individual back to health and continued involvement in the workforce. Access to health insurance can ensure that all people are healthy enough to contribute more fully to the workforce and, in turn, strengthen our economy.

**Adequate, quality, and affordable child care.** Expanding government policies that support childcare subsidies for those in need would lessen the financial burden childcare often places on parents and guardians.<sup>6</sup> Creating policies that support affordable access to childcare can help ensure that parents can remain in the workforce and ultimately contribute to thriving families, communities, and economies.

## Financial Institution Policies

**Fair lending policies.** Predatory lending practices are estimated to cost Americans nearly \$25 billion a year. They also promote an endless cycle of debt for many including survivors of domestic violence. Ending predatory payday lending practices would help build a foundation of financial well-being, and contribute to achieving greater financial and social stability, both at the individual and community levels.

**Financial empowerment programs.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicate that poverty creates risks for sexual and intimate partner violence to occur.<sup>7</sup> Financial institutions can collaborate with community-based organizations to support financial literacy and finance-building programs that include microloan programs to enable a family to weather a financial storm while also allowing them to build credit once repaid. Other efforts include credit building and credit repair programs to enable the recovery and maintenance of financial wellbeing.

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018). Intimate Partner Violence. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). Preventing Sexual Violence. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/sexualviolence/fastfact.html>

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020).

<sup>4</sup> Rossin-Slater, M., Ruhm, C. J., & Waldfogel, J. (2013). The effects of California's paid family leave program on mothers' leave-taking and subsequent labor market outcomes. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 32(2), 224-245.

<sup>5</sup> Oelz, M., Olney, S., & Tomei, M. (2013). *Equal pay: An introductory guide*. Geneva: International Labour Office.

<sup>6</sup> Showalter, K., Maguire-Jack, K., Yang, M. Y., & Purtell, K. M. (2019). Work outcomes for mothers experiencing intimate partner violence: The buffering effect of child care subsidy. *Journal of Family Violence*, 34(4), 299-308.

<sup>7</sup> Centers of Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). Risk and Protective Factors. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html>

