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DCADV
DELAWARE COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

# Economic Justice as DV Prevention

## What is Economic Justice?

Economic justice means everyone, regardless of identity or economic situation, has equitable access to the resources and opportunities they need to thrive. For survivors of domestic violence, economic justice is the difference between being able to leave an unsafe relationship and being trapped in one.

## What is Economic Abuse?

Economic abuse can involve many tactics. It can involve ruining a partner's credit through coerced debt or controlling all home finances, including access to any money in bank accounts. Economic abuse can include employment sabotage by harassing at work or preventing a partner from going to work. These tactics are used by the abuser to control their partner, to prevent them from having financial independence and from leaving the relationship. Economic abuse is present in an estimated 99% of domestic violence cases, making it one of the most common, and least recognized, forms of abuse. (National Network to End Domestic Violence [NNEDV], n.d.)

## How is it Prevention?

Economic security is a protective factor. This means when people have stable income, affordable housing, access to childcare, and control over their own finances, they have more power to leave an unsafe relationship and less reason to enter or stay in one out of financial necessity.

# The Data and The Solutions

## Economic Abuse in Delaware

**The Data**

- Economic abuse occurs in an estimated 94–99% of domestic violence cases nationally, yet most people don't recognize it as a form of abuse.
- Financial insecurity is consistently cited as one of the top reasons survivors stay with, or return to, an abusive partner.
- Delaware women working full-time, year-round are paid roughly 83–89 cents for every dollar paid to men and the gap is significantly wider for women of color.
- Nationally, survivors of domestic violence face nearly $100,000 in lifetime economic costs tied to the abuse. (National Network to End Domestic Violence [NNEDV], n.d.)

**Policy Priorities**

- Paid Family & Medical Leave that survivors can safely use without risking their job.
- Additional housing protections and emergency assistance for survivors fleeing abuse.
- Affordable, accessible childcare so survivors can work and rebuild.
- Pay equity and workplace protections such paid sick and family leave that reduce financial dependence.
- More access to credit, banking, and financial education.

## Additional Resources

DCADV Economic Justice Program - dcadv.org/what-we-do/advocacy-policy-work/economic-justice
DCADV White Paper: Economic Justice as a Framework for Violence Prevention - dcadv.org/what-we-do/prevention/strengthening-economic-supports.html
Delaware 24-Hour Hotlines: New Castle County (302) 762-6110 · Kent & Sussex (302) 422-8058
National DV Hotline: 1-800-799-7233
Community Legal Aid Society: www.declasi.org/legal-services/housing-legal-services/