

Domestic Violence Services for Survivors

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

Economic Services Administration • Community Services Division

Program Description

The Domestic Violence Services for Survivors program distributes dedicated state and federal funding to community nonprofits, local governments and tribes who provide emergency shelter and supportive services for survivors of domestic violence and their dependents. Domestic violence programs consistently report DSHS funding is critical to help keep their doors open and provide essential services to members of their communities.

Domestic violence is the infliction or threat of physical harm against an intimate partner and includes physical, sexual and psychological abuse against the partner. It is part of a pattern of assaultive, coercive and controlling behaviors directed at achieving compliance from or control over that intimate partner. It may include, but is not limited to, a categorization of offenses as defined in RCW 10.99.020, committed by one intimate partner against another.

Services are provided through contracts with community-based agencies, local government agencies, and tribes and focus on survivor-centered advocacy that is individually tailored and based on a survivor's self-defined goals. Services typically include, but are not limited to: safety planning; crisis intervention; emergency shelter; assistance with finding and retaining safe housing; assistance to address legal, immigration, financial, medical and behavioral health needs; support and accompaniment navigating other social and government service systems; transportation and other emergency financial assistance; child care assistance while adult parents are participating in services; age-appropriate, supportive services and resources for children and youth; community outreach and education and primary prevention efforts.

Education, outreach and primary prevention activities are conducted with community groups and people interested in learning about and preventing domestic violence.

Statewide, 25% of survivors who sought services from a community-based domestic violence program received shelter-based services. The majority of services provided are non-residential, such as advocacy, assistance with protection orders and other legal issues, housing stability assistance and supportive services that help survivors address safety risks and improve their family's well-being.

Highlights in State Fiscal Year 2023

- Local domestic violence programs served a total of 17,550 survivors and their children, of whom 4,331 received emergency shelter-based services and 13,219 received non-shelter-based services.
- 39 domestic violence emergency shelter programs provided over 173,150 shelter bed-nights to survivors and their families. Survivors stayed in shelter an average of 44 days.

More information:

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