

STATE OF DELAWARE

Domestic Violence Coordinating Council

Fiscal Year 2019

ANNUAL REPORT



<https://dvcc.delaware.gov/>

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*Statutory Duties
(13 Del.C. § 2103 (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"*

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, (DVCC) we are pleased to present the 2019 Annual Report.

The Annual Report provides statewide data on the incidence and response to domestic violence during the State's Fiscal Year. The Report also highlights initiatives undertaken by the DVCC and its committees to address domestic violence issues in Delaware.

For more than 25 years, the DVCC has been committed to improving Delaware's response to domestic violence. Although much has been accomplished, work remains to be done as far too many families and communities continue to be impacted by domestic violence. In Fiscal Year 2019, the State of Delaware experienced the highest number of domestic violence fatalities since FY2008. While we have made many significant steps to improve the response, enhance services, and hold perpetrators accountable, there is still more work to be done.

In the upcoming year, the DVCC will continue the many collaborations that have been built to address domestic violence. With the support from our criminal justice and community partners, we will implement a pilot Domestic Violence High Risk Team; revise the Domestic Violence Treatment Standards; and study the early interventions and services offered to teen victims of dating violence. The DVCC remains committed to identifying gaps in services and to develop solutions to address those gaps. We wish to commend the Delaware law enforcement agencies, the courts, legal community, medical professionals, and advocates for their hard work and commitment in the fight against domestic violence.

Finally, the DVCC lost an incredibly valuable member of its team due to the death of Pat Kwetkauskie on June 4, 2019. Pat, as the Trainer/Educator, was an indefatigable worker and made a significant impact through her outreach and training on domestic violence.

*Statutory Duties
(13 Del.C. § 2103 (2))*

*"Effectuate
coordination between
agencies, departments
and the courts with
victims of domestic
violence"*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Statutory Duties
(13 Del.C. § 2103(3))*

*"Promote effective
prevention,
intervention, and
treatment techniques
which will be developed
based upon research
data and collection"*

The FY2019 Annual Report highlights some of the DVCC's initiatives during the past year, as well as statistical information on domestic violence incidents and services provided throughout the State.

The statistical data that begins on page 16 reflects the collective efforts of our community-based and justice-based partners in the State's response.

The DVCC was legislatively created to improve Delaware's response to domestic violence and sexual assault. Our mission and goals cannot be achieved without a committed collaborative approach to address the complex issues that many victims and survivors face. As detailed in this report, much of the work of the Council is accomplished through the work of our various committees and support from our community partners.

Highlights of DVCC accomplishments and activities for FY2019 include:

- Information and resources were disseminated to various communities at 51 outreach events.
- Over 1,425 youth, teens, and adults participated in DVCC's educational sessions and awareness events.
- The DVCC Children & Domestic Violence Committee completed an in-depth technical assistance & training project with the Safe & Together Institute.
- The DVCC, in collaboration with key partners, began working on the implementation of a Domestic Violence High Risk Team.

This work would not be possible without the knowledge and dedication of the DVCC staff, Council members, Committee members, and community partners.

Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

CHAIR

Honorable Michael Newell
Chief Judge, Family Court

VICE CHAIR

Honorable Robert Coupe
Secretary, Department of Safety &
Homeland Security

Honorable Catherine Cloutier, 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, Judge, Court of Common Pleas
Honorable Kathleen Jennings, Attorney General, Department of Justice
Honorable Brendan O'Neill, Chief Defender, Office of Defense Services
Honorable Perry Phelps, Commissioner, Department of Correction
Honorable Josette Manning, Secretary, Department of Services for Children, Youth & Their Families
Master Corporal Adrienne Owen, Appointed Representative of the Law Enforcement Community
Dr. Margaret Chou, At-Large Member, Representative of the Medical Community
Professor Dana Harrington Conner, At-Large Member
Diane Glenn, At-Large Member
Laura Graham, Esquire, At-Large Member
Ariana Langford, At-Large Member
Professor Jennifer Naccarelli, At-Large Member
Honorable Vincent Poppiti, At-Large Member

DVCC STAFF MEMBERS

Maureen Monagle, Executive Director
Natasha Smith, Social Services Senior Administrator
Galen Purcell, High Risk DV Coordinator
Aimee String, Criminal Justice Senior Planner
Patricia Kwetkauskie, Trainer/Educator II
Tracie Dixon-Stanley, Administrative Specialist

*Statutory Duties
(13 Del.C. § 2103 (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”

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 (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”*

COMMITTEES

Much of our work 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, identifying areas of need, and implementing policies and procedures that respond to those needs.

Children and Domestic Violence

Honorable Josette Manning ~ Chair

Criminal Justice

Honorable Jan Jurden, Honorable Brendan O’Neill, and Master Corporal Adrienne Owen ~ Chairs

Elderly and Domestic Violence

Honorable Robert Coupe ~ Chair

Immigration

Laura Graham, Esquire ~ Chair

Legislative Drafting and Review

Honorable Krista Griffith ~ Chair

Medical

Dr. Margaret Chou ~ Chair

Public Awareness/Education

Honorable Carl Danberg ~ Chair

Training

Honorable Michael Newell ~ Chair

Treatment

Honorable Brendan O’Neill and Honorable Robert Coupe ~ Chairs

Batterers’ Intervention Certification Panel

Fatal Incident Review Team (FIRT)

Honorable Jan Jurden, Professor Dana Harrington Conner, and Honorable Vincent Poppiti ~ Chairs

CHILDREN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMITTEE

Committee Focus

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.

Fiscal Year 2019 Accomplishments

The Committee examined the Separating and Divorcing Parent Education Program curriculum that is certified by the Department of Services for Children Youth and Their Families (DSCYF). The Committee agreed that a DSCYF working group would be the appropriate body to handle any further discussion and review of the curriculum. DVCC staff will participate in the meetings of that work group and provide necessary updates to the Committee.

Members of the Committee worked on the drafting of a bench card that provides a summary of the approved education seminars for separating and divorcing parents throughout the State that can be provided to the Family Court judicial officers.

Additionally, the Committee researched issues of child custody evaluations. The Committee explored practices and policies followed by other states and national organizations as it relates to standards for custody evaluators for domestic violence education, or for the inclusion of domestic violence history in custody evaluations. The Committee will continue to review this topic.

Safe & Together Institute

The DVCC concluded the project that brought the Safe and Together Model Suite of Tools and Interventions to Delaware. The DVCC provided an in-person technical assistance day to the Domestic Violence Liaison programs and a supervisor from the Division of Family Services in January 2019. During this technical assistance day, the group was able to discuss challenges and achievements they have experienced with using the Safe & Together Model Suite of Tools. The project also allowed online access to the “Introduction to the Safe & Together Model” to more than 35 Division of Family Services Supervisors.



CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Committee Focus

The focus of the Criminal Justice Committee is to continuously review the system 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 Chief Defender, the Department of Justice, the Department of Correction, DELJIS, advocates and community partners to resolve issues specific to the needs of those affected by domestic violence.

Fiscal Year 2019 Accomplishments

The Committee continued to discuss law enforcement's use of body worn cameras in domestic violence cases. Members of the Committee continued to keep open lines of communication with the Department of Justice and the Delaware Police Chiefs' Council on the use of body worn cameras when a law enforcement officer responds to domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking cases.

Additionally, the Committee discussed the implementation of the Lethal Violence Protection Order (HS1 for HB222), which permits a family member or law enforcement officer to obtain an order of relinquishment from the Justice of the Peace Court, if the respondent poses an immediate and present danger of causing injury to themselves or others by owning, possessing, controlling, purchasing, having access to or receiving a firearm.

The Committee also discussed the implementation of the Beau Biden Gun Violence Protection Act (HS 1 for HB302) which, among many things, created a process for law enforcement officials to get permission to search and seize firearms from individuals who are deemed by mental health professionals to be dangerous to themselves or others.

The Committee will continue to discuss and follow the implementation of both legislative changes as petitions are being handled by the courts.

IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE

Committee Focus

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.

Fiscal Year 2019 Accomplishment

This past year has been robust with policy and federal rule changes that affect the immigrant community. The Immigration Committee continues to be committed to identifying changes affecting victims, and educating service providers and community members. The Committee continues to be a trusted resource and network for information exchange among service providers.

LEGISLATIVE DRAFTING AND REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee Focus

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, advocates and community partners.

Fiscal Year 2019 Accomplishment

The Committee proposed legislation to amend the DVCC statute as it relates to the Fatal Incident Review Team. House Bill 142 added one more member, a licensed health care professional knowledgeable in the screening and identification of domestic violence cases, to the Team. This member is to be appointed by the Council.

TRAINING COMMITTEE

Committee Focus

The Training Committee was established in April of 2017 as a result of a need identified by the Family Court Enhancement Project. The Committee's goal is to identify domestic violence and sexual assault training needs throughout the State.

Fiscal Year 2019 Accomplishment

The Committee has been working on the creation of centralized training calendar that will promote and track training events throughout the State. The Committee continues to explore cost effective options to develop trainings that can be available online.

*Statutory Duties
(13 Del.C. § 2103
(6))*

*"Improve the
response to
domestic
violence and
abuse so as to
reduce
incidents"*

TREATMENT COMMITTEE

Committee Focus

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 batterers' intervention policies and procedures (Domestic Violence Intervention Standards) which mandate specific credentials, education and training for treatment service providers as well as outlining the components required for program content. The 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 treatment programs possible.

Fiscal Year 2019 Accomplishments

The Treatment Committee continued to discuss the recommendations from the 2017 evaluation of the certified treatment programs. This evaluation was a meaningful, precise and accurate evaluation that documented the successes, and made recommendations for the following:

- 1) Focus on strengthening communication among the providers, courts, probation and parole, and the DVCC.
- 2) Identify strategies to increase enrollment in the Batterers' Intervention Program.
- 3) As part of capacity building efforts, form a DVCC Research and Accountability Committee comprised of DVCC staff, judges or commissioners, and agency representatives to meet on a regular basis to develop and implement a more rigorous plan for ongoing data collection, analysis and dissemination.
- 4) In light of current budget difficulties in the state, seek external funding to expand capacity-building efforts, with a particular focus on data collection and future evaluations, designed to address local, state, and national interest in the efficacy of Batterers' Intervention Programs.

A small work group was established to begin the work on revising the DV Intervention Standards for certified programs.

PUBLIC AWARENESS/EDUCATION COMMITTEE

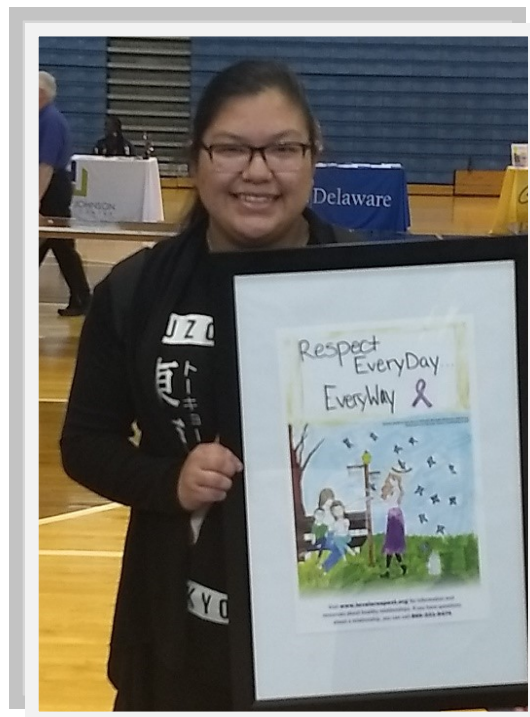
Committee Focus

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 the resources available to victims.

Fiscal Year 2019 Accomplishments

The DVCC continued to spread awareness about domestic violence, teen dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. This past year, efforts were made to expand our presence on social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. The DVCC joined with the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the Sexual Assault Network of Delaware and other state and national organizations to promote unified messages to the public.

The Committee organized a poster contest that was promoted to all high schools in Delaware. Student artists were asked to demonstrate their creativity in the promotion of the theme “*Respect Every DayEvery Way.*” We received entries from many talented student artists representing several public and charter high schools. The selected poster was reproduced and almost 300 were shared with public and private schools, public libraries, and organizations providing youth focused activities such as the Police Athletic League and YMCA.



1st Place Student Artist
Zaiky Moreno HatENCHI
9th Grade, Brandywine High School

BATTERERS' INTERVENTION CERTIFICATION PANEL

Committee Focus

The Batters' Intervention Certification Panel (Panel) is a subcommittee of the Treatment Committee. The Panel is responsible for overseeing and 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 a representative from three of the certified treatment programs, a victim advocate from an agency or organization that works directly with domestic violence victims, as well as a representative from Family Court, the Attorney General's Office, Probation and Parole, Youth Rehabilitation Services, the Office of Defense Services, the Department of Correction's Treatment Unit and a representative from Delaware Prevention and Behavioral Health Services with experience in adolescent development.

The Panel meets yearly and as needed to review Certified Treatment Programs' Annual Reports to ensure that programs remain in compliance with the Intervention Standards including compliance with all continuing education requirements for facilitators. The annual review process helps Delaware maintain high quality and streamlined treatment services statewide.

As of the end of FY2019, the DVCC has four certified programs which offer intervention treatment groups in numerous locations statewide.

<u>Catholic Charities</u> 2601 West 4 th Street Wilmington, DE 19805 Phone: 302.655.9624 Fax: 302.654.6432	<u>CHILD, Inc.</u> 507 Philadelphia Pike Wilmington, DE 19809 Phone: 302.762.8989 Fax: 302.762.8987	<u>Dover Air Force Base</u> 436 MDOS/SGOW Family Advocacy Program 300 Tuskegee Blvd. Dover AFB, DE 19902 Phone: 302.677.2711	<u>Turning Point (Peoples Place II)</u> 1129 Airport Road Milford, DE 19963 Phone: 302.424.2420 Fax: 302.424.2402
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The Domestic Violence Intervention Standards can be found at:
<http://dvcc.delaware.gov/treatment-certification-documents/>

COMMUNITY IMPACT AND OUTREACH



The DVCC collaborates extensively with community partners statewide by participating in public awareness events. Community outreach fulfills an important function by increasing public awareness about domestic violence and sexual assault while distributing resources available to assist victims and their families. The DVCC promoted resources and information to various communities by participating in at least 26 outreach events. Over 1,425 youth, teens, and adults participated in these educational sessions and awareness activities.

Outreach Activities, Community Education, and High School Awareness and Prevention

Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims

Sexual Assault Awareness Month Proclamation—Carvel Building

Health & Wellness Fair—Gateway House Wilmington

Community Youth Health Summit—Newark High School

5k DV Walk—Hope Foundation and Psi Iota Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

Heart in the Game Resource Fair—Conrad High School

Health and Resource Fair—Dover Interfaith Mission

Youth Summit—YMCA

Nanticoke Indians 7th Annual Women's Luncheon—Georgetown

DV Awareness Month Proclamation—Carvel Building

2018 Victim's Rights Awareness Week Tribute—Dover

DE School Based Counselors Conference

Resource Table—Carvel Building

Resource Table—Wilmington Convention & Visitors Bureau

Raising Kings—One Village Alliance

COMMUNITY IMPACT AND OUTREACH

Outreach Activities, Community Education, and High School Awareness and Prevention

2019 LIFE Conference—Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council

Saving Our Sisters Conference—Beautiful Gate Outreach Center

The Heart of Good Health Fair—Nanticoke Health Services

3rd Annual Transition to Adult Life Fair—Various Delaware school districts

Healthy Relationships—Career Team

IPV/DV and Sexual Violence Later in Life—Hope House I

Healthy Relationships—Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Epsilon Iota Omega Chapter

Delaware Veterans Stand Down

Spring Conference—Delaware School Counselors Association (DSCA)

Resource Fair—SODAT/Safe Space Delaware

5k Walk/Run—Connecting Families4 Justice

Brandywine High School

Mt. Pleasant High School

Lake Forest High School

Milford High School

Smyrna High School Wellness Center



TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

PROCLAMATION SIGNING—February 12, 2019

On February 12, 2019, the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the DVCC worked together to proclaim the month of February as Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. By providing young people with relationship skills and by changing attitudes that support violence, we recognize that dating violence can be prevented; and every person has the right to optimal health and safe and respectful relationships free from abuse.



OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Robert “Bob” Hirst enjoyed a long and successful career as a legal services attorney in New England. When he retired, he moved to Delaware to be closer to his family. Immediately upon his arrival in Delaware, he contacted the Delaware Volunteer Legal Services (DVLS) to see how he could volunteer his time and use his vast legal knowledge to assist the agency. Bob became admitted to the Delaware Bar for the sole purpose of doing pro bono work.

Bob volunteers his time assisting victims of domestic violence with Protection From Abuse (PFA) matters twice a week, every week, often assisting multiple clients per day. Bob has handled many of the most challenging cases that are referred to DVLS. He also assists victims and survivors of domestic violence with custody matters. Since July of 2016, Bob has assisted more than 165 victims of domestic violence with family law matters. He has also mentored many attorneys who are new to Family Court.

Victims of domestic violence constantly face challenges and obstacles, often just in their day-to-day survival. They make choices and weigh options that will directly impact their safety and that of their children. Choosing to seek protection through a court order is a decision that is rarely taken lightly; and can often put victims in greater physical danger than choosing to stay with their abusive partner. Bob provides representation, advice and comfort to the people seeking assistance with obtaining a PFA. Bob makes a difference in the lives of the clients he assists and in the community.

We are pleased to recognize Bob Hirst as the 2018 DVCC Outstanding Community Service Award recipient.



Bob Hirst, Esquire
Governor John Carney and
Eliza Hirst, Esquire

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

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 who provide critical advocacy, service and assistance to victims.



PROFESSIONAL TRAININGS

2018 Annual Law Enforcement Training Conference

The 2018 Annual Law Enforcement Conference took place on November 5, 2018, at Del-One Conference Center in Dover, DE. There were 166 attendees from State and local law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, judicial officers, court personnel, SANE nurses, various advocates and community stakeholders from across the State.

This conference included two national speakers presenting on complex issues related to the investigation and prosecution of domestic violence and sexual assault. Veteran Detective Carlton Hershman and Wendy Patrick a career trial attorney, both of San Diego, CA, covered topics such as *Why Doesn't She Leave? The Science Behind the Seduction: Victim Dynamics in Intimate Partner Violence*; *Effectively Communicating With Difficult Victims*; and, *Investigating Sexual Assault Intoxication Cases*.

In addition to the national experts, Officer Ria Wallace of the Department of Correction, Bureau of Community Corrections, provided an overview of Probation and Parole's role in Delaware's response to domestic violence.



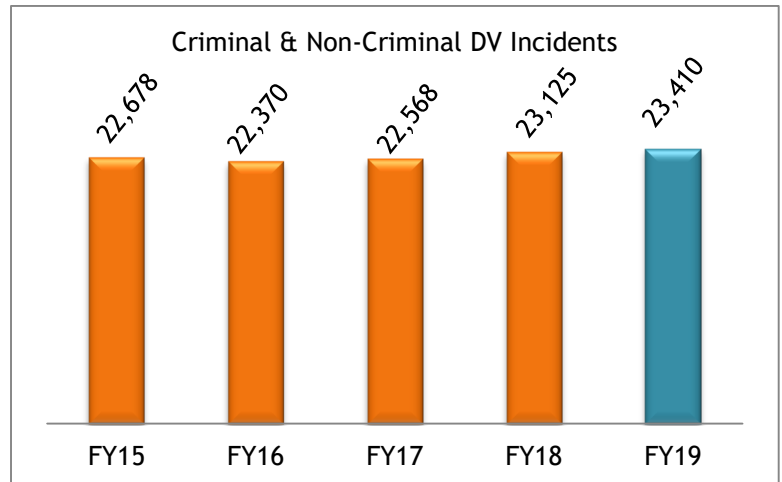
The Annual Law Enforcement Training conference is supported by a subgrant awarded by the Criminal Justice Council through a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, STOP Formula Grant Program.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATISTICS*

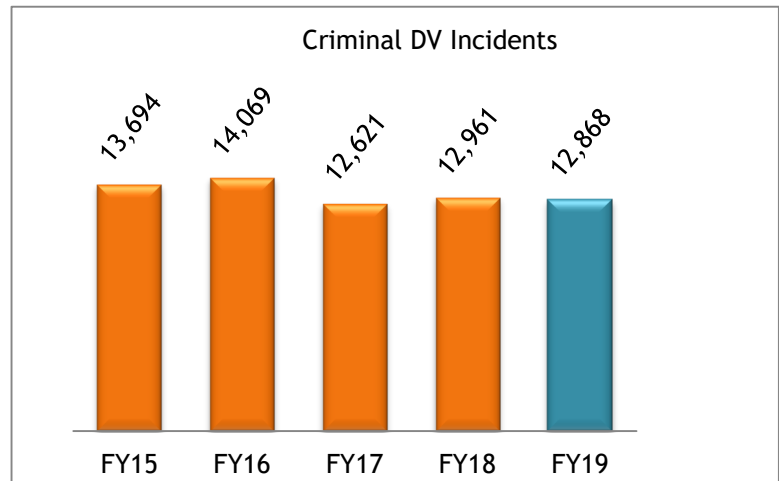
In FY2019, there were a total of **23,410** combined criminal and non-criminal domestic violence incidents reported in Delaware.

Criminal domestic violence incidents are those in which a crime is committed or alleged.

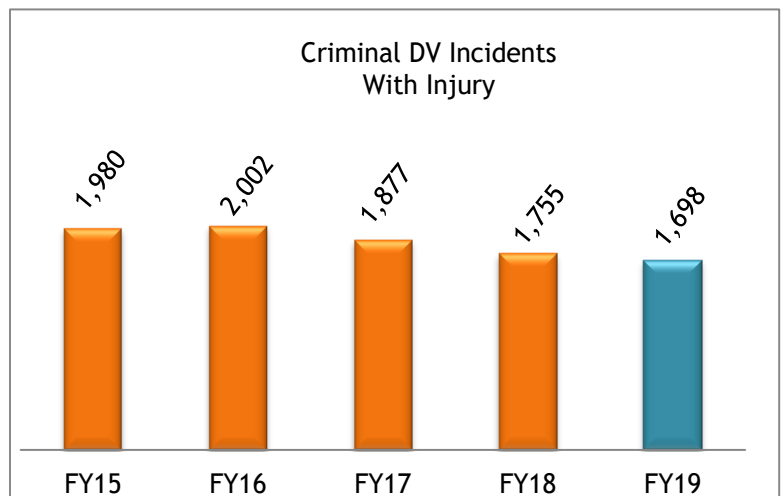
Non-criminal domestic violence incidents are those in which there is police contact, but no crime was alleged, e.g., a verbal argument without any threats.



In FY2019, the total number of reported domestic violence criminal incidents was **12,868**.

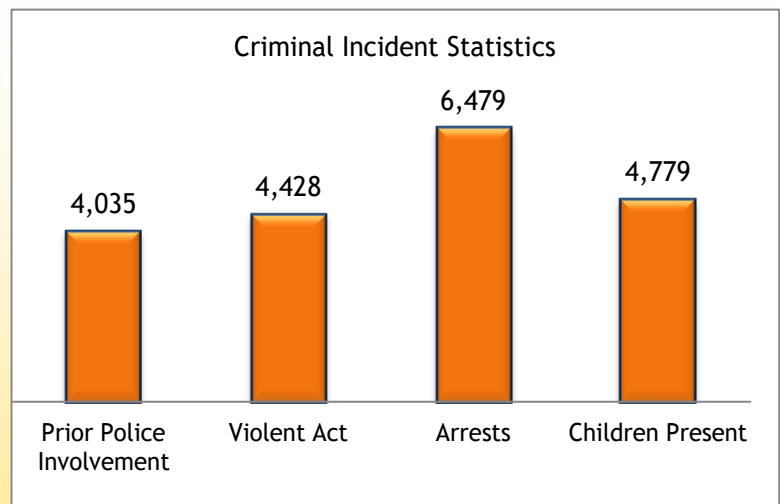


Of the 12,868 reported criminal domestic violence incidents in FY2019, **1,698** resulted in physical injury to the victim.



*Domestic Violence statistics are captured through DELJIS reporting.

- In FY2019, 31% of domestic violence incidents had prior police involvement.
- In FY2019, 34% of domestic violence incidents involved a violent act.
- In FY2019, 50% of domestic violence incidents resulted in an arrest.
- In FY2019, children were present in 37% criminal domestic violence incidents.



LETHALITY ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL (LAP)

The Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) provides an easy and effective method to identify victims of domestic violence who are at the highest potential 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 put in contact with the domestic violence hotline for safety planning purposes.

Capitol Police's Domestic Violence Risk Analyst has continued to train law enforcement officers on the statewide protocol. Since 2014, the DV Risk Analyst has conducted 55 training sessions in 29 agencies to 625 law enforcement officers and the utilization of the LAP has dramatically increased. During the 2018 calendar year, police officers statewide completed the LAP on scene 84% of the time. Through the first 6 months of 2019, the LAP usage is up to 86% statewide.

In addition, the DV Risk Analyst worked with programmers at the Delaware Criminal Justice Information System (DELJIS) during the creation of the new Law Enforcement Information Statewide System (LEISS) product. Built into LEISS is an emergency email mechanism for every new high-risk domestic violence report that is written. When the DV Risk Analyst receives these emergency emails, they immediately forward them to the respective police-based victim service unit and the DVCC's High Risk DV Team Coordinator, with special attention given to any report where the victim declined to speak to a domestic violence hotline. On average, over 300 emails per quarter are generated.

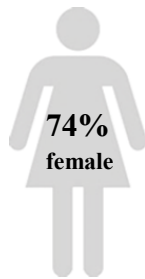


As part of the re-launch of the LAP, Capitol Police collaborated with the courts and community partners to develop a web-based referral program for high risk cases. The Domestic Violence Intervention Program (VIP) allows anyone to make a referral for a domestic violence victim to receive police accompaniment to a court hearing in any of the three counties. To date, over 700 high risk victims have been accompanied to their respective hearings.

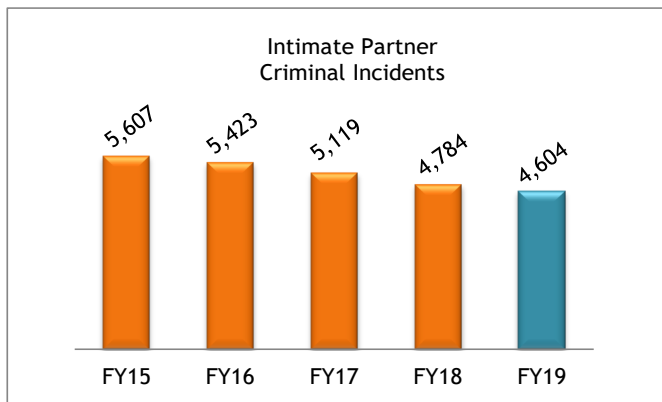
The VIP Program has received recognition for its unique response and support for victims' safety.

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 teen dating couples. Intimate partners may be the same gender.

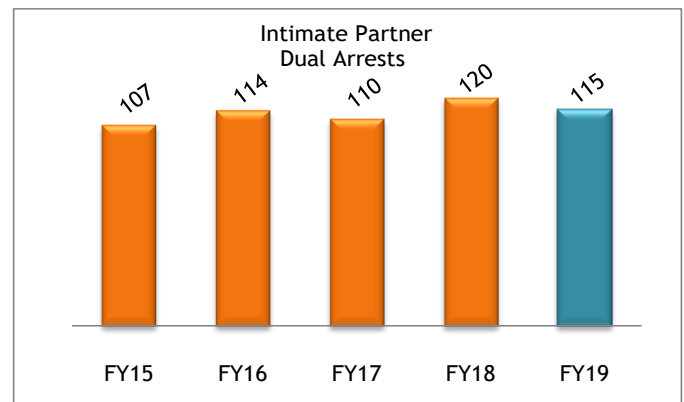


In FY2019, of the intimate partner criminal incidents reported, 74% of the victims were female.



In FY2019, of the **12,868** criminal incidents reported, **4,604** were between intimate partners.

Of those reported in 2019, **797** indicated physical injury to the victim.



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

In FY2019, there were **115** dual arrests made by law enforcement.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HIGH RISK TEAM (DVHRT)

During this past year, the DVCC was awarded a grant by the Criminal Justice Council, through the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), VOCA—Victims Assistance Formula Grant Program, to implement a Domestic Violence High Risk Team (DVHRT). In March of 2019, the DVCC contracted the services of a Coordinator to lead the efforts of this pilot project in Kent County. Partnering agencies on the DVHRT include the Delaware State Police, Dover Police, Probation and Parole, the Attorney General's Office, and People's Place II, Inc. Once the policies and procedures are formalized, the DVHRT will begin reviewing cases during FY2020.

The concept for a DVHRT was originated by the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center in Newburyport, MA in 2005. DVHRTs have been successfully implemented in several jurisdictions around the country. The DVHRT Model utilizes evidence-based risk assessments to identify cases for further review by a multidisciplinary team who implement case specific plans to mitigate further danger. Although adaptations to the original model will be made to fit Delaware's structure and community needs, Delaware's DVHRT will operate under the same guiding principles and goals to increase victim safety and offender accountability. The DVHRT Model is a framework composed of four fundamental strategies: risk assessment, multi-disciplinary team approach to develop intervention plans, on-going monitoring/tracking of cases; and connections to community resources. Delaware's DVHRT will utilize the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LE) and the Danger Assessment Protocol (non-LE) tools 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.

PROTECTION FROM ABUSE STATISTICS

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. 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 certified Batterers' Intervention Program.

Lifetime Orders	
New Castle County	54
Kent County	23
Sussex County	16
Total	93

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.

In FY2019, there were 93 lifetime PFA orders issued that remained in effect at the end of the fiscal year.

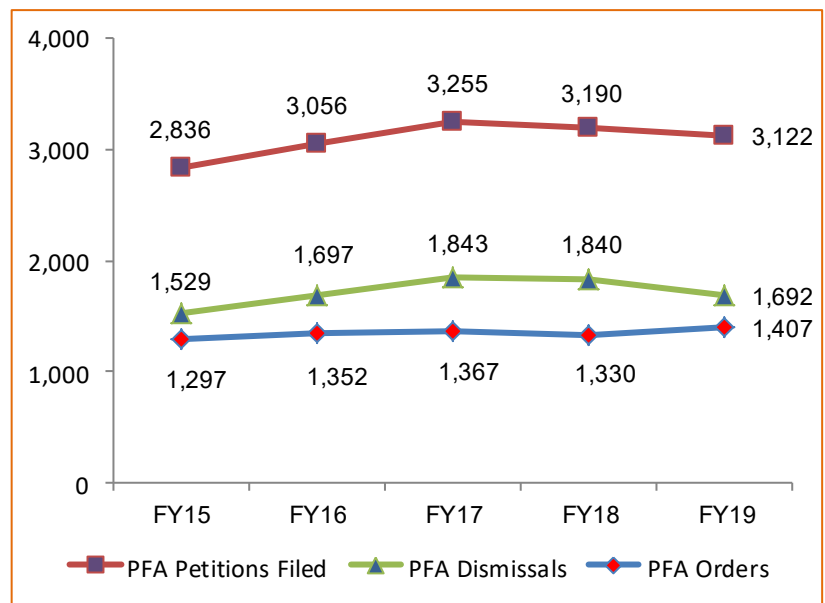
Family Court processed 3,122 PFA petitions statewide during FY2019. Of those petitions filed, 1,407 orders were issued and 1,692 petitions were dismissed.

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;
- ◆ The Respondent consents to the entry of protective order; or
- ◆ A default order is entered when the Respondent fails to appear for a hearing after proper notice.

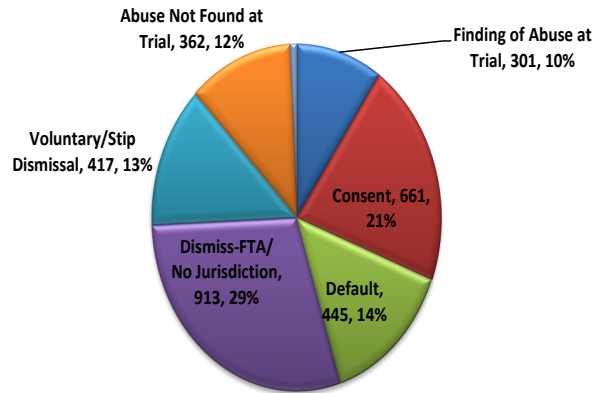
A PFA petition may be dismissed for one of three reasons:

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

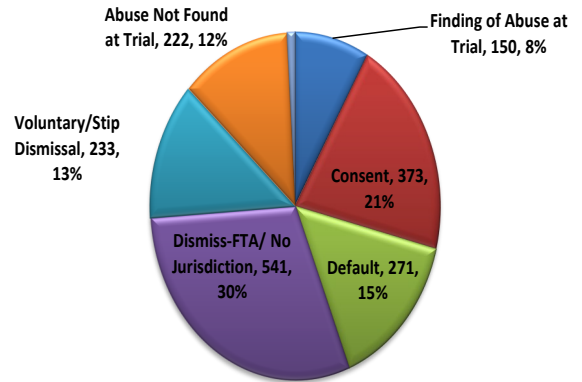


PFA Outcomes

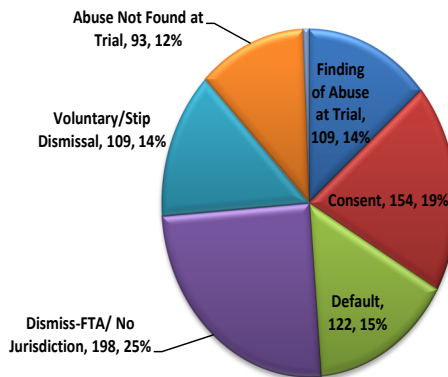
FY 2019 Statewide PFA Outcomes



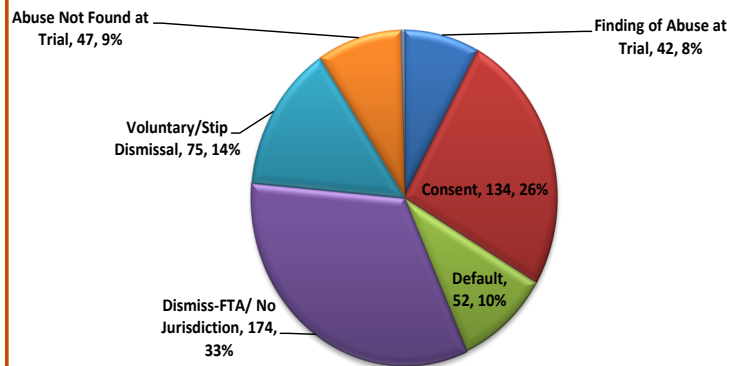
FY 2019 NCC PFA Outcomes



FY 2019 Kent PFA Outcomes



FY 2019 Sussex PFA Outcomes

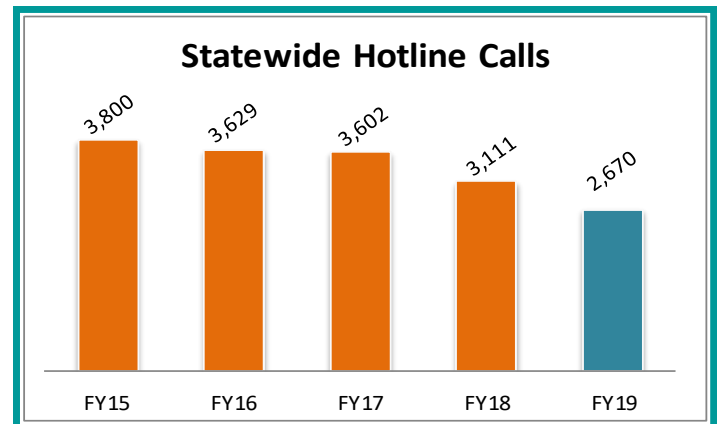


DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE STATISTICS

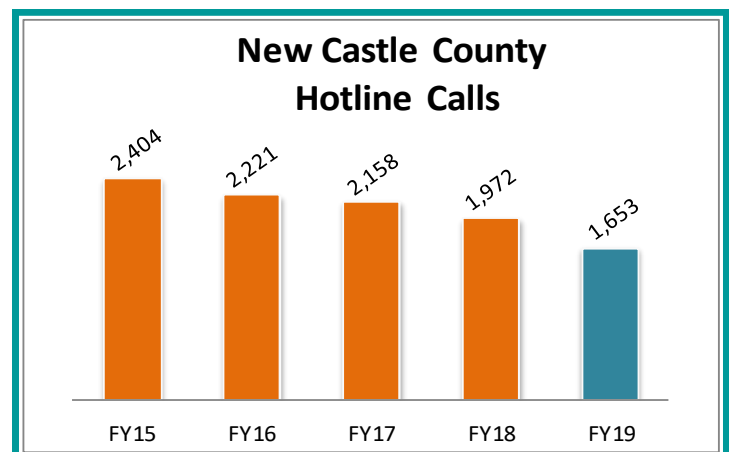
The Domestic Violence Hotlines are an important resource available to victims of domestic violence in Delaware. The hotlines, which are available in all three counties, are confidential and available 24 hours a day/7 days a week. Hotlines are staffed by trained professionals who assist in safety planning,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

In FY2019, there were a total of 2,670 calls received by the Domestic Violence Hotlines statewide.

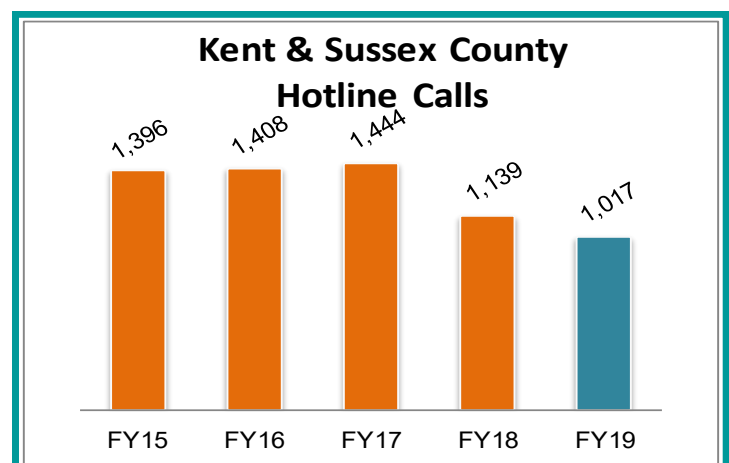
Over a five year span, the average number of hotline calls is 3,362 per year.



In FY2019, there were 1,653 calls to the Domestic Violence Hotline in New Castle County



In FY2019, there were a total of 1,017 calls to the Domestic Violence Hotlines in Kent and Sussex Counties.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTER STATISTICS

Two agencies, CHILD, Inc. and People's Place, 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 shelter in trauma-informed settings, domestic violence shelters offer safety planning, case management, advocacy, counseling, child care, job assistance and more.

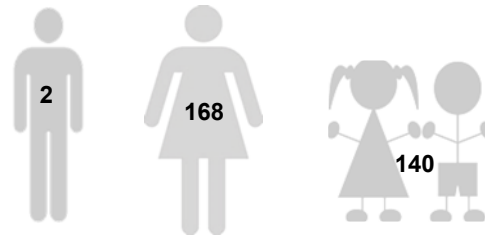
Statewide

495 individuals were sheltered statewide.



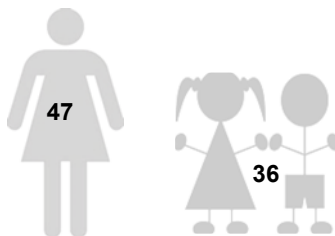
New Castle County

310 individuals were sheltered in New Castle County.



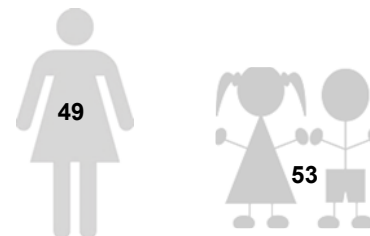
Kent County

83 individuals were sheltered in Kent County.



Sussex County

102 individuals were sheltered in Sussex County.



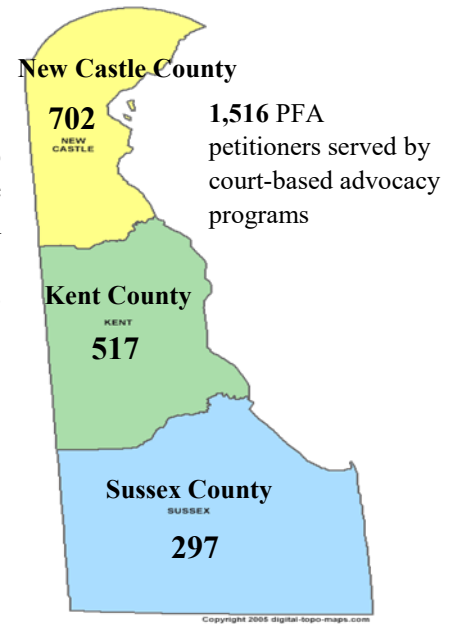
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCACY PROGRAM

The Domestic Violence Advocacy Programs provide free services to help intimate partner victims of domestic violence navigate their way through 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.

New Castle County
302.255.0420

Kent County
302.672.1075

Sussex County
302.856.5843



LEGAL SERVICES FOR VICTIMS

In FY2019, Community Legal Aid Society, (CLASI) handles 755 cases for victims of domestic violence in Kent and Sussex Counties. Of the 755 cases, 623 were PFA cases, 104 were custody/visitation cases, 22 were divorce cases, and 6 involved other issues.

Delaware Volunteer Legal Services (DVLS) provides free representation in New Castle to victims of domestic violence. In FY2019, pro bono and staff attorneys provided advice, brief services and representation to 333 victims through the PFA Pro Bono Program in obtaining protection orders. Pro bono attorneys also represented 20 other clients with PFA matters, custody/visitation and divorce matters. In-house staff attorneys provided representation, advice or brief services on 443 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 the close supervision by the program's director and a staff attorney. In the spring term of 2019 (the DCC was not offered in the fall of 2018) interns 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 1,809 hours of legal research and services.

VICTIMS COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (VCAP)

Victims of domestic violence may suffer financial stress as devastating as their physical injuries and emotional trauma. Every state has a crime victim compensation program that can provide substantial financial assistance to crime victims and their families. Delaware's Victims Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP), through the Department of Justice is the agency to provide such relief.

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.

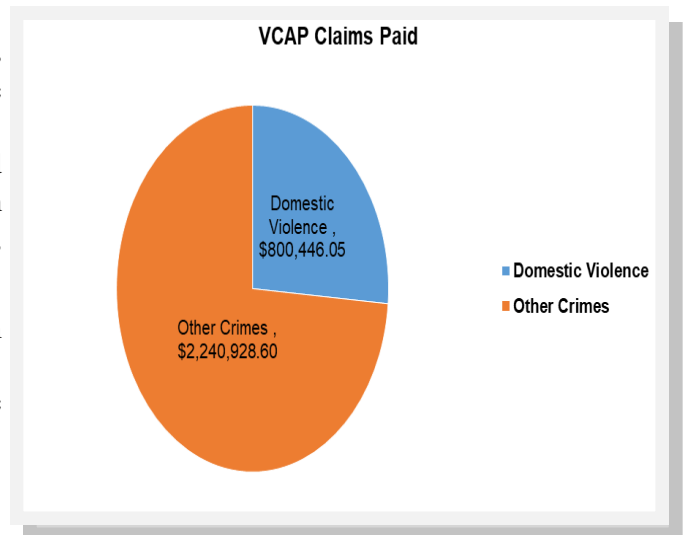
During FY2019 VCAP rendered a total of 3,059 payments to, or on behalf of, victims of crime. Those payments totaled \$2,240,928.68. Of those payments \$800,446.05 (36%) were for victims of domestic violence.

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

<https://attorneygeneral.delaware.gov/vcap/>.

For more information about the Crime Victims Fund that was established by the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), please visit the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC):

<https://www.ovc.gov/about/victimsfund.html>.



VICTIM INFORMATION and NOTIFICATION EVERYDAY (VINE) VINE Protective 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 the status of an offender's custody 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 Permanent) 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 FY2019, of those registered, the VINE VPO program made 90 successful notifications related to protective orders (53 via phone call; 37 via email). Fifty-one notifications were related to Ex-Parte Orders, and 39 of those notifications were related to Final Orders. For more information about Delaware's VPO, please visit: <http://www.registervpo.com>.

FY19 Successful Notification Summary

Notification Type	Final Order	Ex-Parte	Total
Firearm Confiscated	2	0	2
Hearing Change	0	10	10
Hearing Reminder	0	18	18
Order Expiration	37	0	37
Order Served	0	23	23
Totals	39	51	90

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

The Domestic Violence Unit is a part of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice. 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 and the constitutional rights of defendants. This responsibility includes the preparation and presentation of criminal cases before the Superior Court, the Court of Common Pleas, Family Court and in some matters before the Justice of the Peace Courts. The Domestic Violence Unit operates statewide and is a part of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice. The FY2019 statistics capture a small part of the work of this unit.

Family Court Misdemeanor Cases

New Castle County	Kent County	Sussex County
3,883	809	633

Total Family Court Domestic Violence Calendar Events Handled for FY2019—5,325



ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM (ACP)

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 (and should) 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 Address Confidentiality Program started enrolling victims in 2011. By FY2019 there were 13 primary victims of domestic violence and 15 co-participants enrolled in the program for a total of 28 active program participants. 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:

New Castle County	Kent County	Sussex County
DE Department of Justice Victim/Witness Assistance Program 820 N. French Street Wilmington, DE 19801 800.870.1790	DE Department of Justice Victim/Witness Assistance Program 102 W. Water Street Dover, DE 19904 800.870.1790	DE Department of Justice Victim/Witness Assistance Program 114 E. Market Street Georgetown, DE 19947 800.870.1790

FAMILY VISITATION 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 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. The Centers are structured to promote safety for families to include staggered arrival and departure times for parents, and separate entrances for parents. Family Visitation Centers employ experienced security guards for the safety of children and parents. The Centers are equipped with age appropriate toys, games, and crafts. Trained staff support 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 the Belvedere State Service Center, the Hudson State Service Center, the Dover Center, the Milford State Service Center, the Adams State Service Center, and Safe Haven.

	CHILD, Inc. New Castle County	People's Place II Kent & Sussex Counties	Statewide
Visitation Exchanges	329	1,333	1,662
Group Visits	588	1,003	1,591
Individual Supervised Visits	691	1084	1,775
Children Served	198	221	419
Parent/Caregivers Served:	287	336	623
Visiting Parents	144	172	316
Non-visiting Parents	143	164	307

FAMILY VISITATION CENTERS

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.



Services Offered

- ◆ 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 monitor up to two unrelated families within one room.
- ◆ Monitored Exchanges for Off-Site Visits: Facilitation of monitored exchanges ensures regular off-site visitation without adults having contact. Child can be exchanged on-site for both, the pick-up for the visit and drop off for return.

Six Child-Friendly and Convenient Locations

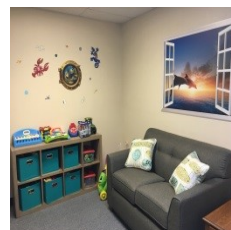
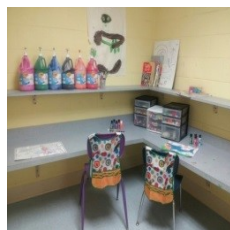
Contact CHILD Inc for information for the locations in New Castle County
302.283.7518

Contact People's Place II, Inc. for information on the locations in Kent & Sussex Counties
302.424.2420

***Belvedere State Service Center**

310 Kiamensi Road
Wilmington, DE 19802

*Closed September 2019



Dover Center

165 Commerce Way
Dover, DE 19904

Hudson State Service Center

501 Ogletown Road
Newark, DE 19711

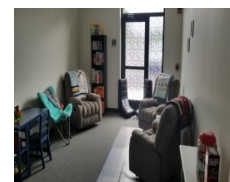


Milford State Service Center

13 S.W. Front Street
Milford, DE 19963

Safe Haven Center

210 Cleaver Farm Road
Middletown, DE 19709



Adams State Service Center

546 South Bedford Street
Georgetown, DE 19947

DIVISION OF FAMILY SERVICES STATISTICS

The Division of Family Services (DFS) screens for domestic violence when an allegation of child abuse or neglect is reported to the DFS hotline. In FY2019, DFS received **21,489** reports alleging child abuse or neglect. Of those, **8,744** (41%) were accepted for investigation. Of those reports accepted for investigation, **1,593** (18%) also alleged domestic violence. Of those reports accepted for investigation, **673** (8%) also identified domestic violence at the conclusion of the investigation (all finding types). A total of **825** investigations were substantiated and **270** (33%) of the substantiated cases stated that domestic violence was reported during the investigation risk assessment.

The Domestic Violence Liaison Program is a partnership of the Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families (DSCYF), DFS, CHILD, Inc. and the SAFE Program of People's Place II, Inc. Implemented in 2002, the domestic violence advocates from CHILD, Inc. and the SAFE Program have been co-located at DFS offices. The domestic violence liaisons 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. These liaisons served a total of **185** victims, referred by DFS in cases where domestic violence was identified.

New Castle County CHILD, Inc.	Kent County People's Place	Sussex County People's Place
Victims Served by DFS Liaisons: 94	Victims Served by DFS Liaisons: 47	Victims Served by DFS Liaisons: 44

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 intergenerational 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 provides these services to children.

<u>New Castle County</u> CHILD, Inc.	<u>Kent & Sussex Counties</u> People's Place
Helping Children Heal	Turning Point
Children/Adolescents Served: 43	Children/Adolescents Served: 42
Parents/Caretakers Served: 84	Parents/Caretakers Served: 31
Total: 127	Total: 73

TREATMENT PROGRAM STATISTICS

In FY2019, there were four certified treatment providers offering batterers' intervention programs in Delaware. Each of these programs followed the guidelines established through the Domestic Violence Intervention Standards and were certified by the DVCC Batterers' Intervention Certification Panel. The four programs are Catholic Charities and CHILD, Inc., in New Castle County; Turning Point at People's Place in Kent and Sussex Counties; and the Family Advocacy Center at Dover Air Force.

	<u>Catholic Charities</u>		<u>CHILD, Inc.</u>		<u>Turning Point Peoples Place II</u>		
	Male	*Female	Male	Female		Male	Female
Probation Evaluated:	76	0	140	38	Kent: Sussex:	78 83	7 4
With PFA Order Evaluated:	24	0	43	3	Kent: Sussex:	11 13	1 4
Self-Referrals:	1	0	5	0	Kent: Sussex:	3 1	1 0
Court Ordered:	2	0	26	13	Kent: Sussex:	9 5	3 3
Participated in Group Intervention:	74	0	255**	56**	Kent: Sussex:	116 96	12 12
Completed Intervention:	39	0	127	37	Kent: Sussex:	82 67	8 9
Total Number Served:	103	0	373	109	Kent: Sussex:	145 120	17 14

*Catholic Charities did not have any female participants in the Batterers' Intervention.

**Includes former clients that returned to group on a voluntary basis.

NOTE: 2019 data was not available for the Family Advocacy Center at Dover Air Force Base.

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 liaison between victims and probation officers and provide guidance through the criminal justice system once an offender is placed on community supervision.

New Castle County Domestic Violence Supervision

Number of DV Offenders Supervised:	570
Number of Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases:	11
Probationer/Probation Officer Ratio:	52:1
Number of Victims Served by Victim Service Agents:	300

Kent County Domestic Violence Supervision

Number of DV Offenders Supervised:	250
Number of Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases:	5
Probationer/Probation Officer Ratio:	50:1
Number of Victims Served by Victim Service Agents:	137

Sussex County Domestic Violence Supervision

Number of DV Offenders Supervised:	194
Number of Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases:	4
Probationer/Probation Officer Ratio:	49:1

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. Reviews focus on identifying trends, patterns and obstacles in services, assessing agency interventions, and most importantly, 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 wealth of 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 supplemental [2019 Fatal Incident Review Team \(FIRT\) Annual Report](https://dvcc.delaware.gov/) is available online at the DVCC website (<https://dvcc.delaware.gov/>). 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 2018; and information and recommendations from the death and near-death cases reviewed by FIRT in 2018.

Chairs:

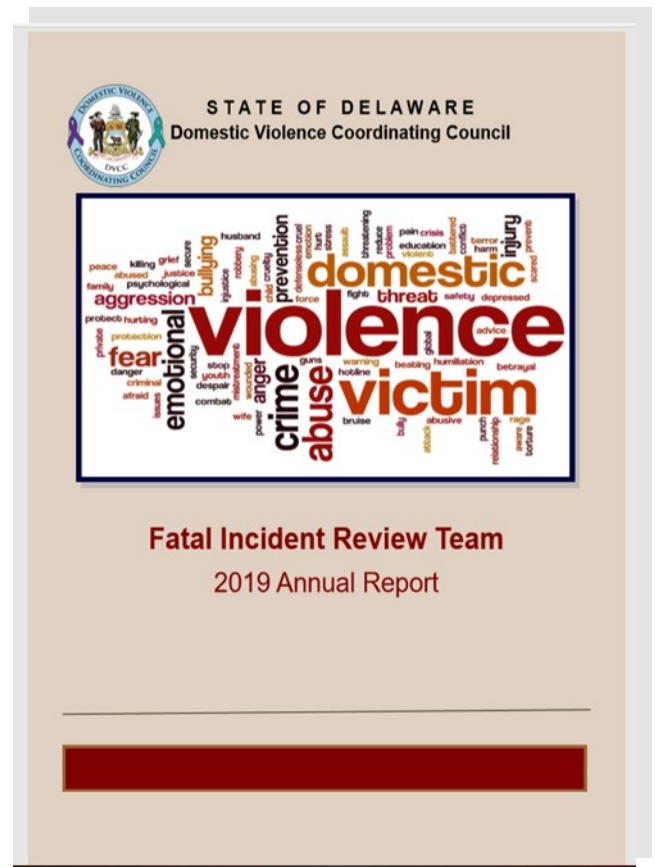
Hon. Jan Jurden, President Judge, Superior Court

Professor Dana Harrington Conner, At-Large Member

Hon. Vincent Poppiti, At-Large Member

Staff Information:

Natasha Smith, 302-255-0408
Natasha.Smith@delaware.gov



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVOR STORY

People who experience victimization are often not prepared for the way it will impact their lives. Many times, they are not aware of their rights, how the criminal justice system works, or what type of community resources are available to support them and their families. Victims of intimate partner violence often times do not report the victimization to the police, or if they do, they may get overwhelmed by the process and disengage. The domestic violence community has suggested that the inclusion of victim services with the law enforcement response may help prepare victims to participate in the criminal justice system and remain engaged in the process. As such, law enforcement agencies in Delaware are uniquely positioned to connect those who have experienced victimization with police-based victim services. Local police departments such as Georgetown, Millsboro, Dover, New Castle County, the City of Wilmington and Newark have in-house victim services. All other local jurisdiction and the Delaware State Police utilize the DSP Victim Services/Delaware Victim Center. The police-based victim specialists may also connect victims and survivors to other victim serving professionals that can respond to their unique needs. Connecting victims to the Victim Social Workers within the Department of Justice, the Department of Correction, or shelter and community-based resources offers a coordinated effort to support victims and survivors impacted by domestic violence.

“As a police-based victim service specialist I recently worked with a Spanish speaking woman that was a victim of domestic violence and sexual assault at the hands of her husband. The officers responding to the report included me as soon as domestic violence was identified. Recognizing the need for safe shelter, we were able to coordinate with one of the Emergency DV Shelters that is located in a different county. The officer and I were able to coordinate with the shelter staff to transport her to the shelter so that she could work with their bilingual staff and advocates. She was able to participate in the investigation via phone and our detective and bilingual officer meeting with her to interview her further. The coordination with her shelter advocate and our agency was seamless and while these types of investigations can take a while, I was able to remain in contact with her to provide updates as the case was reviewed by the prosecutor. By working in collaboration with the victim and her shelter advocates, we were able to keep her engaged and informed in the process, while she was receiving additional supportive services and maintaining her safety, which was her primary goal.”

- Police Based Victim Service Specialist

If you are in danger, please call 911

**Domestic Violence/Rape Crisis
24—Hour Hotline Numbers**

New Castle County

Domestic Violence—302.762.6110
Bi-Lingual—302.672.6110
ContactLifeline—1.800.262.9800
YWCA Sexual Assault Resource Center—1.800.773.8570

Kent & Sussex County

Domestic Violence—302.422.8058
Abriendo Puertas Bi-Lingual—302.745.9874
Contact Lifeline—1.800.262.9800
YWCA Sexual Assault Resource Center—1.800.773.8570

DVCC Main Office

Leonard L. Williams Justice Center
500 N. King Street, Suite 700
Wilmington, DE 19801

Phone: 302.255.0405
Fax: 302.255.2236

<https://delaware.gov/>

DVCC Kent & Sussex County Office

Milford State Service Center
13 S. W. Front Street, Suite 105
Milford, DE 19963

Phone: 302.424.7238
Fax: 302.424.5311

<https://delaware.gov/>

Capitol Police

Domestic Violence Intervention
Program (VIP)
150 Martin Luther King, Jr., Blvd.
P.O. Box 1401
Dover, DE 19901

<http://capitolpd.delaware.gov/>



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, emotional, sexual or economic abuse; intimidation; deprivation; social isolation or repeated battering and injury.
- ♦ Over time the violence 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 the victims of violence if you are being abused.
- ♦ Although you do not have control over your partner's violence, you **DO** have a choice about how to respond to him/her and how to best get yourself and your children to safety.

24-Hour Domestic Violence Hotlines & Shelters

New Castle County—302.762.6110

New Castle County Bi-Lingual—302.762.6110

Kent & Sussex County—302.422.8058

Abriendo Puertas Bi-Lingual—302.745.9874

All hotline calls are confidential.

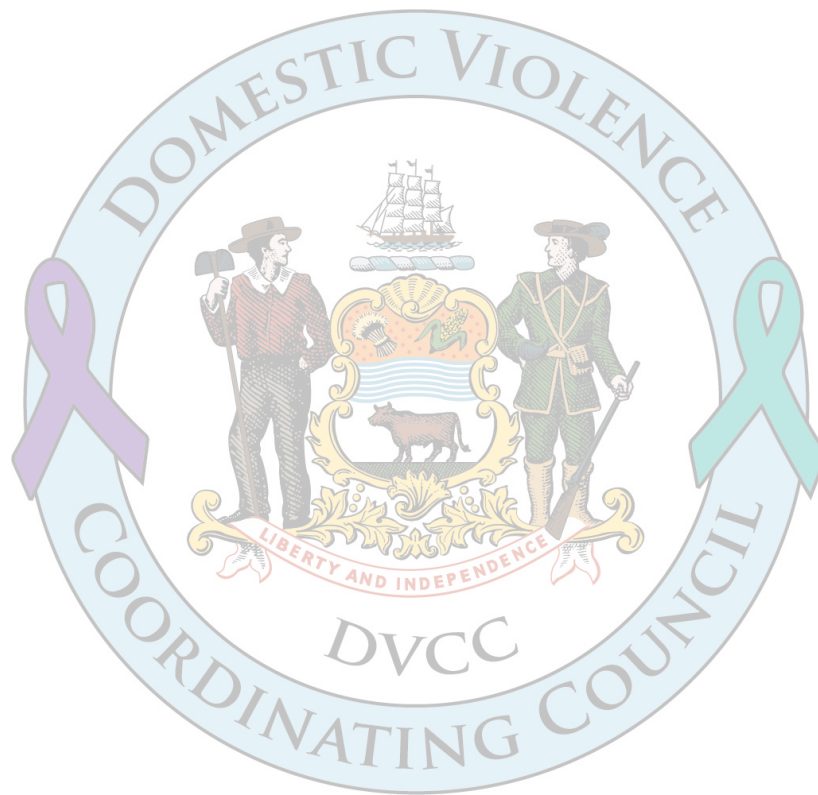
Safety Tips

To increase your safety and the safety of your children:

- ♦ Have important numbers accessible to you and your children (i.e. 911, family members, etc.).
- ♦ Ask a neighbor to be aware of suspicious activity in your home.
- ♦ Plan an escape route in case of an emergency and practice the plan with your children.
- ♦ Think in advance of where you may be able to go with your children in a hurry.
- ♦ Leave extra money, car keys, clothing and copies of documents with someone you trust.
- ♦ Call a Domestic Violence Hotline for assistance in planning.
- ♦ If you are in danger, please try to use a safer computer that someone abusive does not have direct or remote access to. Use a safe computer such as a library or a trusted friend's computer.

If you leave the relationship:

- ♦ Obtain a Protection From Abuse (PFA) Order and keep a copy with you **AT ALL TIMES**. Keep extra copies in your car, at school, work and/or with someone you trust. Remember—**leaving your batterer is a very dangerous time**.
- ♦ Notify all childcare providers if your partner has been restricted from seeing the children in addition to who has permission to pick up your children.
- ♦ Change the locks and make sure all outside lights are working.
- ♦ Have your calls screened at work and use an answering machine to screen your calls at home.
- ♦ Avoid places where your partner knows you will be (grocery stores, banks, etc.).
- ♦ When you feel down and ready to return to the relationship, call a support group, domestic violence hotline or someone you trust.



Domestic Violence Coordinating Council

<https://dvcc.delaware.gov/>