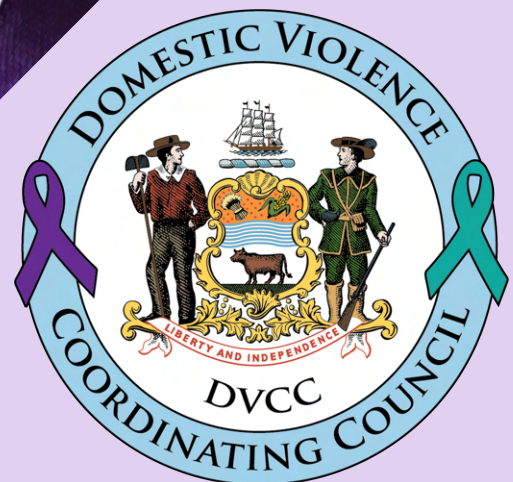


# Annual Report

Fiscal Year  
2021

**Domestic Violence  
Coordinating  
Council**





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# 20 Chair's 21 Message

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On behalf of the members of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, we are pleased to present the Council's Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Report.

Annually, the DVCC provides data on the incidence of domestic violence in Delaware and our response to those incidents. The Annual Report also highlights the work of the DVCC committees and staff during the fiscal year. This year, while the Report provides domestic violence data in a familiar format to previous years, we continued to experience the effects of a pandemic throughout the fiscal year and forward. In last year's letter, I discussed the additional barriers caused by the pandemic including the increased likelihood of violence, and stay at home orders that prevented opportunities for victims to leave. Many victims did not reach out for services last year because of health concerns or because they believed the courts were closed. The pandemic brought out the willingness and determination of the domestic violence community to collaborate to provide safety and assistance to victims of domestic violence.

As this fiscal year progressed, we saw the various agencies and stakeholders continue to adapt to a virtual world of meetings, interviews, and court hearings. Information was posted on websites to inform the public of services available. A method was developed to allow for people seeking relief from domestic violence to file their petitions, evidence, and other paperwork electronically. In short, the working theme for this past year was collaboration. As we continue to work through the effects of the pandemic and study the statistics, we need to keep our focus on "the why." By way of example, why did the number of hotlines calls go down between Fiscal Year 2020 and 2021? At the same time, calls to law enforcement increased slightly, Family Court PFA filings increased, and the number of individuals sheltered also increased. Analysis will have to be conducted to determine why these statistics ended up like they did so that we may adapt our practices as we strive to meet the needs of victims and improve the system's response to domestic violence during this pandemic and into the future. The DVCC will continue to collaborate with our criminal justice and community partners to identify gaps in services and to develop solutions to address those gaps.

We wish to commend the Delaware law enforcement agencies, legal community, medical professionals, and advocates for their hard work and commitment in the fight against domestic violence, especially during these challenging times.

# Executive 20 Summary 21

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We are proud to present to you our Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Report. This report highlights the DVCC's initiatives during the past year, as well as statistical information on domestic violence incidents and services provided throughout Delaware.

The statistical data that begins on page 25 reflects the collective efforts of our community-based and justice-based partners in the State's response to domestic violence.

Highlight's of the DVCC's accomplishments and activities for FY2021 include:

- Partnering with Arizona State University on a research project *Intimate Partner Violence – Assessment of Pretrial Safety*. This study will adapt commonly used intimate partner violence risk assessment instruments to inform pretrial decision-making in intimate partner violence cases.
- The Legislative Committee carefully reviewed and monitored domestic violence-related legislation that was proposed during the legislative session in the Delaware General Assembly.
- The Medical Committee published the updated *Domestic Violence Resource Manual for Healthcare Professionals*
- The Training Committee and the Law Enforcement Training Workgroup launched a series of online training for law enforcement and allied partners in the **Delaware Learning Center**. The first online series focused on topics such as:
  - Evidence-Based Prosecution
  - The Sexualization of Strangulation
  - The Identification and Response to Stalking
  - Protection From Abuse Orders: An Overview of the Family Court Process

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

# 20 Council 21 Members

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## CHAIR

**Honorable Michael Newell**  
Chief Judge, Family Court

## VICE-CHAIR

**Laura Graham, Esquire**  
At-Large Member

Honorable Ernesto Lopez, 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 Brendan O'Neill, Chief Defender, Office of Defense Services

Honorable Claire DeMatteis, 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. Margaret Chou, At-Large Member, Representative of the Medical Community

Professor Dana Harrington Conner, At-Large Member

Debra Reed, At-Large Member

Ariana Langford, At-Large Member

Professor Jennifer Naccarelli, At-Large Member

Honorable Vincent Poppiti, At-Large Member

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## Staff Members

Maureen Monagle, Executive Director

Natasha Smith, Social Services Senior Administrator

Dayna Belfiore, Criminal Justice Senior Planner

Amanda Alcaraz, Trainer/ Educator

Timothy Valeski, High Risk DV Coordinator - Contractor

Stacey Burrell - Administrative Specialist

# Vision Statement

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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.

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## 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.



# 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.

**Children and Domestic Violence**  
Honorable Josette Manning ~ Chair

**Criminal Justice**  
Honorable Jan Jurden, Honorable  
Brendan O'Neill, and Master  
Corporal Andrea Warfel ~ Chairs

**Elderly and Domestic Violence**  
Honorable Nathaniel McQueen ~  
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 ~ Chair

**Batterers' Intervention  
Certification Panel**

**Fatal Incident Review Team  
{FIRT}**  
Honorable Jan Jurden, Professor  
Dana Harrington Conner, and  
Honorable Vincent Poppiti ~ Chair



# Children & Domestic Violence Committee

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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 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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The Committee received presentations on *Domestic Violence Prevention and Support During COVID-19* and *Substance Exposed Infants and Domestic Violence*. During the presentations, the Committee learned more about local resources available to those affected by domestic violence and was able to ask questions from those directly involved in providing services.

Members of the Committee continued to work in partnership with the Separating and Divorcing Parents Education (SPDE) Workgroup of the DSCYF to make the classes more accessible to litigants. After in-person options were no longer available due to COVID-19 restrictions, an online provider offered a basic parenting course as well as a *Parenting with High-Conflict* course for participants. The Committee expressed concerns that the High Conflict portion was not consistent with domestic violence components covered by other providers certified by the DSCYF, and did not meet the needs of litigants who were required to complete this course. The Committee recognized the expertise of local providers and recommended they offer their courses online. This issue will continue to be discussed in Fiscal Year 2022.

# Criminal Justice Committee

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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, DELJIS, advocates and community partners to resolve issues specific to the needs of those affected by domestic violence.

## FY 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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During Fiscal Year 2021, the Criminal Justice Committee received quarterly updates on the progress of the Domestic Violence High Risk Team, a pilot project that utilizes a multi-disciplinary approach to identify and track high-risk domestic violence cases in Kent County.

The Committee continued to discuss the implementation and data collection of the Lethal Violence Protection Order, as well as law enforcement being able to file for relinquishment orders in the Justice of the Peace Court.

The Committee continued to discuss the unique challenges of bail decisions in cases involving domestic violence. The need for a validated risk assessment instrument to be used in pretrial settings involving intimate partner violence continues to be a priority for this group. This topic will continue to be a focus of this Committee during the next fiscal year under a project in partnership with the Arizona State University.

Law enforcements' use of body-worn cameras and their impact on victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking presents a unique set of policy and protocol challenges. The Committee will continue to engage in conversations with the Delaware Police Chiefs' Council and the Department of Justice on any policy updates as more law enforcement agencies deploy officers with this technology.

# DVCC Highlight

## Intimate Partner Violence – Assessment of Pretrial Safety

The DVCC has partnered with the School of Social Work at Arizona State University (ASU) on their grant funded research project, Developing Domestic Violence-Specific Risk Assessment Tools for use in Pretrial Settings & Assessing the Feasibility of a Study to Examine the Impact of these Developed Tools on Pretrial Decision Making. The study is also known by the shorter title, Intimate Partner Violence – Assessment of Pretrial Safety (IPV-APS).

Intimate partner violence (IPV) risk assessments are commonly used by frontline police officers to connect survivors with victim services agencies but have not been examined for their ability to inform decision making and enhance safety in the pretrial period. At the same time, current pretrial risk assessments generally assess the likelihood that an offender will fail to appear or is a risk to the general public; these assessments do not include factors that predict intimate partner violence re-offense, re-assault, or lethality. This leaves decision-makers in the criminal justice system with limited information about the likelihood of risk specific to the IPV survivor when making decisions about pretrial release, conditions of release, and bail. Conducting this research in Delaware will allow researchers to provide state-specific risk assessment information and to answer additional questions of interest to stakeholders.

The goal of this project is to adapt commonly used IPV risk assessment instruments to inform pretrial decision-making in IPV cases. Researchers are collaborating with communities, criminal justice agencies, domestic violence practitioners, and survivors to identify which factors predict safety during the pretrial period and to develop IPV-specific guidance for the use of assessments by criminal justice decision-makers. ASU has selected partners who utilize at least one of the three common/validated domestic violence risk assessment tools. They reached out to the DVCC because of Delaware's use of the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP).

ASU was approved for their research grant in May of 2021. This research project will be implemented in FY2022, and look forward to providing updates to our stakeholders over the next two years.

This project is funded by Arnold Ventures, whose core mission is to invest in evidence-based solutions that maximize opportunity and minimize injustice. ASU is the recipient of the funds. The DVCC does not receive funding as a partner in this project.



# Elderly & Domestic Violence Committee

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The Elderly and Domestic Violence Committee continuously reviews 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, made up of representatives from the Department of Safety and Homeland Security; the Department of Justice; law enforcement; advocates; and community partners, met quarterly to discuss the evolving needs of aging victims and survivors.

## FY 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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During Fiscal Year 2021, the Committee identified training needs to benefit professionals working with elderly victims and survivors. DVCC staff provided virtual training for Adult Protective Services on the topics of *Identifying Domestic Violence* and *Navigating Domestic Violence Resources*. The Committee shifted their focus to building partnerships and collaborations with agencies and providers whose work intersects with elderly victims and survivors of domestic violence. In honor of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, the DVCC Elderly and Domestic Violence Committee partnered with the Department of Justice to share a brief video that identified signs of domestic violence in later life as well as resources for victims to access help.

In Fiscal Year 2022, the Committee will redistribute the needs assessment that began in Fiscal Year 2020 and will continue to reach out to agencies to build collaborations and partnerships with those that have a similar focus as the committee.

# Immigration Committee

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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 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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The Immigration Committee continued its commitment to identifying federal policy changes that affect victims and to educate service providers and community members. The Committee continued to be a trusted resource for information exchange among service providers. The Committee discussed the benefits of using a community engagement approach to better reach and serve Latinx community members. A community engagement model will actively involve community members in a wide variety of prevention efforts, intervention strategies, and research. To do this, the Committee explored best practices for holding listening sessions with community agencies and survivors. The Committee is seeking the input of survivors to have a fuller picture of the services available to Latinx in the community, understand the barriers to providing services to Latinx survivors, and areas where connections between providers and Latinx consumers can be improved or created. This effort will continue in Fiscal Year 2022.

# Legislative Committee

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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.

## FY 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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During Fiscal Year 2021, six bills that came through the Legislative Committee were passed by the General Assembly. Those bills were as follows:

- [Senate Bill 91](#) which leverages technological advances to allow Family Court the flexibility to permit litigants to publish through a legal notices' website established by the Court.
- [House Bill 104](#) which moves the date by which the Department of Education shall submit its annual report to the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council from August 1 to October 15 of each year.
- [House Bill 124](#) which prohibits a person who is the subject of a Protection from Abuse Order of the Family Court and who knows or has reason to know, that the Order has been issued from purchasing, owning, possessing, or controlling a deadly weapon or ammunition for a firearm in this State. This Act also prohibits the subject of an outstanding arrest warrant, active indictment or information related to a felony or misdemeanor crime of domestic violence from purchasing a firearm. The subject of the pending criminal process must know or have reason to know that the process is pending in order for the prohibition to apply.

- [House Bill 136](#) which sets forth eight factors a court must consider in determining a proposed relocation of a child for a period of 60 days or more in litigation involving custody or visitation. These factors include (1) the nature, quality, extent, and duration of the child's relationship with the individual proposing to relocate and with the non-relocating individuals, siblings, and other significant persons in the child's life; (2) the age, developmental stage, needs of the child, and the likely impact of the relocation on the child, taking into account any special needs of the child; (3) the feasibility of preserving the relationship between the non-relocating individual and the child; (4) the child's preference; (5) any established patterns of the relocating individual to thwart or promote the relationship between the child and non-relocating individual; (6) whether the relocation will enhance the general quality of life of the child and relocating individual; (7) the reasons for requesting and opposing the relocation; and (8) any other factor affecting the best interests of the child.



- [House Bill 190](#) which updates the domestic violence first offender diversion program to allow the following offenses to be eligible for the program: assault third, terroristic threatening, and criminal contempt of a domestic violence protective order or lethal violence protective order. In addition, the Act makes these same offenses ineligible for probation before judgement in the Court of Common Pleas and Family Court.
- [House Bill 227](#) which adds child abuse in the third degree to the list of enumerated criminal offenses for which, if convicted, one is by definition considered a "perpetrator of domestic violence" for purposes of this Child Protection From Domestic Violence Act.



The following bills are still pending in the General Assembly:

- [House Bill 254](#) which requires all public schools that serve pupils in grades 7-12 that issue pupil identification cards to have printed on the identification cards the telephone or text numbers for the National Suicide Prevention and National Domestic Violence Hotlines and allows them to add the National Sexual Assault, Teen Dating Violence and Bullying Hotlines. The Act requires all public institutions of higher learning in Delaware, which issue student identification cards, to print on the student identification cards the telephone or text numbers for National Suicide Prevention, Domestic Violence Hotlines and local campus police or campus security telephone numbers and allows the institutions to add the National Sexual Assault Hotline number.

This bill stems from one of the recommendations the DVCC made in 2020, under House Resolution 12 of the 150th General Assembly, when the DVCC was requested to examine the expansion of advocacy and legal resources for minors who are victims of teen dating and sexual violence and make recommendations.

- [House Bill 264](#) creates a Sexual Violence Protection Order (SVPO). The civil order permits a person who has been the victim of non-consensual sexual conduct or non-consensual sexual penetration to apply for a sexual violence protective order if the person has a reasonable fear, based on specific conduct occurring contemporaneously or subsequent to the non-consensual sexual conduct or penetration, that the perpetrator of the sexual conduct will harm the petitioner in the future. An emergency ex parte order may be issued if a petitioner proves by a preponderance of the evidence that the respondent poses an immediate and present danger of causing physical injury to the petitioner. The protective order is a civil remedy available whether or not the respondent has been charged with a crime and whether or not the petitioner reported the respondent's conduct to law enforcement officials. The Act provides for an emergency ex parte hearing as well as a non-emergency hearing in Superior Court. Possible remedies in addition to an order restraining the respondent from any kind of contact with the petitioner include restraining the respondent from going to, or remaining in, the places a petitioner might frequent including home, school, or work. Violation of a sexual violence protective order is punishable as criminal contempt, either as a Class A misdemeanor, or Class F felony if contempt of the order results in physical injury, or involved threatened use, or use of, a deadly weapon or firearm. Petitions under the Act must be verified. If any party falsely swears in a petition or hearing under the Act, the person may be liable for a misdemeanor or felony.

The need for this mechanism of protection was identified after the DVCC held listening sessions with community-based advocates and attorneys. Advocates were invited to voice concerns or share some challenges victims and survivors may experience. Those sessions were held in September and November of 2020.

In the coming year, the DVCC may be seeking statutory amendments which would enhance the information that may be obtained by the Fatal Incident Review Team.

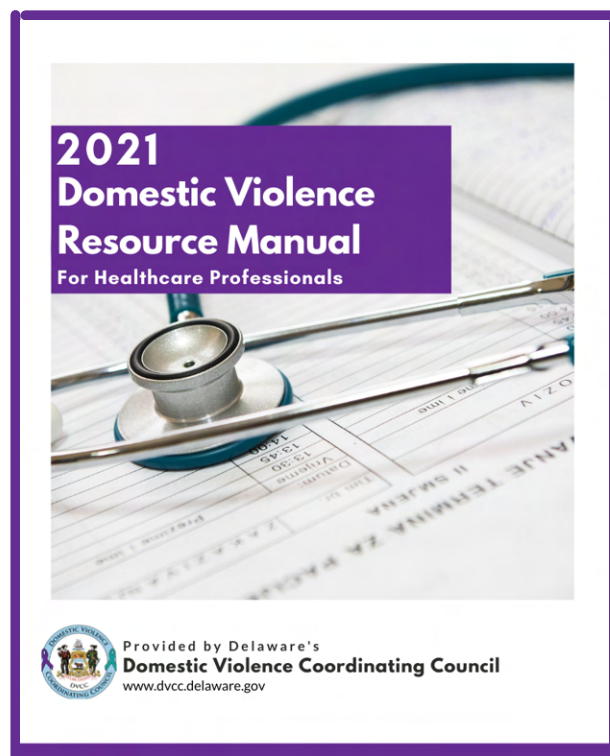
# Medical Committee

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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 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.

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# FY 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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The Committee completed the process of revising the *Domestic Violence Resource Manual for Healthcare Professionals* which was originally released in 2011.

Highlights Include:

- The Medical Manual Revision Workgroup met monthly to develop a manual geared towards healthcare professionals that included best practices on domestic violence resources.
- The workgroup consisted of healthcare representatives working in the fields of obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, nursing, geriatrics, mental health, and advocates from the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence and YWCA of Delaware. Additionally, subject matter experts in the areas of Traumatic Brain Injury and LGBTQIA+ specific issues provided information and insight into the development of those specific topics within the Medical Manual.
- The Committee continued a collaborative dialogue with representatives from the Division of Services for Aging Adults and Person with Disabilities, the Office of the Child Advocate, and the Department of Justice to produce a legal mandates chapter in the manual.
- The Committee worked in partnership with the University of Delaware Center for Drug and Health Studies to provide Delaware-specific data for the Medical Manual.
- The revised Medical Manual was published and made available on the DVCC's website in March of 2021.

Since the completion of the 2021 DVCC Resource Manual for Healthcare Professionals, the Committee has worked to distribute the manual to providers around the state. Additionally, in Fiscal Year 2022, the Committee will develop a plan to provide training on the manual across the state.



# 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 trainings. 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 pass on 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 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During Fiscal Year 2021, the Training Committee facilitated and/or coordinated six trainings for professionals. COVID-19 restrictions prevented in-person training events, but the Training Committee rose to the challenge and delivered professional trainings virtually.

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. Additionally, DVCC staff trained two groups of cadets at the Wilmington University Constables Academy. In June 2021, the Training Committee welcomed approximately 250 participants to a virtual, full-day training event on strangulation, presented by the Alliance for HOPE International.

COVID-19 restrictions inhibited the annual Law Enforcement Training Conference from taking place in person, but the Law Enforcement Workgroup led the initiative to deliver virtual webinars to Delaware's law enforcement community. In Spring 2021, the Online Law Enforcement Training Series was launched on the Delaware Learning Center, a first for the DVCC!

The DVCC provided training on the following topics:

- Domestic Violence Basics: Power, Control and the Cycle of Violence
- Screening for Domestic Violence and Response
- Teen Dating Violence & Healthy Relationships
- Teen Dating Violence Survivors in the Courtroom
- DV and Vulnerable Adults
- Strangulation
- DV, Vulnerable Adults and Trauma-Informed Practices

# 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 batterers' intervention 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 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Treatment Committee set out to update the existing Domestic Violence Treatment Standards. A smaller Domestic Violence Intervention Revision Workgroup was established to focus on the task of enhancing the current approaches to domestic violence offender accountability. The Committee sought technical assistance from national experts, and began working with the Center for Court Innovation's (CCI) Abusive Partner Accountability and Engagement Training & Technical Assistance Project. This past year, the Committee participated in trainings, discussions, and self-assessment surveys that will help the group identify strategies which are grounded in a coordinated, community and justice system response to enhance accountability for and engagement with domestic violence offenders. CCI's work is based on five guiding principles:

1. Survivor voices are centered
2. Accountability is active and relational
3. Hope and dignity are restored
4. Culture and community are reflected
5. Interventions and engagement strategies respond to the needs and strengths of abusive partners

The training and technical assistance work will continue as the Committee works towards the goal of finalizing the revised DVCC's Domestic Violence Intervention Standards before the end of the next fiscal year.

# Batterers' Intervention Certification Panel

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The Batterers' Intervention Certification Panel (the 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.

The Panel meets every year and as needed to review new applications for certification and 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 Panel also approved the modifications programs made to offer the program and individual services virtually. This modification will ensure individuals who are out-of-state or have transportation issues can participate in the programs. The annual review process helps Delaware maintain high quality and streamlined treatment services statewide.

At the conclusion of Fiscal Year 2021, the Panel certified three intervention programs in Delaware. Of the three certified programs, CHILD, Inc and Turning Point may be offering virtual intervention options in light of the changes made during the pandemic.

## **CHILD, INC.**

507 Philadelphia Pike  
Wilmington, DE 19809

Phone: 302.762.8989  
Fax: 302.762.8987

## **DOVER AIR FORCE BASE**

436 MDOS/SGOW Family  
Advocacy Program  
300 Tuskegee Blvd  
Dover AFB, DE 19902

Phone: 302.677.2711

## **TURNING POINT (PEOPLES PLACE II)**

1129 Airport Rd  
Milford, DE 19963

Phone: 302.424.2420 Fax:  
302.424.2402



# Public Awareness and Education Committee

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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.

## FY2021 Accomplishments

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During Fiscal Year 2021, DVCC Staff facilitated 12 domestic violence and/or teen dating violence workshops, reaching approximately 111 people. DVCC Staff partnered with CareerTEAM Wilmington and with Parkway Academy in Dover to deliver workshops that address issues with intimate partner violence, healthy relationships, consent, and teen dating violence.

The Public Awareness and Education Committee again created a collaborative social media project to honor Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month in February 2021. People's Place II, Child, Inc, YWCA Delaware, and the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence formed the TDVAM Workgroup and developed a short, informative video about teen dating violence resources for teens.

This fiscal year, the Committee continued to reach more Delawareans through our ongoing social media campaign. The campaign addressed historically underserved survivors in the LGBTQIA+ and disabilities communities and provided information about intimate partner violence resources in Delaware.

Due to COVID-19 gathering restrictions, the DVCC did not participate in community awareness events in FY2021.

## FY2021 Education Workshops

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- Monthly DV Education at Career TEAM, Wilmington
- Teen Dating Violence Workshops at Parkway Academy, Dover

# Domestic Violence Awareness Month

## Virtual Proclamation Signing

October 6, 2020

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. Governor Carney signed the Proclamation on October 6, 2020.



# Teen Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention

## Virtual Proclamation Signing

February 10, 2021

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month provides an opportunity for citizens to learn more about preventing dating violence among adolescents, promoting healthy dating practices, as well provide services and assistance to victims. Governor Carney signed the Proclamation on February 10, 2021.



# Outstanding Community Service Award

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For the past 15 years, Carolyn Becker has become an invaluable member of Delaware's victim advocate community.

Carolyn started working for the Wilmington Police Department in 2005 as the Bilingual Victims Case Coordinator. Carolyn's proficiency in Spanish helps to remove the communication barriers, often ensuring that victims have access to the support that is available. She guides individuals through the criminal justice system with professionalism and skill; and performs her work with a strong desire to lessen the impact of a crime on the victim.

Carolyn informs and assists victims who seek Protection From Abuse orders, develops safety plans after the police have been called, and connects victims to supportive services in the community, ensuring victims and their families receive the best possible assistance while maintaining their safety. Carolyn is a passionate, determined, dedicated advocate, and active member of the Domestic Violence Task Force, Victims' Rights Task Force and the DVCC's Immigration Committee. She has demonstrated a commitment for bringing professionals together and has mentored others in the field.

She is a compassionate advocate who continues to make a difference in the lives of countless survivors. The DVCC presented Carolyn with this award during the VIRTUAL Governor's Proclamation signing for Domestic Violence Awareness Month on October 6, 2020.



# Annual Law Enforcement Training

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Though the DVCC's Annual Law Enforcement Training Conference was postponed due to COVID-19, the DVCC and the Law Enforcement Training Workgroup developed the Online Law Enforcement Training Series. With support from the Delaware Learning Center, DVCC staff created a series of four asynchronous, self-paced webinars for law enforcement officers and those who work with them to serve and support survivors of domestic violence. Webinar topics and speakers included:

- *Evidence-Based Prosecution*, presented by John Wilkinson, Esq. (Attorney Advisor for Æquitas)
- *Protection from Abuse Order: An Overview of the Family Court Process* presented by Erica Davis (Delaware Family Court DV Coordinator)
- *The Sexualization of Strangulation* presented by Kelsey McKay, JD. (Director and CEO of Respond Against Violence)
- *The Identification and Response to Stalking* presented by Jennifer Landhuis, MS (Director of the National Stalking Prevention And Resource Center)



# Year in Review

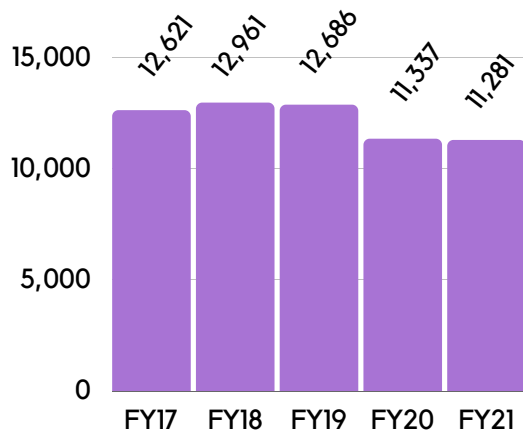
## Domestic Violence Statistics

In FY2021, there were a total of **22,745** combined criminal and non-criminal domestic violence incidents reported in Delaware.



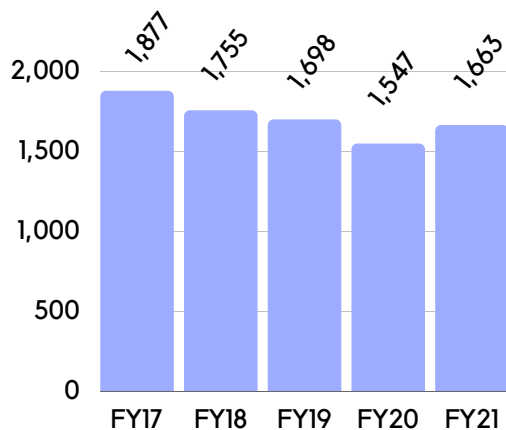
### Criminal and Non Criminal DV Incidents

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.



### Criminal DV Incidents

In FY2021, the total number of reported criminal domestic violence incidents was **11,281**.



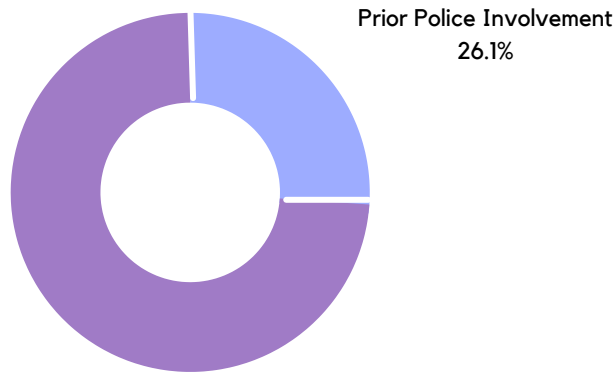
### Criminal DV Incidents with Injury

Of the 11,281 reported criminal domestic violence incidents in FY2021, **1,663** resulted in physical injury to the victim.

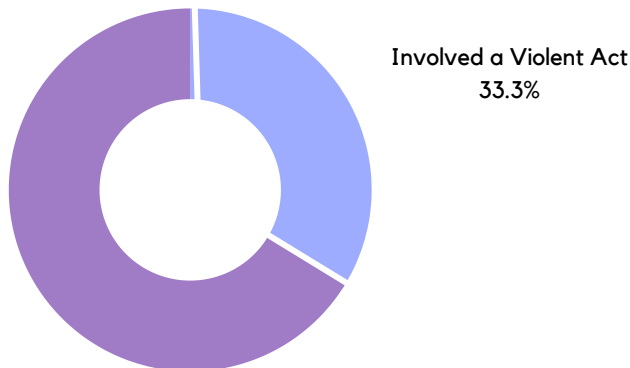
Source: Domestic Violence Incident Reports as captured in Delaware Criminal Justice Information System (DELJIS)

# Year in Review

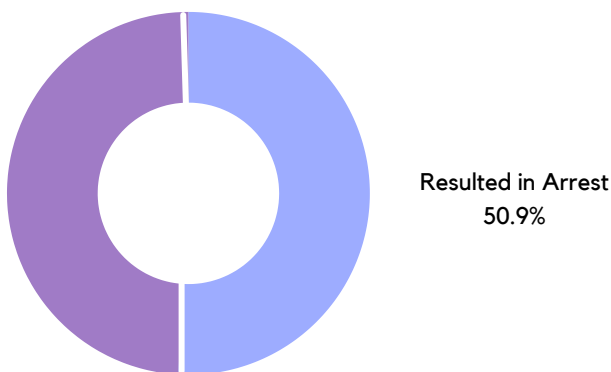
## Domestic Violence Statistics



In FY2021, **3,854** of the criminal domestic violence incidents had prior police involvement.



In FY2021, **3,762** of the criminal domestic violence incidents involved a violent act.



In FY2021, **5,741** of the criminal domestic violence incidents resulted in an arrest.

Source: Domestic Violence Incident Reports as captured in Delaware Criminal Justice Information System (DELJIS)

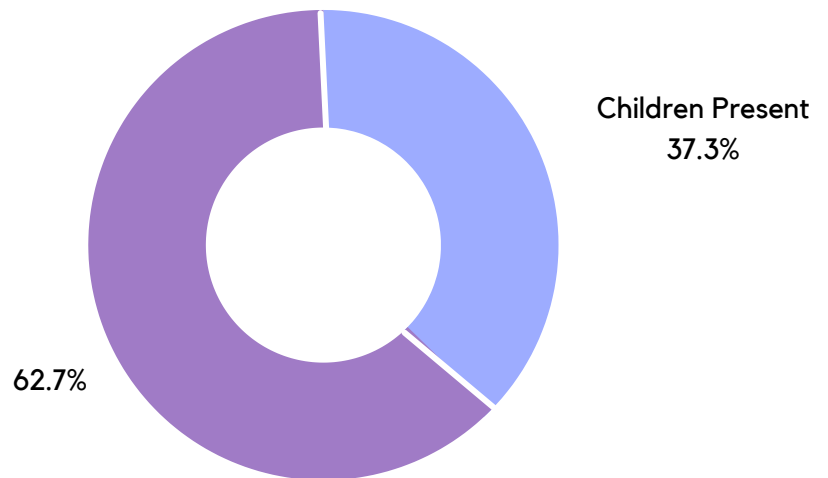


# Year in Review

# Domestic Violence Statistics

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In FY2021, 4,206 of the criminal domestic violence incidents happened with children present



Source: Domestic Violence Incident Reports as captured in Delaware Criminal Justice Information System (DELJIS)



# Year in Review

## Intimate Partner Criminal Statistics

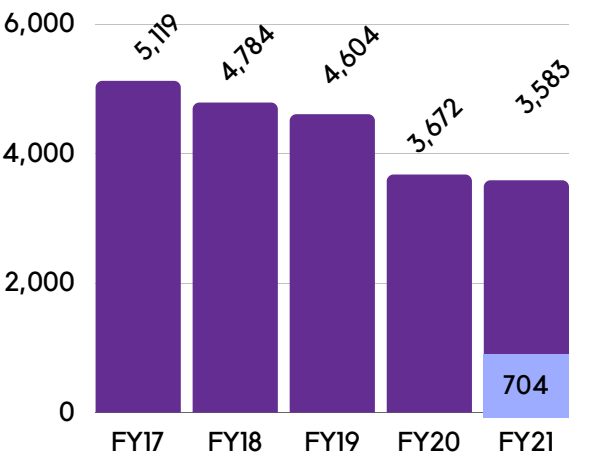
Incidents of domestic violence can be perpetrated against an intimate partner or a family member. Intimate partners can include current and former spouses, current and former dating couples with or without a child in common, and adolescent dating couples. Intimate partners may be the same gender.



In FY2021, of the intimate partner criminal incidents reported, 79% of the victims were female.

In FY2021, of the **11,281** criminal incidents reported, **3,583** were between intimate partners.

Of those reported in FY2021, **704** 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 FY2021, there were **90** dual arrests made by law enforcement



# Lethality Assessment Protocol

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The Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) provides an easy and 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.

Capitol Police's Domestic Violence Risk Analyst has continued to train law enforcement officers on the statewide protocol. Since this position was created, 55 training sessions have been conducted in 29 agencies, to 625 law enforcement officers. The utilization of the LAP has dramatically increased; during the 2020 calendar year, police officers statewide completed the LAP on scene 86% of the time. Through the first 6 months of 2021, the LAP usage was 85% statewide.

## Capitol Police Domestic Violence Intervention Program

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

The Capitol Police operates the Domestic Violence Intervention Program (VIP) to assist those that 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 a court hearing. The VIP program averages 125 escorts during the course of a normal year. This past year, when most hearing were conducted via Zoom due to public health restriction, the Capitol Police provided escorts to three victims with business in the courthouse.

# Domestic Violence High Risk Team

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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.

Research has shown that intimate partner domestic violence homicides are often predictable; and if they're predictable, they're 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.

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 (law enforcement) and the Danger Assessment Protocol (non-law enforcement) 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.

The Domestic Violence High Risk Team (DVHRT) began holding formal reviews in December of 2019. During the reporting period of July 2020 through June of 2021, the DVHRT coordinator has reviewed **423** high risk cases. Of the 423 cases reviewed, **186** of the cases met the threshold to go to the team for a vote with **37** cases being accepted for continued monitoring. Cases are monitored for six months during which time team members report on case activity, follow-up actions, and other relevant information. 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. We hope to report more outcomes as the work of the DVHRT evolves.

The DVCC has been able to implement this pilot 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.

If you had to leave your home right now,  
what would you bring?



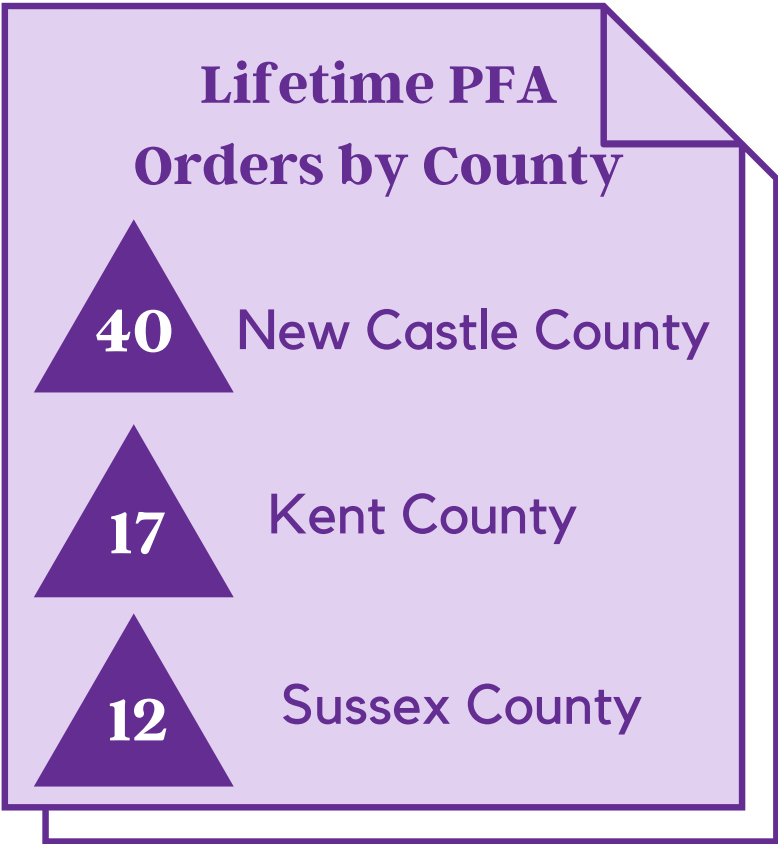
# Protection From Abuse Statistics

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.

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.



69 lifetime PFA orders remained in effect throughout FY2021.



# Statewide PFA Outcomes

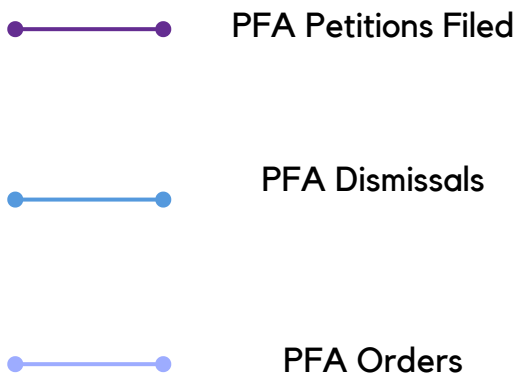
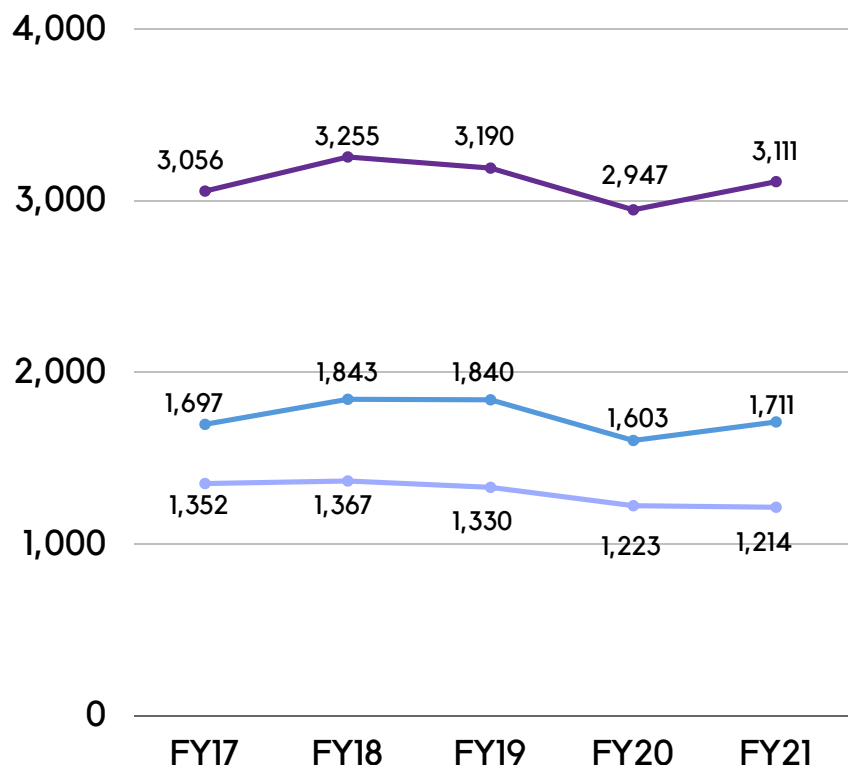
## A PFA Order can be issued by Family Court in one of three ways:

1. The Court finds by a preponderance of the evidence following a hearing that domestic violence has occurred; or,
2. The Respondent consents to the entry of protective order; or
3. 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:

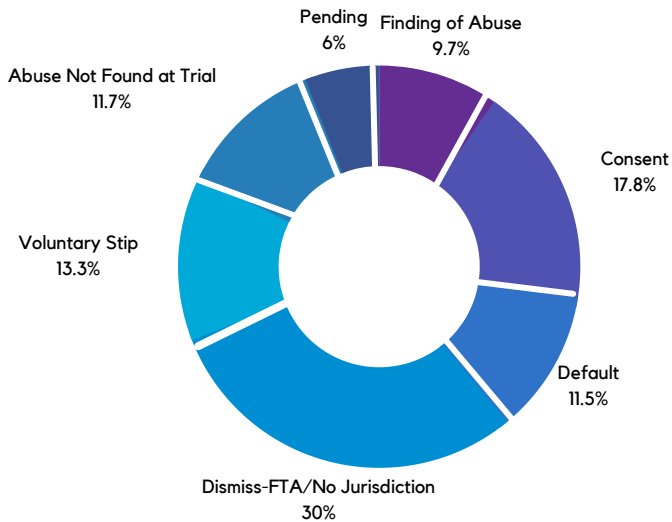
1. The Petitioner failed to appear for the hearing; or,
2. The Petitioner voluntarily withdrew the petition before the hearing; or,
3. Abuse was not found by a preponderance of evidence following a hearing.

Family Court processed **3,111** petitions, which were filed statewide during FY2021. Of those petitions filed, **1,214** orders were issued and **1,711** petitions were dismissed.

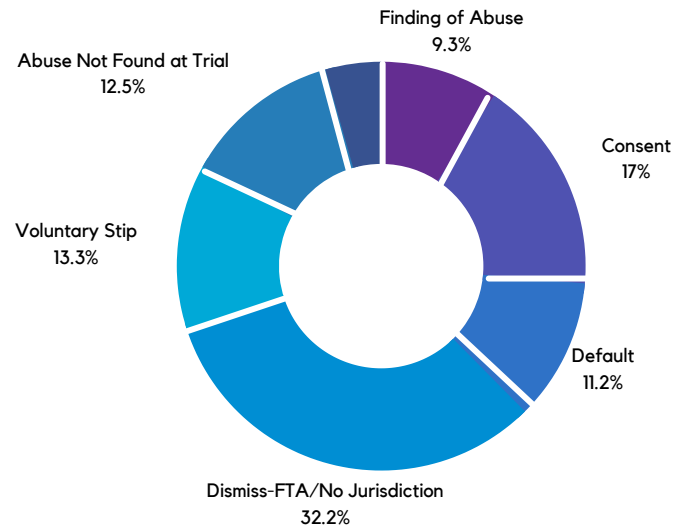


# Statewide PFA Outcomes

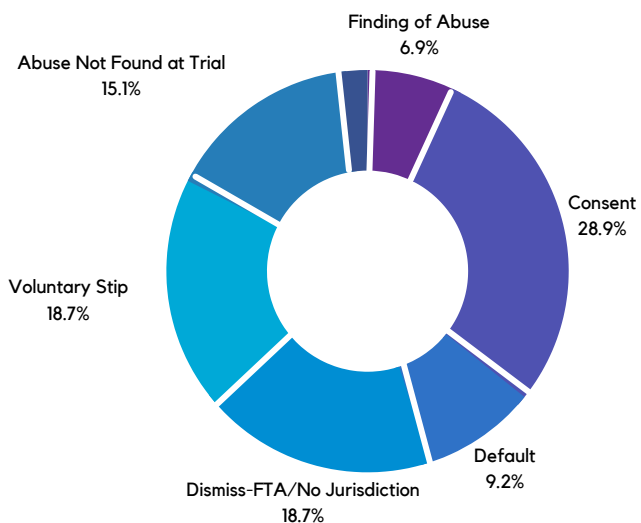
FY21 Statewide PFA Outcomes



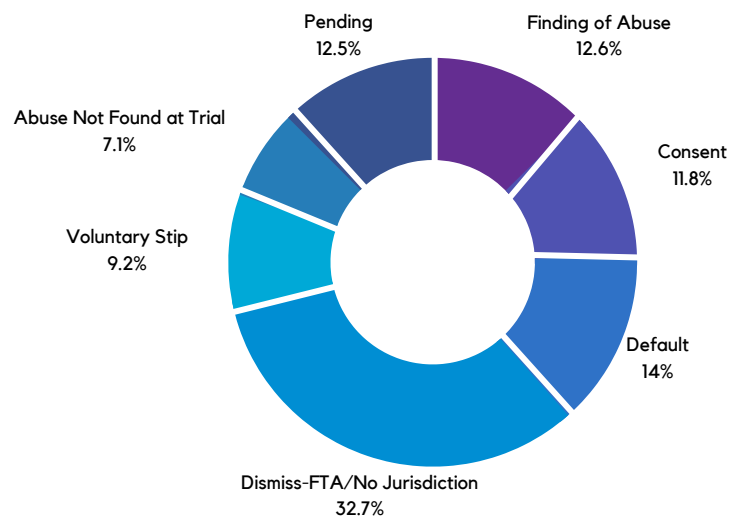
FY21 New Castle County PFA Outcomes



FY21 Sussex County PFA Outcomes



FY21 Kent County PFA Outcomes



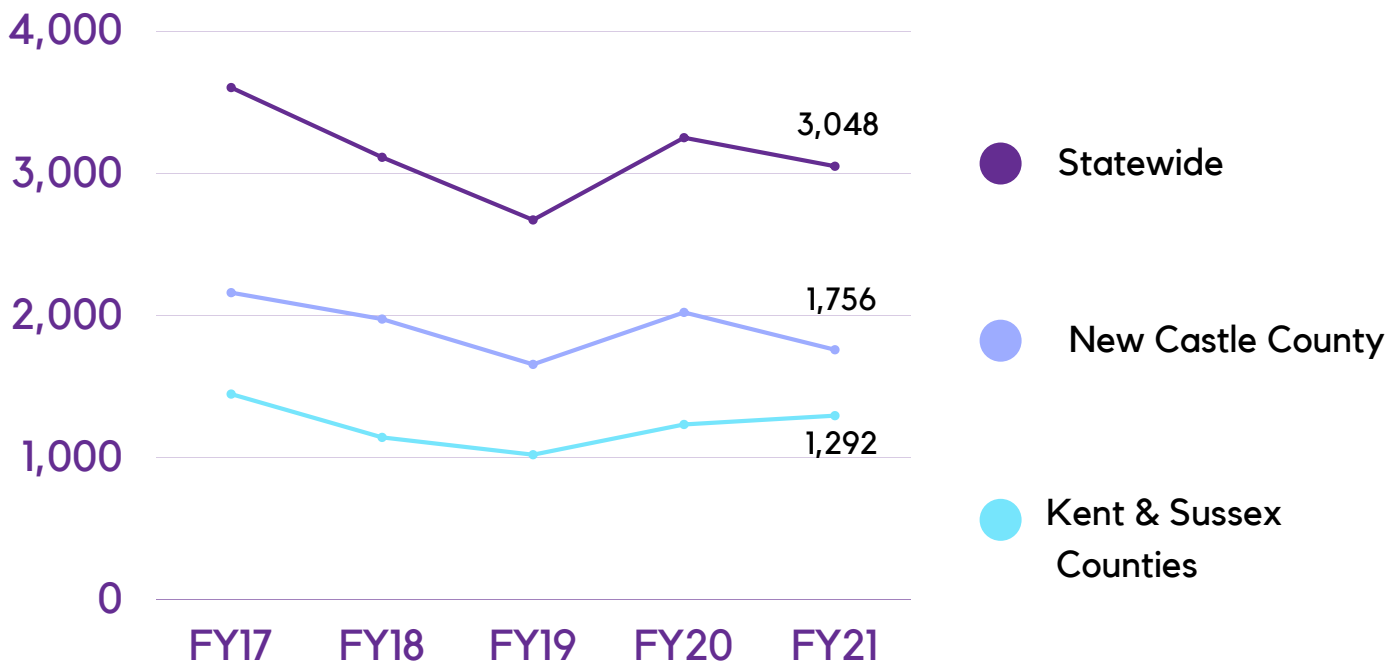


# Year in Review

## 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 FY2021, there were a total of **3,048** calls received by the Domestic Violence Hotlines statewide. Over a five year span, the average number of calls declined, though there was an increase during FY2020. In FY2021, there were **1,756** calls to the Domestic Violence Hotline in New Castle County and **1,292** calls to the Domestic Violence Hotline in Kent and Sussex Counties.

# 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 shelter in trauma-informed settings, domestic violence shelters offer safety planning, case management, advocacy, counseling, child care, job assistance and more. It is important to note that these programs received additional funding, allowing them to house more victims during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Individuals sheltered statewide during FY2021



18

Males sheltered  
statewide



598

Females sheltered  
statewide



517

Children sheltered  
statewide



Individuals sheltered in New  
Castle County



12

Males sheltered



330

Females sheltered



285

Children sheltered



Individuals sheltered in Kent  
and Sussex Counties



6

Males sheltered



268

Females sheltered



232

Children sheltered

# Year in Review

## Domestic Violence Advocacy Program

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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.



1,026

Petitioners served  
statewide in FY2021



531

Petitioners served in  
New Castle County

302.255.0420  
New Castle Office



231

Petitioners served  
in Kent County

302.672.1075  
Kent Office



264

Petitioners served  
in Sussex County

302.856.5843  
Sussex Office

# Legal Services For Victims

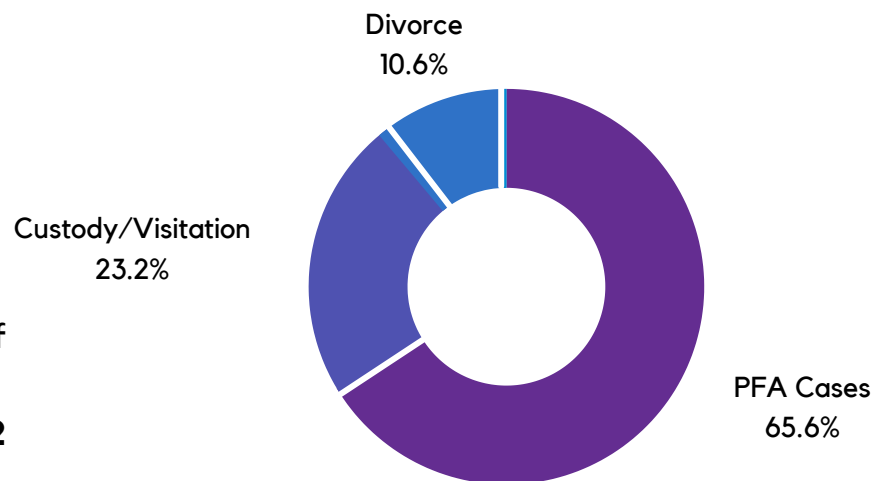
In Fiscal Year 2021, Community Legal Aid Society, (CLASI) provided advice and representation in **818** cases for victims of domestic violence statewide. Of the 818 cases, **537** were PFA cases, **190** were custody/visitation cases, **87** were divorce cases, and **4** involved other issues.

In addition, CLASI provided advice or referral to **290** victims of domestic violence. Of those 290 cases, **229** involved PFA cases, **42** involved custody/visitation, **13** involved divorce, and **6** involved other issues.

Delaware Volunteer Legal Services (DVLS) provides free representation in New Castle County to victims of domestic violence. In FY2021, pro bono and staff attorneys provided advice, brief services, and representation to **175** victims through the PFA Pro Bono Program in obtaining protection orders. Pro bono attorneys also represented **29** other clients with PFA matters, custody/visitation, and divorce matters. In-house staff attorneys provided representation, advice, or brief services on **299** 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 2020, 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 **2,340** hours of legal research and services.

Types of Cases Assisted by CLASI in FY2021



# Victims' Compensation Assistance Program

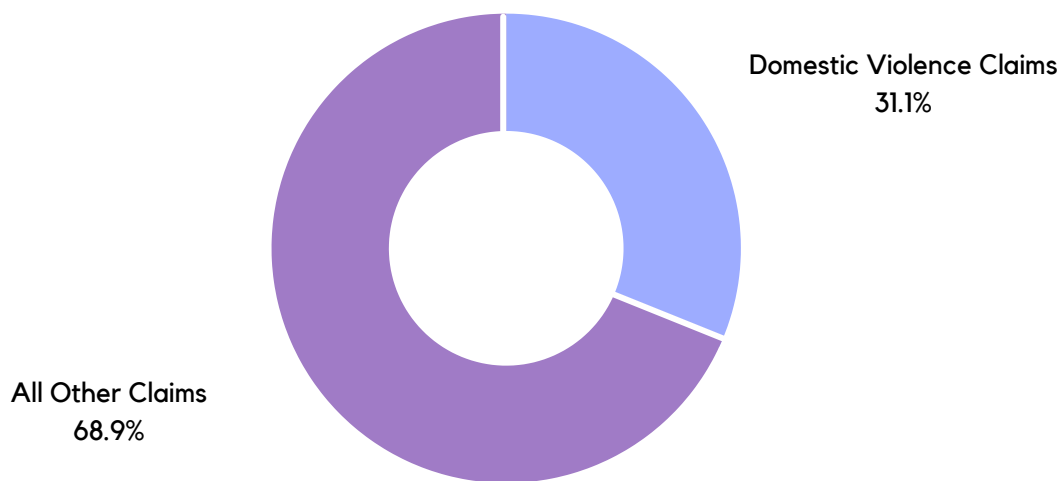
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Every state has a crime victim compensation program that can provide substantial financial assistance to crime victims and their families. Delaware's Victims' Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP), through the Department of Justice, is the agency 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 FY2021, VCAP rendered a total of **2,199** payments to, or on behalf of, victims of crime. Those payments totaled \$1,922,620.91. Of those payments, \$597,895.46 (31%) were for victims of domestic violence.

## FY2021 VCAP Claims



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

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

For more information about the Crime Victims Fund 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 & Notification Everyday

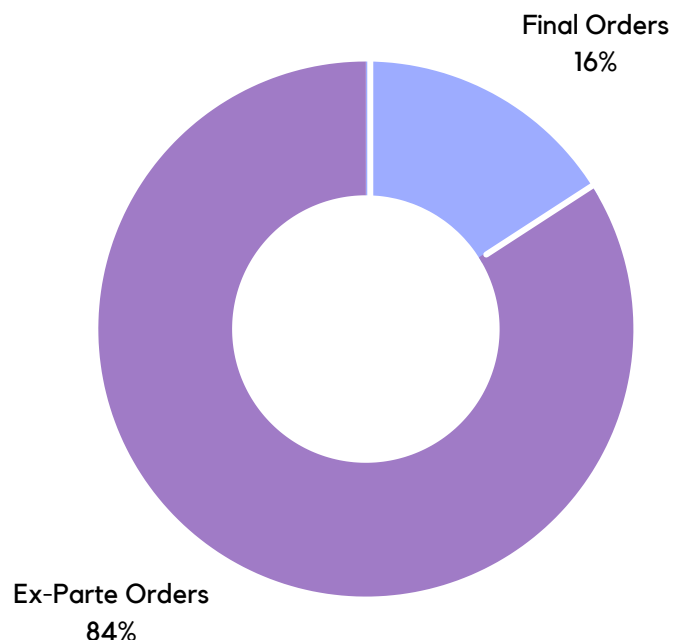
## VINE And VINE Protection Order (VPO)

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 FY2021, of those registered, the VINE VPO program made **75** successful notifications related to protective orders. **63** notifications were related to Ex-Parte Orders, and **12** notifications were related to Final Orders.

### VPO Program Order Notifications



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

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

# Department of Justice

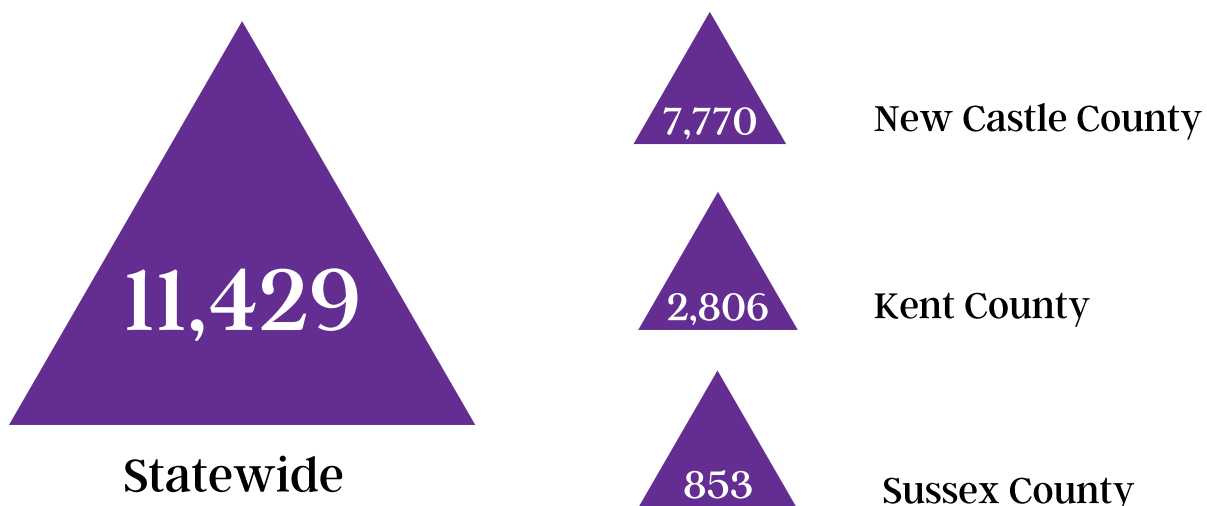
## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT

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. 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.

Deputy Attorney Generals at the Department of Justice handle both misdemeanor and felony domestic violence cases in each county. Felony cases, which are cases that carry more than year of potential incarceration, are assigned to one Deputy throughout the criminal process, while misdemeanor cases are handled by Deputies assigned to a calendar, due to volume. The information provided in this report reflects the Family Court calendar events for the domestic violence misdemeanor cases.

Fiscal Year 2021 shows a significant increase in the number of calendared events attended by Deputy Attorneys General for Domestic Violence misdemeanors in the Family Court. The increase in calendar appearances was due to the backlog of criminal cases created by the Judicial Emergency related to COVID-19 and the reopening of Courts, which has allowed trials to resume to resolve cases more expediently without multiple rescheduling.

### Family Court DV Calendar Misdemeanor Appearances in FY2021





# Address Confidentiality Program (ACP)

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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. For the Fiscal Year 2021, the Address Confidentiality Program has **17** primary participants and **21** co-participants, for a total of **38** active 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 the Delaware Department of Justice Victim/ Witness Assistance Program at one of three locations throughout the state.*

## New Castle County

820 N. French St  
Wilmington, DE 19801

800.870.1790

## Kent County

102 W. Water St  
Dover, DE 19904

800.870.1790

## Sussex County

114 E. Market St  
Georgetown, DE 19947

800.870.1790

# Family Visitation Center Program Statistics

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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. 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 support parents in engaging children in activities and positive interactions.

- 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 Off-Site Visits: Facilitation of monitored exchanges ensures regular off-site visitation without adults having contact. Children can be exchanged on-site for both the pick-up for the visit and drop-off for return.

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.

## Services Provided by Family Visitation Centers in FY2021

	<b>CHILD, Inc New Castle County</b>	<b>People's Place II Kent and Sussex County</b>	<b>Total Statewide</b>
<b>Visitation Exchanges</b>	332	1,107	1,439
<b>Group Visits</b>	303	575	878
<b>Individual Supervised Visits</b>	823	543	1,366
<b>Children Served</b>	169	189	358
<b>Visiting Parents Served</b>	179	143	322
<b>Non-Visiting Parents Served</b>	178	137	315
<b>Total Parents Served</b>	357	280	637

# 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 FY2021, DFS received **20,543** reports alleging child abuse or neglect. Of those, **7,431** (36%) were accepted for investigation. Of those reports accepted for investigation, **1,694** (23%) also alleged domestic violence. Of those reports accepted for investigation, **783** (11%) also identified domestic violence at the conclusion of the investigation (all finding types). A total of **855** investigations were substantiated and **254** (30%) 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.



Total Reports to DFS in  
FY2021



Reports  
accepted for  
investigation



Reports accepted for  
investigation that also  
alleged domestic  
violence

122

Victims Served by DFS  
Liaisons in New Castle  
County

89

Victims Served by  
DFS Liaisons in Kent  
and Sussex Counties



The number of  
substantiated cases that  
stated domestic violence  
was reported during the  
investigation risk  
assessment

# Services For Children Exposed To Domestic Violence

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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.



Total people served by Helping Children Heal program at CHILD, Inc.

**18** Children/ Adolescents Served

**23** Parents/ Caretakers Served



Total people served by Turning Point program at People's Place II

**20** Children/ Adolescents Served

**9** Parents/ Caretakers Served

# Treatment Program Statistics

In FY2021, there were three 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 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.

*NOTE: 2020 data was not available for the Family Advocacy Center at Dover Air Force Base.*

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

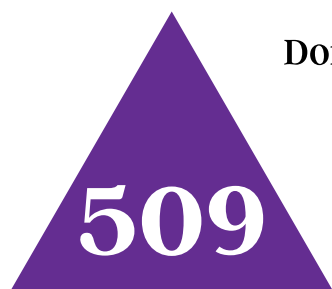
*\*\*The number of people served includes the number of people who were evaluated and attended at least one treatment*

	CHILD, Inc		Turning Point Peoples Place II		
	Male	Female		Male	Female
Probation Evaluated	114	11	Kent	55	8
			Sussex	30	10
With PFA Order Evaluated	107	8	Kent	16	0
			Sussex	19	6
Self-Referrals	5	1	Kent	3	0
			Sussex	2	2
Court-Ordered	110	21	Kent	11	6
			Sussex	7	1
Participated in Group Intervention	249	28	Kent	117	16
			Sussex	98	17
Completed Group Intervention	130	24	Kent	40	12
			Sussex	53	10
Total Number Served	369	53	Kent	123*	22
			Sussex	128**	24

# Supervised Domestic Violence Offender Data

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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.



## Domestic violence offenders supervised in New Castle County.

- 11** Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases
- 46:1** Probationer/ Probation Officer Ratio
- 150** Number of Victims Served by Victim Service Agents



## Domestic violence offenders supervised in Kent County

- 5** Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases
- 47:1** Probationer/ Probation Officer Ratio
- 105** Number of Victims Served by Victim Service Agents



## Domestic violence offenders supervised in Sussex County.

- 5** Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases
- 28:1** Probationer/ Probation Officer Ratio
- 95** Number of Victims Served by Victim Service Agents



# Fatal Incident Review Team Report

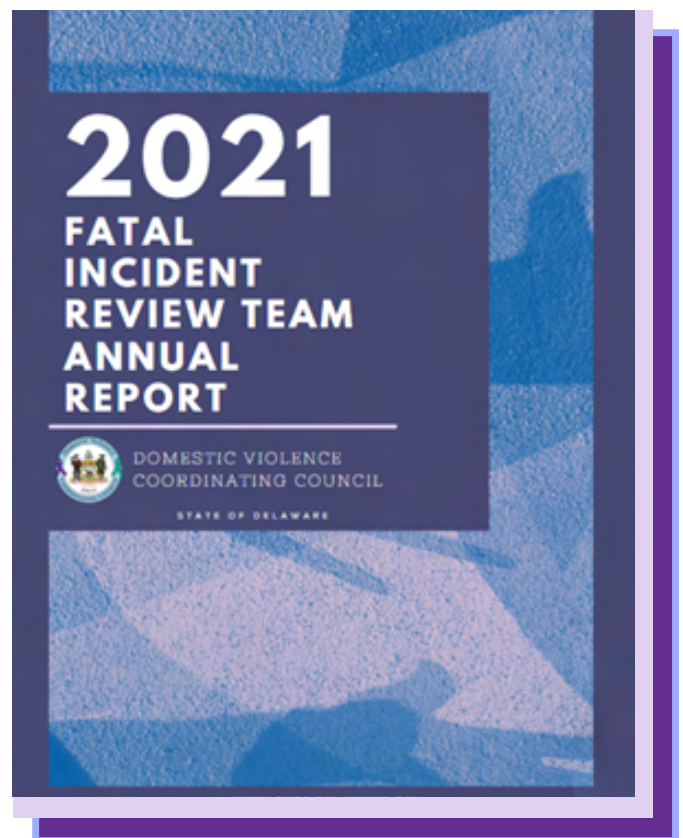
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The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council's Fatal Incident Review Team (FIRT) was established by statute in 1996 and became the first statewide team in the country. FIRT members are dedicated professionals who conduct system audits of State agencies and private organizations that had contact with the victim 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 2021 Fatal Incident Review Team (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 2020; and information and recommendations from the death and near-death cases that were previously reviewed.

## Chairs:

Hon. Jan Jurden, President Judge,  
Superior Court  
Professor Dana Harrington Conner,  
At-Large Member  
Hon. Vincent Poppiti, At-Large Member



# Survivor Story.....

The following story contains subject matter that some readers may find disturbing and violent, including graphic depictions of violence and sexual assault. Reader discretion is advised. The names in the survivor story have been changed to protect the identity of those involved. This story is shared with permission.

A frantic survivor called the domestic violence hotline after being abused and escaping the abuser where she was being held against her will. Her abuser prevented her from leaving with their baby. Her abuser had taken her cell phone and reported to the police that she was attempting to leave the state with their baby. In actuality, she was trying to escape his abuse and protect their child. The abuser convinced the police officer that it was a quarrel about custody and that abuse did not occur. With that information, the police officer determined that this was a custody issue, not rising to the level of a criminal complaint.

The survivor expressed to the hotline that she felt unable to speak up due to fear of retaliation from her abuser. She did not feel physically safe to remain in the house and was left with the choice of having to leave her baby behind. With the help of advocates, she was able to file for an ex parte Protection from Abuse (PFA) order, retrieve her child, and receive the relief provided by the PFA.

The survivor had no family or support system in Delaware and felt safe in shelter with other women and children. She started her recovery from abuse, beginning to heal physically, emotionally, and psychologically. She is currently looking forward to finding employment and permanent housing for herself and her child.



# Resources & Information

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If you are in danger, please call 911.

## Hotline Numbers

DV Hotline, New Castle County  
302.762.6110

DV Hotline, New Castle County  
Bilingual/ Espanol  
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

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## 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.

## 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.

# Resources & Information

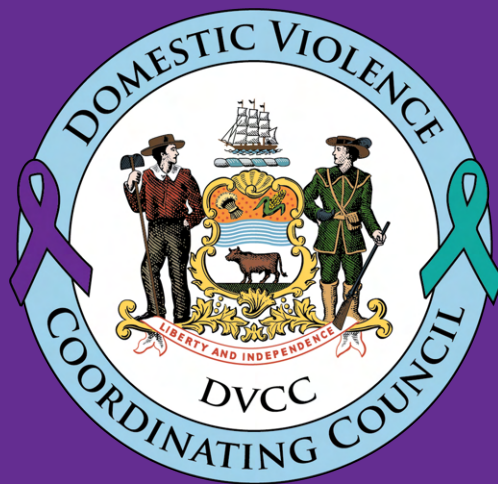
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## Safety Tips

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 abuser 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 voicemail 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 domestic violence support group.





[www.dvcc.delaware.gov](http://www.dvcc.delaware.gov)