



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
COORDINATING COUNCIL

# ANNUAL REPORT

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FISCAL YEAR 2024

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# CHAIR'S MESSAGE

We are pleased to present the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2024. In last year's Chair's letter, I said we were looking forward to the upcoming year and the future successes of the DVCC. As you will see when reviewing this annual report, all of the committees have been very active, and each committee can boast of their respective accomplishments. The highlight of FY 2024 was the passage of House Bill 340 to allow for the creation of Family Justice Centers in each county of Delaware. This seismic legislation will significantly improve the coordination of services for survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and child abuse. The DVCC started working towards this goal in 2021 with the establishment of the Family Justice Center Steering Committee and has worked diligently to see Family Justice Centers in Delaware become a reality. While there is still much work to be done before the first center opens its doors, this enabling legislation is a giant step towards seeing that reality.

The Annual Report also includes statistical information on incidents of domestic violence, a breakdown of court dispositions, and services offered for victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. This annual report contains a wealth of statistical information that will inform the DVCC's work as we progress through the next fiscal year and will guide the policy decisions of Delaware. Unfortunately, there is still much work to be done.

On behalf of the members and staff of the DVCC, we thank you in joining us in the fight against domestic violence and your commitment to the same.

Sincerely,

**Michael K. Newell, Chair**  
Chief Judge, Family Court

# 2024 COUNCIL MEMBERS

## CHAIR

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

## VICE-CHAIR

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

Honorable Bryant L. Richardson, 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 Alan Davis, Chief Magistrate, Justice of the Peace

Honorable Kathleen Jennings, Attorney General, Department of Justice

Honorable Nathaniel McQueen, Secretary, Department of Safety and Homeland Security

Honorable Kevin O'Connell, Chief Defender, Office of Defense Services

Honorable Terra Taylor, Commissioner, Department of Correction

Honorable Steven Yeatman, Secretary, Department of Services for Children, Youth & Their Families

Master Corporal Andrea Warfel, Appointed Representative of the Law Enforcement Community

Honorable Claire DeMatteis, At-Large Member

Dr. Josephine Mokonogho, At-Large Member, Representative of the Medical Community

Professor Dana Harrington Conner, At-Large Member

Professor Jennifer Naccarelli, At-Large Member

Melissa Pennachi, At-Large Member

Denise Grabowski, At-Large Member

## STAFF MEMBERS

Angela Seguin, Executive Director

Lauren Cuevas, Social Services Senior Administrator

Sara Paris, Planner IV

Francisca Moreno, Trainer/Educator

Debra Pierce, Administrative Specialist

Debra Reed, DV High Risk Team Coordinator

Timothy Valeski, DV High Risk Team Coordinator

Libby Neuner, Family Justice Center Project Coordinator

# MISSION 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

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.

# DVCC 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.

## Animal Abuse & DV Link

**Chair** Honorable Michael Newell  
**Designee Chair** Honorable Jennifer Ranji

## Children and Domestic Violence

**Chair** Honorable Steven Yeatman

## Criminal Justice

**Chairs** Honorable Jan Jurden  
**Designee Chair** Linda Carmichael, Esquire  
 Melissa Pennachi  
 Master Corporal Andrea Warfel

## Elderly & Domestic Violence

**Chair** Honorable Nathaniel McQueen  
**Designee Chair** Kimberly Chandler

## Immigration

**Chair** Laura Graham, Esquire

## Legislative Drafting & Review

**Chair** Honorable Krista Griffith

## Medical

**Chair** Josephine Mokonogho, MD

## Public Awareness/Education

**Chair** Honorable Carl Danberg

## Training

**Chair** Honorable Michael Newell  
**Designee Chair** Eleanor Torres, Esquire

## Treatment

**Chair** Honorable Terra Taylor  
**Designee Chair** Melissa Kearney

## Family Justice Center

### Steering Committee

**Chair** Laura Graham, Esquire

## Domestic Violence Intervention

### Certification Panel

## Fatal Incident Review Team (FIRT)

**Chairs** Honorable Jan Jurden,  
**Designee Chair** Melanie Ewing-Lahutsky  
 Deputy Attorney General Jenna Milecki, and  
 Professor Dana Harrington Conner

# ANIMAL ABUSE & DV LINK COMMITTEE

The Animal Abuse & Domestic Violence LINK Committee brings together representatives from Family Court, Animal Welfare, Child Welfare, the General Assembly, the Department of Justice, advocates and community partners to examine the link between animal abuse and domestic violence, the ways that these intersections can be recognized by service providers in each area, and ways to more effectively address these issues.

## FY 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY 2024, the Committee reviewed existing risk assessment tools, those in use and others available, to determine whether screening questions focused on animal abuse are included. The group reviewed tools used by the Domestic Violence Hotlines, by Family Court in the Mediation process, and by the Division of Family Services, as well as Domestic Violence Lethality Assessment tools. The Committee also reviewed data available from these tools about animal abuse present in DV or child abuse situations and made recommendations for organizations to include animal abuse screening questions on assessment tools that did not include such questions. At the request of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ), the Committee reviewed a Bench Card that was created for judges in Virginia and began work to create a Bench Card for Delaware. The Committee began exploring options to create a public service announcement video that can be utilized during Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Preparations also began to sponsor a large-scale multidisciplinary symposium on the link between animal abuse, child abuse, and domestic violence in April 2025.

- The Committee supported Senate Bill 198, which passed in the Senate on March 28th, in the House on June 27th, and now awaits signing by the Governor. SB198 “revises existing animal cruelty laws to include people who knowingly possess, own, buy, sell, transfer, or manufacture animal fighting paraphernalia with the intent to engage in or otherwise promote or facilitate such fighting as guilty of a class E felony. This Act defines “animal fighting paraphernalia” and creates a list of considerations a court may use when assessing whether an item or object qualifies as animal fighting paraphernalia.”
- The Office of Animal Welfare created an infographic that provides the signs of animal abuse, reporting criteria, how to report, and what happens after a report is made. The infographic was distributed to the Office of the Child Advocate, the Division of Family Services, to participants at the Protecting Delaware’s Children Conference in April and was added to the resource section of the Office of the Child Advocate’s Memorandum of Understanding phone app for the multidisciplinary team. This initiative supports staff with mandatory reporting requirements for abuse of animals.
- A training on the link between animal abuse, child abuse and domestic violence was conducted for the Office of Animal Welfare’s 20 Animal Control Officers by Division of Family Services and the Office of the Child Advocate on Jan. 17, 2024. It included a 2 hour presentation by Phil Arkow of the National LINK Coalition. On Jan. 24, Adrienne Owen provided a 1.5 hour virtual follow up training.
- Brandywine Valley SPCA agreed they would continue to provide temporary shelter for animals of survivors who need to go to DV shelter, despite the loss of grant funding for this purpose.
- On January 30, 2024, the work of the Committee was featured in a [News Journal article](#).

# CHILDREN & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMITTEE

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 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY 2024, the Children & Domestic Violence Committee continued its efforts to develop a comprehensive understanding of all the resources available in Delaware to children who have experienced trauma. The Committee brought in speakers from partner agencies, such as the Behavioral Health Unit of the New Castle County Police and Family Court, to talk about their services and how the Children & Domestic Violence Committee can support their efforts and raise awareness to their work. The Committee also engaged with programs outside of Delaware, such as the Arizona Child and Adolescent Survivor Initiative (ACASI) to learn how other states serve children who have experienced trauma themselves or witnessed intimate partner violence.

The Committee continues its efforts to enhance awareness of available services to address the Fatal Incident Review Team (FIRT) recommendation that reads “The DVCC should increase efforts to enhance the awareness of the interventions for children who experience intimate partner violence and trauma between service providers, child welfare professionals, law enforcement, and other key stakeholders.”





# CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

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, Delaware Criminal Justice Information System (DELJIS), advocates and community partners to resolve issues specific to the needs of those affected by domestic violence.

## FY 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Committee continues to receive regular reports from the Domestic Violence High Risk Team (DVHRT) on the Team's work and receives regular data from Superior Court on Lethal Violence Protective Orders and Weapons Relinquishment Orders. In FY 2024, the committee finalized and voted to approve the Strangulation Protocol for Delaware, which serves as a best practice guideline for law enforcement and first responders to utilize when responding to domestic violence-related strangulation cases. The Strangulation Protocol was voted on and approved by the DVCC on Sept. 18, 2023 and by the Delaware Association of Chiefs of Police on Nov. 14, 2023. The Committee remains engaged in the efforts to implement this protocol and train police across the state. To that end, a 6-hour webinar hosted by the DVCC in partnership with the Training Institute on Strangulation Prevention was held on Feb. 22, 2024 and the DVCC is utilizing a Law Enforcement Training grant from the Criminal Justice Council to provide on-site trainings at all police departments throughout the state, as well as at police academies.

Additionally, this fiscal year, the Committee discussed various lethality assessments such as the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) (what is currently used in Delaware), the LAP 2.0, and the Arizona intimate Partner Risk Assessment Instrument System (APRAIS) tool with the intention of evaluating what is the best tool for Delaware. The committee also began work to address a FIRT recommendation that reads "DVCC shall explore and discuss collateral consequences of a potential change in legislation that will address domestic violence misdemeanor cases that are not within Family Court's exclusive jurisdiction."

# ELDERLY & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMMITTEE

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 is made up of representatives from the Department of Safety and Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, law enforcement, advocates, and community partners.

## FY 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY 2024, the committee focused on increasing committee membership and developing committee goals and strategies. These goals include attending community meetings and reporting back to the Committee, conducting outreach at resource fairs and conferences, and hosting an annual event for Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

On June 13, 2024, in collaboration with Trauma Matters Delaware, the committee hosted an Elder Abuse Day Webinar (social media flyer below). The webinar reached a total of 54 attendees. Feedback from the webinar included “[appreciating] the personal stories that the instructors shared. It highlighted very concretely what approaches to take and questions to ask when working with older crime victims.” Approximately 74% of attendees reported feeling “Very Satisfied” and 25% reported feeling “Satisfied” with the webinar. Committee members plan to host more webinars beyond those on Elder Abuse Awareness Day and will use feedback from the webinar to identify these topics.

**WEBINAR**

**TRAUMA MATTERS DELAWARE**

**ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY**  
*Sharing Stories, Sparking Change*  
 June 13, 2024 from 10 AM-11:30 AM

This event is an opportunity to hear from individuals with lived experiences and to engage in discussions on how to better support our aging community.

**Facilitated By:** Dr. Charlene Lumbford, Director, Presley Ridge

**With Speakers:** Erik Mitchell, Executive Director, Trauma Matters DE; Sharon Morrison-Nel, Associate Editor, Journal of Elder Abuse & Neglect; Jenika Reed, Alternative Services Manager, Senior Abuse Response Center (SARC)

Questions? Contact us at [DVCC.Trainings@delaware.gov](mailto:DVCC.Trainings@delaware.gov)

# IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE

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 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Committee continued to review and discuss policy and law updates impacting immigrant survivors in our state. In FY 2024, the Committee hosted presentations from service providers and community groups who offer services to immigrants and groups working with survivors who identify as Limited English Proficient (LEP), in order to increase awareness of available services, identify need and gaps in services, and highlight opportunities for collaboration. Through these discussions, language access became a presenting theme and area of focus for the Committee.

According to the most recent census data for Delaware, approximately 13.9 percent of Delawareans speak a language other than English at home. Access to services and information about domestic violence and sexual assault for LEP survivors is paramount for safety; survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault need to be able to communicate effectively with system-based partners and community providers. In FY 2024 and into FY 2025, the Immigration Committee made Language Access for survivors a priority, and the Committee has begun discussing goals related to this work for the next year.

# LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

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 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Legislative Committee tracked several bills that are relevant to the work of the DVCC, but did not recommend any for a formal position by Council. The Legislative Committee welcomed new members at the January meeting.

During FY 2024, the Committee's energy was focused on the DVCC's bill, House Bill 340, to authorize the creation of Family Justice Centers in Delaware. The prime sponsors of this bill were Council members Representative Krista Griffith (Chair of this Committee) and Senator Nicole Poore. HB340 establishes the Council that will oversee Family Justice Centers, and includes a fiscal note for two positions, an Executive Director and a Planner IV. The bill was introduced on March 14th, passed by the House on June 16th, passed by the Senate on June 30th and now awaits the Governor's signature. A bill signing event is being planned.

The DVCC's web pages cataloging recent DVCC legislation and the history of DVCC legislation since 1993 were both updated.

# MEDICAL COMMITTEE

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 of domestic violence 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.

## FY 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY 2024, after a presentation from the Fatal Incident Review Team (FIRT) regarding recommendations for Delaware's Medical Community, the Committee prioritized the promotion of an evidence-based intervention called "CUES" by Futures Without Violence. CUES is an acronym representing Confidentiality, Universal Education & Empowerment, and Support. CUES is a universal education strategy for medical providers to educate all patients about the impact of intimate partner violence. CUES promotes collaboration between healthcare facilities and domestic violence agencies to strengthen support for survivors.

In addition to the continual dissemination of the Domestic Violence Resource Manual, the Committee created additional resources for providers to use with contact information for domestic violence service providers. In FY 2024, members of the Medical Committee have disseminated resources and provided training to medical providers throughout the state, such as Westside Family Healthcare, Bayhealth, and Beebe Medical Group.

# PUBLIC AWARENESS & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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.

## FY 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY 2024, 132 individuals received awareness and education materials during various resource fairs and conferences. The Public Awareness and Education Committee established the branding theme "Connecting the Dots: Together Against Domestic Violence" for the 2024 Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM). This theme was presented to the DVCC and approved at the March 2024 DVCC Quarterly Meeting. It will be used for social media and awareness campaigns for DVAM 2024 and 2025.

The Committee also organized a statewide Teen Dating Violence Poster Contest for middle and high school students, receiving a total of 11 submissions. Two winners were selected – Lihlo from New Castle County, the middle school winner, and Kelis from New Castle County, the high school winner. Both winners were honored at the 2024 Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month Proclamation signing on February 16, 2023 where they met Governor John Carney and other stakeholders. The posters submitted were showcased at Legislative Hall on the ground floor throughout February. To request a Teen Dating Violence Poster, email us at [DVCC.Trainings@delaware.gov](mailto:DVCC.Trainings@delaware.gov).

During the March DVCC Quarterly Meeting, the winners and second and third-place high school winners were recognized. Each winner received a certificate and prizes as follows: first-place winners received \$350 gift cards, one sponsored by the DVCC and the other sponsored by the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence (DCADV); the second-place winner received a \$200 gift card sponsored by the DVCC, and the third-place winner received a \$100 gift card sponsored by the DCADV.

In addition to the poster contest, 51 students participated in educational workshops. One group, CAUSE Productions, created Teen Dating Violence public service announcements with the help of the DVCC's Trainer/Educator Francisca, available on the DVCC's [Instagram feed](#).

# 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 training. 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 disseminate 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 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Training Committee provided recommendations and assistance for the DVCC's training initiatives throughout FY 2024. In FY 2024, the DVCC conducted 30 training sessions, reaching 686 participants. DVCC also produced a Protective Order brochure, developed with input from the Training Committee. This resource is now accessible on the [DVCC website](#) and in print format, serving as a valuable tool for providers to discuss protective order options with clients. Additionally, the Sexual Violence Protective Order (SVPO) Workgroup convened for the first meeting on May 22, 2024. This workgroup aims to develop educational and outreach materials about SVPOs for public awareness.

Another initiative of the Training Committee was planning the treatment conference in collaboration with the DVCC Treatment Committee. Held on March 6, 2024, this conference was titled "Empower and Evolve: Redefining the Future of Domestic Violence Intervention." One participant of the conference remarked, "I loved that various systems were invited to this for educational and informational sharing. Though we are a small state, these collaborations matter and are critical to success and positive outcomes for those we serve."

Topics covered in DVCC trainings (both in-person and webinars) during FY 2024 included: Domestic Violence Foundations, Supporting Latino Survivors, Supporting Survivors with Disabilities, Supporting Transgender and Non-binary Survivors, Systemic and Community-Based Remedies for Survivors, Collaborative Approaches to Stalking, and Navigating Changes to Protection from Abuse Order Relief. The Training Committee will prioritize training on protective orders, stalking, and familial violence for the next fiscal year.

Finally, the Training Committee provided technical assistance and feedback on Student Misconduct training. The DVCC is statutorily required to develop this training, based on the Student Misconduct Model Policy, and to send the modules to the Department of Education. This training is for teachers, administrators, school volunteers, and any other mandated school personnel. The training will be launched for the 2024-2025 school year.

# 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 Domestic Violence Intervention (DVI) 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 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY 2024, the Treatment Committee revised the Delaware DVI Standards, and the standards were approved by the full Council on December 18, 2023. The purpose of revising the standards was to incorporate the current available research on DVI, and to reflect the evolution of DVI in Delaware.



Panel: Juan Rodriguez & Stephanie Rodriguez, Justin King, Allison Bumgarner & Bill Evans.



Participants attending the Treatment Conference in Dover in March 2024.

After the development and approval of the standards, the Committee hosted a conference on March 6, 2024, in partnership with the DVCC's Training Committee, called "Empower and Evolve: Redefining the Future of Domestic Violence Intervention." At the conference, DVI providers, Department of Correction, Family Court and other stakeholders discussed successes and improvements that have been made to DVI in Delaware.



# TREATMENT COMMITTEE

Attendees heard sessions on the implementation of Delaware's first statewide Compliance Calendar and how that process has enhanced compliance with DVI and strengthened partnerships. Attendees also heard a panel discussion where DVI providers and the Department of Correction discussed Delaware's first DVI program in a correctional facility and the importance of a coordinated community response. Presenters from the House of Ruth, an agency in Baltimore, Maryland operating a domestic violence crisis shelter, shared current best practices with participants.

The Treatment Committee ended FY 2024 reviewing and discussing possible implications of proposed legislation from the 2024 General Assembly, including a criminal justice reform bill.

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION CERTIFICATION PANEL

The Domestic Violence Intervention Certification Panel (formerly the Batterers' Intervention 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.

# FY 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY 2024, the Certification Panel reviewed the DVI programs at CHILD, Inc. and People's Place and in May 2024, the DVCC approved these programs for recertification July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. Due to staffing changes, Dover Air Force Base (DAFB) was temporarily removed from the referral list in February 2024 and recertification of DAFB for FY 2025 is postponed. The panel anticipates reviewing recertification applications for DAFB in late fall 2024.

# FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER STEERING COMMITTEE

In September of 2021, the DVCC established the Family Justice Center Steering Committee to explore the feasibility, impact, and steps needed to establish one, or more, Family Justice Centers in Delaware to support victims of interpersonal violence. Governor Carney recognized the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on increasing rates of domestic violence and approved the DVCC as a recipient of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for the Family Justice Center study. The DVCC contracted with the Family Justice Center Alliance (Alliance), a program of the Alliance for HOPE International, for their expertise, consultation, and technical assistance to guide Delaware through this process.

A Family Justice Center (FJC) provides one place for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse to receive the life-saving services currently available in their community from both non-profit and governmental agencies. The FJC model creates a collaborative, family-friendly, victim-centered, trauma-informed, hope-centered environment, in which a multidisciplinary team of professionals works together in one, centralized location to provide coordinated services to survivors of family violence. The framework brings the services together for survivors and their children, allowing them to go to one place – as opposed to multiple locations - for all their services, and creates a community for survivors long after the crisis is over. The FJC model is identified as a best practice in the field of domestic violence intervention and prevention services by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.



# FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER STEERING COMMITTEE FY 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In addition to FY 2023 site visits, virtually with Sojourner Place in Milwaukee and in person to the New York City Family Justice Center (FJC) sites in Manhattan and Brooklyn, members of the DVCC staff, FJC Steering Committee and other stakeholders visited an additional six sites across the country in FY 2024 to study best practices and engage with Directors. Included with visits, travelers attended the Alliance for Hope’s FJC Boot Camp in Fort Worth (September), FJC Leadership Summit in New Orleans (December), and Annual FJC Conference in San Diego (April).



Forensic Exam Room at New Orleans FJC

At NYC FJC in Brooklyn: Kathleen Kelley, Erica Davis, Ting Tsai (front), Chief Judge Newell, Libby Neuner, Ellie Torres, Laura Graham, Angela Seguin, and Britt van Veen

At Contra Costa County FJC in Concord, CA: Kathleen Seipel, Jennifer McCann (front), Kathleen Kelley, Angela Seguin, Libby Neuner

FJC Sites toured in FY 2024:

**Fort Worth, TX** - Libby Neuner traveled September 27-28, 2023

**New Orleans, LA** – Laura Graham, Angela Seguin, and Libby Neuner traveled December 6-8, 2023

**Concord, Antioch, and Richmond, CA** – Kathleen Siepel, Kathleen Kelley, Jennifer McCann, Angela Seguin, and Libby Neuner traveled January 31-February 1, 2024

**San Diego, CA** – Sgt. Timothy Maloney, Venita Garvin, Jennifer McCann, and Libby Neuner traveled April 23-25, 2024



Child Care rooms at FJCs in San Diego (left) and New Orleans (right)



Remote Courtroom at One Safe Place FJC in Fort Worth

# FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER STEERING COMMITTEE FY 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

On March 14, 2024, the FJC enabling legislation, House Bill 340, was introduced. The bill establishes Family Justice Centers statewide, with one location in each county, and creates a Family Justice Center Council that will oversee the Centers. HB340 passed in both chambers and is awaiting the Governor's signature. The fiscal note of \$175,179, included in the bill, for fiscal year 2025 allows for hiring of an Executive Director and a Planner IV. These key staff will implement the foundation outlined in the bill, support the Council's work, promulgate rules, and develop implementation plans for the FJCs.

As part of the ongoing Feasibility Study, Tevebaugh Architecture and the State Director of Facilities Management identified potential sites for FJCs in Delaware. Tevebaugh identified and recommended two viable properties: a state-owned site on the Stockley campus in Sussex County, and a privately-owned property in the City of Wilmington, owned and managed by the Woodlawn Trustees. To date, a viable site has not been located in Kent County or New Castle County outside of the City of Wilmington.

The Stockley campus offers many advantages. There are several other service providers already on site, including Christiana Care, Delaware Adolescent Program Inc., Head Start, Department of Labor, and Delaware State Police. The campus will soon have a bus route, there is room for growth, and it will be rent-free. The Wilmington site is small but sits on a bus line, will offer parking, and includes 4 apartments to be utilized as transitional housing for survivors, which is greatly needed.

The FJC Steering Committee reviewed these options and Tevebaugh's recommendations, and unanimously agreed to move forward with a funding request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bond Committee for capital costs. The dollar amount requested, \$7.8 million, was for capital costs and was based on estimates to renovate these two sites. The Bond Committee request was not approved but the work to identify funding sources for capital costs continues.

On June 6, 2024, an article about bringing FJCs to Delaware was featured in a [News Journal article](#).

# INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE ANALYSIS OF PRETRIAL SAFETY STUDY (IPV-APS)

In 2021, the DVCC partnered with a team of researchers at Arizona State University and the University of Central Florida on their grant-funded “Intimate Partner Violence Analysis of Pretrial Safety” Study (IPV-APS). ASU was approved for their research grant in May 2021. Delaware’s involvement in this study began because the Courts hoped to be able to utilize an evidence-based pre-trial risk assessment tool that was relevant for Delaware to inform decision making related to bail/release terms for defendants with pending family violence charges. Due to a number of obstacles, the process of getting Delaware up and running with the study was delayed through FY 2022.

The researchers’ goal was to reach a total of 200 study participants in Delaware. Typically about 50% of people who are referred to the project opt to participate, so at least 400 referrals were needed. They anticipated it would take about a year to reach that goal. Law Enforcement based Victim Service Specialists agreed to provide basic information about the study to survivors during follow-up, and share survivor contact information with the ASU team. At that point, a research team member, trained in trauma-informed interviewing strategies, would reach out to the survivor to talk about the study, explain the benefits, and if the survivor wished to participate, would enroll them in the study.

A meeting was arranged between Victim Service Specialists and the research team of Dr. Jill Messing (ASU), Dr. Bethany Backes (UCF), and Dr. Jill Etienne (ASU) to provide the information needed for referrals to begin. The team made modifications requested by the Victim Service Specialists, and Victim Service Specialists began sharing information with victims about the study on April 1, 2023. As planned, a follow up meeting with Victim Service Specialists was held on May 18, 2023 to check in about how things were going. Based on the feedback of Victim Service Specialists, adjustments were made at that time and additional resources were provided by the research team.

Referrals to the study were consistently low from April through September 2023 with the highest at 10 in May, and most months being zero or one referral. Referrals dropped to zero in October and remained there. Because of the low number of referrals, the research team wanted to explore the option of having uniformed officers provide the study information on scene, as it is being done in another jurisdiction that is participating in the study.

# INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE ANALYSIS OF PRETRIAL SAFETY STUDY (IPV-APS)

To that end, the DVCC's Executive Director went before the Delaware Association of Chiefs of Police in January 2024 with the research team joining via zoom. The background on the Courts' interest in having the study lead to a validated pre-trial risk assessment tool for Delaware, the benefits of having this tool, and options for increasing referrals to the study were reviewed with the Chiefs. Ultimately, the Chiefs did not support having uniformed officers provide this information on scene, and opted to continue utilizing Victim Service Specialists to screen and refer to the ASU study.

With zero referrals in January, February, and March 2024, the ASU team decided that they were unable to continue with the survivor input portion of the Pre-Trial Risk Assessment Study in Delaware. They noted that they regretted that the voices of Delaware survivors would not be included in the evaluation.

In the meantime, the research team had continued meeting with DELJIS staff and began the data retrieval process. The team indicated that they want to keep their commitment to the DVCC, the DELJIS Board, and the Courts, so they will continue to collect and analyze administrative data and present the results of the study when that time comes. Because this study will not result in a tool for Delaware, a new path forward to developing a validated pre-trial risk assessment for Domestic Violence cases will need to be identified.



# OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD

The DVCC Outstanding Service Award for 2023 was presented to Jenna R. Milecki.

The Council annually recognizes individuals or programs that demonstrate outstanding service in supporting those impacted by domestic violence and sexual assault. Jenna Milecki has been the Unit Head of the Domestic Violence Unit at Delaware's Department of Justice since October 2019. Since taking on this role, she transformed the way that domestic violence is prosecuted in Delaware. Jenna regularly trains police and allied professionals on investigating domestic violence, strangulation and stalking, and has helped shape protocols and legislation to improve Delaware's laws and criminal justice process. Jenna has engaged in all of these activities while maintaining a heavy felony level prosecution caseload, and supervising and training a unit of prosecutors, paralegals, and administrative assistants.

Jennifer Kutney-Soper said "She works closely with the victim services specialists in the DV unit and has an amazing ability to connect with victims to help them feel safe and heard during an incredibly traumatic process." Attorney General Kathy Jennings said "I've worked with many domestic violence prosecutors over the years and gotten to know each of them. It is impossible to overstate the level of skill, resilience, and emotional intelligence we demand from them for the good of the state. Through all my years with the DOJ, Jenna has been among the best to take on the job. Our State has asked a great deal of her in the name of justice for survivors; without fail, she has answered the call. She has earned our gratitude, and consideration for this award."



Award Recipient Jenna Milecki (center) receives the DVCC's 2023 Outstanding Service Award.

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

## Proclamation Signing

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 that provide critical advocacy, services, and assistance to victims. Governor Carney signed the Proclamation on October 27, 2023.



Governor Carney (center) signing the DVAM Proclamation with (from left) Angela Seguin, Chief Judge Michael Newell, Sue Ryan, DAG Jenna Milecki, AG Kathy Jennings, and Erika Gutierrez.

# TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

## Proclamation Signing

Teen Dating Violence Prevention and Awareness Month provides an opportunity for citizens to learn more about preventing dating violence among adolescents, promoting healthy dating practices, as well providing services and assistance to victims. Governor Carney signed the Proclamation on February 16, 2024. At the Proclamation Signing, the DVCC also honored the winners of the TDVAM Poster Contest, Lihlo, the middle school winner, and Kelis from New Castle County, the high school winner.

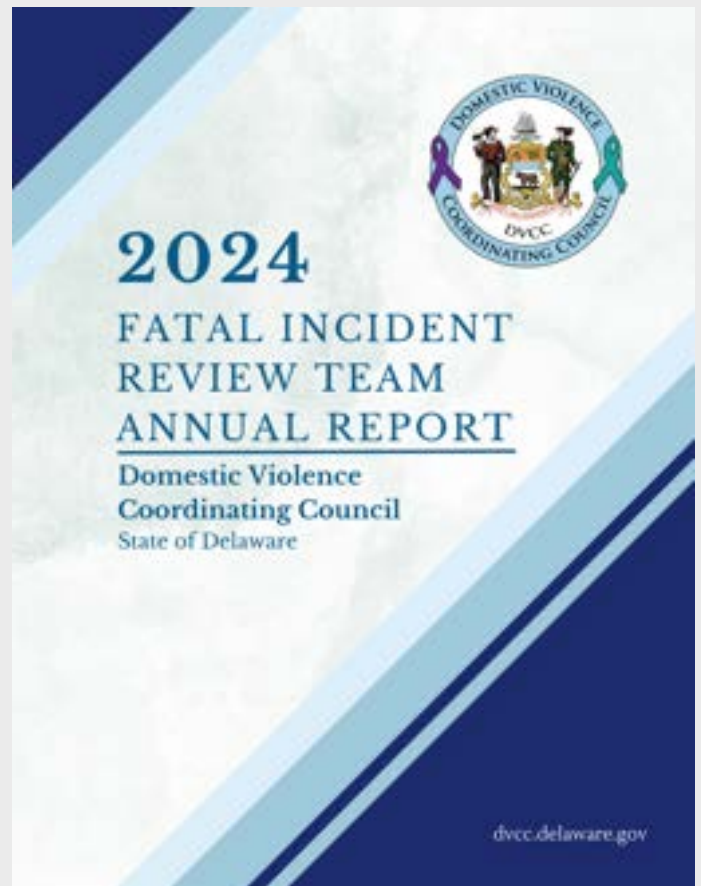


Governor Carney (center) at the TVDAM Proclamation Signing with (from left) Elmer Setting, Chief Judge Carl Danberg, poster contest winners Lihlo and Kelis, and DVCC staff Francisca Moreno and Sara Paris.



# 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, focusing on identifying trends, patterns and obstacles in services, assessing agency interventions, and 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 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 2024 FIRT Annual Report is available online at the [DVCC website](https://www.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 2023; and information and recommendations from the death and near-death cases that were previously reviewed.

## Year In Review

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HIGH RISK TEAM

Research has shown that intimate partner domestic violence homicides are often predictable; and if they are predictable, they are 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 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 and the Danger Assessment Protocol 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.

All cases reviewed by DVHRT result in one of three outcomes, either: a) DVHRT determines that all appropriate services are in place, thus "closed" with the Team but remains active with partner agencies; b) the victim refuses services, thus "closed" with DVHRT; or c) the case is retained by DVHRT for additional monitoring. Customized interventions (either through cases retained by DVHRT or services already rendered through partner agencies) will be offered to victims to alleviate the risk of future harm.

Since the implementation of the program, the DVHRT has been operating with a Coordinator who receives referrals of Kent County cases identified as high risk through the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) and then conducts a secondary assessment to prepare cases for a monthly review by the DVHRT. From 2020 - 2023, close to 7,500 statewide cases were identified as high risk through the LAP, conducted by police officers on the scene. Of those, nearly 1,900 were Kent County cases. Because the Coordinator receives referrals on high-risk cases statewide, the team was able to determine that Sussex County had approximately the same number of high risk cases as Kent County.

Therefore in 2023, a second Coordinator was added to begin a preliminary review of Sussex County high risk cases. The long-term goal is to have a DVHRT in each of the three counties.

## Year In Review

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HIGH RISK TEAM

During FY 2024, the DVHRT Coordinators received **1907** statewide referrals of high risk cases: **493** in Kent County, and **498** in Sussex County. Of those 493 Kent cases reviewed, **138** met the threshold to go to the Team for consideration with **25** cases being retained for continued status updates. During the same time frame, **206** Sussex cases met the threshold and would have gone to a team for review if a team existed in Sussex County.

Retained cases are monitored for six months during which time team members report on case activity, follow-up actions, and other relevant information. Further, the Coordinators check the criminal history status of the offenders each month. 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.

The DVCC has been able to implement this project with funding support of a Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) – Victims Assistance Formula Grant awarded as a subgrant by the Criminal Justice Council. In May 2024, the DVCC applied for the federal Improving Criminal Justice Response grant. If awarded, it will provide funding over a three year period to support: implementation of High Risk Teams in New Castle and Sussex Counties, continuation of the Kent County Team, DVHRT Coordinators in all 3 counties, and Training and Technical Assistance by the Geiger Institute. It will also fund staff from People’s Place and Child, Inc. to participate on the teams, allow for printing of DV shoe cards in Spanish, and pay for translation of other victim resources.

### Total Number of High Risk Cases by County

	New Castle County	Kent County	Sussex County	Total Statewide
2020	1,067	424	524	2,015
2021	1,050	477	510	2,037
2022	977	490	441	1,908
2023	990	477	493	1,960
Jan. 1 - June 30, 2024	439	235	232	906

Data on the table, by calendar year, represents cases that assessed as high risk when the Lethality Assessment Protocol was conducted by police responding to a call.

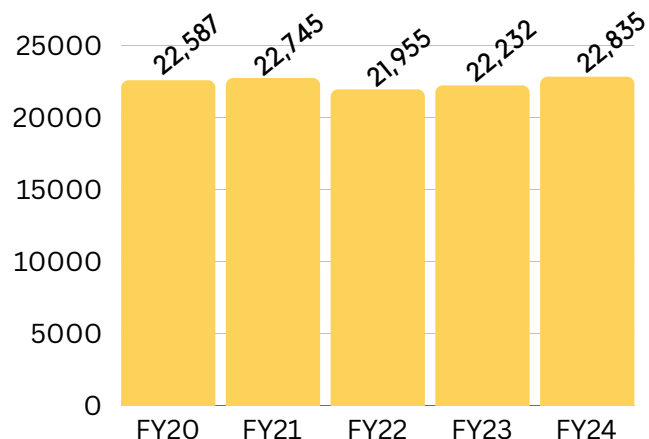
## Year In Review

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATISTICS

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 reported threats. Incidents of domestic violence can be perpetrated against an intimate partner or a family member. The data on pages 26 through 28 reflect incidents involving a family member, which can include an intimate partner.

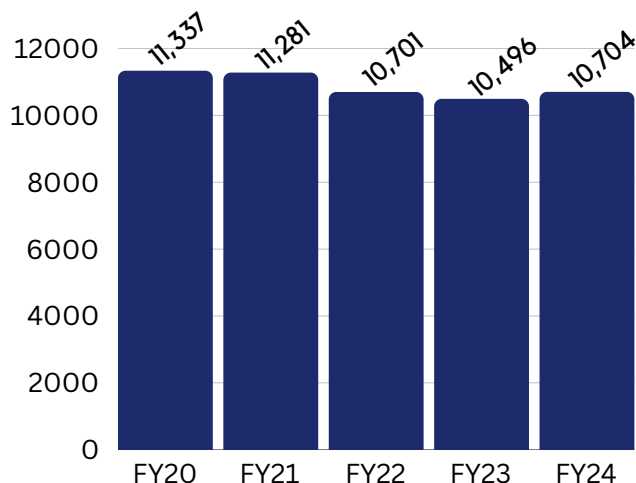
### Criminal and Non-Criminal DV Incidents

In FY 2024, there were a total of **22,835** combined criminal and non-criminal domestic violence incidents reported in Delaware.



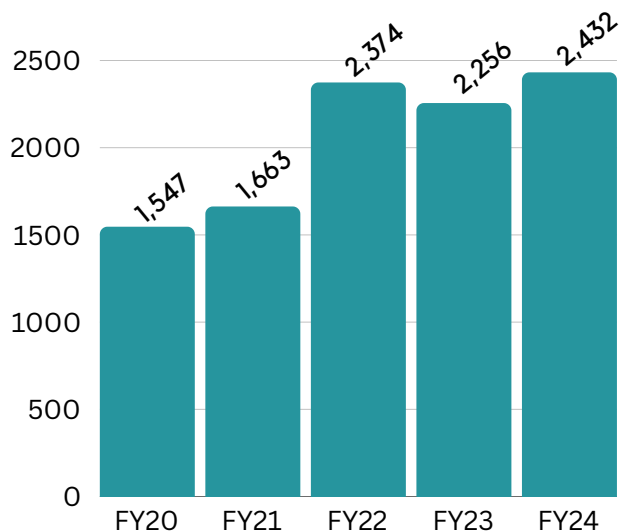
### Criminal DV Incidents

In FY 2024, there were a total of **10,704** criminal domestic violence incidents reported in Delaware.



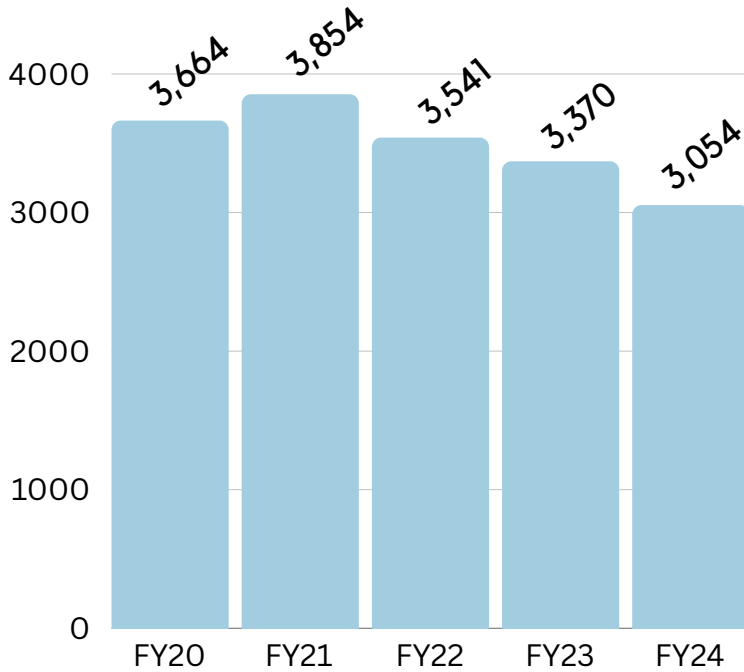
### Criminal DV Incidents with Injury

Of the **10,704** reported criminal domestic violence incidents in FY 2024, **2,432 (22.7%)** resulted in physical injury to the victim.



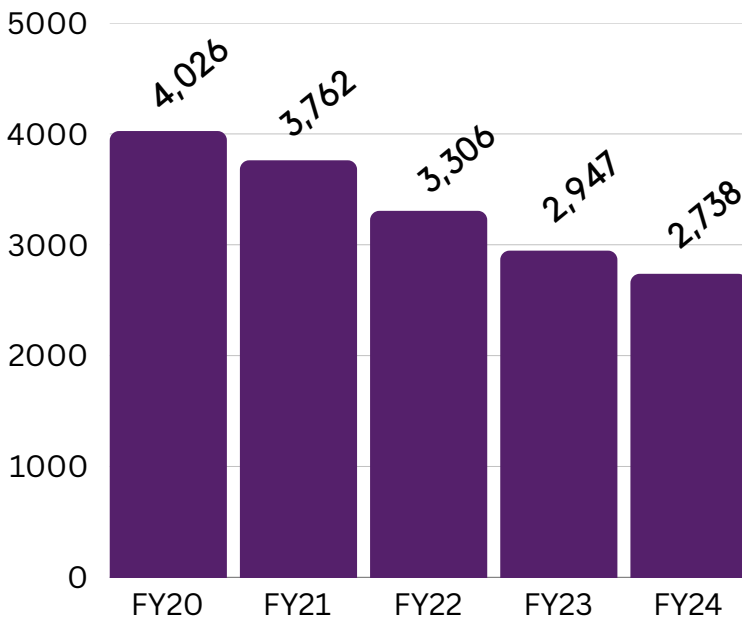
## Year In Review

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATISTICS



### Prior Police Involvement

In FY 2024, **3,054 (28.5%)** of the criminal domestic violence incidents had prior police involvement.



### Involved a Violent Act

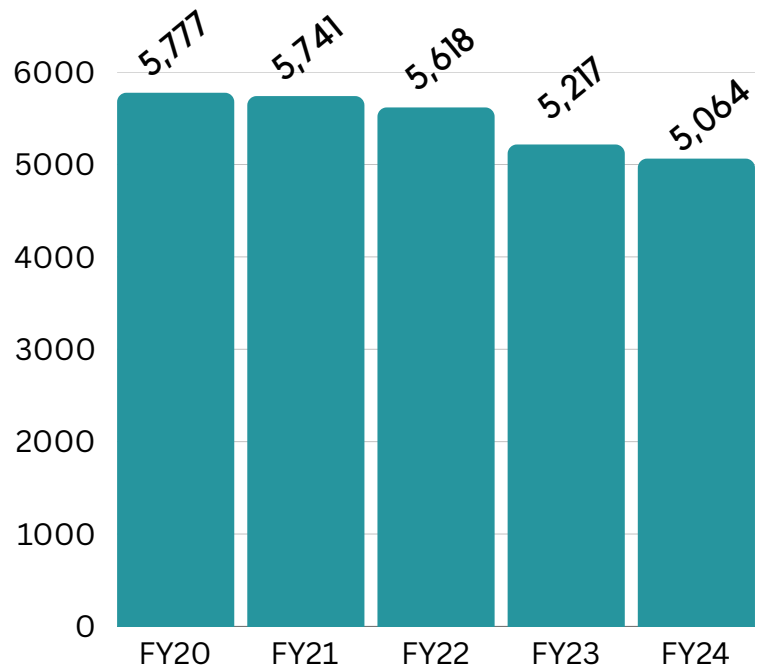
In FY 2024, **2,738 (25.6%)** of the criminal domestic violence incidents involved a violent act.

## Year In Review

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATISTICS

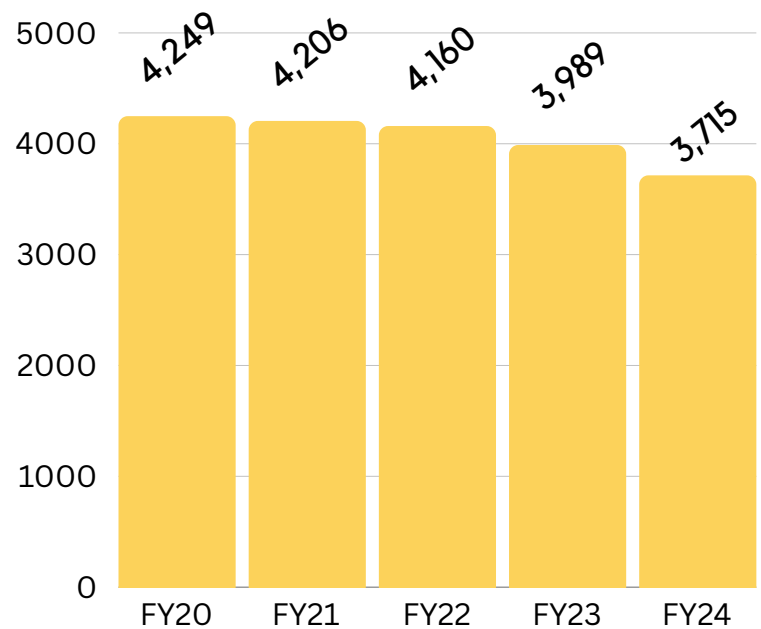
### Resulted in Arrest

In FY 2024, **5,064 (47.3%)** of the criminal domestic violence incidents resulted in an arrest.



### Children Present

In FY 2024, **3,715 (34.7%)** of the criminal domestic violence incidents happened with children present.



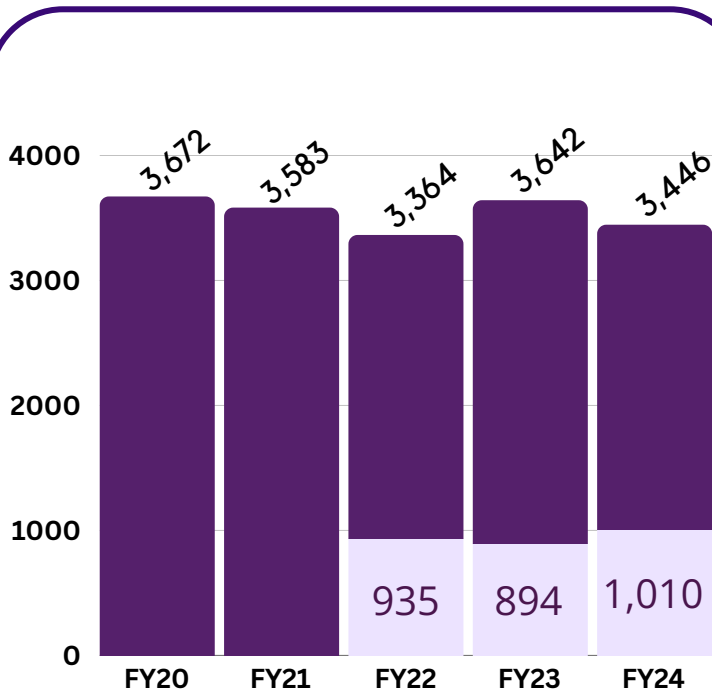
The DVCC collects this data from the Domestic Violence Incident Report captured in CJIS. Crime statistics for Delaware, including sex offenses, are analyzed by the Statistical Analysis Center and provided on their website for past years, through 2022: <https://sac.delaware.gov/sac-publications/>.

## Year In Review

# INTIMATE PARTNER CRIMINAL STATISTICS

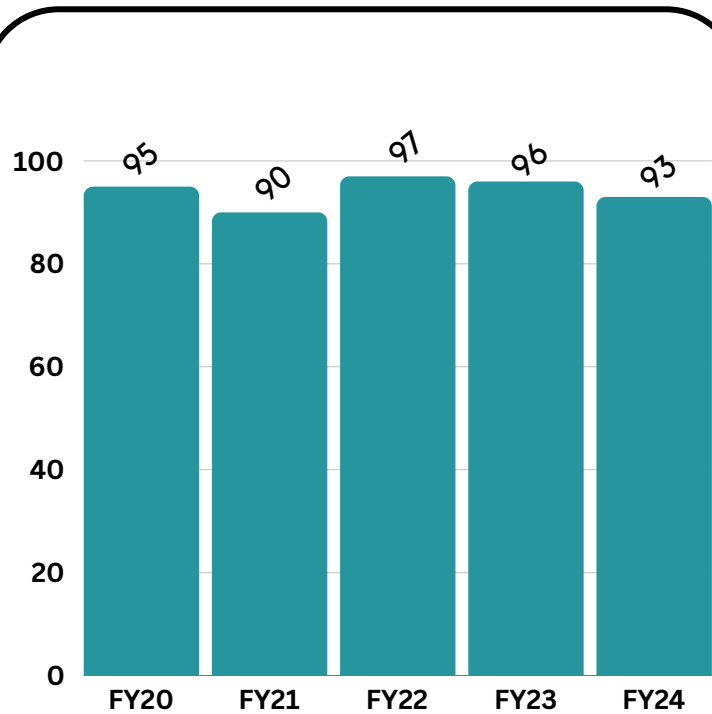
Incidents of domestic violence can be perpetrated against an intimate partner or a family member. Intimate partners can include current and former spouses, current and former dating couples with or without a child in common, and adolescent dating couples. Intimate partners may be the same gender.

Of the **10,704** criminal domestic violence incidents in FY 2024, **3,446** involved intimate partners. Of the intimate partner criminal incidents reported, **2,677** of the victims were female and **967** of the victims were male.



In FY 2024, of the **10,704** criminal incidents reported, **3,446** were between intimate partners.

Of those reported in FY 2024, **1,010** 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 FY 2024, there were **93** dual arrests made by law enforcement.

## Year In Review

# DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

## Domestic Violence Unit

The Domestic Violence Unit is a part of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice (DOJ). 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 Superior Court, the Court of Common Pleas, Family Court, and in some matters, before the Justice of the Peace Courts.

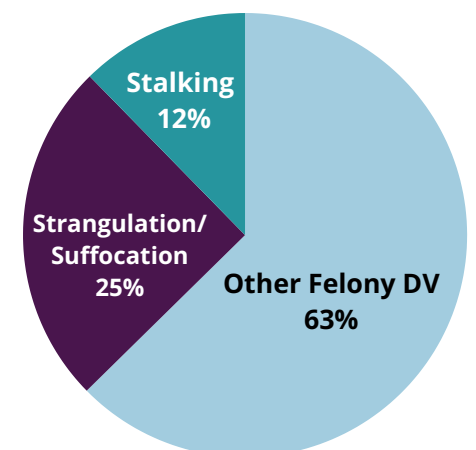
The DOJ is working on statewide training in domestic violence for prosecutors and utilizing trained prosecutors to uniformly handle domestic violence cases throughout the state. The DOJ is also adding processes that will include a special focus on stalking, strangulation, and domestic violence offenses involving a firearm in all three counties, as those are linked to lethality, to ensure that cases are evaluated consistent with the most serious cases seen by the DOJ. The anticipated process would evaluate certain felony DV cases similar to how homicide cases are reviewed for resolution decisions.

The Domestic Violence Unit in New Castle County (NCC) has made efforts to better track strangulation and stalking data with the goal of extending tracking throughout the State. In FY 2024, the New Castle County DV Unit received a total of **803** felony domestic violence (DV) cases. Those include intimate partner violence, crimes against new partners, as well as familial violence. Of those felony cases, **300 (approximately 37%)** were charged by police as strangulation or stalking, with **201** charged as strangulation/suffocation and **99** charged as stalking. DOJ received **497** felony sexual violence (SV) cases statewide. DOJ frequently reviews misdemeanor and felony cases within the unit to add charges of strangulation/suffocation and stalking where appropriate, but those are not reflected in these numbers.

FY 2024 Incoming Felony DV & SV Cases Statewide

	New Castle County	Kent County	Sussex County	Total Statewide
Incoming felony DV cases	803	167	214	1,184
Incoming felony SV cases	375	22	100	497

Breakdown of NCC DV Unit Caseload





## Year In Review

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

**1,140** Domestic violence offenders supervised in New Castle County.

**13** Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases

**558** Victims Served by Victim Service Agents

**216** Domestic violence offenders supervised in Kent County.

**4** Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases

**285** Victims Served by Victim Service Agents

**632** Domestic violence offenders supervised in Sussex County.

**8** Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases

**333** Victims Served by Victim Service Agents

## Year In Review

# LETHALITY ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL

The Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) provides an 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.

During the 2023 calendar year, utilization of the LAP statewide by police officers on scene held steady at **81%** of the time. For January-June 2024, the LAP was used **84%** of the time.

# CAPITOL POLICE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAM

Capitol Police operates the Domestic Violence Intervention Program (VIP) to provide escort, accompaniment, and other support to those who 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 and from a court hearing.

During FY 2024, the VIP program received **359** new VIP referrals and provided **301** clients with enhanced safety and/or protection as they conducted their business at various courts around the State. Victims who responded to surveys have been extremely grateful for the protection offered by this service. Many spoke about the VIP program in terms of giving them the strength to come to court and face their abusers without fear of being revictimized.

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

Or Scan Below



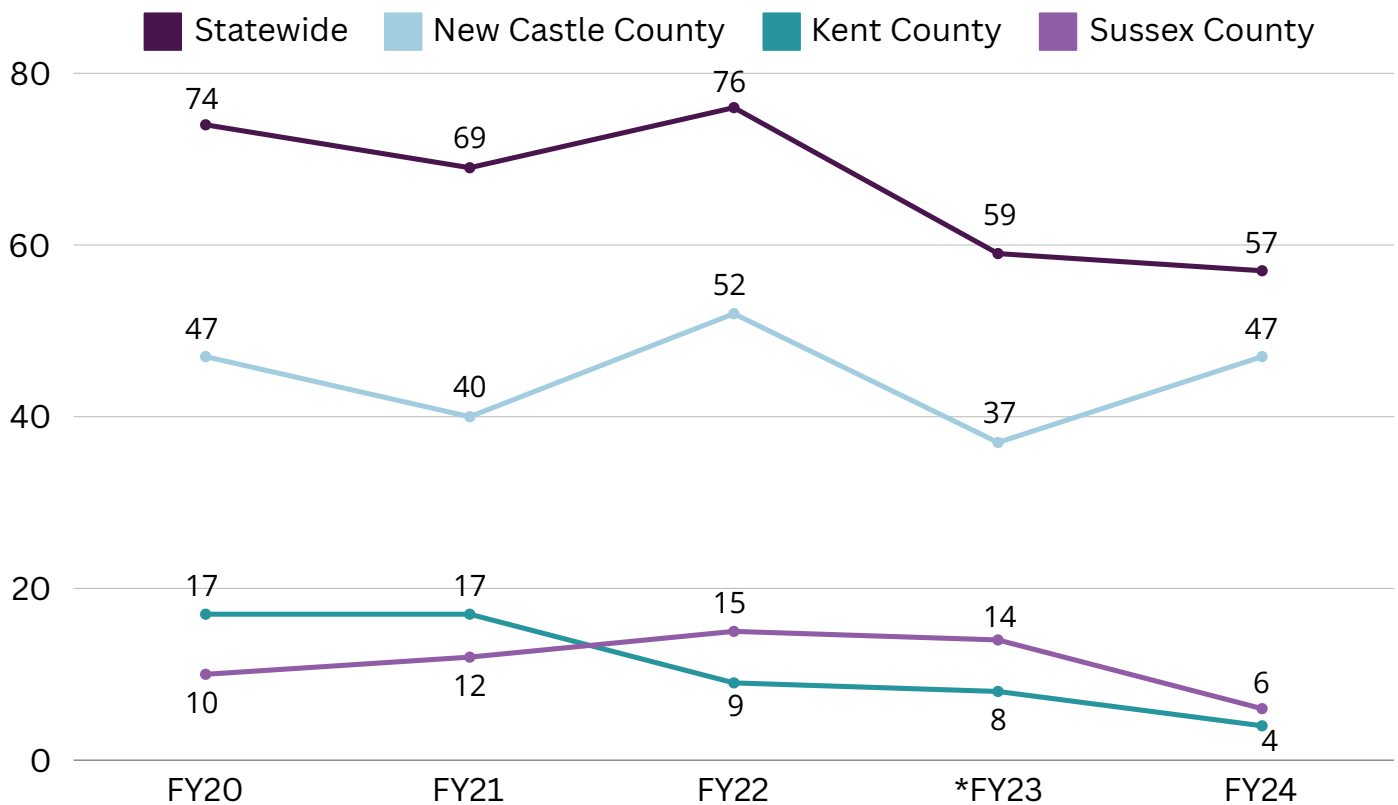
# Year In Review

## STATEWIDE PFA OUTCOMES

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 Order. 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 DVCC-certified Domestic Violence 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. In FY24, **57** lifetime PFAs were issued statewide, with **47** in New Castle County, **6** in Kent County, and **4** in Sussex County.

### Lifetime PFA Orders Issued in FY2020 - FY24



\*Our FY 2023 Annual Report listed Lifetime PFA totals only for those in which there was an abuse finding at trial; it did not reflect the total lifetime PFAs issued in 2023 including Default and Consent orders.

# Year In Review

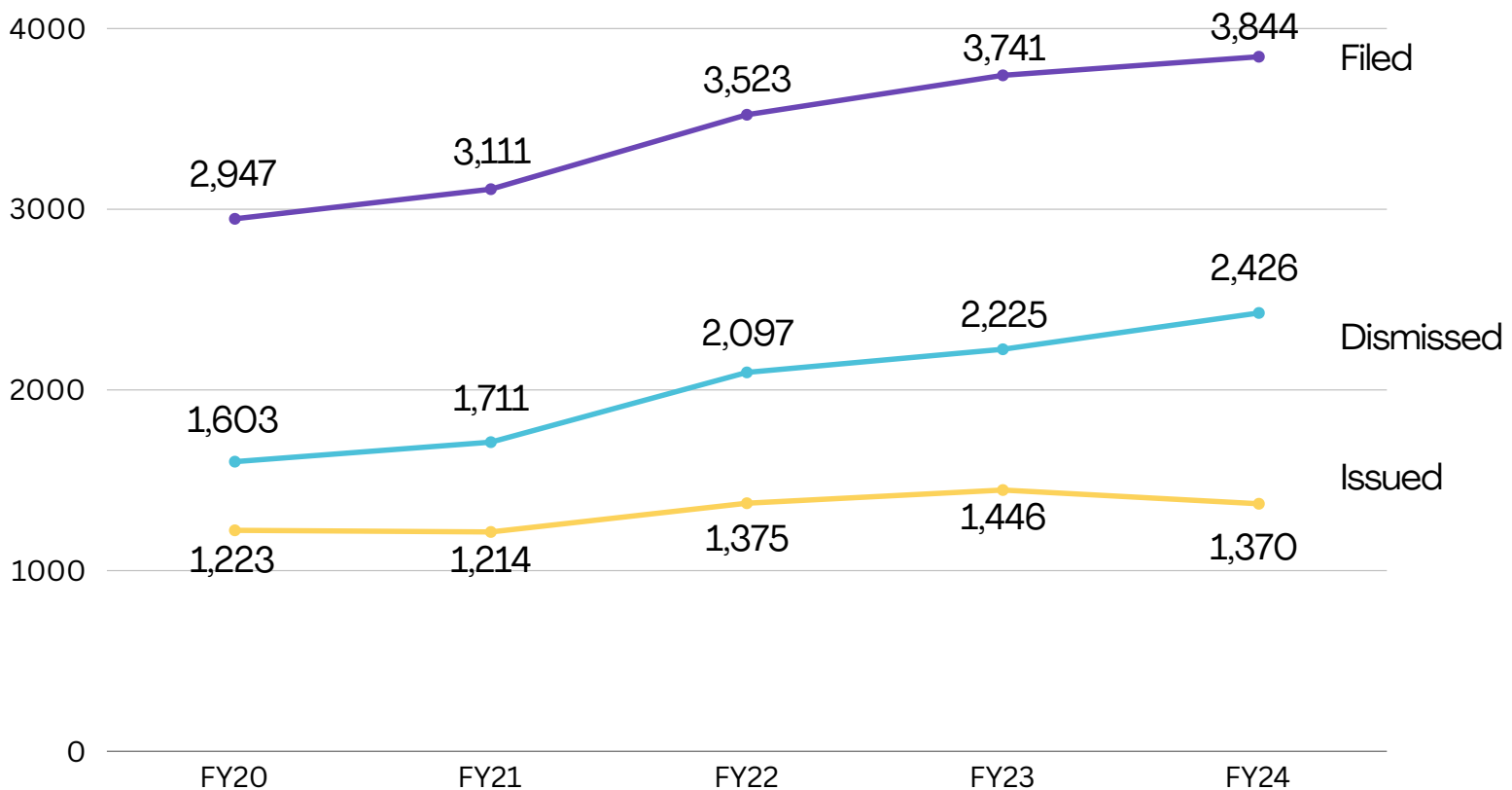
## STATEWIDE PFA OUTCOMES

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; or
- The Respondent consents to the entry of an 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; or
- The Petitioner voluntarily withdrew the petition before the hearing; or
- Abuse was not found by a preponderance of the evidence following a hearing.

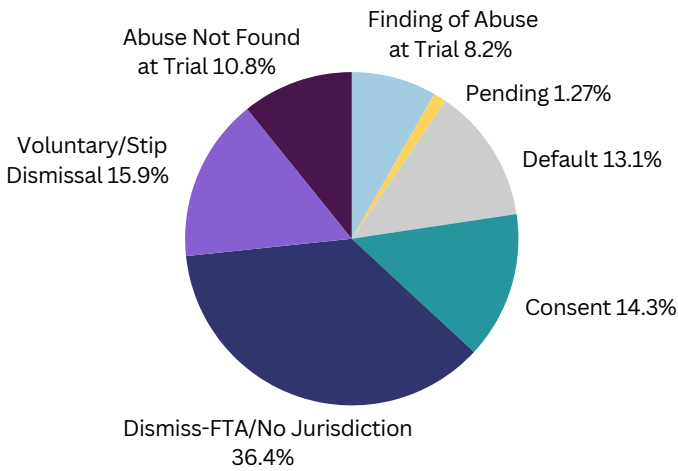


Family Court processed **3,844** petitions, which were filed statewide during FY 2024. This was a **2.8%** increase from FY 2023. Of those petitions filed, **1,370** final orders were issued and **2,426** petitions were dismissed.

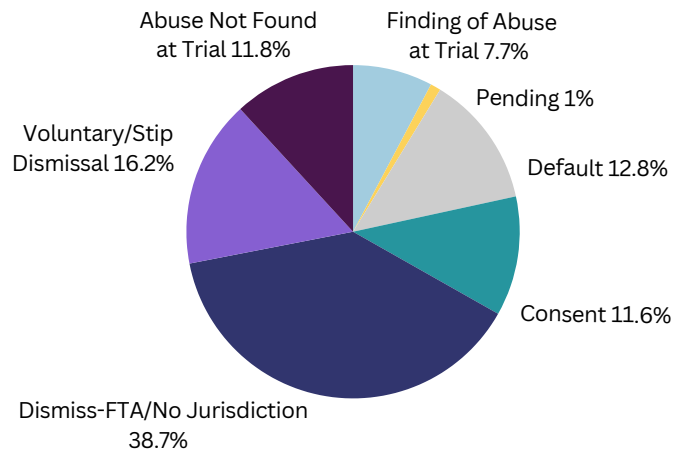
# Year In Review

## STATEWIDE PFA OUTCOMES

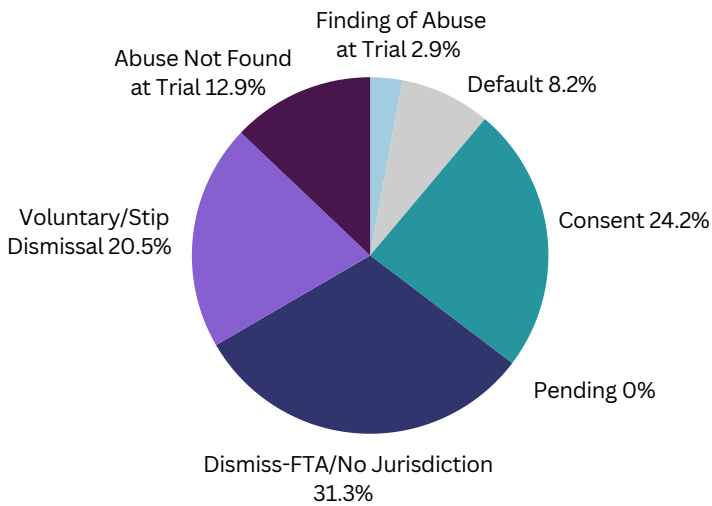
FY24 Statewide PFA Outcomes



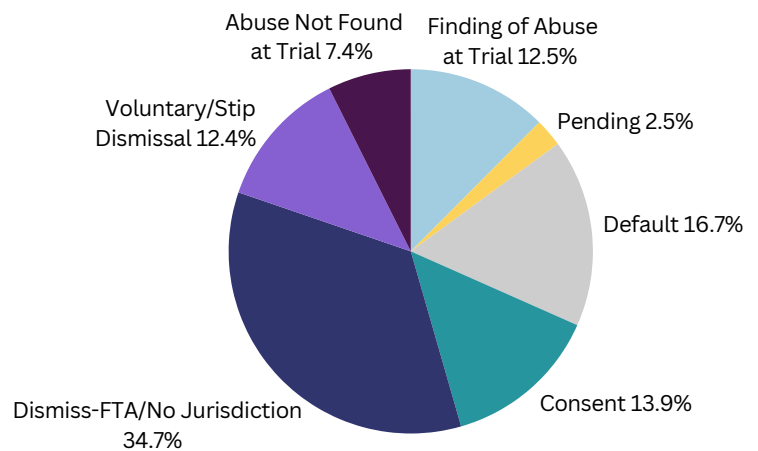
FY24 New Castle County PFA Outcomes



FY24 Sussex County PFA Outcomes



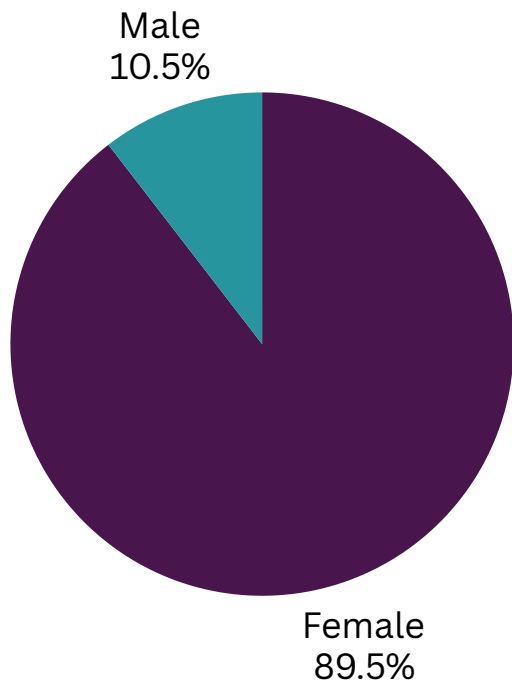
FY24 Kent County PFA Outcomes



Year In Review

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCACY PROGRAM

The Domestic Violence Advocacy Program provides free services to help intimate partner victims of domestic violence navigate 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.



## 1,081 Petitioners Served Statewide in FY2024

**373** Petitioners served in New Castle County

**343** Female **30** Male

**429** Petitioners served in Kent County

**379** Female **50** Male

**279** Petitioners served in Sussex County

**246** Female **33** Male

New Castle County  
302-255-0420

Kent County  
302-672-1075

Sussex County  
302-856-5843

## Year In Review

# DV INTERVENTION PROGRAM STATISTICS

At the start of FY 2024, there were three certified treatment providers offering Domestic Violence Intervention programs in Delaware: 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 Base\*. Each of these programs followed the guidelines established through the Domestic Violence Intervention Standards. CHILD, Inc. and People's Place were re-certified by the DVCC's DVI Certification Panel.

	CHILD, Inc.		Turning Point People's Place		Turning Point People's Place		
	New Castle County		Kent County		Sussex County		SCI***
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Probation Evaluated	419	40	89	11	118	20	N/A
With PFA Order Evaluated	205	31	35	10	23	5	N/A
Court Ordered	40	0	5	4	4	4	N/A
Self Referral	13	3	0	3	3	0	N/A
Participated in Group Intervention	238	27	115	26	146	25	27
Completed Intervention	233	41	58	13	69	18	25
Total Served**	677	79	173	26	215	25	27

\*The Family Advocacy Center at Dover Air Force Base is only for military personnel. Data is not provided.

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

\*\*\*Sussex Correctional Institute - pilot program in FY23 and FY24. Above data is for FY24.

## Year In Review

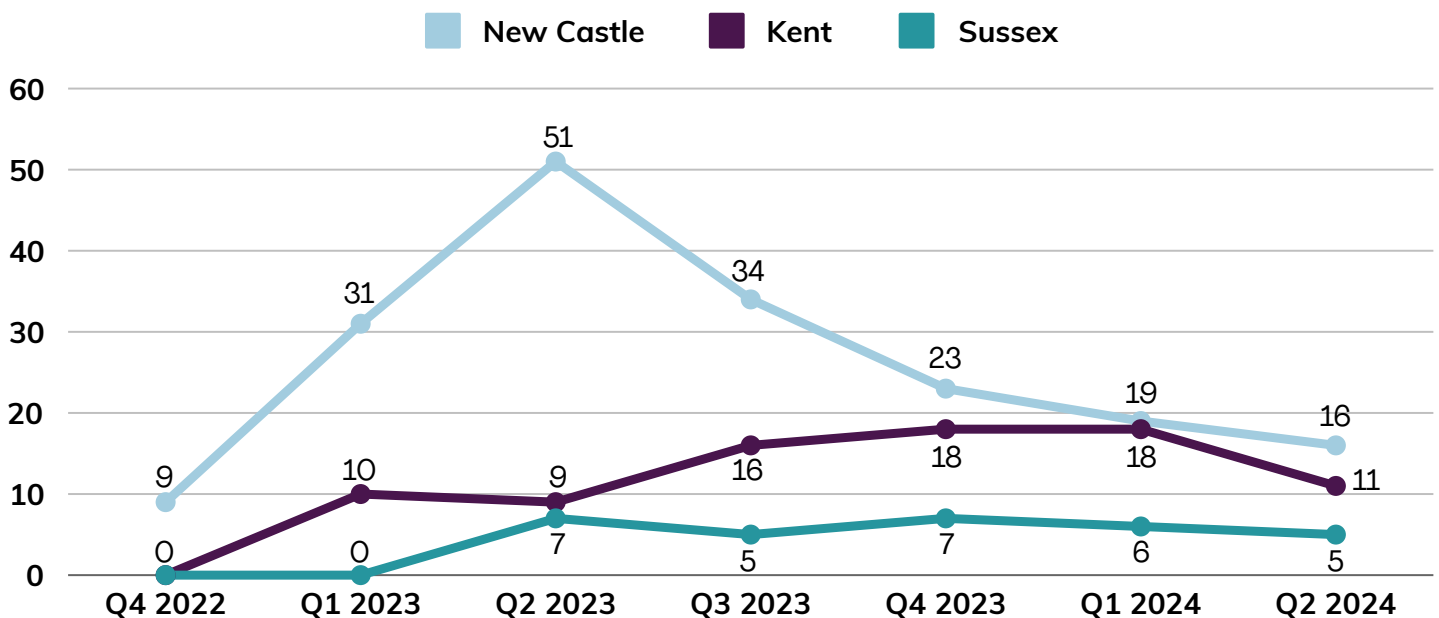
# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMPLIANCE CALENDAR

Delaware Family Court is proud to announce a partnership with Child Inc. and Turning Point at People’s Place II to increase the accountability of PFA Respondents who are ordered to Domestic Violence Intervention (DVI). When a PFA Order is issued after a trial by a consent and DVI is included, Respondents are now automatically added to a monthly calendar in which they must report out to the Court regarding their status with signing up with a DVI program. Representatives from Child Inc. and Turning Point attend these calendars as well and report to the Court regarding Respondents’ engagement with treatment.

The new DV Compliance Calendar began in New Castle County in November of 2022 and has since quickly moved to Kent and Sussex Counties. This statistical report aims to review the past year of the calendar as it compares with the data collected during FY2019. Because of the dedicated time devoted to ensuring that PFA respondents follow all portions of their PFA orders, the data collected for this current year outlines that more individuals engaged with treatment and intervention. Additionally, there are no longer cases in which Respondents are not compliant and it goes unaddressed by the Court.

Family Court plans to continue to expand these calendars to include PFA litigants who are ordered to use a visitation center, and litigants who are ordered to DVI in a criminal order.

**Number of cases added to the DV Compliance Calendar by County:  
November 2022 through June 2024**

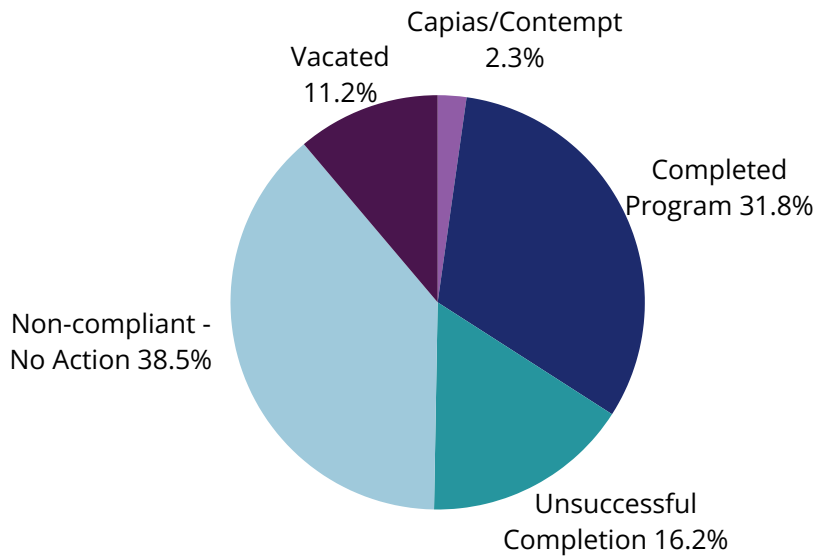




## Year In Review

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMPLIANCE CALENDAR

**Court Recorded Outcomes from Cases Tracked in 2018**



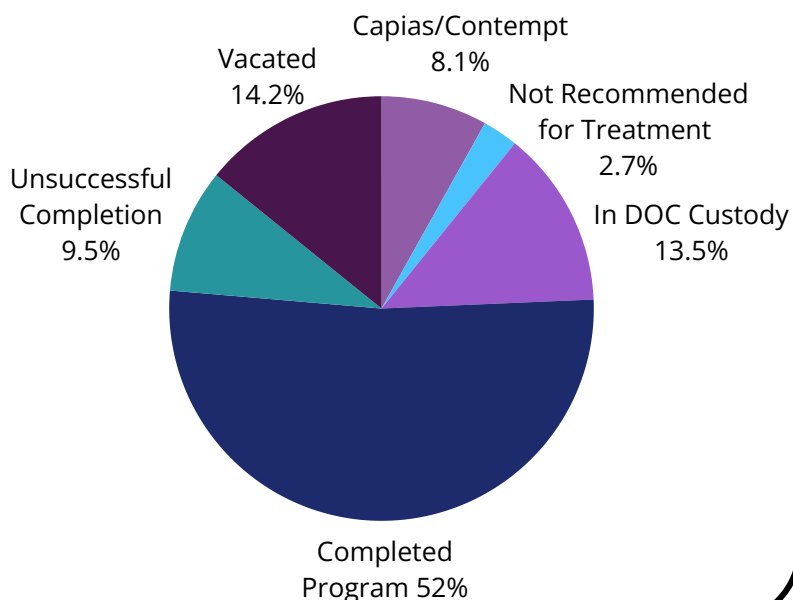
As of July 2024, **63** Respondents are being monitored statewide.

Prior to the Compliance Calendar in 2018, a significant number (**38.5%**) of Respondents were non-compliant with DVI treatment, and no action was taken on their cases by the Court. In 2023, the non-compliant category disappears entirely. Since the implementation of the Compliance Calendar, the overwhelming majority of respondents (**52%**) are now completing treatment programs.

A new category that Family Court can track because of the dedicated calendar are cases in which a Respondent is evaluated, and the provider does not recommend them for DVI services. These Respondents are part of the compliant group, and typically contain individuals who need victim services or other treatment types instead of DVI.

Prior to the DV Compliance Calendar, the Court did not have the staff to monitor Default orders that were served after the initial order. In 2023, the Court was able to bring **44** Respondents onto the calendar who had been served with a Default order.

**Court Recorded Outcomes from Cases Tracked in 2023**



## Year In Review

# SEXUAL VIOLENCE PROTECTIVE ORDERS

A Sexual Violence Protective Order (SVPO) is a civil order issued by Superior Court that protects Petitioners who have experienced sexual violence by prohibiting Respondents from contacting or approaching them. SVPOs may include additional measures to ensure the Petitioner's safety.

The law creating SVPOs became effective on April 10, 2023 and allows a protection option for Delaware residents who experience sexual violence but do not qualify to file a petition for a Family Court Protection From Abuse Order because either the Petitioner and the Respondent were not in a substantive dating relationship, or the Petitioner and the Respondent do not have a family relationship that falls under Family Court's jurisdiction. An SVPO Petitioner must have a reasonable fear that the Respondent will harm them in the future based on specific conduct that occurred simultaneously with or subsequent to the sexual violence.

In addition to prohibiting contact, an SVPO may include these additional measures:

- (1) Restrain the Respondent from having contact with the Petitioner's residence, workplace, school, or other institution where the Petitioner may be.
- (2) Prohibit the Respondent from knowingly coming within, or knowingly remaining within, a specified distance and location.
- (3) Order the Respondent to relinquish to a police officer, or to a federally-licensed firearms dealer located in Delaware, the Respondent's firearms, and to refrain from purchasing or receiving additional firearms for the duration of the order.
- (4) Direct a law-enforcement agency having jurisdiction where the Respondent resides, or where the firearms or ammunition are located, to immediately search for and seize any firearms or ammunition owned, possessed, or controlled by the Respondent.
- (5) Order the Respondent to undergo a drug, alcohol, or mental health assessment approved by the Sex Offender Management Board.
- (6) Any other reasonable relief necessary or appropriate for the protection of the Petitioner.

Hearings on emergency or "*ex parte*" petitions are held within 72 hours, and on non-emergency petitions within 15 days of the filing of a non-emergency petition.

## Year In Review

# STATEWIDE SVPO OUTCOMES

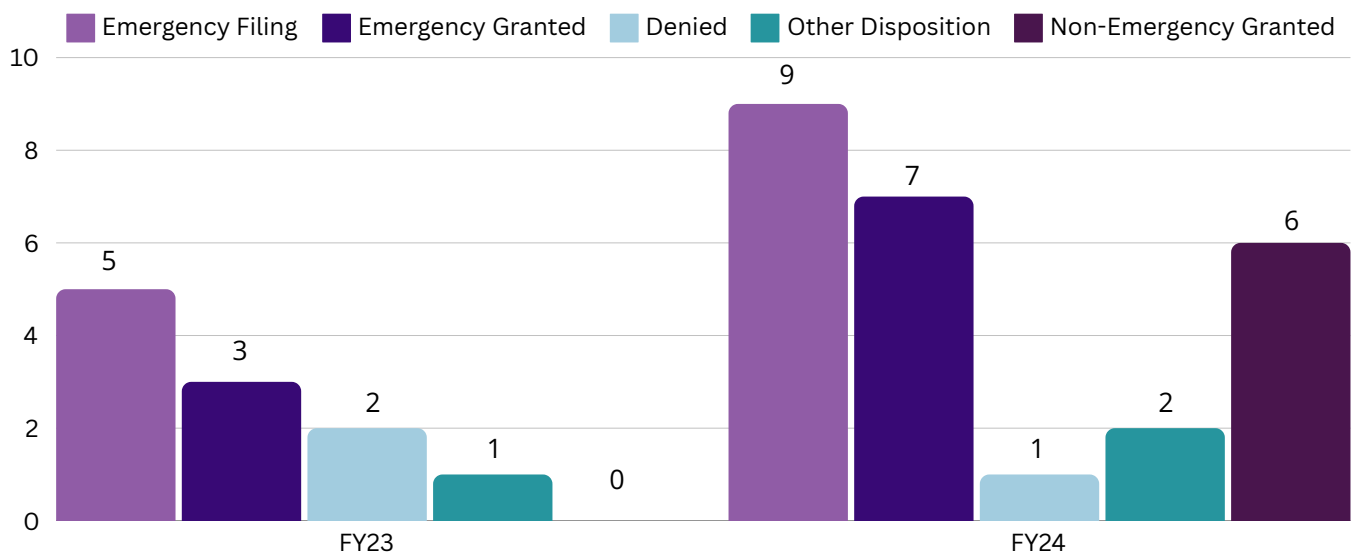
An SVPO can be issued following a hearing if:

- the Petitioner proves by a preponderance of the evidence that sexual violence has occurred; or
- the Respondent consents to entry of an order; or
- the Respondent fails to appear for a hearing after proper notice, and a default order is entered.

An SVPO petition can be vacated or dismissed if:

- the Petitioner fails to appear for the hearing; or
- the Petitioner voluntarily withdrew the petition before the hearing; or
- sexual violence was not found by a preponderance of the evidence following a hearing.

## Statewide SVPO Filings in FY 2023 and FY 2024



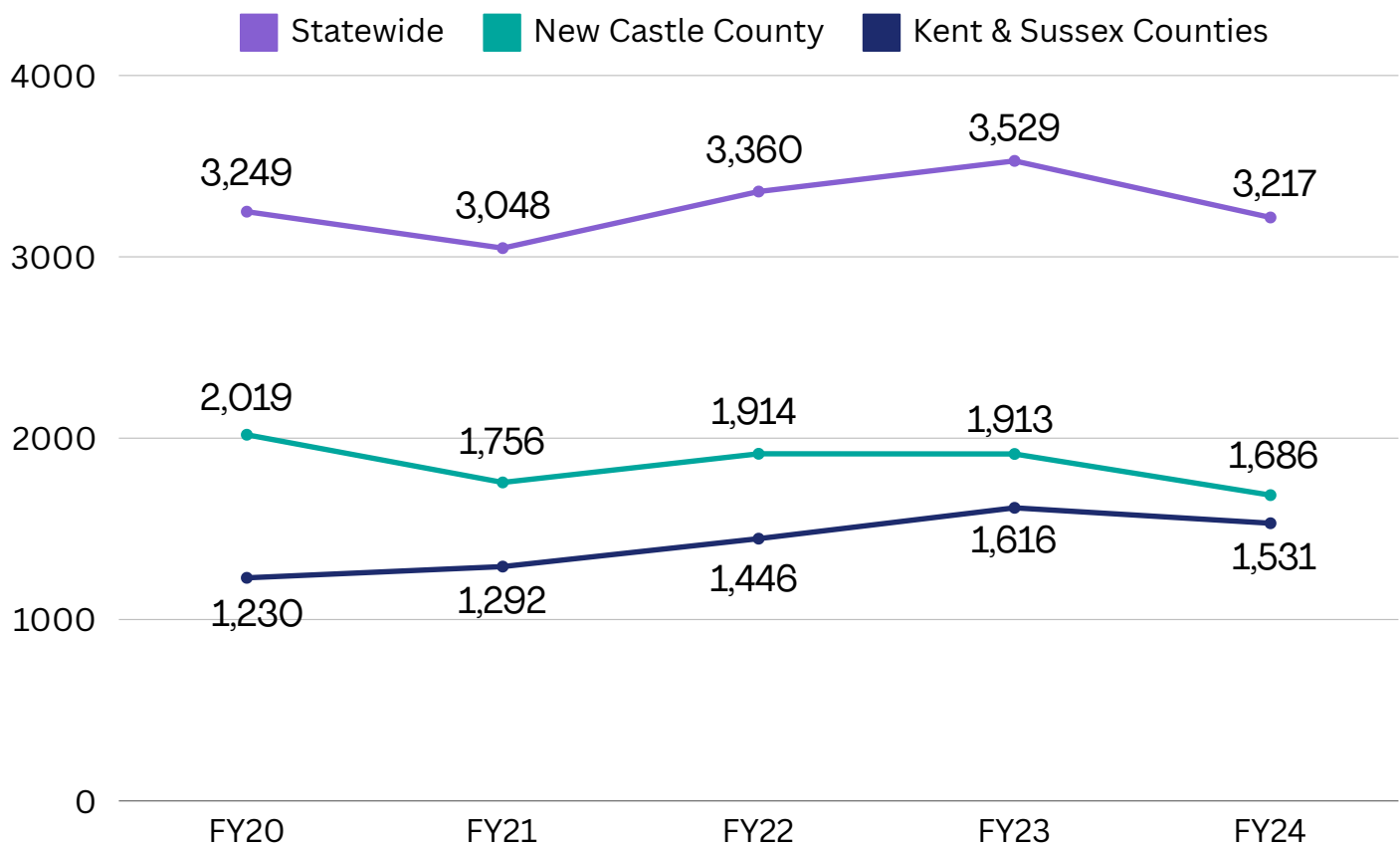
Statewide, Superior Court processed **5** petitions in FY 2023 (April 10, 2023 - June 30, 2023), and **9** petitions in FY 2024. Of those petitions filed, in FY 2023, **3** emergency orders were granted, **0** non-emergency orders were granted, **1** resulted in “other disposition,” and **2** orders were denied. In FY 2024, **7** emergency orders were granted, **6** non-emergency orders were granted, **2** resulted in “other disposition,” and **1** order was denied.

## Year In Review

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE STATISTICS

The Domestic Violence Hotlines are an important, confidential resource available to victims of domestic violence in Delaware, and are 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 FY 2024, there were a total of **3,217** calls received by the Domestic Violence Hotlines statewide. There were **1,686** calls to the Domestic Violence Hotline in New Castle County and **1,531** calls to the Domestic Violence Hotlines in Kent and Sussex Counties. There were **180** Lethality Assessment Protocol calls received by the hotline in New Castle County, and **269** Lethality Assessment Protocol calls received by the hotlines in Kent and Sussex counties.

## Year In Review

# SEXUAL VIOLENCE HOTLINE STATISTICS

The Sexual Assault/Rape Crisis Hotlines are an important resource available to victims of sexual violence in Delaware. Similar to the DV Hotlines, the Sexual Assault Hotlines are available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week in all three counties. Hotlines are operated by trained volunteer advocates who provide crisis advocacy including accompaniment to local hospitals, police stations and courts. Advocates provide information and resources, crisis management strategies, and support to survivors of sexual assault. All services are free and confidential.

There are two Sexual Violence Hotline services in Delaware, one operated by YWCA Delaware's Sexual Assault Response Center (SARC) and one by ContactLifeline. In addition to hotline calls, YWCA SARC advocates provided the following accompaniments for survivors statewide: **287** hospital (**6** Department of Correction, Prison Rape Elimination Act), **427** police, **244** court, and **14** Title IX. **39** sexual violence survivors received civil legal services thru SARC's Medical Legal Partnership with CLASI. SARC also served **733** survivors in aftercare community health case management, **425** adult survivors in individual and group counseling, and **135** youth in individual and group counseling. In addition to hotline calls, ContactLifeline provided **22** hospital accompaniments. ContactLifeline also provided counseling related to sexual violence for **30** teens at high schools in Kent and Sussex counties, and for **15** adults.

## Number of Hotline Calls by County Per Year

	New Castle County		Kent County		Sussex County		Unknown County or Other States
	Contact Lifeline	YWCA SARC	Contact Lifeline	YWCA SARC	Contact Lifeline	YWCA SARC	Contact Lifeline
Sexual Assault Hotline calls	55	2,132	30	599	35	632	37
Totals	2,187		589		667		37

Year In Review

# 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 shelters in trauma-informed settings, domestic violence shelters offer safety planning, case management, advocacy, counseling, child care, job assistance, and more.

## Individuals Sheltered Statewide

	CHILD, Inc.	People's Place SAFE & Abriendo Puertas	
	New Castle County	Kent County	Sussex County
Females Sheltered	176	59	73
Males Sheltered	0	0	0
Children Sheltered	145	55	71
Total Sheltered	321	114	144

## Individuals Provided with Hotel Stays Statewide

CHILD, Inc. New Castle County			People's Place - SAFE Kent & Sussex County			People's Place - Abriendo Puertas Sussex County		
Female	Male	Children	Female	Male	Children	Female	Male	Children
14	8	13	41	4	60	2	1	3
Total: 35			Total: 105			Total: 6		

## Year In Review

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RAPID REHOUSING STATISTICS

CHILD, Inc. offers a Rapid Rehousing Program in New Castle County. The program is funded by a grant through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Designed for families who are experiencing homelessness and need temporary assistance in order to obtain and retain housing, it is an evidence-based approach that aims to end homelessness as soon as possible. Rapid Rehousing helps to provide supportive services to families in need so they can regain stability. Child, Inc.'s program focuses on families who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, who have no other residence, and who lack resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

The Rapid Rehousing Program provides assistance in the search for safe and affordable housing, assistance connecting with landlords and finding the best placement options, and monetary assistance for moving costs. Rapid Rehousing staff develop a unique plan for each client to provide rental assistance at varying duration, based on each client's needs. The staff also assist with navigating barriers that clients may face, especially by connecting them to community resources that can help maintain their housing.

	CHILD, Inc.
	New Castle County
Adults Served	42
Children Served	61
Total Served	103

## Year In Review

# LEGAL SERVICES FOR VICTIMS

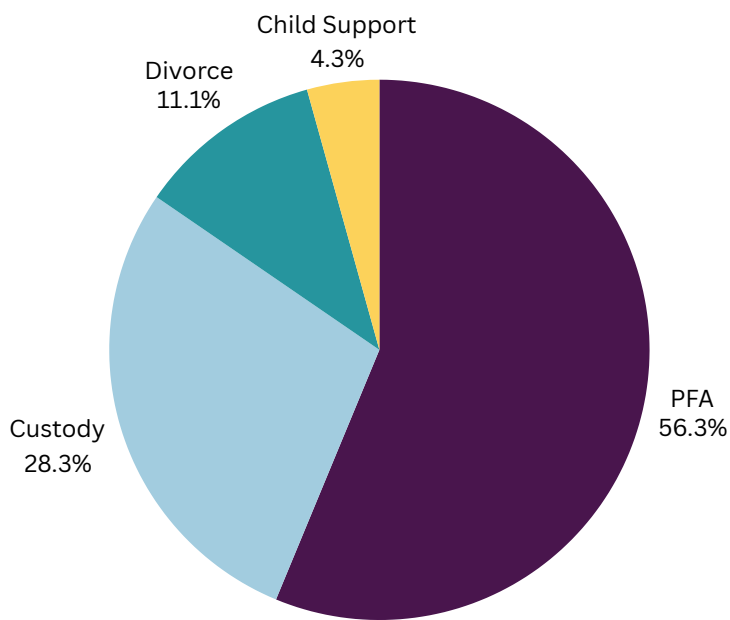
In Fiscal Year 2024, Community Legal Aid Society (CLASI) provided representation and guidance in **948** cases for survivors of domestic violence statewide. Of the **948** cases, **480** were PFA cases, **304** were custody/visitation cases, **125** were divorce cases, and **39** involved child support.

In addition, CLASI provided advice and referral to **348** survivors of domestic violence. Of those **348** cases, **249** involved PFA cases, **63** involved custody/visitation, **19** involved divorce, and **17** involved child custody.

Delaware Volunteer Legal Services (DVLS) provides free representation in New Castle County to victims of domestic violence. In FY 2024, pro bono and staff attorneys provided advice, brief services, and representation to **98** victims through the PFA Pro Bono Program in obtaining protection orders. Pro bono attorneys also represented **104** other clients with PFA matters, custody/visitation, and divorce matters. In-house staff attorneys provided representation, advice, or brief services on **468** 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 2023, the DCC 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 **1,650** hours of legal research and services.

### Cases Assisted by CLASI in FY24





## Year In Review

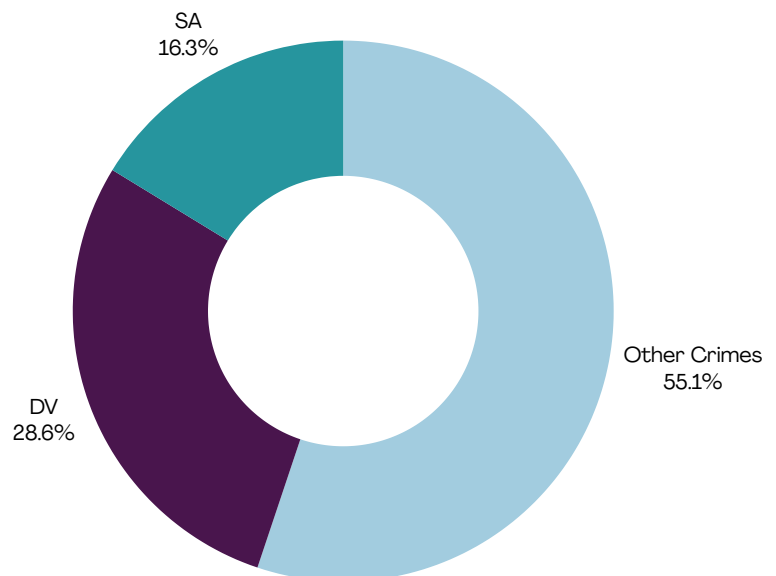
# VICTIMS' COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Delaware's Victims' Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP), through the Department of Justice, provides financial assistance to crime victims and their families. All states receive federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds to support victim compensation. This funding is generated by a surcharge on fines and penalties imposed by the Courts.

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 FY 2024, VCAP rendered a total of **2,840** payments to, or on behalf of, victims of crime. Those payments totaled **\$2,872,487.15**

Of those payments, **\$821,288.59 (28.6%)** was paid for domestic violence victims (excluding victims of domestic violence victims that were sexually assaulted) and **\$467,375.07 (16.3%)** was paid for victims of sexual assault, child sexual assault, and DV-related sexual assault and child sexual assault (including SANE kits).



**For more information about Delaware's VCAP, please visit**  
<https://attorneygeneral.delaware.gov/vcap/>

## Year In Review

# VICTIM INFORMATION & NOTIFICATION EVERYDAY (VINE) 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.

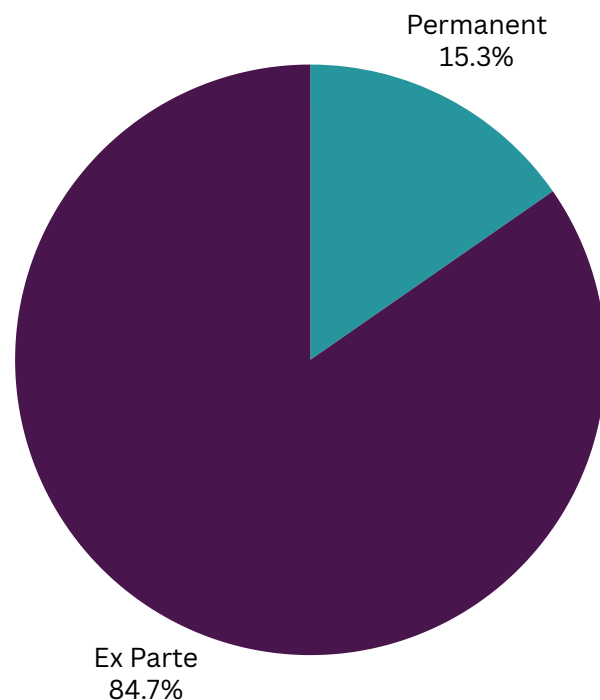
Victims are not automatically registered for VPO upon issuance of a protective order. It is the victim's choice to register for this service. Knowing when the order has been served helps victims create safety plans and take additional precautions to protect themselves.

For FY 2024, the VINE VPO program made a total of **150** successful notifications related to protective orders, **127** regarding ex parte orders and **23** regarding permanent orders. There were **86** unsuccessful notifications.

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

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

## VPO Program Order Notifications



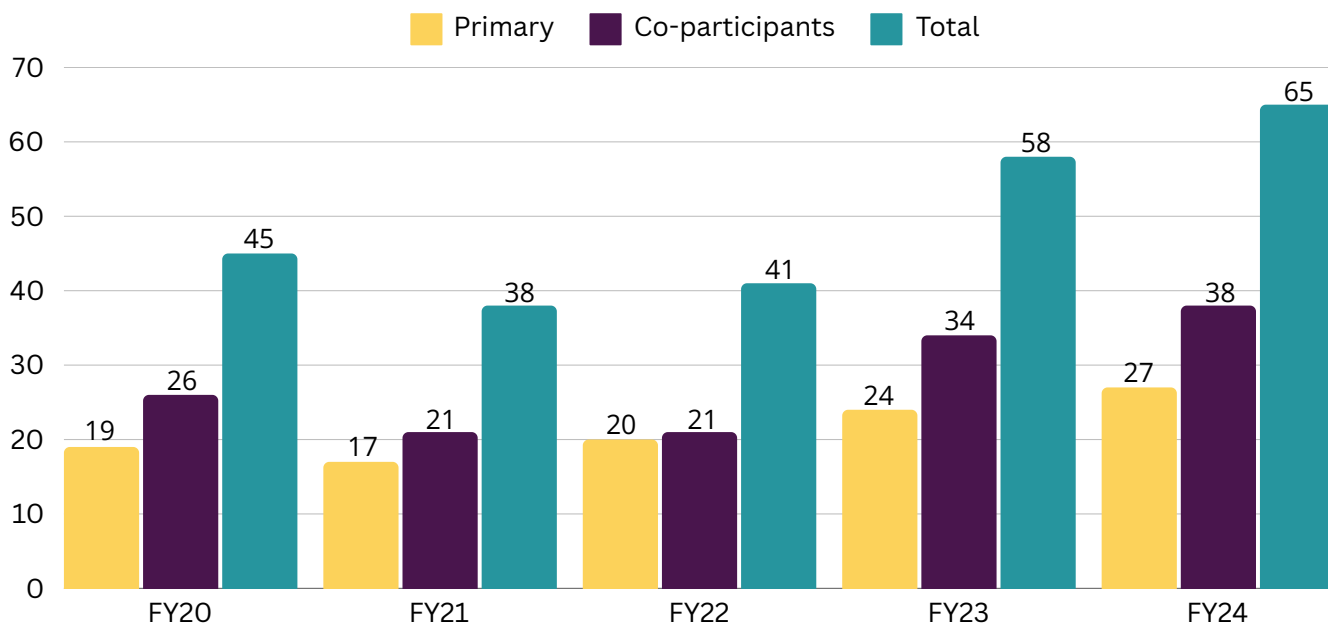
## Year In Review

# ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM

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 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.

For FY 2024, the ACP had **27** primary participants; **19** were in New Castle County, **5** were in Kent County, and **3** were in Sussex County. In FY24, there were **38** co-participants; **24** in New Castle County, **8** in Kent County, and **6** in Sussex County. A co-participant is a member of the same household as the primary victim. The ACP had a total of **65** active participants in FY24.

### ACP Participants & Co-Participants FY 2020-FY 2024



For more information about the Delaware Address Confidentiality Program, please contact the Delaware Department of Justice Victim/Witness Assistance Program at one of the three locations throughout the state.

<p><b><u>New Castle County</u></b>              820 N. French St              Wilmington, DE 19801              800-870-1790</p>	<p><b><u>Kent County</u></b>              102 W. Water St              Dover, DE 19904              800-870-1790</p>	<p><b><u>Sussex County</u></b>              114 E. Market St              Georgetown, DE 19947              800-870-1790</p>
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## Year In Review

# FAMILY VISITATION CENTER 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 a 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 supports parents in engaging children in activities and positive interactions.

The Delaware Family Visitation Program is a federal and state-funded program that operates 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.

### **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 monitors 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 pickup and drop off.

Year In Review

# FAMILY VISITATION CENTER PROGRAM STATISTICS

## Services Provided by Family Visitation Centers in FY 2024

	CHLD, Inc. New Castle County	People's Place II Kent County	People's Place II Sussex County	Total Statewide
Visitation Exchanges	378	505	429	1,312
Group Visits	362	392	251	1,005
Individual Supervised Visits	781	842	281	1,904
Children Served	83	144	65	292
Visiting Parents Served	126	124	51	301
Non-Visiting Parents Served	130	127	51	308
Total Parents Served	256	251	102	609
Total People Served	339	395	167	901

## Year In Review

# DIVISION OF FAMILY SERVICES STATISTICS

The Division of Family Services (DFS) is a division within the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families (DSCYF). The Mission of the DFS is to promote the safety and well-being of children and their families through prevention, protection, and permanency. DFS screens for domestic violence when an allegation of child abuse or neglect is reported to the DFS hotline.

In FY 2024, DFS received **24,142** reports alleging child abuse or neglect. Of those, **6,646 (27.5%)** were accepted for investigation. Of those reports accepted for investigation, **1,152 (17.3%)** also alleged domestic violence.

## Domestic Violence Liaison Program

The Domestic Violence Liaison Program has been a partnership of DFS, CHILD, Inc. and the SAFE Program of People's Place. Domestic violence advocates from CHILD, Inc. and the SAFE Program co-locate at DFS offices to 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.

In FY 2024 there were:



Year In Review

# DIVISION OF FAMILY SERVICES STATISTICS

## Domestic Violence Liaison Program

The DFS Liaison Program has ended at CHILD, Inc. for two main reasons: first, the lack of referrals, and second, the reduction in VOCA funds which required CHILD, Inc. to triage its programs in order to continue funding its most critical services (shelter, court advocacy, and therapy).

For the past four years, since the start of the pandemic, the Division of Family Services has experienced vacancies in their investigation and treatment units. Reduced staffing, coupled with remote work required during the COVID pandemic, led to curtailed interaction between DFS staff and DFS Liaisons, and thus a reduction in referrals. In spite of efforts to increase referrals, low referral numbers, DFS staffing shortages, and VOCA funding cuts led CHILD, Inc. to make the difficult decision to end the DFS Liaison Program.

Faced with similar circumstances of the VOCA cuts and lower referral numbers, People's Place cut one DFS Liaison position but was able to maintain one position. People's Place has hired a new staff member who will serve in this role beginning in September 2024.

## Year In Review

# 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 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. The data below reflects children served in FY 2024.

	Helping Children Heal CHILD, Inc.	Turning Point at People's Place	
	New Castle	Kent	Sussex
Children/Adolescents Served	36	8	9
Parents/Caretakers Served	56	7	8
Total Served	92	15	17



# RESOURCES & INFORMATION

**If you are in danger, please call 911.**

## Hotline Numbers

DV Hotline, New Castle County

302.762.6110

DV Hotline, New Castle County Bilingual/ Español

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

## 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, intimidation, emotional, sexual, or economic abuse; deprivation; social isolation; destroying property; abuse of children or animals; or repeated battering and injury.

Over time the abuse 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 victims of violence if they are being abused.

Help is available! An ideal first step is to call the DV Hotline, and an advocate can answer questions, offer resources and information, connect callers with shelter if needed, and more.

## Safety Tips

To increase safety including the safety of children:

Have important numbers accessible (i.e. 911, family members, etc.).

Ask a neighbor to be aware of suspicious activity taking place.

Plan an escape route in case of an emergency and practice the plan with children.

Think in advance of safe places to go with the children in a hurry.

Leave extra money, car keys, clothing and copies of documents with a trusted person.

Call a Domestic Violence Hotline for assistance in planning and to get connected to other services and resources.

If there is danger, try to use a safer computer to which the abusive person does not have direct or remote access.



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

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