

FISCAL YEAR 2026

ANNUAL REPORT

Domestic Violence
Coordinating Council



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Chair's Message

On behalf of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, I am pleased to present the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2026. In addition to the dedicated and hard-working staff of the DVCC, our valued committee members devoted considerable time and effort to many of the accomplishments highlighted in this report. The DVCC's committee structure allows the Council to address the ever-present and pervasive issues Delawareans face across all sectors impacted by domestic violence. Please see the summary of the FY 2026 accomplishments for each committee in the pages that follow.

This year's Annual Report continues to include 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 and the information contained in it continues to inform the DVCC's work and enables us to accomplish our mission.

The statistics contained in this year's report reflect modest changes from previous fiscal years. This data provides critical perspective on our accomplishments and ongoing challenges, serving as a roadmap toward the DVCC's ultimate goal of eliminating domestic violence. It may appear trite to say that any incident of domestic violence is one too many, but I will assert that this is true. Domestic violence is a public health issue that impacts us all; the statistics throughout this report represent our families, our neighbors, our loved ones, and our communities. Domestic violence is broad reaching and systemic; consequently, our response must be equally as broad and comprehensive. The DVCC is dedicated to its mission and continues to strive to improve the lives of Delawareans. We need to remain steadfast in our commitment to ending domestic violence through continued collaboration and systematic change, as exemplified by the work detailed in this Annual Report. On behalf of the members and staff of the DVCC, we thank you for all that you do to improve the lives of the citizens of our wonderful state.

Sincerely,
Michael K. Newell, Chair

2026 Council Members

Chair

Honorable Michael Newell

Chief Judge, Family Court

Vice-Chair

Honorable Terra Taylor

Commissioner, Department of Correction

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 Danielle Brennan, Designee for President Judge, Superior Court

Honorable Carl Danberg, Chief Judge, Court of Common Pleas

Honorable Alan Davis, Chief Magistrate, Justice of the Peace Court

Honorable Kathleen Jennings, Attorney General, Department of Justice

Honorable Vaughn Bond, Designee for Secretary, Department of Safety and Homeland Security

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

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

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

Claire DeMatteis, At-Large Member

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

Associate Dean and Professor Dana Harrington Conner, At-Large Member

Professor Jennifer Naccarelli, At-Large Member

Kathryn van Amerongen, Esq., At-Large Member

Melissa Pennachi, At-Large Member

Denise Grybowski, At-Large Member

Staff Members*

Angela Seguin, Executive Director

Lauren Cuevas, Social Services Senior Administrator

Sara Paris, Planner IV

Francisca Moreno, Training and Education Specialist III

Debra Pierce, Administrative Specialist

Debra Reed, DV High Risk Team Coordinator

Timothy Valeski, DV High Risk Team Coordinator

*In March and April 2026, Lauren Cuevas and Francisca Moreno left the DVCC. In April, Sara Paris was hired into the role of Social Services Senior Administrator. In June, Megan Bittinger was hired as Planner IV.

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.

Aging & Domestic Violence

Chair Honorable Vaughn Bond
Designee Chair Kimberly Chandler

Animal Abuse & DV Link

Chair Honorable Michael Newell
Designee Chair Honorable Jennifer Ranji

Children and Domestic Violence

Chair Honorable Steven Yeatman

Criminal Justice

Chairs Melissa Pennachi and Master Corporal Andrea Warfel

Immigration

Chair Laura Graham, Esquire

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
Domestic Violence Intervention Certification Panel

Legislative Drafting & Review

Chair Honorable Krista Griffith

Fatal Incident Review Team (FIRT)

Chairs Deputy Attorney General Jenna Milecki, Professor Dana Harrington Conner, and Lisa Hudson

Aging and Domestic Violence Committee

The Aging 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 2026 Accomplishments

- In March and April 2026, Committee members, DVCC staff and other advocates attended site visits to the Kutz Senior Living Campus to meet staff, tour the facility, and learn about plans to implement an Elder Abuse Sanctuary for older adult survivors of domestic violence.
- In June 2026, for Elder Abuse Awareness Day, a video about elder abuse created by DVCC staff for the Committee was shared on the DVCC's social media platforms. The Committee decided to continue to host an Elder Abuse Awareness Webinar annually and present a webinar series every other year.
- The Committee provided feedback about the infographic on elder abuse and DV which had previously been posted on the Committee's webpage on the DVCC's site. As a result of this feedback, the old infographic was retired and replaced with a new one-page infographic created by DVCC Staff. The purpose of the document is to increase awareness about domestic violence and aging adults, as well as how to spot the signs. The new infographic was incorporated into the DVCC Medical Committee's Domestic Violence Resource Manual for Health Care Providers, which was updated in 2026.

Scan for the new Aging & Domestic Violence Infographic:



Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence LINK Committee

The Animal Abuse and 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.

The Committee discussed several potential legislative issues, including the effort to address safety for animals abused by children under age 12 and a possible rewrite of the animal cruelty statute. These efforts will continue in FY2027. The Committee followed two bills that are relevant to the LINK, both of which passed by June 30, 2026. HB415 mandates that veterinarians report animal abuse. This bill was highlighted in the July 2026 edition of The National LINK Coalition's Newsletter, where it was noted that Delaware joins 23 other states which mandate veterinarians reporting animal abuse. HB134 updates the animal cruelty statute by upgrading certain violations from misdemeanors to felonies.

The Committee set a goal to incorporate information about the LINK into upcoming conferences and trainings being offered by partners that focus primarily on related LINK issues such as domestic violence, child abuse, and elder abuse. To that end, a list was generated of recurring and upcoming trainings and conferences in FY2027, and the legwork has begun to have the LINK information included either by having it infused into planned sessions, or by having a full workshop on the LINK added, or by providing brochures and tabling at events.

FY 2026 Accomplishments

- The Committee's Public Service Announcements (PSA) about the LINK, both a 30 second version and a 2.22 minute version, were completed by The CAUSE Production Crew. The long version can be viewed on the [DVCC's YouTube page](#). It has been shared on the DVCC's social media pages and on Family Court's website. The PSA was shown in Episode 6: "The Animal in Our Lives" of The CAUSE's live show "The Monthly Purpose" on May 21, 2026. The Committee continues to explore options for dissemination of the PSA via social media and other outlets.
- A Bench Card on the LINK for Delaware was drafted in collaboration with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) and is under consideration to be adopted by Family Court.
- Judge Ranji spoke for the 3rd year in a row at George Washington University with the Animal Defense Fund at the NCJFCJ Judicial Institute on the LINK.
- Information about the LINK was included in the DVCC's Resource Manual for Health Care Providers which was updated in 2026.
- DVCC Staff created a LINK brochure which the Committee will utilize for outreach and trainings.

Children and DV 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.

In FY 2026, the Committee began the year by working with DVCC staff to review and update DVCC's "How DV Affects Children" brochure based on feedback the Committee provided last fiscal year.

A carryover from FY 2025, the Committee continued discussions on the issue of mental health services for minors. This issue is particularly important for minors in cases where there is joint custody and a history of domestic violence. Mental health service providers often face legal barriers that prevent them from delivering services to minors. The Committee worked with DVCC staff to coordinate a meeting between Family Court representatives and mental health service providers to discuss barriers to providing services to minors. The Committee discussed possible solutions to address this service gap impacting children.

Additionally, the Committee continued its work with DVCC's Medical Committee on the latest version of the Manual for Healthcare Professionals.

In FY 2027, the Committee will continue to work to address the gap in mental health services for minors and collaborate with DVCC staff and committees on issues related to children and domestic violence.

FY 2026 Accomplishments

- The Committee provided feedback which led to an updated version of the DVCC's "How DV Affects Children" brochure.
- The Committee provided extensive feedback to the DVCC's Medical Committee on the latest version of the Manual for Healthcare Professionals, specifically focusing on the sections related to children and domestic violence and legal mandates. The Committee specifically addressed language around mandated reporting to ensure providers are clear on when a report of suspected abuse or neglect is needed.

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.

During FY 2026, the Criminal Justice Committee made steady and meaningful progress across several key initiatives related to domestic violence response and policy development. The Committee convened quarterly to receive updates, advance ongoing projects, and collaborate with stakeholders on systemic improvements.

Throughout the fiscal year, the Committee also monitored emerging trends and systemic issues, including the substitution of anger management in place of domestic violence-specific treatment, data around breach of release and criminal contempt, challenges associated with violations of protection orders and VOP (violation of probation) charges, and more.

FY 2026 Accomplishments

- A focus throughout the year was the continued rollout of the Strangulation Protocol across Delaware. Although the supporting grant has concluded, training will continue on an as-needed basis both in person and through a virtual module version of the training that DVCC staff developed.
- In response to a Fatal Incident Review Team (FIRT) recommendation, the Committee established a workgroup to explore potential legislative changes related to domestic violence misdemeanor cases outside the exclusive jurisdiction of Family Court. As a result, a bill was filed (HB122) to address the recommendation. That Bill has passed.
- In response to a Fatal Incident Review Team (FIRT) recommendation the committee established a workgroup to improve responses to suspicious death/potential staged suicide investigations involving domestic violence markers.
- The Criminal Justice Committee also focused on improving the clarity and enforceability of No Contact Order language in sentencing orders. The Committee continues to collaborate with the Judicial Information Center (JIC), the Delaware Criminal Justice Information System (DELJIS), and other stakeholders to address this.

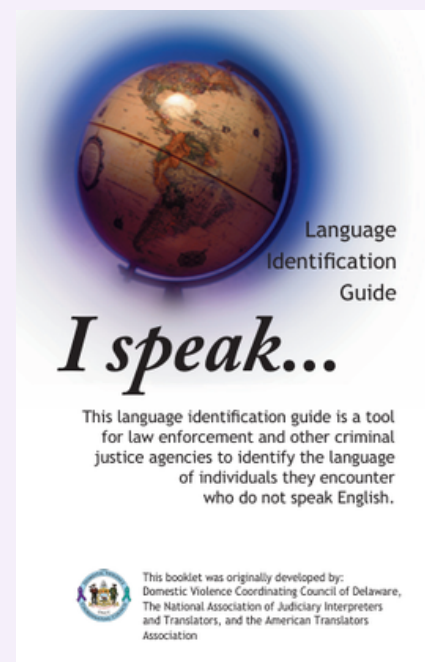
Immigration Committee

Non-U.S. Citizen victims of domestic violence and sexual assault experience additional barriers and challenges when accessing services. Non-Citizen victims often feel trapped in abusive relationships because of immigration status or lack thereof, language barriers, social isolation, and/or lack of financial resources. In addition, non-Citizens are less likely to report violence out of fear of law enforcement and deportation. The Immigration Committee, made up of service providers, law enforcement, and victim advocates, collaborates to identify the additional barriers confronting non-Citizen victims, and works to coordinate resources and effectuate change.

Delaware is home to approximately 121,000 people who were born outside the United States. This accounts for approximately 12% of Delaware's total population (New Americans in Delaware, Office of New Americans). According to the most recent Census data for Delaware, approximately 16.2% of Delawareans speak a language other than English at home. Access to services and information about domestic violence and sexual assault for Limited English Proficient (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.

FY 2026 Accomplishments

- The Committee continued to address the Fatal Incident Review Team's (FIRT) recommendation regarding language access for LEP survivors. The Committee identified focus areas of funding, training, sharing of resources, and Language Access Plans. The Committee discussed barriers with existing interpretation services and the need for training around interpretation best practices. As a result, the Committee worked with DVCC staff to incorporate language access into DVCC's Law Enforcement Training Series.
- Additionally, the Committee worked with law enforcement partners to collect data on language barriers with utilizing Delaware's Lethality Assessment Protocol.
- Finally, as a result of Committee discussions, DVCC staff added interpretation resources and included interpretation for American Sign Language in the "I Speak" notebooks for law enforcement officers, which were reprinted in May 2026.



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.

The Legislative Committee had several meetings in FY2026 to discuss bills under consideration and was able to work through and overcome potential barriers to reach agreement on a couple of key bills. The DVCC voted to support these bills, at the Committee's recommendation. All of the bills below passed in the House and Senate and await the Governor's signature.

FY 2026 Accomplishments

- **HB122** - Provides Family Court and the Court of Common Pleas with concurrent criminal jurisdiction over non-felony, adult criminal cases that include charges that fall within both Family Court's and Court of Common Pleas' jurisdiction. This bill was brought to the Legislative Committee by the DVCC Criminal Justice Committee and was the result of a Fatal Incident Review Team recommendation.
- **HB213** - Establishes that victim advocate confidential communications with victims are privileged.
- **HB197** - Updates Delaware law to align with the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Counterman v. Colorado*. Expands the definition of a "course of conduct" in the stalking statute and provides that if the court finds as a matter of law that acts subject to this statute are in fact constitutionally protected activities, then all evidence associated with those activities must be excluded. Raises stalking under § 1312(c) from a class F to a class D felony; raises stalking under § 1312 (b) from a class G to a class E felony.
- **HB342** – Existing law prohibited persons subject to Family Court protective orders from purchasing or possessing deadly weapons, with some exceptions. This bill extends the prohibition to individuals with out-of-state protective orders.
- **HB421** - Changes the criteria for granting or denying a sexual violence protective order by prohibiting the consideration of certain information only in the decision to deny a protective order rather than prohibiting its consideration at all.

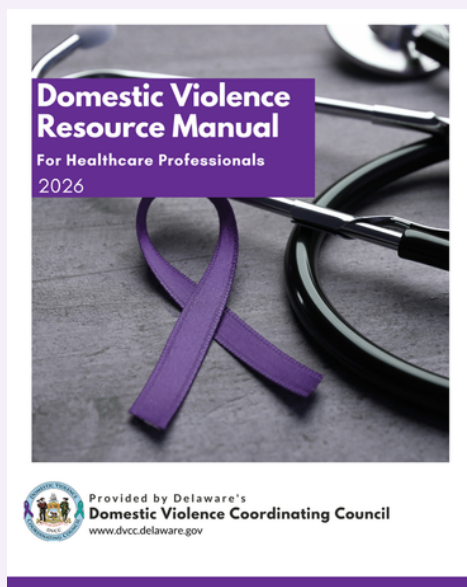
Medical Committee

Domestic violence is a serious public health concern that affects the well-being of millions of people each year. Domestic violence can lead to adverse health outcomes that can be a direct result of the violence experienced or can be exacerbated by the trauma from the abuse. Healthcare providers who are knowledgeable about domestic violence and sexual assault play a critical role in educating about resources for safety and improving health outcomes for survivors.

This Committee is made up of health care providers, advocates, preventionists, community health workers and behavioral health providers. The Medical Committee acknowledges the medical community as vital participants in a coordinated community response to domestic violence and seeks to provide accessible information and training to health care providers in Delaware regarding evidence-based responses to domestic violence.

FY 2026 Accomplishments

- The Medical Committee produced a revised version of the Domestic Violence Resource Manual for Healthcare Professionals. This manual is a comprehensive guide on Domestic Violence and best practices for responding to patients who are experiencing DV.
- Members of DVCC staff and the Medical Committee provided training to Christiana Care's Chaplain Residency program and Family Medicine Residents at St. Francis Hospital.



To view the new version of the [Domestic Violence Resource Manual for Healthcare Professionals](#) visit:



Public Awareness & Education Committee

The Public Awareness and Education 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 2026 Accomplishments

- In FY2026, **7** educational workshops were facilitated, with **93** participants reached. Staff had a table at one high school Teen Dating Violence Awareness event reaching about **500** students. (Trainings that were provided are summarized on the Training Committee page.)
- The 2025 Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) theme was “eYES on Safety! Domestic Violence Affects Everyone.” DVCC intern Erin Muñoz conducted **11** interviews with various domestic violence advocates and a judge throughout the state of Delaware. All 11 interviews were posted to the DVCC’s Instagram and Facebook pages in October for Domestic Violence Awareness Month and received **8,145** views on Instagram.
- The Committee organized a statewide Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month Poster Contest for middle and high school students, which received multiple submissions. The theme of the 2026 contest was “Beyond the Post: Safety, Privacy and Empowerment Online.” There were two first place winners: high school winner Zylah, a ninth-grade student at Sussex Academy, and middle school winner Patrick, a seventh-grade student at Sussex Academy. Both were honored on February 26, 2026, at the Governor’s proclamation signing for Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.
- During the March DVCC Quarterly Meeting, the winners, including the second place and third place high school winners, were recognized. The second place winner for high school was Natya, a twelfth-grade student at St. George’s Technical High School. The third place winner was Isabella, an eleventh-grade student from St. George’s Technical High School. Each winner received a certificate and prizes: the first-place winners each received a \$350 gift card. One gift card was sponsored by the DVCC and the other was sponsored by the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence (DCADV). The second place winner received a \$200 gift card and the third-place winner received a \$100 gift card, both sponsored by the DVCC.

Public Awareness & Education Committee



2026 Teen Dating Violence Poster Contest

This year's contest theme is **"Beyond the Post: Safety, Privacy, and Empowerment Online."** Social media can skew our view of the relationships around us and, in some cases, influence our decisions to stay in unhealthy ones.

High School Winners



First Place



Second Place



Third Place

Middle School Winner



First Place

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 2026 Accomplishments

- The Training Committee provided recommendations and assistance for the DVCC's training initiatives throughout FY2026. In FY2026, staff traveled across Delaware to train faith leaders, chaplains, law enforcement officers, victim advocates, court staff, other allied professionals, and the general public about domestic violence. DVCC staff facilitated **20** trainings in which **861** people were trained.
- The Committee reviewed and approved the DVCC Training Manual which was drafted by DVCC Staff, based on the results of a needs assessment survey that was given to DVCC Committees. The manual will serve to standardize training procedures and highlight best practices on training and education for the DVCC. The manual includes guidance on hosting webinars and conferences, and how to utilize trauma-informed training practices.
- Through federal STOP VAWA funds awarded by the Criminal Justice Council, in September 2025, the DVCC facilitated a full-day Law Enforcement Training Conference with **76** law enforcement officers and allied professionals in attendance. The book Recantation and Domestic Violence: The Untold Story, co-written by one of the trainers, David Martin, was given to conference attendees. Additional training materials such as LAP notebooks, I Speak notebooks, and Domestic Violence shoe cards were distributed.



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 DV intervention policies and procedures (Domestic Violence Intervention Standards) which mandate specific credentials, education, and training for DVI service providers. The standards also outline the intervention model used in Delaware and seeks to provide transparent and consistent minimum operating standards, intervention practices and credentialing for certified DVI programs and DVI providers. The Committee continuously monitors changes in the field and is committed to providing recommendations based on the best available research.

FY 2026 Accomplishments

- Treatment Committee continued to discuss topics of anger management in sentencing orders, expanding domestic violence intervention in correctional facilities, and legislation related to domestic violence intervention.
- The Committee also continued discussions of expanding domestic violence intervention in correction facilities. Funding and staffing are needed to expand DVI both in correctional facilities and in community-based organizations. This need drives the Committee to continue researching how other states legislate domestic violence intervention. This research on domestic violence intervention policies will continue through FY 2027.
- In partnership with Family Court, members of the treatment committee created an informational video for litigants on the process of court monitoring for DVI.
- Members of DVCC staff and the treatment Committee continued training efforts with facilitating training on DVI to Commissioners and Judges within the Court of Common Pleas and a joint training with Family Court on Delaware's DVI standards and Compliance Calendar.

DV Intervention Certification Panel

The Domestic Violence Intervention Certification Panel is a subcommittee of the Treatment Committee. The Panel is responsible for ensuring that DV Intervention programs for people who cause harm meet all specified requirements of DVCC's Domestic Violence Intervention Standards prior to being added to the referral list of Certified Programs for courts and supervising agencies. In FY 2026, the certification panel recertified 2 DVI programs, Child, Inc. and People's Place II, Inc.

2025 Outstanding Service Awards

The DVCC Outstanding Service Award for 2025 was presented to an individual and a group. The individual award was presented to Jennifer Kutney-Soper of the Department of Justice, and the group award was given to the Domestic Violence Intervention (Treatment) Providers at Child, Inc. and People's Place II.

The Council annually recognizes individuals or programs that demonstrate outstanding service in supporting those impacted by domestic violence and sexual assault. The individual winner, Jennifer Kutney-Soper, worked at various victim service organizations: Brandywine Counseling, Child, Inc., and the Victims' Compensation Assistance Program before joining their Delaware Department of Justice (DOJ) in 2011 as a Victim Service Specialist in the Domestic Violence Unit. In 2025 she assumed a new role in DOJ's Division of Civil Rights and Public Trust. She reviews policies being proposed in legislative hall and provides expert insight to DOJ leadership on how these policies would impact victims of DV. Jenn is the Chair of the Delaware Victims' Rights Task Force, Chair of the LGBTQ+ Victim Services Subcommittee of the VRTF, has served as Secretary to the Domestic Violence Task Force, and is an active member of the Joint Task Force Legislative Subcommittee. She has been instrumental in various pieces of legislation, including passage of the gay panic defense bill. She served on the Victims' Bill of Rights Committee in 2024 which provided recommendations that directly led to the passage of SS1 for SB17 in 2025.



From left to right: Laura Graham, Chief Judge Michael Newell, Jennifer Kutney-Soper, Governor Matt Meyer, Attorney General Kathleen Jennings, and Representative Krista Griffith.

2025 Outstanding Service Awards

The group award winner honored the Domestic Violence Intervention (Treatment) Providers at both Child, Inc. and People's Place II, Inc. These programs provide treatment to those who engage in domestic violence abuse, which is often court mandated.

Since 2022, when the PFA Compliance project started, both programs have demonstrated unwavering commitment by collaborating to address complex challenges that required seamless coordination, strategic innovation, and a shared vision. Their partnership has not only set a standard for inter-agency collaboration but has also delivered measurable results that have positively transformed the lives of those they serve.

The success of these programs is a direct result of the collective dedication and contributions of every team member. From the meticulous administrative work carried out by support staff, to the adaptability and understanding demonstrated by evaluators, to the expertise and empathy shown by facilitators, and the steadfast leadership of the program directors—each role has been vital. Despite budget constraints, staffing shortages, limited resources, and personal challenges, both agencies have remained steadfast in their commitment to delivering exceptional service. These programs go above and beyond by modifying service delivery methods to accommodate out of state or incapacitated clients, adjusting fees so that no clients are unable to access services, offering trainings for stakeholders and partners, and advocating for adequate funding, accountability and systems improvements.



From left to right: Laura Graham, Chief Judge Michael Newell, Ann Altemus, Maite Aros, Laurie Dyer, Melissa Kearney, Governor Matt Meyer, Greg Mattison, Attorney General Kathleen Jennings, Dan Armstrong, and Representative Krista Griffith.



From left to right: Laura Graham, Chief Judge Michael Newell, Ann Southard, Stephanie Rodriguez, Juan Rodriguez, Governor Matt Meyer, Blanche Creech, Attorney General Kathleen Jennings, and Representative Krista Griffith.

The DVCC presented the recipients with their awards during the Governor's Proclamation signing for Domestic Violence Awareness Month on October 30, 2025.

Proclamation Signings

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Domestic Violence Awareness Month provides an opportunity for citizens to learn more about preventing domestic violence and to show support for the agencies and organizations that provide critical advocacy, services, and assistance to victims. Governor Meyer signed the Proclamation on October 30, 2025.



Left to right: Chief Judge Michael Newell, Angela Seguin, Commissioner Terra Taylor, Attorney General Kathleen Jennings, Rep. Krista Griffith, Secretary Steve Yeatman. Seated: Sue Ryan, Governor Matthew Meyer.



Governor Matt Meyer, Victim Advocates, and Teen Dating Violence Poster Contest Winner at the 2026 Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month Proclamation signing.

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

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, and providing services and assistance to victims. Governor Meyer signed the Proclamation on February 26, 2026. At the Proclamation Signing, the DVCC honored the first place winners of the TDVAM Poster Contest. Zylah, the high school winner from Sussex Academy, attended. Patrick, the middle school winner also from Sussex Academy, was unable to attend.

Fatal Incident Review Team

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 2026 FIRT Annual Report is available online at the DVCC website (scan the QR code to view). 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 2025; and information and recommendations from the death and near-death cases that were previously reviewed.

Scan this QR code to view the
2026 Fatal Incident Review Team
[Annual Report](#)



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 Domestic Violence High Risk Team (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. 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 implementation of the program, the DVHRT has operated 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 - 2025, **11,367** statewide cases were identified as high risk through the LAP, conducted by police officers on the scene. Of those, **2,867** were Kent County cases. In July 2023, a second Coordinator was added to begin a review of Sussex County high risk cases. From July 2023 through 2025, there were **1,266** Sussex County cases reviewed. However, funding has not yet been secured to operate a Sussex team.

During FY2026, the DVHRT Coordinators received **2,036** statewide referrals of high risk cases: **507** in Kent County, and **474** in Sussex County. Of those 507 Kent cases reviewed, **180** met the threshold to go to the Team for consideration with **59** cases being retained for continued status updates. During the same time frame, **175** Sussex cases met the threshold and would have gone to a team for review if a team existed in Sussex County.

Year in Review

Domestic Violence High Risk Team

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 continues this project in Kent County with funding support of a Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) – Victims Assistance Formula Grant awarded as a subgrant by the Criminal Justice Council. The DVCC will continue to pursue funding opportunities with the goal of expanding the High Risk teams to operate in all three counties.

Total Number of High Risk LAP by County*

	New Castle County	Kent County	Sussex County	Total Statewide
2021	1,050	477	510	2,037
2022	977	490	441	1,908
2023	990	477	493	1,960
2024	902	492	513	1,907
2025	1,018	454	489	1,960
Jan 1 - June 30, 2026	515	282	234	1,032

*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.

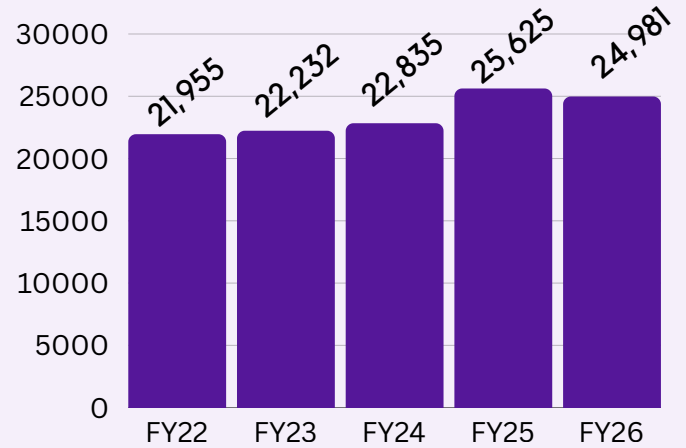
Year In Review

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.

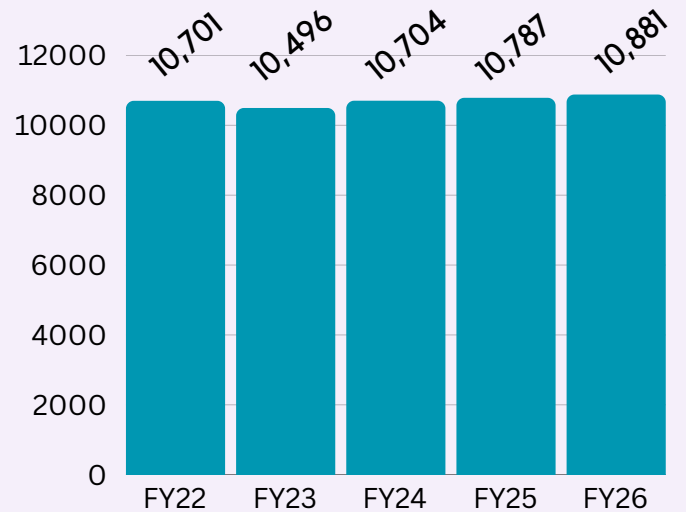
Criminal and Non-Criminal DV Incidents

In FY2026, there were a total of **24,981** combined criminal and non-criminal domestic violence incidents reported in Delaware.



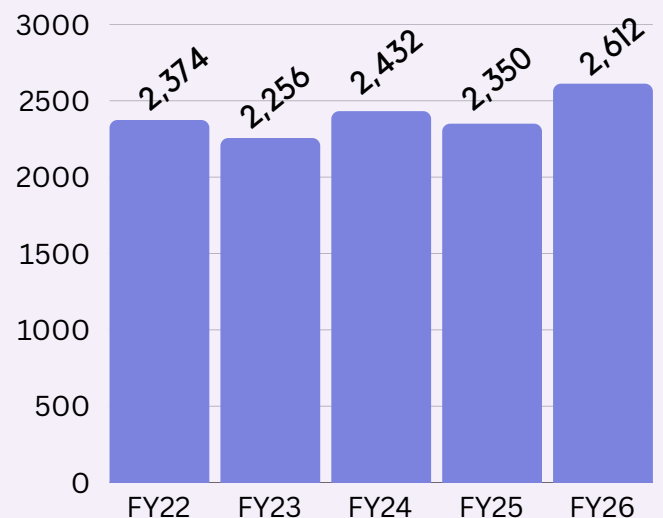
Criminal DV Incidents

In FY2026, there were a total of **10,881** criminal domestic violence incidents reported in Delaware.



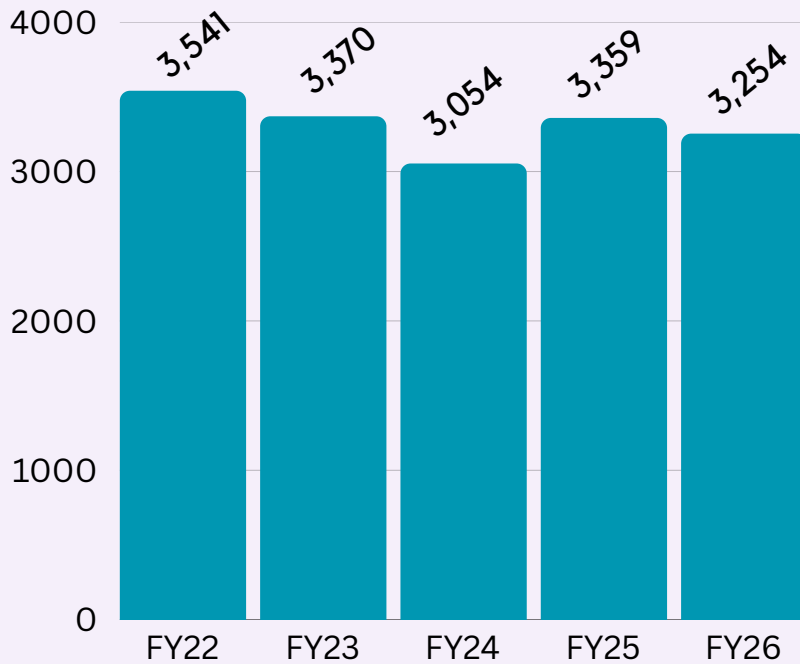
Criminal DV Incidents with Injury

Of the 10,881 reported criminal domestic violence incidents in FY2026, **2,612 (24%)** resulted in physical injury to the victim.

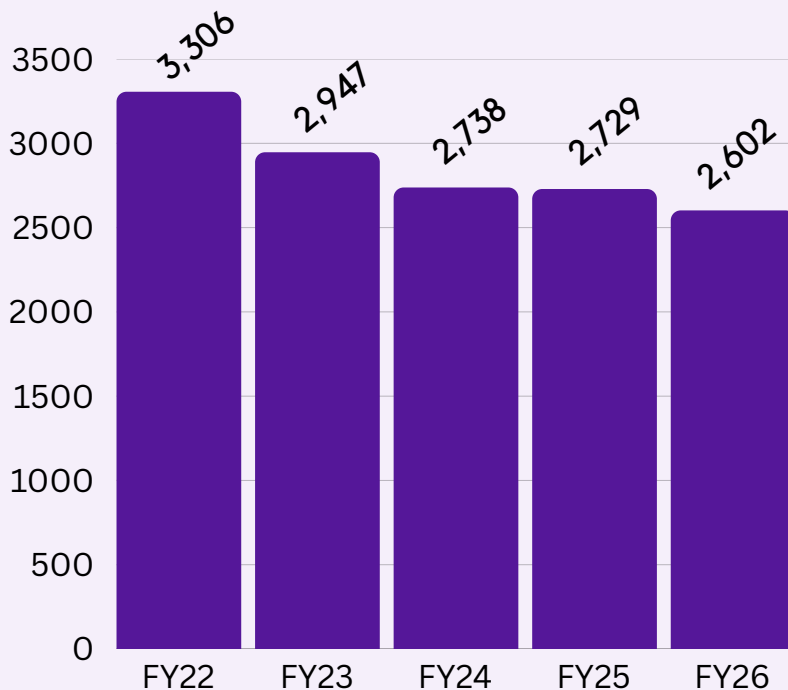


Year In Review

Domestic Violence Statistics

Prior Police Involvement

In FY2026, **3,254 (30%)** of the criminal domestic violence incidents had prior police involvement.

Involved a Violent Act

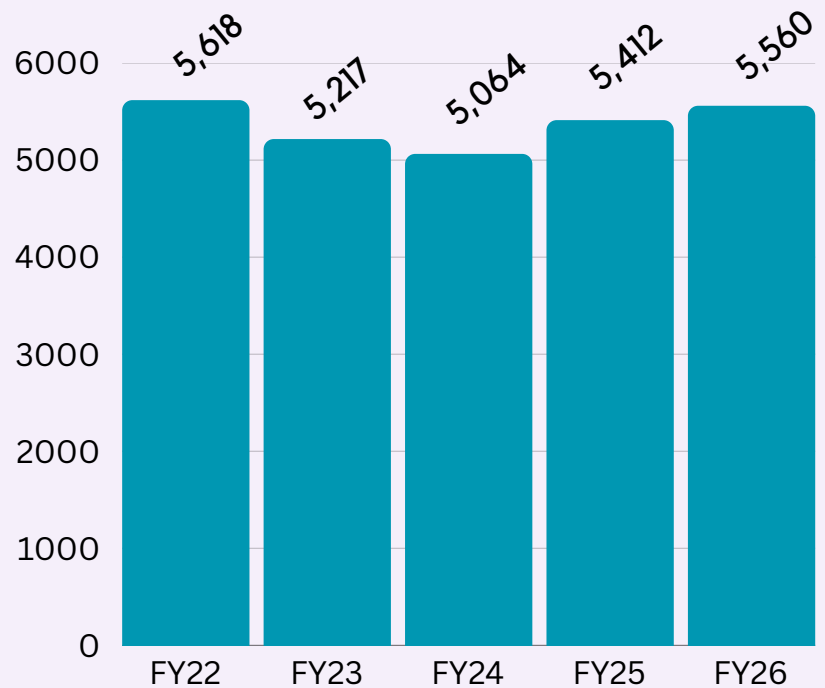
In FY2026, **2,602 (24%)** of the criminal domestic violence incidents involved a violent act.

Year In Review

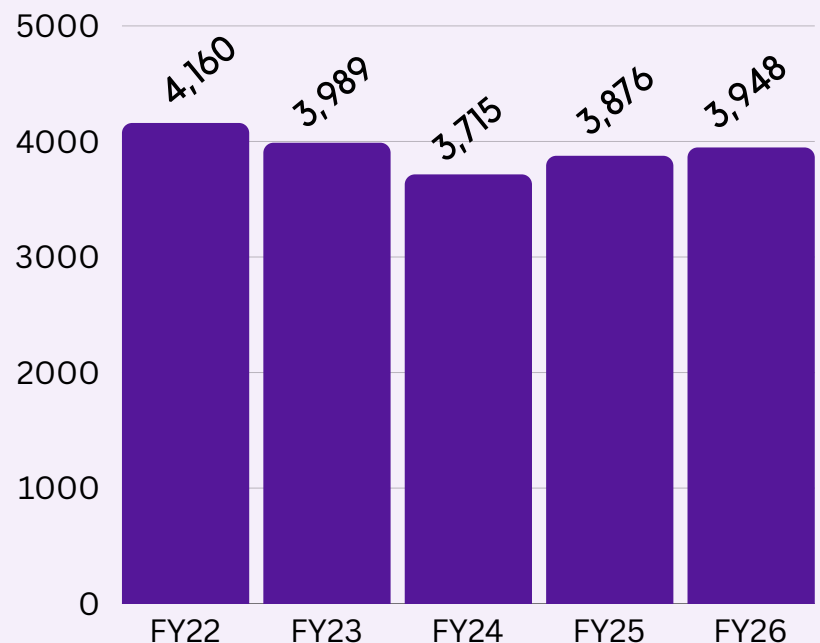
Domestic Violence Statistics

Resulted in Arrest

In FY2026, **5,560 (51%)** of the criminal domestic violence incidents resulted in an arrest.

Children Present

In FY2026, **3,948 (36%)** of the criminal domestic violence incidents happened with children present.



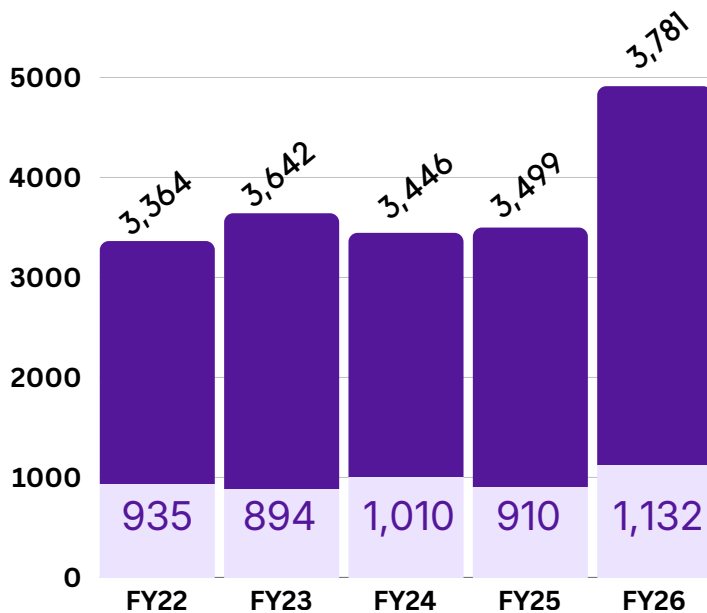
The DVCC collects this data from the Domestic Violence Incident Report captured in CJIS. Crime statistics for Delaware, including sex offenses, are analyzed by the Statistical Analysis Center and provided [on their website](#) for past years, through 2025.

Year In Review

Intimate Partner Criminal Statistics

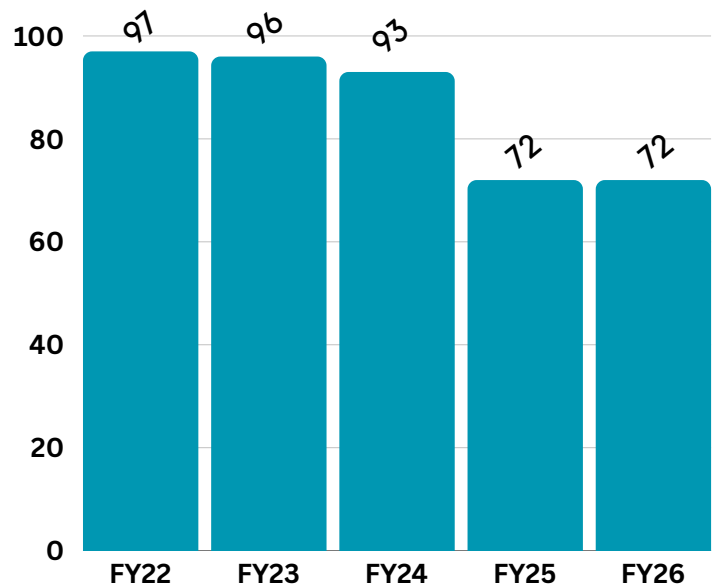
Incidents of domestic violence can be perpetrated against an intimate partner or a family member. Intimate partners can include current and former spouses, current and former dating couples with or without a child in common, and adolescent dating couples. Intimate partners can be people of any gender.

Of the **10,881** criminal domestic violence incidents in FY2026, **3,781** involved intimate partners. Of the intimate partner criminal incidents reported, **2,910** of the victims were female and **1,098** of the victims were male.



In FY202, of the 10,881 criminal incidents reported, **3,781** were between intimate partners.

Of those reported in FY2026, **1,132** 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 FY2026, there were **72** dual arrests made by law enforcement in intimate partner criminal incidents.

Year In Review

Department of Justice

Domestic Violence Unit

The Criminal Division of the Department of Justice (DOJ) 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 rights of victims and their families. The Domestic Violence Unit is a part of the Criminal Division in New Castle County. That Unit is responsible for the preparation and presentation of felony domestic violence criminal cases before Superior Court. Domestic Violence misdemeanor cases are handled by Deputy Attorneys General in other courts as well, including the Court of Common Pleas and Family Court.

While the Domestic Violence Unit is housed in New Castle County, the DOJ provides statewide training in domestic violence for prosecutors and utilizes specially trained prosecutors to handle domestic violence cases throughout the state.

Those prosecutors focus on stalking, strangulation, and domestic violence offenses involving a firearm in all three counties, as those are linked to lethality. The goal is to ensure that cases are evaluated consistently, as they are some of the most serious cases seen by the DOJ. Further, the DOJ has added a position to the Homicide Unit for a statewide Domestic Violence Homicide prosecutor in order to better evaluate homicide and suspicious death cases perpetrated by domestic violence offenders.

Year In Review

Department of Justice

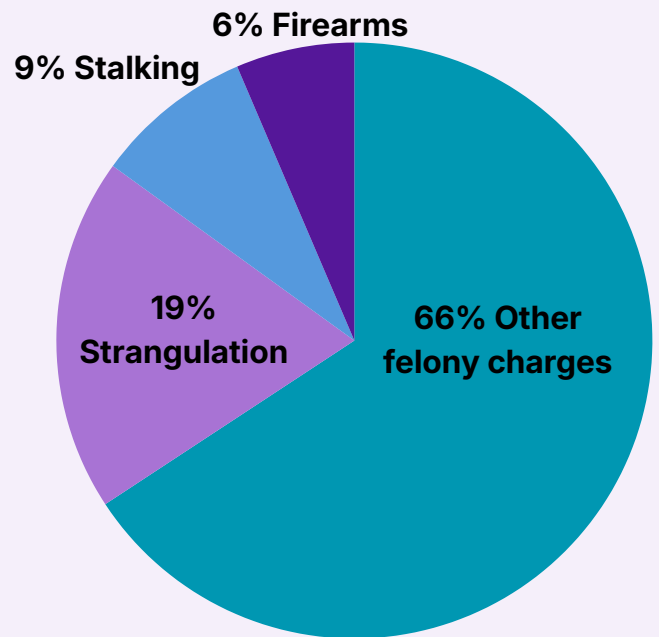
Domestic Violence Unit

In recent years, the Department of Justice has made efforts to better track strangulation and stalking data throughout the State. In FY2026, the DOJ received a total of **1,197** felony domestic violence (DV) cases. Those include intimate partner violence, crimes against new partners, as well as familial violence.

Of the felony DV cases, **230 (19%)** were charged by police as strangulation/suffocation, **103 (9%)** were charged as stalking, and **77 (6%)** involved firearms charges. The other **787 (66%)** cases involved other felony charges.

DOJ received **209** 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. In New Castle County, there were **905** DV felony cases resolved with **60%** of those cases resulting in convictions.

**Percentage of DV Unit
Cases by Type**



FY2026 Incoming Felony DV & SV Cases Statewide

	New Castle County	Kent County	Sussex County	Total Statewide
Incoming felony DV cases	847	177	173	1,197
Incoming felony SV cases	53	101	55	209

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.

849 Domestic violence offenders supervised in New Castle County

12 Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases

552 Victims Served by Victim Service Agents

297 Domestic violence offenders supervised in Kent County

5 Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases

160 Victims Served by Victim Service Agents

670 Domestic violence offenders supervised in Sussex County

9 Probation Officers Assigned to DV Cases

280 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.

Average LAP Usage by Law Enforcement in FY26



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 FY2026, the VIP received **205** new referrals and provided **184** 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 in terms of giving them the strength to come to court and face their abusers without fear of being revictimized.

Visit the [VIP webpage](#) for more information

Or Scan Below



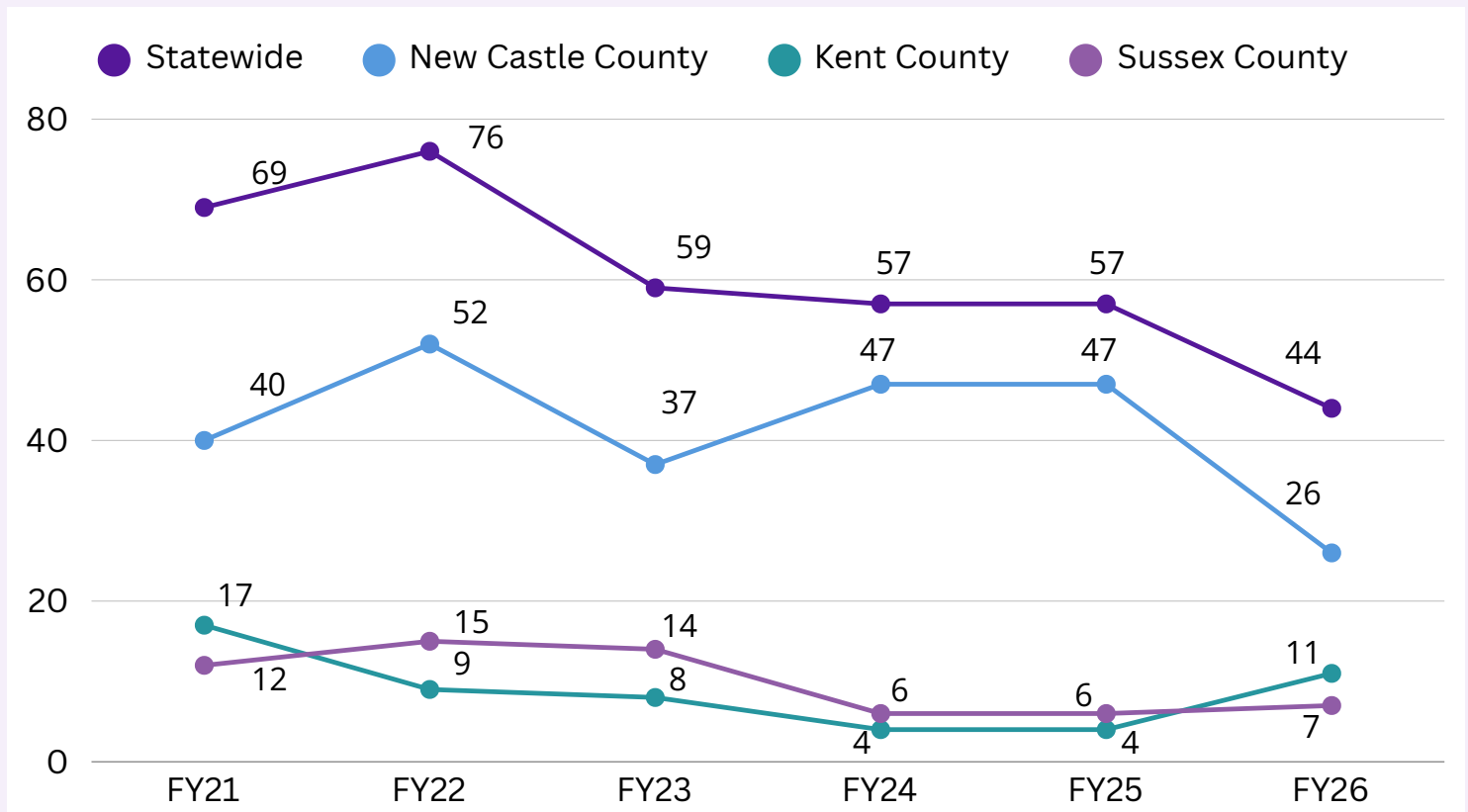
Year In Review

Statewide PFA Outcome Data

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.

Delaware Family Court releases two Fiscal Year Annual Reports each September that include PFA data. The figures presented in the DVCC Annual Report for FY2026 may vary slightly from those in the Family Court reports due to the reporting timeframe. DVCC data is compiled in mid-August, while Family Court data is finalized in late September. However, the data has been updated to reflect final numbers for previous fiscal years. In FY2026, **44** lifetime PFAs were issued statewide, with **26** in New Castle County, **11** in Kent County, and **7** in Sussex County.

Lifetime PFA Orders Issued in FY2021 - FY2026



Year In Review

Statewide PFA Outcome Data

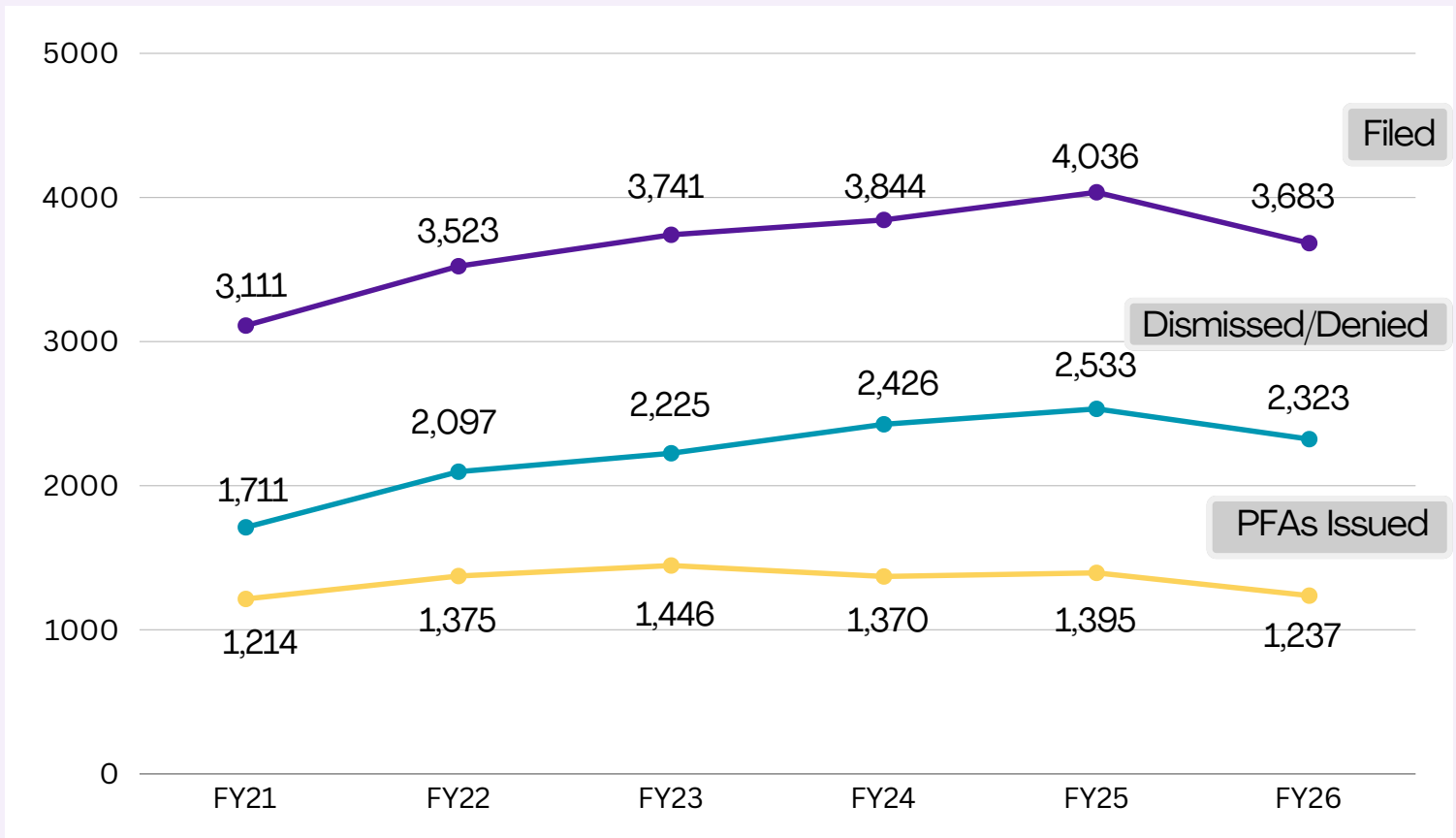
A PFA Order can be issued by Family Court in one of three ways:

- 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.

FY2021-FY2026 Statewide PFA Filings

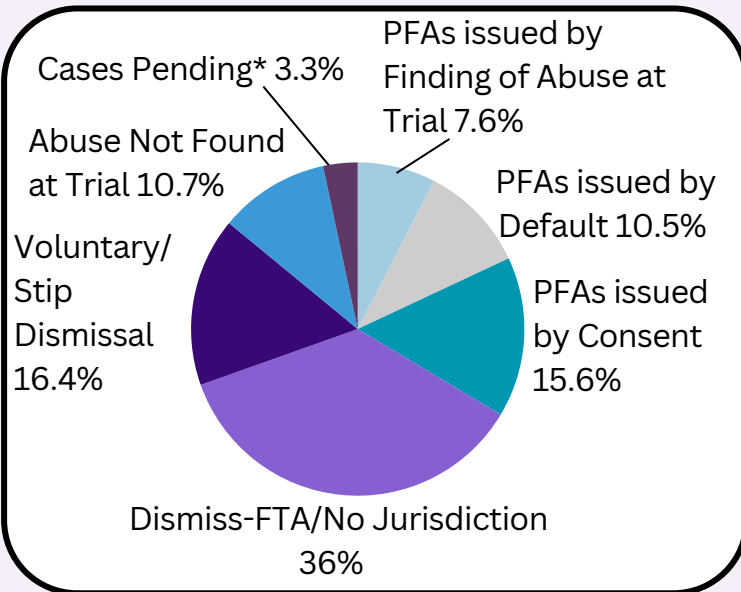


Family Court processed **3,683** petitions, which were filed statewide during FY2026. Of those petitions filed, **1,237 (34%)** final orders were issued, **2,323 (63%)** petitions were dismissed/denied and **123** petitions were pending.

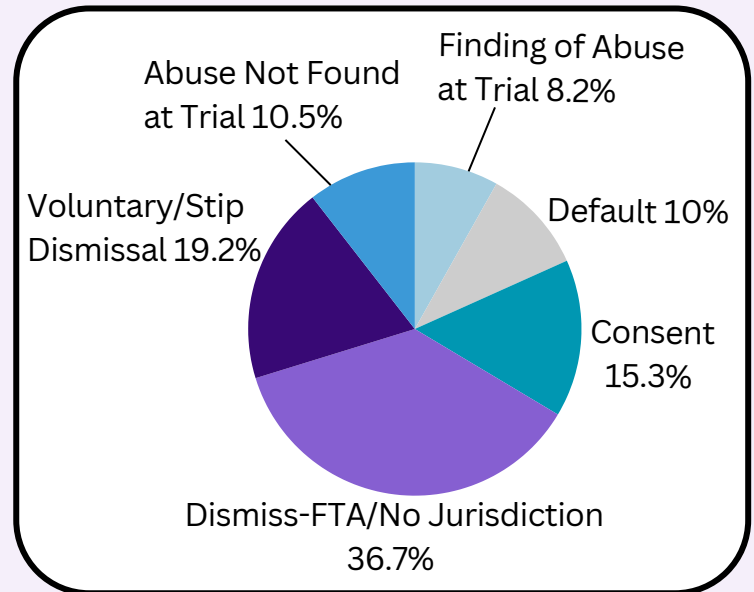
Year In Review

Statewide PFA Outcome Data

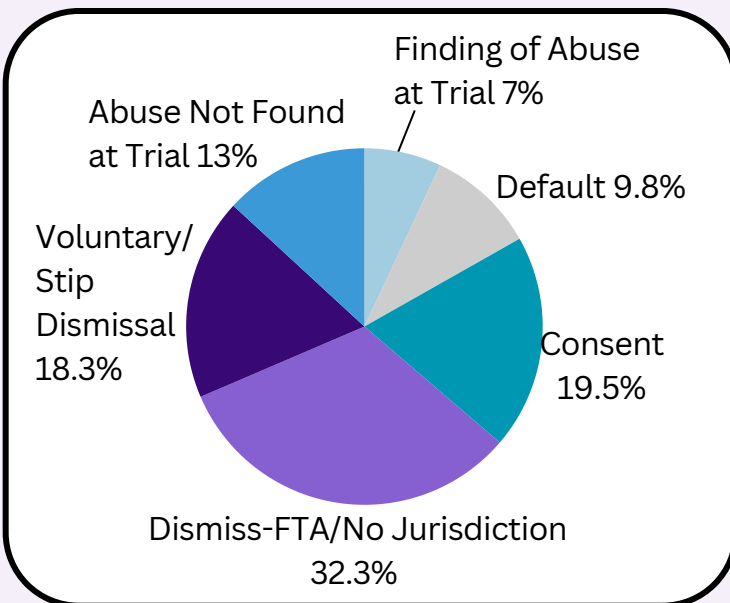
FY26 Statewide PFA Outcomes



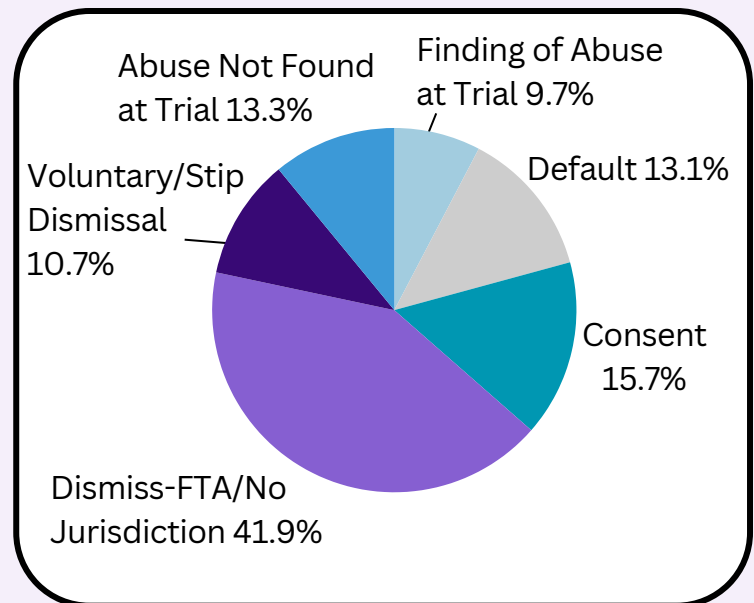
FY26 New Castle County PFA Outcomes



FY26 Sussex County PFA Outcomes



FY26 Kent County PFA Outcomes



As shown on the previous page, of the **3,683** petitions filed statewide, **1,237 (34%)** resulted in a PFA order either by consent, default/failure to appear by the respondent, or a finding of abuse at trial. **2,323 (63%)** were dismissed, either due to failure to appear by the petitioner, no jurisdiction, voluntary/stipulation of dismissal, or no finding of abuse at trial. Of the **3,683** filings, **673 (18%)** went to trial. Of the 673 that went to trial, **279 (41%)** resulted in a finding of abuse and a PFA order and **394 (59%)** resulted in no finding of abuse.

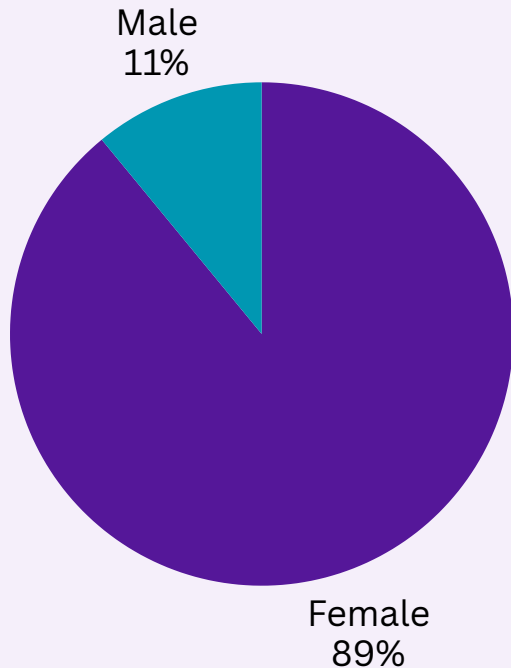
***123** cases were pending statewide for FY2026 when the data was submitted. County percentages are based on disposed cases only.

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.

812 Petitioners Served Statewide in FY2026



283 Petitioners served in New Castle County

256 Female and **27** Male

326 Petitioners served in Kent County

293 Female and **33** Male

203 Petitioners served in Sussex County

174 Female and **29** Male

New Castle County
302-255-0420

Kent County
302-672-1075

Sussex County
302-856-5843

Year In Review

DV Intervention Program Data

In FY2026, there were two certified treatment providers offering Domestic Violence Intervention programs in Delaware: CHILD, Inc., in New Castle County; Turning Point at People's Place II, Inc. in Kent and Sussex Counties. Each of these programs followed the guidelines established through the Domestic Violence Intervention Standards. CHILD, Inc. and People's Place II, Inc. were re-certified by the DVCC's DVI Certification Panel.

	CHILD, Inc.		Turning Point People's Place II, Inc.				
	New Castle County		Kent County		Sussex County		SCI**
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Probation Evaluated	353	12	73	6	112	14	N/A
With PFA Order Evaluated	177	52	34	8	16	5	N/A
Other Court Order	147	39	3	9	7	6	N/A
Self Referral	13	0	6	1	1	1	N/A
Participated in Group Intervention	532	82	154	10	205	13	38
Completed Intervention	255	27	71	9	98	17	35
Total Served*	699	117	160	35	225	33	41

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

**Sussex Correctional Institute - Level V

Year In Review

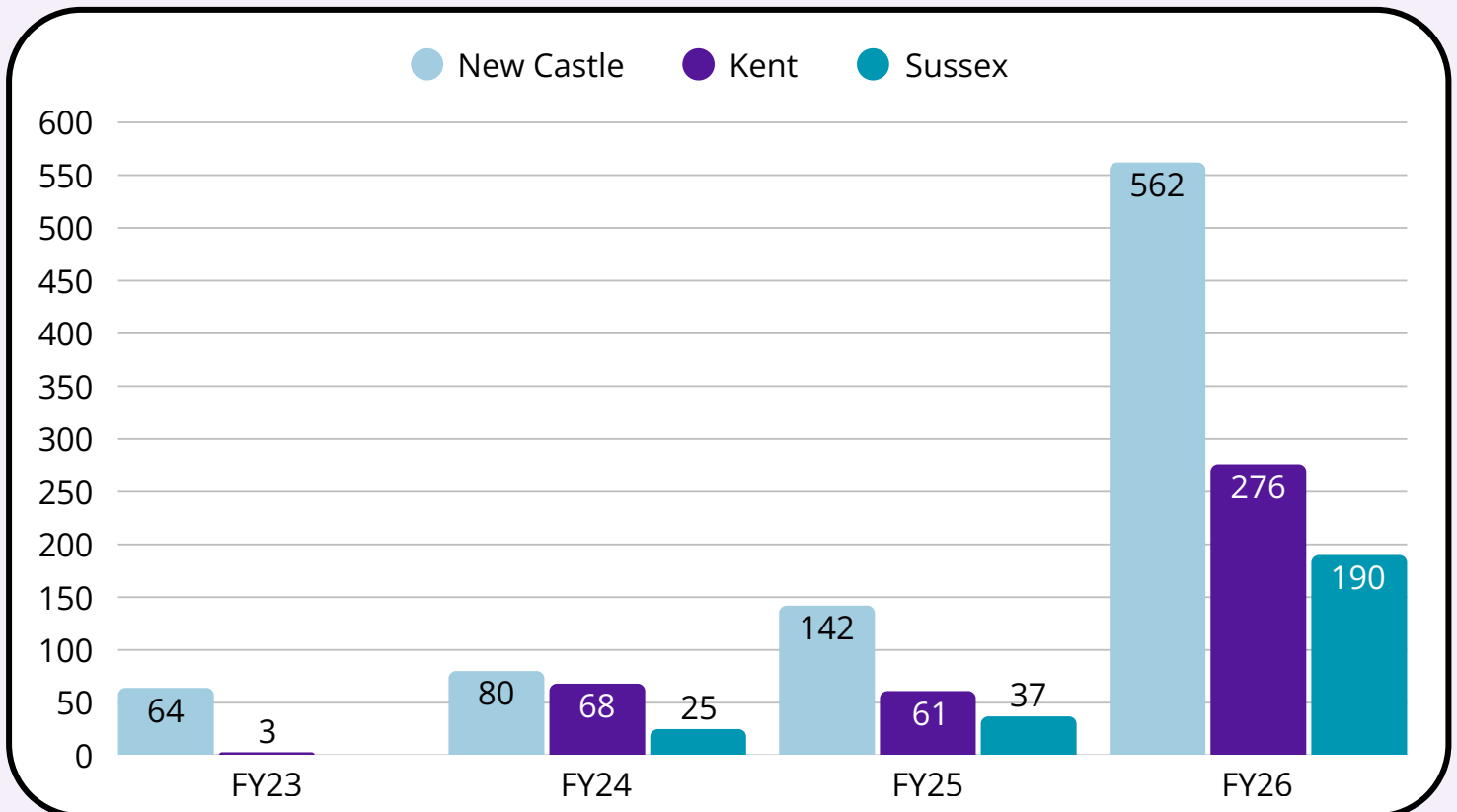
DV Compliance Calendar

In FY2026, Delaware Family Court continued its partnership with Child, Inc. and Turning Point at People's Place II, Inc. to increase the accountability of PFA Respondents who are ordered to Domestic Violence Intervention (DVI). When a PFA Order includes DVI, respondents are 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 DV Compliance Calendar began in New Castle County in November of 2022 and quickly expanded to Kent and Sussex Counties. As planned, Family Court has continued 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. That expansion is evident in the chart below.

In FY2026, there were **1,028** DV Compliance Calendar hearings, including **562** in New Castle County, **276** in Kent County, and **190** in Sussex County.

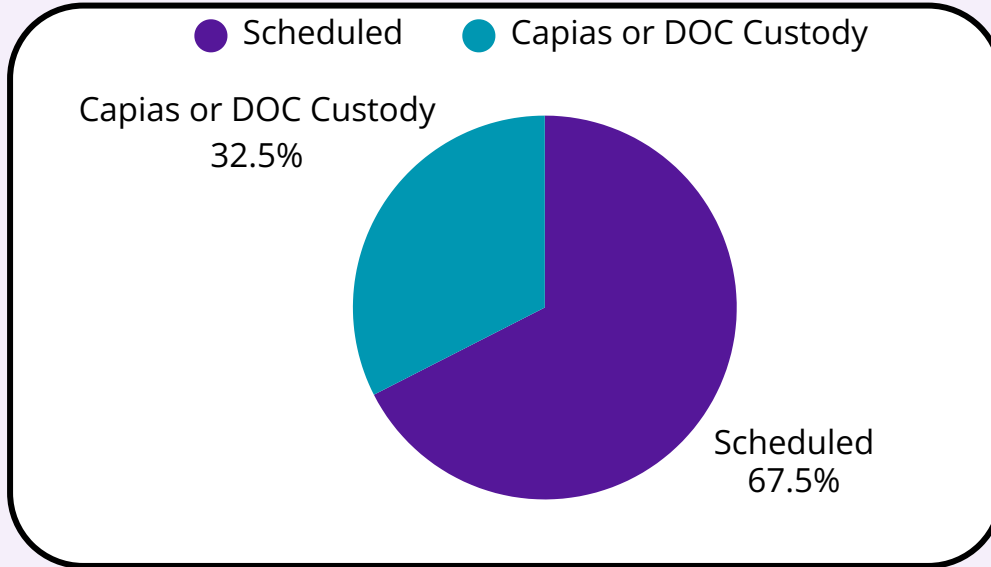
New DV Compliance Calendar Cases by County FY2023 - FY2026



Year In Review

DV Compliance Calendar

Active/Pending Case Status FY2026



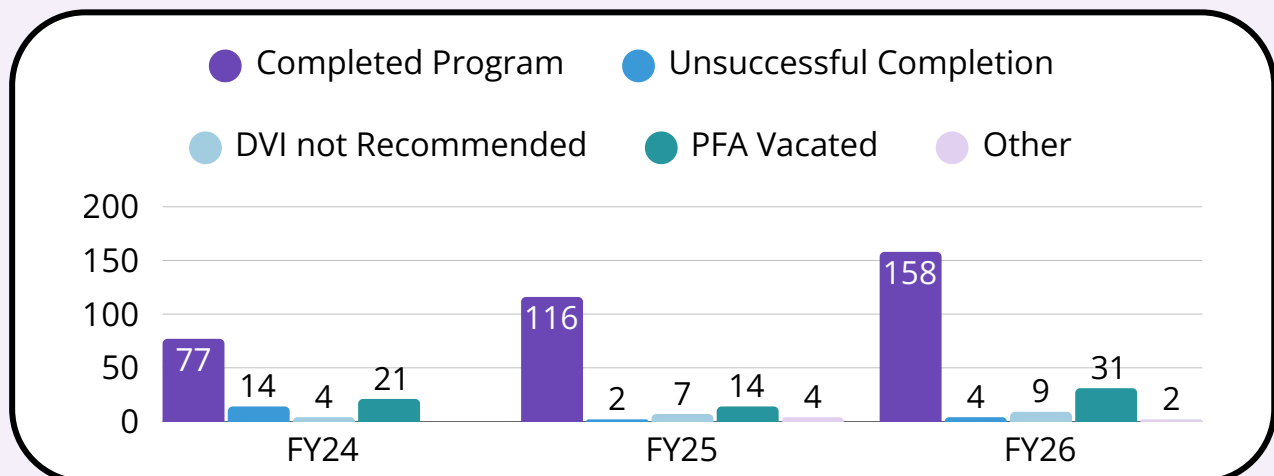
As of June 30, 2026, **283** respondents are being monitored statewide. Of those, **191** are scheduled for hearings and **92** respondents have an outstanding capias for failing to appear to a scheduled hearing or have become incarcerated since their first compliance calendar hearing

Respondents are evaluated by DVCC-certified Domestic Violence Intervention (DVI) providers to assess appropriate services. In some cases, 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.

When a respondent's PFA is vacated, their obligation to participate in treatment is dismissed. In FY2026, One respondent was deported and another is sentenced for a term longer than the existing PFA and are represented by "other" in the chart below.

In FY2026, the overwhelming majority of respondents (**81%**) completed treatment programs. Of the 2 "other," 1 was deported and 1 is sentenced for a term longer than their existing PFA Order.

Court Recorded Outcomes Tracked FY2024 - FY2026

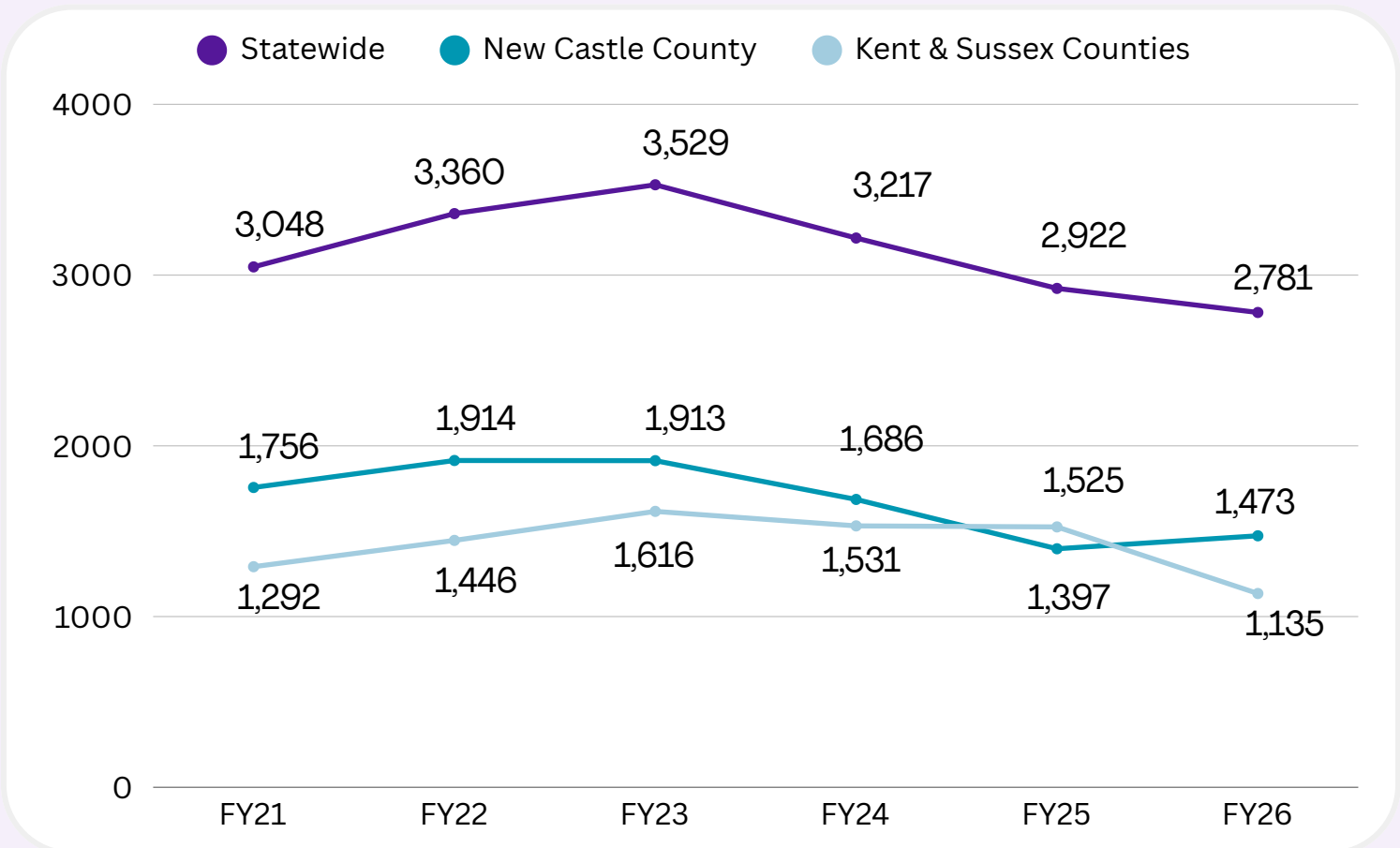


Year In Review

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 Fiscal Year



In FY2026, there were a total of **2,781** calls received by the Domestic Violence Hotlines statewide, including **173** calls in Spanish. There were **1,473** calls to the Domestic Violence Hotline in New Castle County and **1,135** calls to the Domestic Violence Hotlines in Kent and Sussex Counties. There were **157** Lethality Assessment Protocol calls received by the hotline in New Castle County, and **243** Lethality Assessment Protocol calls received by the hotlines in Kent and Sussex counties.

Year In Review

Domestic Violence Shelter Statistics

Two agencies, CHILD, Inc. and People's Place II, Inc. 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 FY2026

	CHILD, Inc.	People's Place II, Inc. SAFE & Abriendo Puertas		
	New Castle County	Kent County - SAFE	Sussex County - SAFE	Sussex County - Abriendo Puertas
Females Sheltered	132	86	58	28
Males Sheltered	4	0	0	0
Children Sheltered	110	79	54	41
Total Sheltered	246	165	112	69

Individuals Provided with Hotel Stays Statewide

CHILD, Inc. New Castle County			People's Place II, Inc. - SAFE Kent & Sussex Counties			People's Place II, Inc. - Abriendo Puertas Sussex County		
Female	Male	Children	Female	Male	Children	Female	Male	Children
2	4	0	46	2	33	2	0	3
Total: 6			Total: 81			Total: 5		

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.

Total Number of People Served

	Child, Inc. New Castle County			
	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026
Adults Served	37	42	109	30
Children Served	63	61	66	45
Total Served	100	103	175	75

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 CHILC, Inc. and People's Place II, Inc. The Centers in Delaware are located at the Hudson State Service Center, the Dover Center, the Milford State Service Center, and the Adams State Service Center.

The location at Child, Inc.'s main office closed on January 31, 2026 and all services in New Castle County were consolidated to the Hudson State Service Center on February 1, 2026.

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 FY2026

	CHILD, Inc. New Castle County	People's Place II, Inc. Kent County	People's Place II, Inc. Sussex County	Total Statewide
Visitation Exchanges	358	458	296	1,012
Group Visits	423	224	198	845
Individual Supervised Visits	742	832	498	2,072
Total Services	1,523	1,514	992	4,029
Children Served	90	199	80	369
Visiting Parents Served	120	141	56	317
Non-Visiting Parents Served	125	144	57	326
Total Parents Served	245	285	113	823
Total People Served	335	434	193	962

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, Inc. provides these services to children. The data below reflects children served in FY2026.

Individuals Served by County in FY2026

	Helping Children Heal CHILD, Inc.	Turning Point at People's Place II, Inc.	
	New Castle	Kent	Sussex
Children/Adolescents Served	42	17	12
Parents/Caretakers Served	56	2	2
Total Served	98	19	14

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 FY2026, DFS received **24,626** reports alleging child abuse or neglect. Of those, **6,509 (26%)** were accepted for investigation or Family Assessment Intervention and Response program (FAIR). Of those reports accepted for investigation, **1,302 (20%)** also alleged domestic violence.



Domestic Violence Community Health Worker Program

The Domestic Violence-Community Health Worker (DV-CHW) Program is a statewide program that supports the complex safety, health, and social needs of survivors. Through partnerships with CHILD, Inc., People's Place II, Inc., ChristianaCare, Westside Family Health Care, and AmeriHealth Caritas DE, the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence (DCADV) is working to advance effective healthcare responses to DV through training and community-based service.

Community Health Workers offer safety planning; emotional support; assessing safety, health, and social needs; care coordination; and connecting patients to healthcare and community resources. In FY26, the DV-CHWs have served **93** new survivors and have an average caseload of **66** survivors per month.



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

Sexual Violence Protective Orders

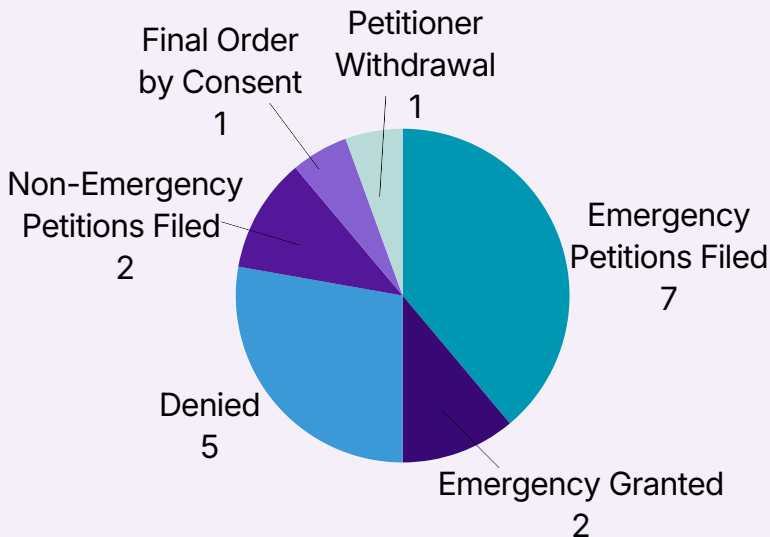
An SVPO can be issued following a hearing if:

- 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:

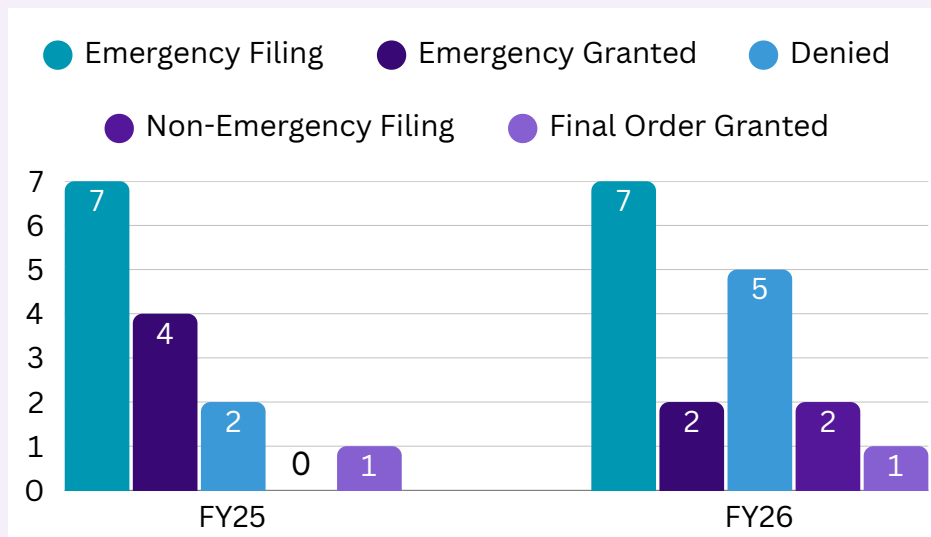
- the Petitioner fails to appear for the hearing; or
- the Petitioner voluntarily withdrew the petition before the hearing; or
- sexual violence was not found by a preponderance of the evidence following a hearing.

Statewide SVPO Outcomes in FY2026



Statewide, Superior Court processed **9** new petitions for SVPOs in FY2026. Of those, **7** were emergency petitions and **2** were filed as a non-emergency. Of the **7** emergency petitions, **2** emergency orders were granted, and **5** were denied. **1** non-emergency petition was withdrawn by the Petitioner. The other non-emergency petition results in a final order entered by consent of the parties.

2-year Statewide SVPO Data



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 (CLL).

In addition to hotline calls in the chart below, YWCA SARC advocates provided the following accompaniments for survivors statewide: **356** hospital, **114** police, **295** court, **12** Department of Correction - Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), and 10 Title IX. SARC also served **558** survivors in aftercare community health case management, **105** adult survivors in individual and group counseling, and **59** youth aged 12 and up in individual and group counseling. FY 2026 outcomes at SARC reflect the impact of staffing changes experienced during the reporting period. Counseling service numbers were lower due to the untimely passing of the Counseling Manager, which temporarily reduced capacity during the transition. Aftercare client numbers also declined due to staff turnover. Despite these challenges, SARC continued to provide trauma-informed services and remained focused on maintaining continuity of care and restoring full staff capacity.

ContactLifeline answered **15, 756** total crisis calls, **189** of which were related to sexual assault. CLL provided **23** hospital accompaniments. CLL also provided counseling related to sexual violence for **45** teens at high schools in Kent and Sussex counties, and for **12** adults. CLL has had an MOU with the Department of Correction since 2015 to accept unmonitored phone calls from inmates reporting allegations of sexual assault in the prison, which assists with their Prison Rape Elimination Act mandate. To that end, CLL answered **358** prison PREA calls.

Year In Review

Sexual Violence Hotline Statistics

Number of Hotline Calls by County in FY2026

	New Castle County		Kent County		Sussex County		Unknown or Other States	Unknown or Other States
	CLL	YWCA SARC	CLL	YWCA SARC	CLL	YWCA SARC	CLL	YWCA SARC
Sexual Assault Hotline calls	67	3,320	37	496	34	567	51	764
Totals	3,387		533		601		815	

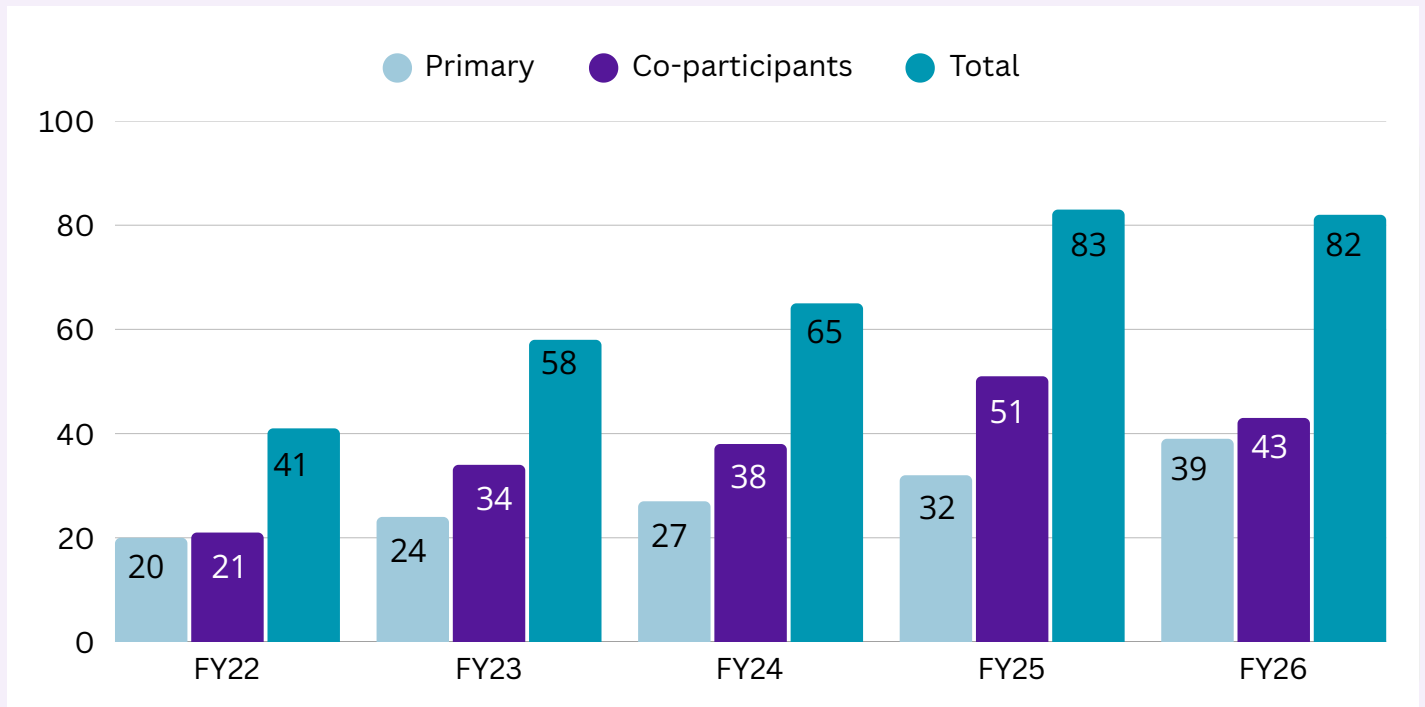
Year In Review

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 FY2026, the ACP had **39** primary participants; **19** were in New Castle County, **7** were in Kent County, and **8** were in Sussex County. There were **43** co-participants; **27** in New Castle County, **5** in Kent County, and **10** in Sussex County. A co-participant is a member of the same household as the primary victim. The ACP had a total of **82** active participants in FY2026. These 82 include 1 Spanish speaking participant and 5 out of state participants from: PA (2), NJ (1), MD (1), and NC (1).

ACP Participants & Co-Participants FY2022-FY2026



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.

New Castle County
820 N. French St
Wilmington, DE 19801
800-870-1790

Kent County
102 W. Water St
Dover, DE 19904
800-870-1790

Sussex County
114 E. Market St
Georgetown, DE 19947
800-870-1790

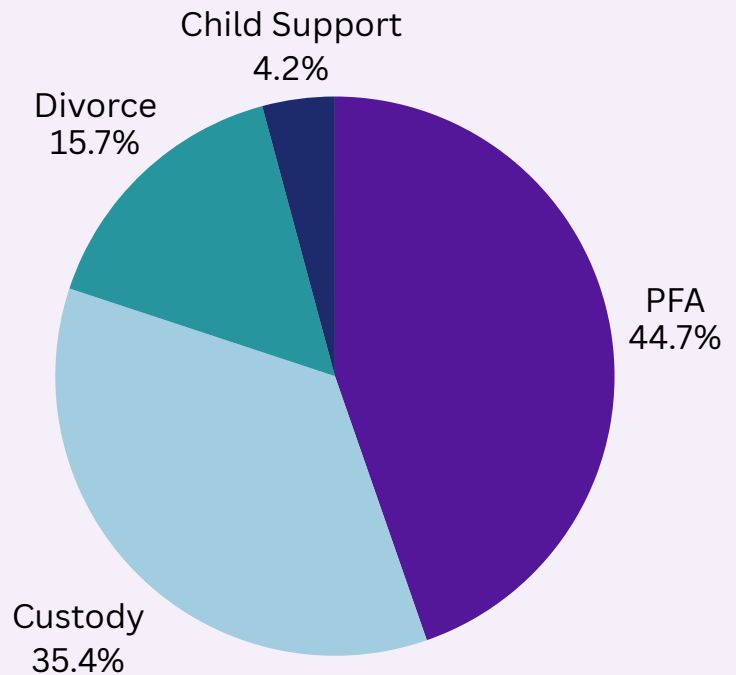
Year In Review

Legal Services for Victims

In FY2026, Community Legal Aid Society, Inc. (CLASI) provided representation and guidance in **788** cases for survivors of domestic violence statewide. Of those cases, **352** were PFA cases, **279** were custody/visitation cases, **124** were divorce cases, and **33** involved child support.

In addition, CLASI provided advice and referral to **341** survivors of domestic violence. Of those cases, **226** involved PFA cases, **81** involved custody/visitation, **29** involved divorce, and **5** involved child custody.

Cases Represented by CLASI in FY2026



Delaware Volunteer Legal Services (DVLS) provides free representation primarily in New Castle County to victims of domestic violence. In FY2026, pro bono and staff attorneys provided advice, brief services, and representation to **282** victims seeking protection from abuse orders. Pro bono attorneys also represented **21** other clients with PFA matters, custody/visitation, and divorce matters. In-house staff attorneys provided representation, advice, or brief services on **221** 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. In the Fall of 2025, 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 **1,722.70 hours** of legal research and services.

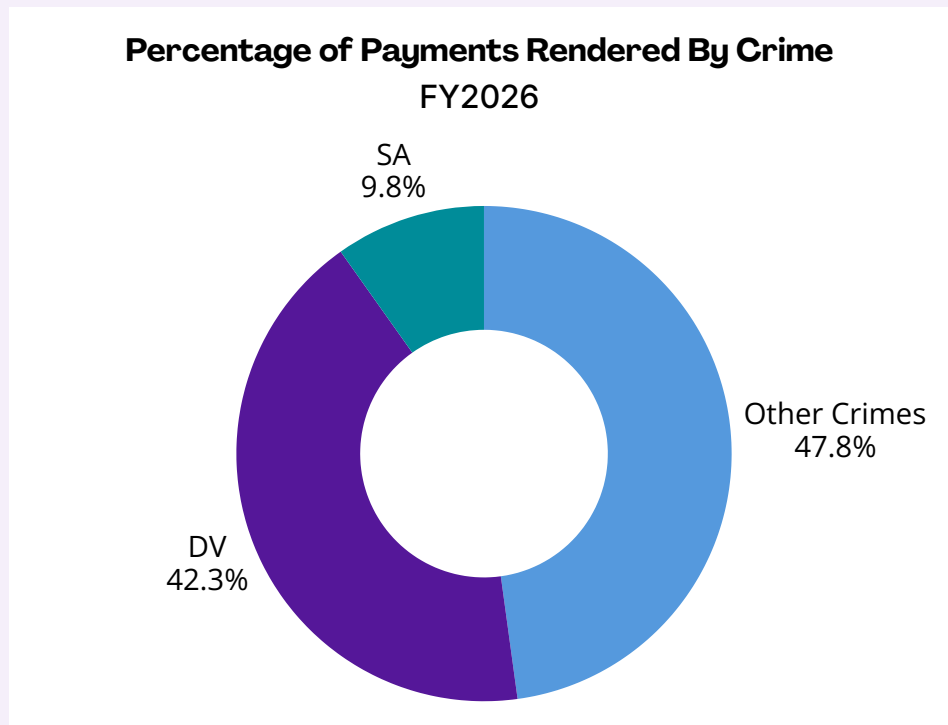
Year In Review

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 FY2026, VCAP rendered a total of **1,701** payments to, or on behalf of, victims of crime. Those payments totaled **\$1,707,714**. Of those payments, **\$723,077 (42%)** was paid for domestic violence victims (excluding victims of domestic violence victims that were sexually assaulted) and **\$167,770 (9.8%)** 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, please visit [Delaware's VCAP](#).

Year In Review

Victim Information & Notification Everyday (VINE) and VINE Protection Order (VPO)

Victim notification in cases involving domestic violence can be critical to a survivor's ability to make well-informed decisions regarding their safety. The Delaware Criminal Justice Information System (DELJIS) operates the Delaware VINE (Victim Information and Notification Everyday) System. VINE is an automated service that lets victims and survivors track offender's custody status or court case. The VINE Protective Order (VPO) is a free and confidential service that allows Petitioners to register for notification when a protective order (Ex-Parte or Final) has been served by law enforcement. VPO also provides advance notice when the protective order is about to expire.

For FY2026, the VPO program made a total of **177** successful notifications related to protective orders, including **103** regarding ex parte orders and **74** regarding permanent orders. There were **15** unsuccessful notifications.

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 more information or to register for Delaware VINE & VPO, visit <http://vinelink.com> and choose the language you need in the upper right menu and the state you need in the middle menu.

Quick Links:

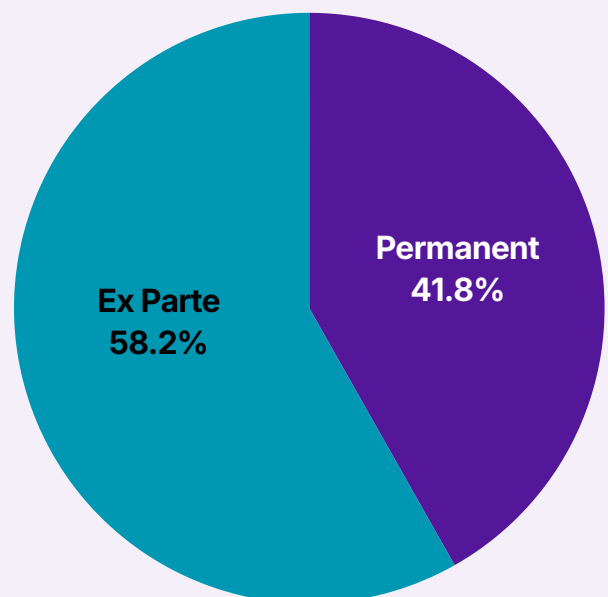
<https://vinelink.vineapps.com/state/DE/ENGLISH>

<http://vinelink.vineapps.com/state/DE/SPANISH>

To use the VINE/VPO search, visit:

<https://vinelink.vineapps.com/search/DE/Person>

VPO Program Successful Notifications



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 & 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

DVCC Information

DVCC Office
900 N. King Street, Suite 300
Wilmington, DE 19801

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