

January 31, 2022

To all State Assemblymembers and Senators,

As you may know, the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV) was established more than 40 years ago as a statewide non-profit organization comprised of local domestic violence service providers committed to preventing and ending DV. We are recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Justice as the information clearinghouse, primary point of contact, and resource center on DV for New York. We provide education, training, and technical assistance to DV service providers; and support the development of policies to enhance DV intervention and prevention.

As New York begins its discussions on the State Budget, I want to be sure you are aware of a significant issue facing all victim assistance providers across the state – **massive funding cuts that will impact the provision of support services for victims of all types of crime.**

NYSCADV is presenting a webinar for legislators and legislative staff to review the situation and discuss remedies the Legislature should take in the state budget to protect New York's victims of crime:

When: Thursday, February 10, 2022, 2:00-3:00 PM

[Register here](#)

Specifically, the NYS Office of Victim Services (OVS) has informed providers that, due to significant declines in federal funding coming into New York, their funding will be slashed in the next round of awards issued later this year. In addition, OVS cancelled the last year of existing contracts with programs providing civil legal services to crime victims.

These actions have already impacted the provision of support services for victims. Legal service providers have stopped taking on new clients and victim assistance providers have stopped hiring for open positions. These funding cuts, if implemented, would have significant, devastating, and possibly irreversible impacts on DV programs, leaving thousands of New Yorkers unable to access life-changing services.

The timing of these cuts could not come at a worse time. According to the latest nationwide survey, New York has the highest demand for DV services in the country. In 2020, on just one day in New York, more than 8,300 survivors of DV received services. On that same day, nearly 2,000 DV survivors did not get the services they requested because of critical funding and staffing shortages.¹

To ensure the continuity and sustainability of New York's crime victim services, **we are asking Governor Hochul and the Legislature to earmark \$25 million* in the FY'22-'23 budget for OVS to extend current contracts with all victim assistance providers for two years, during which time the federal funding coming into New York is expected to rebound.** The State is well positioned to extend these existing contracts, with its surplus and the availability of ample pandemic relief funding.

** NYSCADV and other victim assistance providers have asked OVS to confirm the level of funding needed to extend current contracts for two years. OVS has not replied to our request for information. We estimate \$25 million is needed to cover the annual shortfall.*

¹ National Network to End Domestic Violence (2021). 15th Annual Domestic Violence Counts Report. Washington, DC. Retrieved from: NNEDV.org/DVCounts.

The enclosed fact sheets provide more information about this request, as well as additional budgetary requests to:

- Remove Part H of the PPGG Budget which proposes a mandate requiring all DV advocates to obtain 40 hours of state-provided training and certification. While NYSCADV shares the state's goal of workforce development, creating new training mandates and expanding government oversight of advocacy organizations across multiple state agencies is not needed;
- Increase the TANF set aside for non-residential DV services to \$6 million; and,
- Maintain the Governor's \$5 million appropriation in OCFS' Aid to Localities Budget to implement a flexible funding model pilot project.

If you would like to receive more information about these issues and the needs of New Yorkers experiencing domestic violence, please attend our upcoming webinar on February 10 or contact me at jgerhardt@nyscadv.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joan Gerhardt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joan Gerhardt
Director of Public Policy and Advocacy