

MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

Reduce Housing Instability by Updating Shelter Allowances to 100% of Fair Market Rent

A.5543 Rosenthal L./ S.2982 Kavanagh

The New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV) urges the New York State Legislature to pass legislation that reduces housing instability and homelessness by updating shelter allowances to cover up to 100% of fair market rent. Shelter allowances, which vary depending on household size, county of residence and other factors, are provided to individuals receiving temporary assistance and can be used to cover housing costs.

The intersection of domestic violence, housing insecurity, and homelessness is irrefutable. Domestic violence is one of the leading causes of homelessness for women and their children. Safe housing can provide a path to freedom for survivors. Yet, lack of safe and affordable housing is often reported as one of the primary barriers victims of domestic violence face when they choose to leave an abusive partner.¹

In New York, according to the 17th Annual Domestic Violence Counts Report, facilitated by the National Network to End Domestic Violence, on a single day in 2022 requests for advocacy and support around TANF or other Public Benefits ranked in the top three requests from victims of domestic violence.² Requests for transitional housing and support related to housing matters also ranked as top priorities requested by victims on that day. These elevated requests are becoming increasingly difficult for domestic violence programs to navigate with victims due to lack of local inventory compounded by the outdated and inadequate shelter allowances currently allowed.

Now is the time to reduce housing instability and homelessness for all New Yorkers, including victims of domestic violence. NYSCADV urges the Legislature to pass this legislation which would allow shelter allowances to cover up to 100% of the current U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's fair market rent based on location.

ABOUT NYSCADV:

Established in 1978, NYSCADV is designated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as the information clearinghouse, primary point of contact, and resource center on domestic violence for the State of New York. NYSCADV is responsible for supporting the development of policies, protocol, and procedures to enhance domestic violence intervention and prevention and also provides education and technical assistance to the network of primary-purpose domestic violence service providers statewide.

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Revised: January 31, 2024

1 Browne, A. 1998. "Responding to the Needs of Low Income and Homeless Women Who are Survivors of Family Violence." *Journal of American Medical Women's Association*. 53(2): 57-64.

2. National Network to End Domestic Violence (2023). 17th Annual Domestic Violence Counts Report. Washington, DC. Retrieved from: NNEDV.org/DVCounts.