

# Creating a Safer Texas

TCFV offers this annual update to the Texas State Plan to tell the story of the needs and services provided to survivors of family violence in Texas.

## Life-Saving Services for Survivors

Family Violence Centers (FVCs) are trauma-informed organizations offering crucial safety and support to survivors of family violence in Texas.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2021, **78 Family Violence Centers** funded by the Texas Health and Human Services (HHSC) Family Violence Program<sup>1</sup>:

- » served **62,796 survivors** and their families
- » received **256,078 Hotline calls**

The most common services provided to survivors:

**680,515**

### Intervention Services

*includes advocacy, understanding and support, and safety planning*

**227,563**

### Information and Referral to Community Services

**173,852**

### Child Services

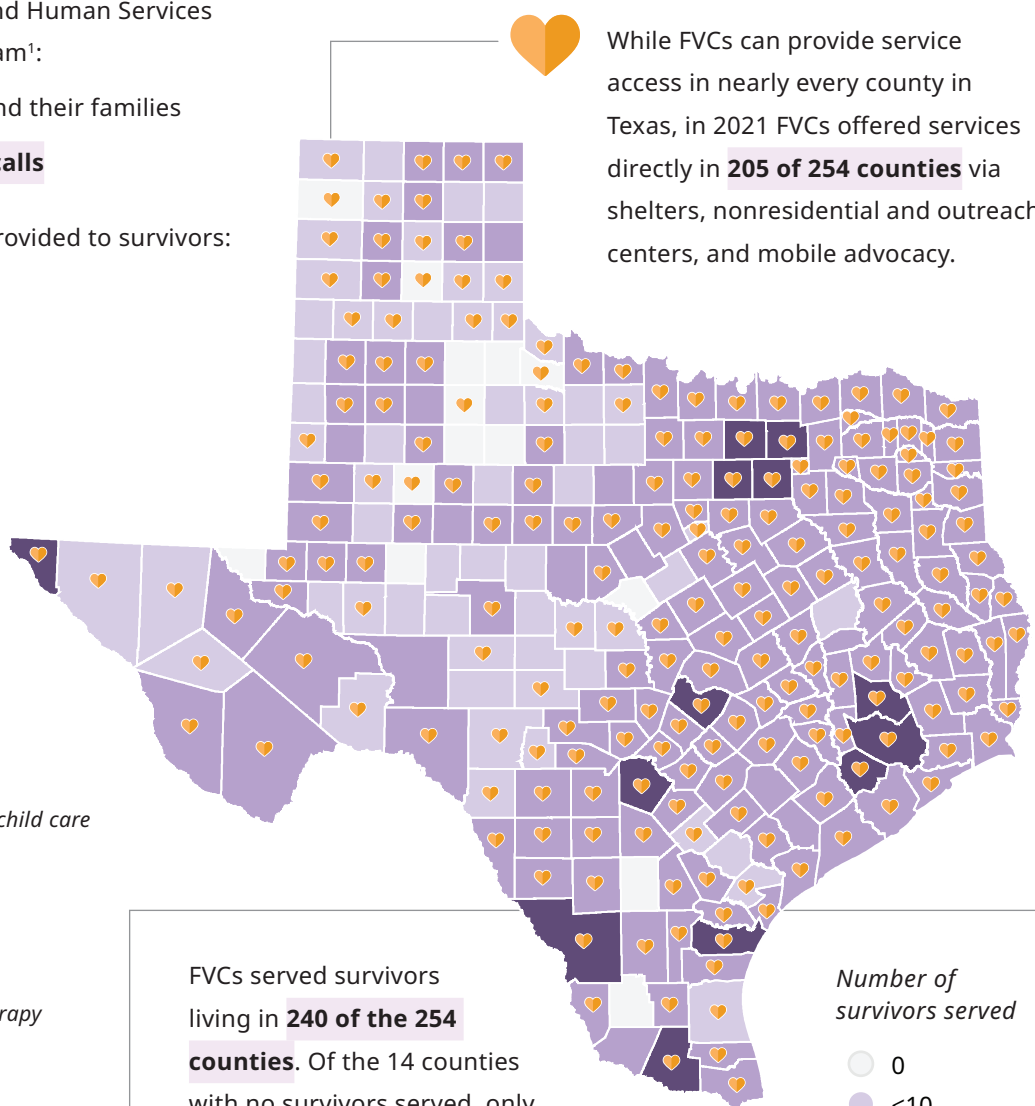
*includes activities for children and child care*

**110,564**

### Counseling and Therapy

*includes one-on-one and group therapy*

Family Violence Centers provided  
**~1.5 million** services in 2021.<sup>1</sup>



While FVCs can provide service access in nearly every county in Texas, in 2021 FVCs offered services directly in **205 of 254 counties** via shelters, nonresidential and outreach centers, and mobile advocacy.

FVCs served survivors living in **240 of the 254 counties**. Of the 14 counties with no survivors served, only one has an FVC physically located in their county.

Number of survivors served

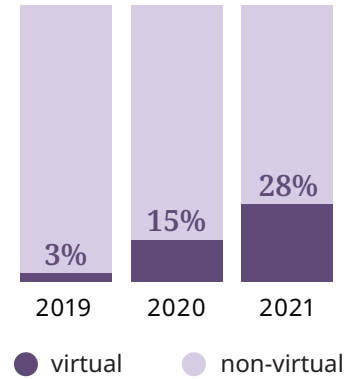
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## A Changing Landscape — Virtual Advocacy

A cornerstone of the family violence movement includes efforts to meet survivors where they are, virtually and via geographic location.

- » Services provided virtually **increased 750%** in two years.
- » Legal assistance offered through enhanced funding (EIF), a hugely important service for survivors seeking safety, has been provided virtually at much higher rates than other services.

The rise of virtual services



SHELTER AND NON-RESIDENTIAL SERVICES	% PROVIDED VIRTUALLY	EIF SERVICES	% PROVIDED VIRTUALLY
Family Violence Option	74%	Legal Services – Immigration	93%
Counseling and Therapy	54%	Legal Services – Child Support	79%
Legal Assistance	48%	Legal Services – Child Custody	74%
Support Groups	44%	Economic Stability – Employment	72%

During the pandemic, virtual services became essential, and the use of this modality grew at a staggering rate.



## Safety in Shelter

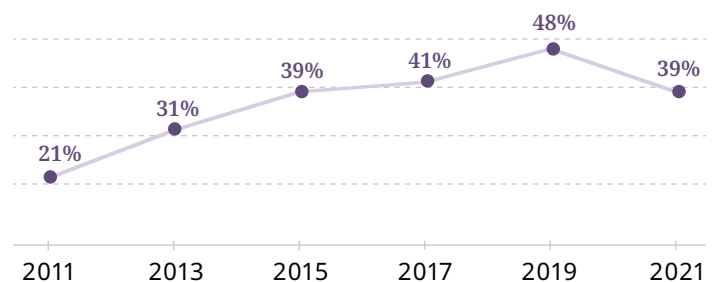
Family violence shelters are a critical safety intervention for some survivors. In 2021:

**18,607**  
adults and children offered  
emergency shelter

**555,798**  
nights of safety provided

**7,460**  
callers referred to other shelters

Survivors denied shelter due to lack of space



Lack of bed space continues to create a capacity and safety crisis in our state. Due to recent funding increases, Texas has seen fewer survivors denied shelter solely due to the lack of space within the shelters, but it is still at **39% statewide**.

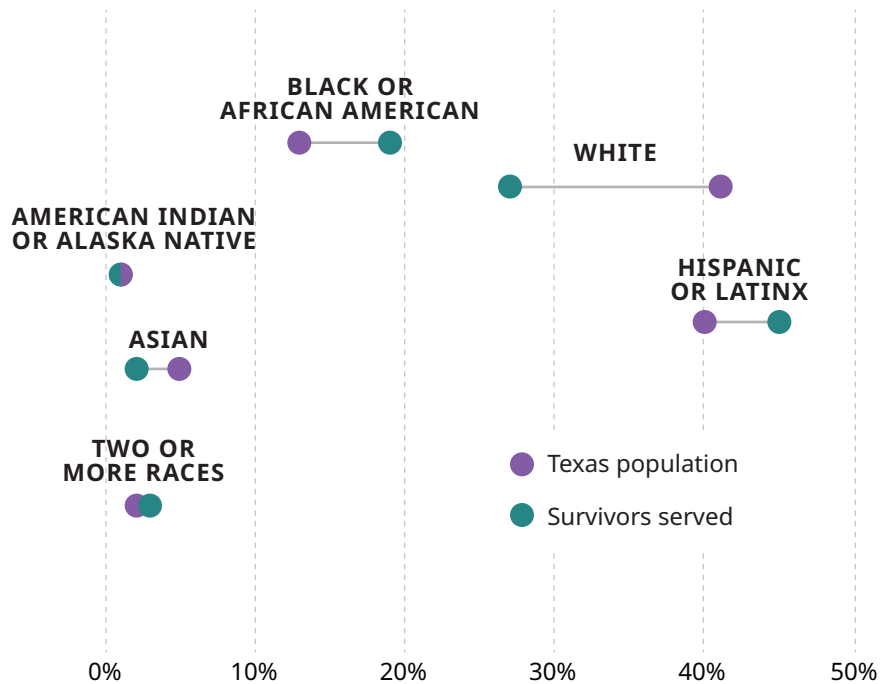
## Equity in Services

The following compares the demographics of survivors served by family violence centers to the population of Texas.

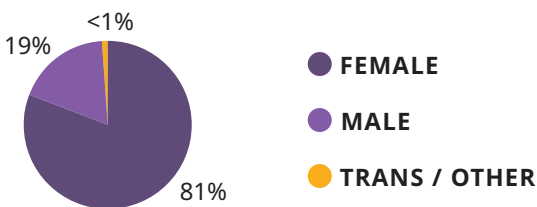
### RACE AND ETHNICITY

- » Black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx Texans represent more survivors served by FVCs than the Texas population.
- » It is encouraging that the FVC staff's racial and ethnic identities represent the survivors being served.

Comparison of race/ethnicity



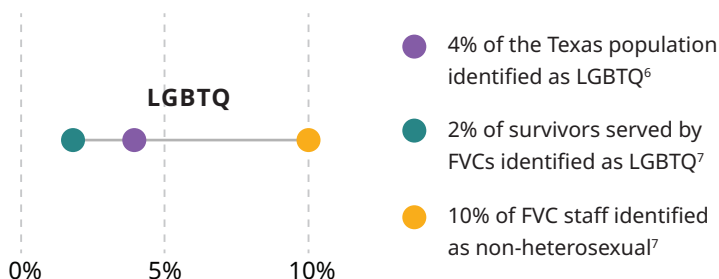
Survivors served by HHSC FVCs



Percent experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV) nationally<sup>2,3</sup>



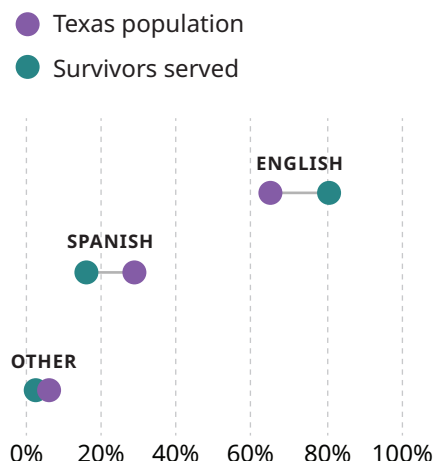
Percent of population identifying as LGBTQ



### GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

- » Of the 19% of male clients served, a large majority (80%) were children of survivors.
- » Individuals who identify as LGBTQ are at higher risk of intimate partner violence than people who do not.<sup>2</sup>
- » LGBTQ youth experience domestic violence at alarming rates, with **42.8%** of lesbian, gay, or bisexual youth and **88.9%** of transgender youth reporting experiencing some form of dating violence.<sup>4</sup>
- » LGBTQ survivors face challenges in reporting violence and accessing services, as well as additional risks from bias, stigma, and lack of understanding around sexual orientation or gender identity.<sup>5</sup>

### Comparison of languages spoken



### LANGUAGES SPOKEN

There is a great need to enhance service accessibility for Spanish and other non-English speaking survivors.

The most common other languages spoken by survivors served are:

**Spanish**  
**Urdu**  
**Arabic**  
**Chinese**  
**Vietnamese**  
**French**

**Housing is consistently the number one need requested by survivors in Texas.**



### HOUSING NEEDS IN A SINGLE DAY:

**3,909**

*survivors found safety in emergency shelters, transitional housing, hotels, motels, and other housing provided by family violence centers*

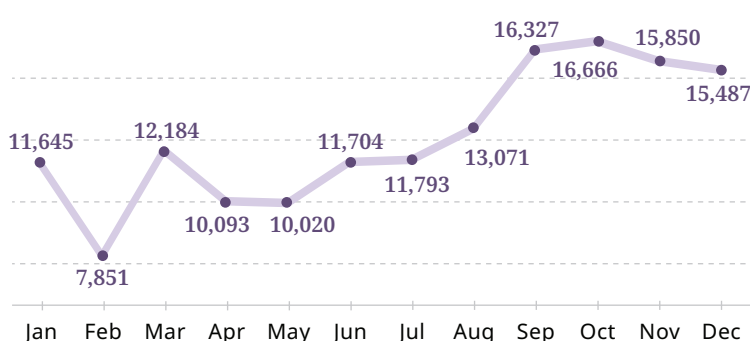
**1,112**

*requests for service were unable to be met—most (56%) for housing and emergency shelter<sup>11</sup>*

## The Most Critical Need: Housing

- » **71.4% of survivors** interviewed for the Texas State Plan needed help finding housing.<sup>7</sup>
- » Family violence is a major contributor to housing problems for an estimated **one in every three-to-four homeless women**.<sup>8</sup>
- » This increased need for housing is compounded by the high cost of housing in Texas and the rise in evictions as the state moratorium is lifted from the pandemic in January 2022.<sup>9</sup>

Texas evictions filed in 2021<sup>10</sup>



The Texas Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment is **\$1,172**.



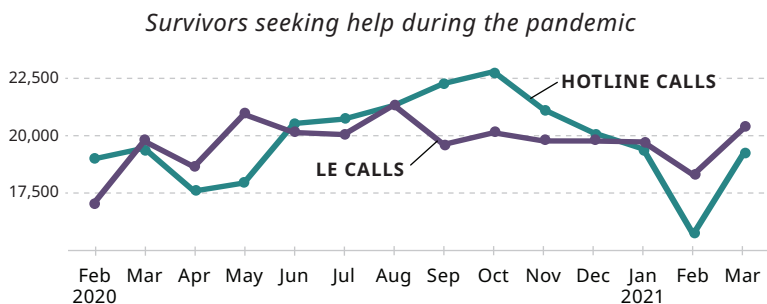
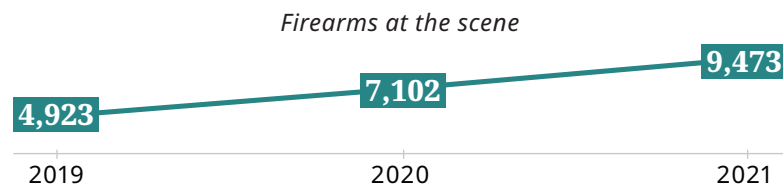
Texans must make **\$22.54** an hour to afford housing.<sup>12</sup>

## Increasing Severity of Violence

### Increase in Survivors Calling Law Enforcement

A victim calling law enforcement (LE) has an immediate need for help and concern for their safety. For survivors of family violence, violence from their partner has likely reached dangerous levels. Between FY 2019-2021, Texas saw an increase in family violence incidents that involved:

- » **20.4% increase** in victims at the scene
- » **92.4% increase** in firearms at the scene<sup>13</sup>

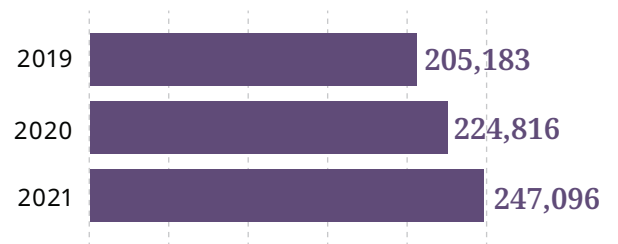


### Increase in Femicides: Honoring Texas Victims

Every year, TCFV shares the stories of the men, women, and children who lose their lives to family violence.

- » Over the last decade, over **1,400 women** have been murdered by their intimate partners.
- » Women are **3.6 times** more likely to be killed in the process of leaving than any other time in the relationship.<sup>16</sup>
- » A firearm in family violence situations can increase the risk of homicide for women **by as much as 500%**.<sup>17</sup>

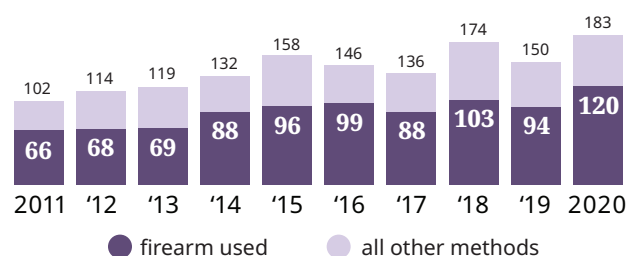
*Victims at the scene*



As data has shown in the past with similar large-scale disasters such as Hurricane Harvey, the pandemic increased the risk of violence for survivors due to isolation and increased stressors in the home. Hotline calls to FVCs decreased significantly in the first months of the pandemic as survivors were isolated with their abusive partners, while calls to LE increased. After stay-at-home orders were lifted, survivors could safely reach out to hotlines. As Texas recovers from the coronavirus pandemic, there is likely to be a sharp uptick in need for family violence services.<sup>14</sup>

**63%** of women killed by their intimate partner in the past 10 years were killed with a firearm.<sup>15</sup>

*Texas femicide victims killed by firearms*



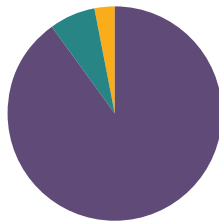
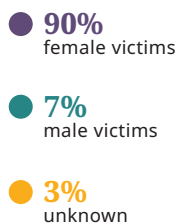
## COORDINATED SAFETY: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HIGH-RISK TEAMS

These deaths are preventable. Communities can work together to identify these risks and support survivors before abuse becomes lethal.

Domestic Violence High-Risk Teams (DVHRTs) create a community-coordinated initiative in which survivors at the highest lethality risk get enhanced support from law enforcement, advocates, prosecutors, and others. This wrap-around model holds offenders accountable and is a trauma-informed approach to maximize victim safety. In 2021:

**DVHRTs ensure survivors at the highest lethality risk get enhanced support from law enforcement, advocates, prosecutors, and others.**

*DVHRT victim gender*

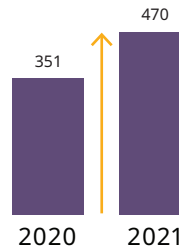


*DVHRT victims served*

7 sites

470 victims

34% increase



**83%** of victims made first contact with Law Enforcement<sup>18</sup>

## Community Intersections

Survivors often interact with multiple systems that are not FVCs and may be more likely to approach informal support, such as family or friends or ancillary helpers (i.e., LE), prior to seeking family violence services.<sup>19</sup> These systems act as an important touch point in a survivor's life to either provide lifesaving support or discourage a survivor from seeking help in the future.

### Crime Victims Compensation

**Over 99% of survivors** experience economic abuse,<sup>20</sup> and flexible cash assistance is the most urgent need for survivors to stay safe.<sup>21</sup> The Office of Attorney General Crime Victim Compensation (CVC) is one resource utilized by survivors to reduce the financial impact of violence. In 2021:<sup>22</sup>



**8,560**

family violence applications were filed



**7,232**

family violence applications were approved



**\$8,268,525**

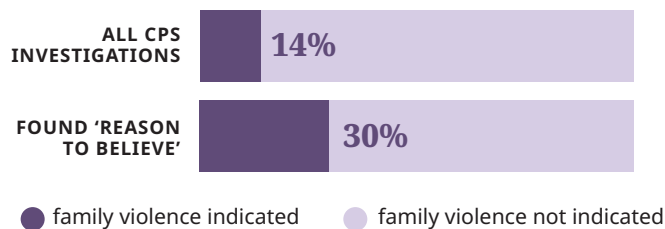
was provided to survivors of family violence

Applicants approved for compensation due to a family violence crime made up **43% of all applicants approved** in 2021, and **14% of the total money distributed by CVC**.<sup>22</sup> The funds paid for essential needs like hospital care, physician fees, funeral expenses, loss of wages, and costs for relocation.

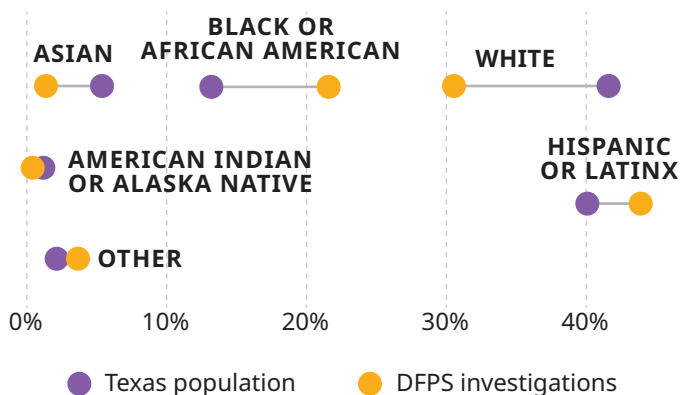
## Department of Family and Protective Services

**89%** of family violence centers provide support to survivors who are involved with CPS.<sup>23</sup>

Prevalence of family violence in CPS investigations



Comparison of race/ethnicity



Survivors with children may interact with the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), Child Protective Investigations, and Child Protective Services (CPS). While a child's exposure to family violence alone is not abuse or neglect, there are instances of co-occurrence, and the abusive partner might also use reporting to DFPS as a method of control. Below is a snapshot of this intersection in FY2021:

- » 157,519 CPS investigations were completed by DFPS; family violence was indicated in **14% of all investigations.**
- » 43,270 were found 'Reason to Believe,' meaning the investigation found abuse or neglect occurred; **30% of those found to have 'Reason to Believe' indicated family violence.**<sup>24</sup>
- » DFPS investigates Hispanic and Black/African American families at higher rates than their representation in the Texas population.

*Specific data by county is available by request.*

*For information, data sources, and methodology, email [policy@tcfv.org](mailto:policy@tcfv.org).*



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TEXAS COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE PROMOTES SAFE AND  
HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS BY SUPPORTING SERVICE PROVIDERS,  
FACILITATING STRATEGIC PREVENTION EFFORTS, AND CREATING  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR FREEDOM FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

