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.

Family Violence Centers provided ~1.5 million services in 2021.¹

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 Program¹:

- 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

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.

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.
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHELTER AND NON-RESIDENTIAL SERVICES</th>
<th>% PROVIDED VIRTUALLY</th>
<th>EIF SERVICES</th>
<th>% PROVIDED VIRTUALLY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Violence Option</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>Legal Services – Immigration</td>
<td>93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counseling and Therapy</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>Legal Services – Child Support</td>
<td>79%</td>
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<td>Legal Assistance</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>Legal Services – Child Custody</td>
<td>74%</td>
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<td>Support Groups</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>Economic Stability – Employment</td>
<td>72%</td>
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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

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.

**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.

» 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.

> 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.
71.4% of survivors interviewed for the Texas State Plan needed help finding housing.

Family violence is a major contributor to housing problems for an estimated one in every three-to-four homeless women.

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.

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

Texans must make $22.54 an hour to afford housing.

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

The Most Critical Need: Housing

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The most common other languages spoken by survivors served are:

- Spanish
- Urdu
- Arabic
- Chinese
- Vietnamese
- French

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:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Texas population</th>
<th>Survivors served</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>ENGLISH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>SPANISH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>OTHER</td>
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Comparison of languages spoken

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
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

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.

**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.
- A firearm in family violence situations can increase the risk of homicide for women by as much as 500%.

63% of women killed by their intimate partner in the past 10 years were killed with a firearm.

Texas femicide victims killed by firearms

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firearm used  all other methods
**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:

**DVHRT victim gender**
- 90% female victims
- 7% male victims
- 3% unknown

**DVHRT victims served**
- 7 sites
- 470 victims
- 34% increase
- 2020: 351
- 2021: 470
- 83% of victims made first contact with Law Enforcement

**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. 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, and flexible cash assistance is the most urgent need for survivors to stay safe. The Office of Attorney General Crime Victim Compensation (CVC) is one resource utilized by survivors to reduce the financial impact of violence. In 2021:

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. The funds paid for essential needs like hospital care, physician fees, funeral expenses, loss of wages, and costs for relocation.
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.
- 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.
REFERENCES


5. Center for Victim Research. (2019, April). Intimate Partner Violence Involving Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Individuals: A Look at National Data. Webinar. Accessed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QDPWmxTwnTSLq&list=PL2FKeVVCPGDCLXccBcQn3QDB8PLCPq0&index=6&t=0s


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.