

# Virtual Legislative Day of Action Toolkit

May 12, 2020



#Safety4Survivors  
#DVSurvivorsNeedHelp

**NYSCADV**  
NEW YORK STATE COALITION  
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

# 2020 NYSCADV VIRTUAL LEGISLATIVE DAY OF ACTION TOOLKIT

On May 12, 2020, survivors, domestic violence advocates, community members and allies will join together for NYSCADV's Virtual Legislative Day of Action!

Together, we will advocate #Safety4Survivors by taking to Facebook, Twitter, email, phone and video to promote policies that invest in domestic violence programs and improve services for victims and their families.

[Check Out Our Facebook Event:](#)  
[Following our Virtual Legislative Day of Action Facebook Event is the best way to keep updated on the latest.](#)



# Emergency Funding Needed Now to Sustain DV Services for Victims

For years, New York State led the country in its demand for domestic violence services. This demand was outpacing New York's investment in DV services, which has remained flat for years. Now, DV service providers are struggling to re-direct what little funding they get to provide critical services to DV survivors during the COVID-19 pandemic. DV programs, as essential service providers, are pivoting to offer remote advocacy services to those unwilling to come into shelter, and enhancing social distancing and isolation protocols for residents already in shelter. Yet New York's 30-year-old service delivery system, which is based on an outdated per diem reimbursement model, results in less funding for DV service agencies during this crucial time.

Help NYSCADV spread the word that we cannot wait any longer. We must eliminate the per diem reimbursement policies for DV shelter and instead allocate significant state-originating dollars to ensure victims receive the assistance they need to stay safe and protect their families. DV service agencies should be provided with flexible emergency funding to enable them to provide economic stability grants directly to survivors. And additional funding must be available for purchases of personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies, food services, building modifications to enhance social distancing, remote technologies and staff compensation and benefits.



## IT'S EASY TO PARTICIPATE AND YOU CAN CHOOSE HOW TO BEST CONTRIBUTE YOUR TIME

This toolkit includes the following tools:

- **Sample Social Media Posts:** We've pulled together a number of sample Facebook and Twitter posts for you to share. All you need to do is copy and paste... and remember to use **#Safety4Survivors** and **#DVSurvivorsNeedHelp**.
- **Shareable Graphics:** Spread the word and what you're doing to promote **#Safety4Survivors** and **#DVSurvivorsNeedHelp** by sharing these images on social media, your website, and/or emails.
- **Virtual Meeting Advocacy Tips**  
Worried about stumbling over your words or missing a talking point? Is this your first time meeting with a legislator? We got you covered with tips for successful advocacy as well as talking points and a practice Q&A on priority issues.
- **Sample Email Scripts:** If you don't have the time, or if your legislator is unavailable for a virtual meeting, consider sending an email. We've provided you with sample email script. Simply copy and paste, or use these scripts as a jumping off point for your own message.
- **NYSCADV #PurpleintheHouse Awareness Campaign:** In advance of VLDA '20, take a selfie of yourself wearing **PURPLE** and post it on Twitter or Facebook, using the hashtag **#PurpleintheHouse**.





# USE THESE SAMPLE POSTS!

(TIP: Always remember to tag your representatives so they will see your post)

- [Click here to find your New York Senator on Twitter and Facebook](#)
- [Click here to find Your New York Assembly Member on Twitter and Facebook](#)

1. For years, New York State has led the country in its demand for domestic violence services. Today we join the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence and dozens of advocates and survivors to call on state lawmakers to invest in domestic violence programs. Together, we must ensure victims receive the help they need to enhance #Safety4Survivors.

2. New York’s investment in services for domestic violence survivors and their families has remained flat for years. Yet demand for DV services is higher than it’s ever been. Today we join the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence and dozens of advocates and survivors to call on state lawmakers to provide emergency funding for domestic violence programs. #Safety4Survivors #DVSurvivorsNeedHelp

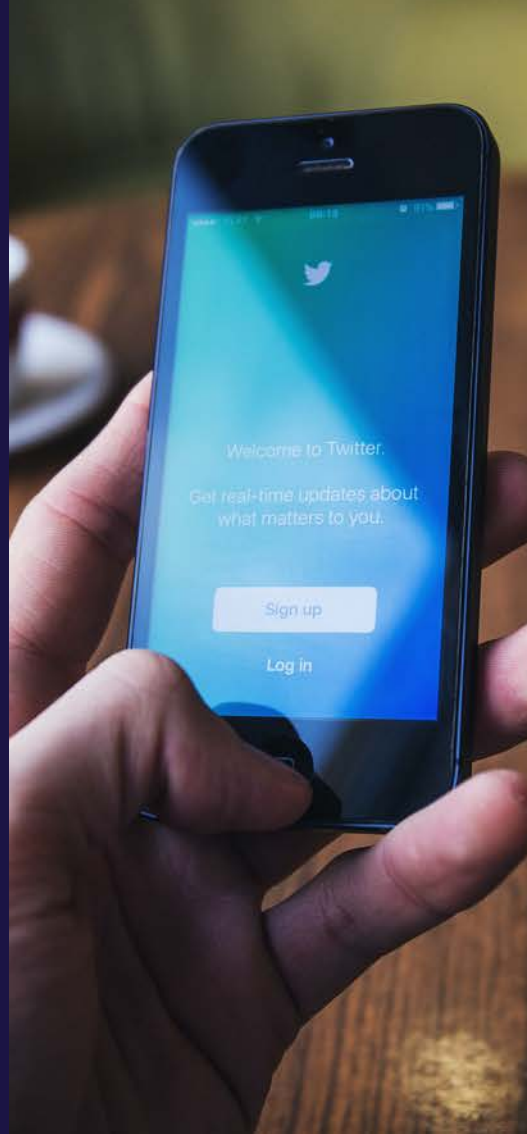


3. People experiencing domestic violence need a variety of housing options and remote services. New York’s DV service providers, whose budgets have remained flat for years, are struggling to respond. New York must increase emergency funding for DV services now to enhance #Safety4Survivors. There is no more time to wait.

## Click to Tweet!

Click on each tweet to have it appear on your twitter account, ready to edit:

- @\_\_\_\_\_ (Senator/Assembly Member twitter handle) promote safety for domestic violence survivors in New York  
#DVSurvivorsNeedHelp  
#Safety4Survivors
- @\_\_\_\_\_ (Senator/Assembly Member twitter handle) Join my support of domestic violence survivors by allocating emergency funding for DV programs now  
#DVSurvivorsNeedHelp  
#Safety4Survivors
- Today I join @NYSCADV & dozens of DV advocates to call on @NYSenate & @NYSA\_Majority to invest in DV programs across the state
- @NYSenate & @NYSA\_Majority — It's time to dedicate more resources, staff & funding to stop violence before it starts  
#DVSurvivorsNeedHelp
- New York leads the country in its demand for domestic violence services. @NYSenate & @NYSA\_Majority need to do more to protect DV survivors.  
#DVSurvivorsNeedHelp



- [Click here to find your New York Senator on Twitter and Facebook](#)
- [Click here to find Your New York Assembly Member on Twitter and Facebook](#)

# Use a Video Background During Your Virtual Meetings

Several video platforms like Zoom enable users to display an image as your background during a virtual meeting. We've developed a background for you to use during meetings with legislators.

To use the background during a Zoom call, follow these simple instructions:

1. Sign in to the Zoom web portal.
2. Click on the Settings gear icon.
3. Click on the Virtual Background option and verify that the setting is enabled. If it is disabled, click the Status toggle to enable it. If a verification dialog displays, choose Turn On to verify the change. (Note, you may have to logout of Zoom and log back in for the change to take effect.)
4. Add the VLDA virtual background by downloading the image to your computer. Then click + and find the image on your computer to upload to Zoom.
5. Virtual backgrounds work best if you have a green screen, or a solid, light-colored background color. If prompted, click Download to download the package for the virtual background without a green screen.
6. Remember, the virtual background will display for all future meetings. To disable Virtual Background, choose the option None.

[Click here to download Zoom background](#)

**I Pledge  
to End  
Domestic  
Violence  
in New York**

**NYSCADV**  
NEW YORK STATE COALITION  
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

#Safety4Survivors  
#DVSurvivorsNeedHelp

# Meeting Advocacy Tips

- 1) **Be Prepared:** Identify the messages you want to convey. Think about the questions you may be asked and prepare how to respond. If you know any personal facts or local connections about your legislator, use them!
- 2) **Be Prompt:** Be on time for your virtual meeting and be patient if the legislator is late. Expect each meeting to last 15-30 minutes.
- 3) **Be Yourself and Tell Your Story:** Tell the legislator about your work with survivors and families in your community. Discuss how the current Pandemic has impacted them. Give specific examples whenever you can.
- 4) **Keep It Short and Focused:** Stress what's important. Focus on what you're asking them to do.
- 5) **Get a Commitment:** If the legislator expresses support, ask them to do something concrete to demonstrate their support. For example, they can help persuade leadership of the need for funding.
- 6) **Be Honest:** It's OK if you don't know the answer to questions you are asked. Let the legislator know that you will follow-up with the requested information.
- 7) **Follow Up!** Send a thank you letter or email, and send any information you promised





#DVSurvivorsNeedHelp

**6) Avoid Multi-tasking:** Give legislators your undivided attention. Avoid reviewing information that is not directly relevant to your meeting. Also, avoid eating or drinking.



## Additional Resources for VLDA Outreach



Communicating with your state legislators is as easy as 1, 2, 3:

1. Click below to identify your Assembly Member and Senator.

- [Click here to find your legislator in Assembly](#)
- [Click here to find your legislator in Senate](#)

2. Check out their official webpages to find their office phone numbers or email.

3. Prepare in advance by reviewing these talking points and Q&As:

- [Click here to download talking points](#)
- [Click here to download Q&A](#)

# Phone-Based Advocacy Tips

If you are unable to schedule a virtual meeting with your legislator, consider contacting the legislator's office to communicate with whomever answers the phone. Legislative offices keep detailed information regarding the calls they receive and the issues raised.

- 1) Remember your message prep! For phone calls, it can be helpful to write out some talking points ahead of time to make sure you know what you want to say. Calls to the front desk are often brief, but legislators do take note of them.
- 2) Use the prepared email scripts as a launching pad to get you started on talking points. It's best to use your own language. Rehearse what you intend to say a few times. The more you practice, the easier it will become to deliver your message!
- 3) Because legislative staff are working remotely now, it is unclear who will be answering the phone when you call a particular office. When you get someone on the phone, tell them you are a constituent and you'd like to speak to someone about domestic violence issues. This information will help direct you to the most appropriate person. Alternatively, you can ask to speak with the chief of staff or the legislative director.



# Sample Email Scripts

1

## 1. Subject: Promote victim safety in NY

Senator/Assembly Member \_\_\_\_\_:

I'm \_\_\_\_\_ (name), \_\_\_\_\_ (position/title) at \_\_\_\_\_ (name of agency), a community-based program serving \_\_\_\_\_ (town/city/county) and working every day to end domestic violence.

I am emailing you today to urge you to support emergency funding for New York's domestic violence service providers, to ensure victims receive the assistance they need to stay safe and protect their families. Unfortunately, even before the COVID-19 Pandemic, New York led the country in its demand for domestic violence services. This demand far outpaced New York's investment in domestic violence services, which has remained flat for years.

I am asking you to promote victim safety by asking your colleagues to support emergency funding for local DV service providers. This will enable them to:

- Provide economic stability grants directly to survivors;
- Purchase personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies, and food services for residents in emergency shelter;
- Transition advocacy services to remote technologies to ensure DV victims who do not want to enter shelter can still obtain services;
- Modify buildings to enhance social distancing among shelter residents, and
- Provide shelter staff, who have been working on the frontlines of this public health emergency since early March, with enhanced compensation and benefits.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to safety in New York. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Thank you!

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name, title, agency, contact information)

## 2. Subject: Pandemic Increases Demand for DV Services

Senator/Assembly Member \_\_\_\_\_:

I'm \_\_\_\_\_ (name), \_\_\_\_\_ (position/title) at \_\_\_\_\_ (name of agency), a community-based program serving \_\_\_\_\_ (town/city/county) and working every day to end domestic violence.

I am emailing you today to let you know that, as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic and New York's shelter-in-place requirements, New York's survivors of domestic violence need more services than ever before. Even before the current crisis began, New York led the country in its demand for domestic violence services. This demand far outpaced New York's investment in domestic violence services, which has remained flat for years.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has introduced a new health crisis within the epidemic of family violence in our state. We do not know what lies ahead, but anecdotal information suggests that violence may be increasing. Many domestic violence shelters urgently need resources to reduce the spread of the disease, modify their physical shelters and innovate methods of reaching families in order to protect the health and safety of the families they serve. New York's domestic violence shelters and programs vary in physical shelter layout, capacity, continuum of services, budget, community partnerships and resources, and geography. They need flexible resources to meet their unique needs.

I am asking you to stand alongside New York's domestic violence service providers and ask your colleagues to support emergency funding for local DV service providers.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Thank you!

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name, title, agency, contact information)



# Sample Email Scripts

## 3. Subject: Emergency Funding Needed for DV Services

Senator/Assembly Member \_\_\_\_\_:

I'm \_\_\_\_\_ (name), \_\_\_\_\_ (position/title) at \_\_\_\_\_ (name of agency), a community-based program serving \_\_\_\_\_ (town/city/county) and working every day to end domestic violence.

I am emailing you today to let you know that New York's domestic violence service providers need the State's help to ensure domestic violence survivors and their families get the help they need. Immediately following New York's shelter-in-place program, New York's domestic violence advocates sprung into action to:

- Ensure DV services were available and accessible for all survivors
- Implement social distancing and disinfection of emergency shelters
- Obtain personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies for our residents and staff
- Transition advocacy services to virtual programming and mobile advocacy to ensure DV survivors were able to obtain services without leaving their homes
- Re-deploy and provide training to non-essential staff so they could provide more urgently needed services, and
- Expand housing opportunities, including stays in hotels and motels, for DV survivors so they wouldn't have to enter a communal living situation in order to enhance safety.

These actions have placed an unparalleled financial burden on New York's domestic violence service providers. In order to ensure services for domestic violence services continue for DV survivors, I ask you to support immediate, emergency funding for local DV service providers.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Thank you!

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name, title, agency, contact information)

# NYSCADV #PurpleintheHouse Awareness Campaign

Everyone with a Smartphone can participate in NYSCADV's social media campaign on May 12, 2020. Simply take a selfie of yourself wearing **PURPLE** anytime between now and then. Take it alone, with other household members, with pets. Be as creative as you want to be!

[Click on the image to download](#)



Sample Facebook post: I'm wearing purple today to support survivors of domestic violence. Purple symbolizes survival, courage and peace. I urge New York's lawmakers to recognize the increasing demand for domestic violence services across the state and allocate emergency funding for DV providers.  
#DVSurvivorsNeedHelp #PurpleintheHouse

# Twibbon Yourself

What is a Twibbon?

A twibbon is a small icon or logo that lays on top of your Facebook or Twitter profile picture.

You + Twibbon = Total Awesomeness



+

I'm wearing  
#PurpleintheHouse  
to support victims of  
domestic violence.

=



You can support NYSCADV's Virtual Legislative Day of Action in a number of ways using a Twibbon:

- Add a Twibbon to your Facebook profile picture
- Add a Twibbon to your Twitter profile
- Send out a tweet from your Twitter account
- Post a link to our Twibbon campaign to your Facebook Timeline
- Add a Twibbon to your selfie and post on Facebook or Twitter

[Click here to make your own Twibbon](#)

# Freshen Up Your Social Media Channel

Click on each image to download



Facebook Cover Image



Twitter Cover Image



Email Banner Image

# Virtual Legislative Day of Action Toolkit

#Safety4Survivors  
#DVSurvivorsNeedHelp



@NYSCoalitionAgainstDomesticViolence



[www.https://www.nyscadv.org/](https://www.nyscadv.org/)



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