

## NYSCADV'S FY'24 Budgetary Priorities

### 1) Support DV Staffing by Setting Living Wage Floor of No Less than \$21/hour for All State-funded Human Services Workers and Providing an 8.5% COLA to All State-Funded Human Services Contracts

Domestic violence advocates are essential, frontline workers whose work requires specialized skills and training. It is also a 24/7 job, requiring them to meet DV survivors where they are – at the police station, in court or the hospital – to provide critical, life-stabilizing services. Yet most DV advocates do not earn a living wage. Further, staff of DV agencies were not included in any prior budgetary initiative to raise compensation for human service workers, nor are they included in the FY'24 COLA proposal.<sup>1</sup> This has had a disastrous impact on the ability of DV agencies to retain and recruit employees. Thousands of jobs remain vacant as staff have left for higher paying and less traumatizing employment, jeopardizing availability of services.

### 2) Aid to Localities OTDA TANF Budget: Increase TANF Set Aside for Non-Residential Domestic Violence Services<sup>2</sup> to \$6 Million to Meet High Demand and Adjust for Inflation

DV survivors' requests for non-residential supportive services increases every year. On just one day in 2022, 3,500 adult and child victims requested these services – 38% of all requests received on that day and 1,000 more than the year prior.<sup>3</sup> The Executive Budget decreases this set aside from \$3.2 million to \$3 million, the same level as when it was first appropriated more than 20 years ago. When adjusted for inflation, this \$3 million appropriation would have to be \$5 million today to provide the same level of support and services for New York's victims.

### 3) Aid to Localities: Maintain Shift of \$14.4 Million From General Funds to OVS<sup>4</sup> and Appropriate \$11.7 Million of New Funding to OVS for Legacy Victim Service Providers That Received Less Funding Under 2022-2025 Contracts than Under Prior Contracts

The FY'23 budget included the first installment of a \$14.4 million annual transfer from general funds to OVS to stave off cuts to crime victim service organizations providing critical services to crime victims on behalf of the state. Regardless of the funding shift, OVS cut \$11.7 million of funding for nearly 90 providers of DV, sexual assault, legal, and child advocacy services when it awarded new contracts last summer. Over the three-year term of the contracts, this amounts to \$35.1 million of cuts – a move that is dramatically destabilizing New York's crime victim service network. Without immediate intervention, the sustainability of victim services is in jeopardy, and services will not be available to all who need them.

### 4) Add Organizational Viability Language for All State-Administered Federal Grants Used to Support Domestic Violence Services

With the highest demand for DV services in the country, New York should be continuously funding DV services. Yet that isn't happening. Most funding for DV services is awarded via competitive procurement, a process that causes significant upheaval and instability among this critical network. To ensure the long-term availability of these services, the following language should be added in the State Budget wherever DV funding is appropriated: "To ensure organizational viability, agency administration may be supported subject to review and approval of the commissioners of state agencies administering funding for domestic violence services. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, commissioners of such state agencies shall be authorized to continue contracts with community-based, nonprofit organizations providing residential or non-residential domestic violence services, without any additional requirements that such contracts be subject to competitive bidding or a request for proposals process."

(Revised: 3/2/23)

<sup>1</sup> Health and Mental Health Budget Bill S4007/A3007, Part DD.

<sup>2</sup> ATL Budget Bill S4003/A3003, Page 506, Lines 15-22.

<sup>3</sup> National Network to End Domestic Violence (2022). 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Counts Report. Washington, DC.

<sup>4</sup> PPGG Budget Bill S4005/A3005, Part CC, Page 116, Lines 8-9.