

## 2022 Public Policy Platform

The following is a list of NYSCADV's priority areas for the 2022 legislative session:

1. **Funding:** New York State is in the process of transforming its system of funding and oversight of domestic violence programs. The system has not been updated since it was established more than 30 years ago. NYSCADV supports a new, innovative, efficient and streamlined model that will greatly enhance services for New Yorkers experiencing domestic violence. Such a model should eliminate the current per diem reimbursement methodology that prioritizes emergency shelters over other housing options and non-residential support services. And New York State must ensure that no domestic violence program receives a decrease in funding when a new system is implemented.

In addition to changing the way in which New York State funds domestic violence programs, NYSCADV continues to urge New York to dedicate additional state-originating funding, in addition to federal funding streams like VOCA, VAWA STOP and FVPSA funding, to support domestic violence survivors and their families. New York State has the highest demand for domestic violence services in the country — higher than many states with larger populations — yet federal funding for domestic violence programs has remained flat for decades. Federal funding also comes with onerous restrictions on the use of such funds and requires cash-strapped domestic violence programs to find and allocate unrestricted funds to “match” the federal funds, a requirement that disproportionately impacts rural, culturally specific and under-resourced organizations that have unlimited access to unrestricted funds.

2. **Housing:** The intersection of domestic violence, homelessness and housing insecurity is undeniable. Survivors often report a lack of safe and affordable housing as one of the primary barriers they face when they choose to leave an abusive partner. Emergency shelters can satisfy immediate, short-term housing needs. However, many communities in New York lack an adequate number of affordable housing and transitional units, which provide short-term housing with wrap-around support services such as assistance obtaining public benefits, finding employment, and counseling. Further, many landlords refuse to lease properties to domestic violence survivors, despite New York State laws restricting such discrimination.

NYSCADV is committed to working with New York State to enhance housing options available for survivors of domestic violence, such as the Domestic Violence Housing First Approach which focuses on getting survivors of domestic violence into stable housing quickly and then providing the necessary supports needed for them to rebuild their lives. We are excited to learn more about Governor Hochul's \$25 billion, five-year housing plan aimed at creating and preserving 100,000 affordable homes, including 10,000 homes with support services for vulnerable populations. In addition, NYSCADV will work to increase avenues for survivors' economic stability (e.g., job protections, benefits, fair pay, child care, tax credits, etc.), to advance strong protections against discrimination in housing.

- 3. New York's Criminal and Family Court Systems:** Judges play a crucial role in their courtroom and in their communities to help end violence against individuals. It is therefore critical for judges and court personnel to understand the dynamics of domestic violence, the needs of domestic violence survivors, and the harm courts may cause victims when domestic violence or child abuse is minimized. NYSCADV is collaborating with legislative leaders to require comprehensive domestic violence training for all judges and court personnel before they can hear such cases, as well as participation in regular, robust continuing education programming.

With respect to child custody and visitation, NYSCADV seeks to advance public policies that protect victims and their families by keeping children away from violent offenders, strengthening requirements for professionally supervised visitation, halting the growing epidemic of cases in which courts determine "parental alienation" has occurred in families experiencing domestic violence, and ensuring parents' attempts to protect their children when domestic violence and child abuse are present are not used against them in court decision-making. NYSCADV opposes any legislation that prioritizes economic factors over the health and safety of a child.

- 4. Ensuring Equity for All Domestic Violence Survivors:** NYSCADV is committed to advocating for the advancement of a bold and robust policy agenda crafted through an intersectional lens, with close attention to anti-oppression and anti-violence frameworks. We know that race, sex, gender identity, religion, nationality, immigration status, sexual orientation, class and/or disability-based oppressions do not act independently of one another and that systemic oppressions permeate our institutions, our schools and universities, our healthcare facilities, our courts and criminal justice system, our government and our workplaces. Dismantling deeply rooted systems of oppression cannot be accomplished within a silo.

NYSCADV is dedicated to working collaboratively with organizations throughout New York State and across the country to change and/or dismantle the systems of oppression that enable all forms of violence to occur. We are committed to elevating the experiences and voices of ALL survivors, ensuring equitable space within the movement. We will conduct educational programming around the impact of oppression individually, institutionally and societally. And we will examine and seek to improve systems' practices, policies and protocols that impact domestic violence survivors and their experiences seeking justice.

Established in 1978, the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (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 works to create and support the social change necessary to prevent and confront all forms of domestic violence. NYSCADV's policy agenda employs both legislative and systems change advocacy to support the needs of domestic violence survivors and their families and the programs that support them.

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