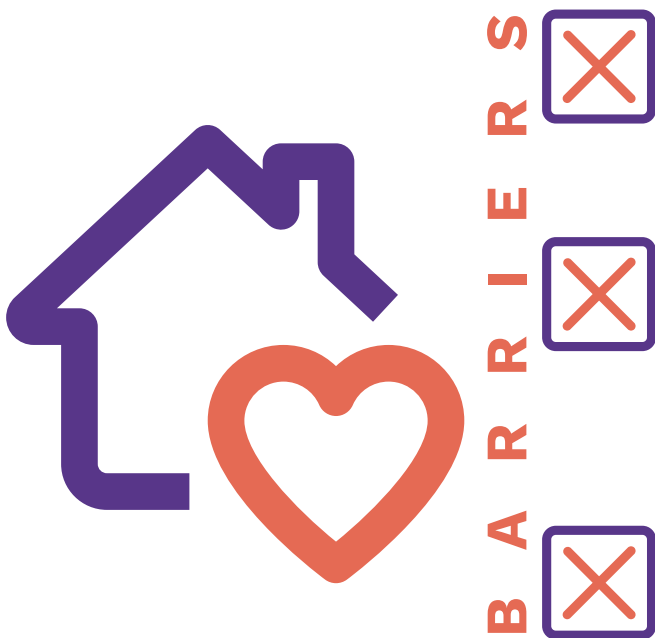




2021 Legislative Support Agenda: Housing

Violence Free Minnesota is a statewide coalition of over 90 member programs working to end relationship abuse across the state. Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness for women and their children. Safe, affordable housing and access to economic resources are the two most vital pathways to safety for victim/survivors and their children.



COVID-19 has left survivors struggling to navigate crisis upon crisis. Survivors face the physical, economic, and equity crisis created by the pandemic *and* these same challenges from the abuse they experience.

Survivors face evictions based on factors beyond their control and tied directly to the abuse they suffered. Once an eviction is on a survivor's record it can create insurmountable barriers to new housing. **Evictions create barriers to safe housing and stability for survivors.**

Housing benefits, such as vouchers, provide financial support many survivors need to leave an abusive situation. **When landlords who can - and often do - deny rental applications from voucher holders, many survivors are left unable to locate an affordable rental, limiting their choices to homelessness or returning to abuse.**

Policy Solutions:

COVID-Related Housing Protections

Ensure strong housing protections are in place - including an eviction moratorium and ample emergency assistance - to protect renters and homeowners impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Eviction Reform | HF20/SF766 - SF 1341/HF1060 - HF265/SF771

Reform eviction laws to prevent needless evictions, protect tenants from pending eviction filings being used to deny access to housing, increase due process in eviction court, and make eviction expungement more accessible.

Source of Income Discrimination

Amend the Minnesota Human Rights Act to make clear that source of income discrimination encompasses all forms of housing assistance, including housing choice vouchers, and other forms of housing assistance, thereby prohibiting such discrimination from continuing.

THE COALITION TO END RELATIONSHIP ABUSE



2021 Legislative Support Agenda: Economic Justice

Violence Free Minnesota is a statewide coalition of over 90 member programs working to end relationship abuse across the state. Victim/survivors are often plunged into economic instability due to abuse and a lack of safety nets further obstruct pathways to security. Victim/survivors of color - including Black and Indigenous survivors - experience unique barriers to safety due to legacies of racism, economic exclusion, and disparities found in the criminal-legal system. When we close systemic gaps, victim/survivors are one step closer to lasting safety and stability.



Economic abuse occurs in 99% of all instances of intimate partner violence.

Victim/survivors are left with little to no income, no access to cash or bank accounts, fraudulent and/or coerced debt in their name, and damaged financial profiles.

Surviving abuse and navigating its aftermath is traumatic, expensive, and time-consuming. From seeking healthcare, counseling and legal appointments related to their abuse to caretaking children and finding stable housing, victim/survivors risk losing their jobs due to a lack of paid leave, without a safety net to fall back on.

Fees, fines, and surcharges for traffic citations or minor criminal conviction can create a debt trap, especially for victim/survivors struggling to find economic stability in the aftermath of abuse.

Inability to pay minor fines can quickly snowball into ongoing entanglement in the criminal-legal system. This can result in license suspension or even jail time. A suspended license makes it harder to get to work and maintain employment while negatively impacting daily life and even the ability to de-escalate or escape a violent situation.

Policy Solutions:

Paid Family Medical Leave | HF1200/SF1205

Create a system that allows survivors to care for and protect themselves while accessing the services they need without risking their jobs or income. Implement a paid family and medical leave program ensuring all Minnesotans have access to 12 weeks of partially paid medical and family leave, including safety leave for survivors. Safety leave includes paid leave from work for survivors who need time away to seek medical attention, relocation, or obtain services, counseling, or legal help related to abuse.

Eliminate the Debt Trap

Remove policies using fines, fees, and suspension of drivers licenses in punitive and ineffectual ways that disproportionately impact low-income and BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) survivors.

- HF306/SF902 | In cases where there is a financial hardship involving traffic, parking, and other minor criminal violations, amend the law to give judges discretion to waive the \$75 State Surcharge associated with those citations and require judges to consider the ability to pay when assessing fines.
- HF336/SF432 | End the practice of suspending licenses based solely on the fact that someone has failed to pay a traffic ticket or missed court for a traffic-related offense.

THE COALITION TO END RELATIONSHIP ABUSE

Statewide Membership List



VIOLENCE FREE
MINNESOTA

Violence Free Minnesota is an association of over 90 programs that provide critical public safety and crime victim services in all 87 counties.

*360 Communities/Lewis House, Dakota, Carver, Goodhue, Hennepin, Ramsey
 Advocacy Center of Winona, Winona
 Advocates for Family Peace, Itasca, Northern St. Louis
 Advocates for Human Rights, International
 Advocates of the Bemidji Area, Beltrami
 *Alexandra House, Anoka
 *American Indian Community Housing Organization, St. Louis, Koochiching, Lake, Cook, Itasca
 *Anna Marie's Alliance, Sherburne, Benton, Stearns, Mille Lacs, Wright
 ARRC Shelter, Hubbard
 *Asian Women United of MN, Hennepin, Ramsey
 Battered Women's Justice Project, National
 Bluff Country Family Resources, Fillmore, Houston
 Bois Forte Tribal Government - Victim Services, Nett Lake, Koochiching, St. Louis
 Brave of Heart, Washington
 Breaking Free, Ramsey
 *Casa de Esperanza, Hennepin, Ramsey
 *Committee Against Domestic Abuse, Brown, Nicollet, Blue Earth, LeSueur, Sibley, Waseca, Watonwan, Faribault, Martin
 Community Health Services, Polk, Norman, Clay, Pennington
 Community Stabilization Project, Ramsey
 Community University Health Care Center, Hennepin
 Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicios (CLUES), Hennepin, Ramsey
 *Cornerstone Advocacy Services, Hennepin
 Crime Victim Resource Center – Mayo Clinic, Mower
 Crisis Resource Center of Steele County, Steele
 CURA-POT, Ramsey
 Division of Indian Work, Hennepin
 Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs, St. Louis
 Domestic Abuse Project, Hennepin
 East Side Neighborhood Services, Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey
 *Equay Wiigamig, Red Lake Reservation, Beltrami
 *Family Pathways, Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Pine, Carlton
 Family Safety Network, Cass, Clearwater, Hubbard
 Freeborn County Crime Victim Crisis Center, Freeborn
 Friends Against Abuse, Koochiching, Lake of the Woods
 Gender Violence Institute, Statewide
 Global Rights for Women, International
 Hands of Hope Resource Center, Morrison, Todd
 Hmong American Partnership, Ramsey
 Healing Opportunity Provided Equally (HOPE), Aitkin, Crow Wing
 Hope Center, Rice
 *Hope Coalition, Goodhue, Wabasha
 Indigenous Women's Life Net, Ramsey, Hennepin
 Karen Organization of Minnesota, Statewide
 *Lakes Crisis and Resource Center, Becker & surrounding area
 Martin County Victim Services, Martin
 McLeod Alliance for Victims of Domestic Violence, McLeod
 Men As Peacemakers - Men and Masculine Folk Network, Statewide
 *Mid-Minnesota Women's Center, Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd, Wadena

*Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Family Violence Prevention Program, Aitkin, Crow Wing, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Otter Tail, Pine
 Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless, Statewide
 Minnesota Elder Justice Center, Statewide
 Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center, Hennepin
 *Missions, Inc. - Home Free, Hennepin
 New Horizons Crisis Center, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Redwood
 North Shore Horizons, Lake
 Northwest Indian Community Development Center, Beltrami
 *Northwoods Battered Women's Shelter, Beltrami, Cass
 Oasis of Love Crisis Intervention, Hennepin
 OutFront Minnesota, Statewide
 Pearl Crisis Center, Mille Lacs
 Phumulani: Minnesota African Women Against Domestic Violence, Anoka, Hennepin, Ramsey, Washington
 Pillsbury United Communities, Hennepin
 Praxis International, National
 Rape and Abuse Crisis Center of Fargo-Moorhead, Clay, Wilkin
 Rivers of Hope, Wright
 *Safe Avenues, Kandiyohi, Swift, Chippewa, Lac Qui Parle, Renville, Meeker, McLeod
 *Safe Haven Shelter and Resource Center, St. Louis, Carlton, Aitkin, Itasca, Lake, Cook, Koochiching
 SEWA-AIFW (Asian Indian Family Wellness), Hennepin, Ramsey
 Sexual Violence Center, Hennepin, Carver, Scott
 *Sojourner Project, Hennepin, Carver, Dakota, Ramsey
 Someplace Safe, Big Stone, Grant, Pope, Stevens, Douglas, Traverse, Wilkin, Otter Tail, Wadena
 Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services (SMRLS), Southern Minnesota
 Southern Valley Alliance, Carver, Scott
 Southwest Crisis Center, Noble, Pipestone, Rock, Cottonwood, Jackson
 St. Paul and Ramsey County Intervention Project, Ramsey
 Standpoint, Statewide
 Stevens County Victim Witness, Stevens
 ThinkSelf, Statewide
 Transforming Generations, Ramsey, Hennepin, Washington, Dakota
 *Tubman, Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Washington
 *Violence Intervention Project, Red Lake, Pennington, Marshall, Kittson, Roseau
 Violence Prevention Center, Cook
 White Earth DOVE Program, White Earth Reservation, Mahnommen, Becker, Clearwater
 WISE, Statewide
 *Women of Nations, Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Washington
 *Women's Advocates, Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, Washington
 WoMen's Rural Advocacy Programs, Lincoln, Lyon, Yellow Medicine, Redwood
 *Women's Shelter and Support Center, Dodge, Fillmore, Olmsted & surrounding counties
 Yellow Medicine County Victim Services, Yellow Medicine

**Emergency Shelter Program*

THE COALITION TO END RELATIONSHIP ABUSE

Contact Katie Kramer at 651.646.6177 x127 or kkramer@vfmn.org to discuss how you can make Minnesota safer for all.
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