

Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault

2023 Legislative Agenda

THE MINNESOTA COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT IS A STATEWIDE COALITION DRIVING TRANSFORMATIVE CULTURE CHANGE TO ADDRESS SEXUAL VIOLENCE THROUGH ADVOCACY, PREVENTION, RACIAL JUSTICE, AND SYSTEMS CHANGE.



Increased State Investment in Victim Services



\$50 MILLION INCREASE IN BASE FUNDING TO CRIME VICTIM SERVICES

In collaboration, Minnesota's crime victim coalitions request the State increase the investment in victims/survivors and the programs that serve them.

Programs need additional government funding to provide critical safety services to survivors and their children. This funding would help fill the direct needs of programs and survivors by providing direct client assistance to survivors, competitive wages for direct service staff, hotel stays, culturally responsive programming, prevention programming, and more.

Administered by the Department of Public Safety's Office of Justice Programs (DPS/OJP).

Sexual Assault Evidentiary Exams



SHIFT FROM COUNTY-BASED EXAM REIMBURSEMENT TO A STATE-ADMINISTERED FUND

This will streamline billing and reimbursement processes, ensure victim/survivor confidentiality, and promote equity across the state.



REVISE STATUTE 609.35 TO REFLECT BEST PRACTICES FOR WHAT IS COVERED AS PART OF A SEXUAL ASSAULT EXAM

MNCASA supports adopting language that includes treatment for sexually transmitted infections and access to emergency contraception.



MANDATE CRIME LAB TESTING OF SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE WITHIN 90 DAYS OF RECEIPT

Requiring kits to be tested within a 90-day window will improve outcomes for victims/survivors by allowing investigations to move more quickly and bring Minnesota crime labs in line with national best practices.

Office of Missing & Murdered Black Women & Girls



ESTABLISH A PERMANENT STATE OFFICE OF MISSING AND MURDERED BLACK WOMEN & GIRLS (HF 55/SF 19)

MNCASA supports the establishment of a permanent Office of Missing and Murdered Black Women & Girls within the Minnesota Office of Justice Programs. The office will work to prevent and end violence against Black women and girls by addressing injustice in the criminal legal response to missing and murdered Black women and promoting culturally responsive support services and community-led prevention efforts.

Coerced Debt



PROVIDE COERCED DEBT RELIEF TO VICTIMS/SURVIVORS

Coerced debt is debt that an abusive partner has taken out in the victim/survivor's name without that person's knowledge or debt taken out by the victim/survivor under force or threat from an abusive partner. Some states have passed civil laws to help victims/survivors remove coerced debt from credit reports, or eliminate their liability for the debt.

Improving Access to Crime Victim Reparations



REMOVE BARRIERS THAT HINDER VICTIMS/SURVIVORS FROM ACCESSING REPARATIONS

MNCASA supports the Minnesota Office of Justice Programs' efforts to remove barriers that hinder victims of crime in accessing reparations:

- Improve victims of crime' ability to access the program, and change name from "reparations" to "reimbursement."
- Provide clarification and context surrounding the determination of victim/survivor cooperation with law enforcement.

MNCASA will also work to advance policies and practices related to sexual violence prevention, safe and accessible housing, youth justice, and racial justice. See the following page for more information on these areas of support.

Additional Areas of Support



Sexual Violence Prevention

MNCASA supports local community work to expand healthy relationships and sexual violence prevention education for children and youth.



Safe and Accessible Housing

Stable, accessible housing is paramount for victims/survivors of sexual violence to ensure safety and healing. Housing insecurity and unfair rental practices leave people vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. In addition to community-led efforts to improve housing equity and accessibility, MNCASA supports the establishment of Healing House, a housing program for Native American women exiting incarceration.



Youth Justice

MNCASA supports the Minnesota Coalition for Youth Justice 2023 Legislative Agenda. The Minnesota Coalition for Youth Justice seeks to reform and reimagine the juvenile justice system. Their 2023 legislative priorities include funding for youth violence prevention efforts, ending visual strip searches and other harmful practices in facilities, and funding for community-based resources and alternatives to incarceration.



Racial Justice

MNCASA will intentionally center racial equity as a key principle across all areas of strategy and policy development. MNCASA believes that BIPOC victims/survivors deserve justice and access to affirmation, safety, and systems they can trust and use. To that end, we will apply a racial justice lens to all of our work and work to continuously center the needs and experiences of BIPOC victims/survivors.

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