COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the lives of survivors, their children, pets, and local victim service programs. Social distancing measures increase risk for violence in homes and limit opportunities for survivors to access help. Throughout the pandemic, sexual and domestic violence programs have remained open, providing crucial services to survivors during a particularly precarious time.

Programs have had to make significant shifts in shelter and service provision to ensure the safety and wellbeing of survivors and staff during COVID-19. There is a critical need for additional resources to address the dramatically evolving needs of survivors during the challenging circumstances presented by the pandemic. While call volume has fluctuated, most shelters remain full, and community-based advocates have maintained large and growing caseloads.

This report describes the most-pressing needs of Arizona’s sexual and domestic violence programs as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the needs of sexual and domestic violence survivors already exceeded the available resources in Arizona. Victim service providers have decades of experience managing life-threatening crises with limited resources; however, COVID-19 has impacted communities in unprecedented and sustained ways. As programs adapt to meet the needs of survivors, funding is critical to sustaining and hiring staff, purchasing new technology, identifying safe housing alternatives, and modifying programs to ensure social distancing and adequate sanitization.

100% of programs have experienced fundraising shortfalls due to postponing events, fewer third-party fundraisers, and/or fewer individual donations

79% of programs have inadequate facility and/or office space to practice physical distancing

62% of programs have experienced disruptions in staffing due to COVID-19 related resignations or illness

"Funds are needed to pay overtime for staff due to difficulties in hiring staff for shelter positions and to cover staff salary expenses due to losses in private funds and donor contributions that typically fill gaps in government contracts and grants."

--Executive Director of an urban dual SV/DV program
Staff is putting their safety on the line to provide uninterrupted services to survivors. Continuing to provide funding for their salary and pay is crucial.

—Executive Director of a dual SV/DV program in rural Arizona

**STAFF/PERSONNEL**

**80%**

of programs need funding for **HAZARD PAY** for frontline staff

Average 30-day cost: $8,038  
Cost range: $500-$30,000

**71%**

of programs need funding for **FMLA** for staff with COVID-19 or caring for someone with COVID-19

Average 30-day cost: $8,063  
Cost range: $1,600-$16,000

**67%**

of programs need funding for **OVERTIME PAY** for staff

Average 30-day cost: $4,612  
Cost range: $270-$15,000

**STAFFING**

As the number of COVID-19 positive cases rise in Arizona, it is critical that programs are able to retain specialized sexual and domestic violence advocates and staff. The health and safety of the shelter workforce has been deeply impacted by COVID-19. Fair compensation and funds for contract employees to address COVID-related staffing disruptions are necessary to ensure staff safety and continuance of services. Among respondents, 46% need additional hotline and client services staff; 37% need contract staff to provide child care in programs; and 46% said funds for contract staff to write grants is important.
### Supplies/Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>of programs need <strong>personal protective equipment</strong> such as masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant wipes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>of programs need <strong>food and flexible funds for food</strong> for survivors and their families in shelter and receiving services in the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96%</td>
<td>of programs need <strong>supplies</strong> such as thermometers, diapers, Pedialyte, paper products, and medical supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>of programs need <strong>children's toys, art supplies, and games</strong> to help children and youth in shelter stay entertained while social distancing</td>
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SHELTER CAPACITY

Arizona’s domestic violence shelters vary with regard to size, layout, budget, and geography. Most programs had to limit their shelter capacity to allow for social distancing and self-quarantine. As a result, shelter space has been reduced by approximately 50% in Arizona.

COVID-19 has led to high rates of unemployment, less affordable housing, and fewer opportunities for survivors to safely stay with family and friends. Consequently, survivors and their children often need to remain in emergency shelter for longer periods than before the COVID-19 pandemic, further limiting bed availability.

Sexual and domestic violence programs need funding to provide survivors with alternative safe housing options, such as hotel vouchers, and to provide rental and relocation assistance so that survivors can transition out of shelter, creating space for other people in need and supporting survivors in accessing safety, healing, and independence.

The need for helping with rent, utilities, security deposits is growing and will continue to grow.

--Executive Director of an urban dual SV/DV program

100% of shelters need funds for shielding survivors in alternative locations such as hotels

Average 30-day cost: $2,942
Cost range: $1,600-$16,000

83% of programs need funds to provide housing assistance to survivors such as rental deposits

Average 30-day cost: $4,000
Cost range: $1,000-$15,000
LIMITING CONTAGION

On a given day, Arizona shelters have approximately 1,989 survivors and their children in their facilities. In these programs, bedrooms, kitchens, bathrooms, and living areas are often shared. Among shelters that responded to the survey, 84% had shared bathrooms.

While shelters have made accommodations to reduce and limit contagion, such as closing shared spaces and limiting the number of people/families in a room, funding is needed to modify shelters for social distancing and ensure thorough sanitization in the long-term. This includes measures such as building modifications to de-congregate shelters and create shared spaces allowing for physical distancing, adding plastic covers to furniture, plexiglass dividers in offices, and routine professional sanitization.

70% of shelters need funds to adapt existing shelter facility to reduce contagion such as room dividers and plexiglass

Average 30-day cost: $2,942
Cost range: $200-$15,000

87% of shelters need funds to provide routine professional sanitizing of the facility

Average 30-day cost: $1,856
Cost range: $200-$12,000

SUCCESS STORIES

Some programs have received funding to make modifications to their programming that enhanced service provision during COVID-19. This includes a mobile advocacy program who installed plexiglass dividers in their vans to allow for in-person advocacy. Another removed a wall in the shelter, creating a large enough space to conduct support groups while doing physical distancing.
TRANSPORTATION

Many domestic violence survivors experience financial abuse and coercive control, which often extends to access to transportation. Abusive partners may limit survivors’ access to vehicles, bus fares, or gas money in order to control and isolate survivors and their children.

Survivors need free or low-cost transportation to get to shelter, attend medical and mental health care appointments, veterinarian appointments, education or employment, or to take their children to school.

SUCCESS STORIES

A 54-year-old survivor with two dogs desperately needed bus tickets to travel from Arizona to Oregon to escape her abusive partner. He restricted her access to the finances and she had only $3 to her name. She had secretly stored up food for the trip and found a place to stay. All she needed was the tickets to get there. Financial support enabled the survivor and her pets to find safety, a new home, and peace for the first time in years.

75% of programs need transportation funds for survivors

Average 30-day cost: $1,518
Cost range: $200-$25,000
COVID-19 has significantly impacted service provision in Arizona, requiring many programs to transition from in-person advocacy and support groups to digital or virtual modalities. Programs need funding to provide staff and survivors with necessary technology, including high-speed internet, devices, and high-encryption meeting platforms, to continue service provision without interruption.

SUCCESS STORIES: Remote service provision has been a successful shift for programs, allowing them to serve more survivors and increase accessibility. Virtual support groups have been particularly successful, attracting survivors from out-of-state and even internationally. Funding for technology devices and platforms ensures more survivors are receiving the support they need.

67% of programs need technology for survivors who are remotely sheltered (e.g., hotels) such as laptops, wifi hotspots, and tablets

- Average 30-day cost: $1,792
- Cost range: $200-$4,000

67% of programs need technology for survivors to receive remote services in the community such as tablets and wifi hotspots

- Average 30-day cost: $3,592
- Cost range: $600-$9,500

67% of programs need technology for survivors in shelter such as tablets and e-learning platforms for children

- Average 30-day cost: $3,129
- Cost range: $200-$20,000

79% of programs need funds to purchase licenses for digital and virtual platforms and software for meetings, trainings, and services

- Average 30-day cost: $1,334
- Cost range: $200-$5,000

83% of programs need technology such as cell phones, laptops, wifi hotspots and other technology devices for staff to deliver remote services

- Average 30-day cost: $3,329
- Cost range: $300-$12,500

“...we have desperately tried to accommodate technology services for clients and staff, however this has been an expense that we would normally have funded through our fundraising events and that is no longer available.”

--Executive Director of a dual SV/DV program in rural Arizona

We have desperately tried to accommodate technology services for clients and staff, however this has been an expense that we would normally have funded through our fundraising events and that is no longer available.
COVID-19 RESPONSE

The Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence (ACESDV) has a 40-year history of working in partnership with the statewide community of sexual and domestic violence service providers, responders, and educators. We are committed to continuing to work in collaboration with public health partners and local victim service programs to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in shelters and programs, ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff and survivors, and continue to support survivors in their healing. While ACESDV is not able to provide programs with funding to address their primary needs, we are taking the following action to help our member programs and survivors adapt to the pandemic and access support:

- Created a COVID-19 specific webpage providing resources for programs and survivors and updates from programs statewide
- Developed Domestic Violence Shelter Guidance on COVID-19
- Encouraging coordination with local public health departments
- Sharing announcements of emergency funding opportunities
- Providing technical assistance and resources on establishing and implementing new COVID-19 specific organizational policies and leave options, technology, and remote advocacy
- Developed toolkits for programs on creative outreach methods during COVID-19, working from home for advocates, safety planning, and considerations for immigrant survivors
- Developed toolkits for survivors on self-care, grounding, and safety planning during COVID-19
- Developed toolkits for community members on the dynamics of sexual and domestic violence during COVID-19 and how to support friends, family, and neighbors who may be experiencing harm
- Conducting weekly and biweekly peer support meetings for DV/SV Program Executive Directors and frontline staff
- Providing weekly public policy updates and action alerts and coordinating with policymakers at the municipal, state, and federal level to advocate for program needs
- Conducting media interviews and supporting programs with messaging to generate awareness about the availability of services
- Providing a Survivor Emergency Relief Fund for survivors statewide to receive flexible financial support to access safety and healing (e.g., rental assistance, relocating costs, utilities)
Please direct questions to:
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Tasha@acesdv.org