



174 E Long Street, Suite 200
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: 614-781-9651
www.odvn.org

House Finance Committee
Proponent Testimony for H.B. 96
March 13, 2025

Maria York, Policy Director
Ohio Domestic Violence Network

Chair Stewart, Vice Chair Dovilla, Ranking Member Sweeney and members of the House Finance Committee:

The Ohio Domestic Violence Network (ODVN) is Ohio's federally designated domestic violence coalition, representing 76 local domestic violence programs throughout the state. Thank you for the opportunity to provide support for H.B. 96. We appreciate Attorney General Yost and Governor DeWine for including level funding for domestic violence programs (GRF 055504) in their FY 26-27 budgets.

Ohio has made significant strides in funding domestic violence services, and we are incredibly grateful to the legislature for prioritizing the safety of families and advocating for this progress. We hope that as you work through the budget process, you will consider opportunities to build upon this foundation. Even a modest increase would go a long way in ensuring that survivors and their children have access to the safety and support they deserve.

Services Provided vs. Services Needed

The domestic violence line-item is a critical investment that allows us to provide life-saving services to survivors and their children across Ohio. At the same time, the need for emergency shelter and supportive services for survivors continues to rise. According to ODVN's annual membership application, our 76 member programs:¹

- Answered 121,420 direct crisis communications (calls, texts, and chats), an average of 333 a day. This was a **34% increase** over the prior year.
- Provided emergency shelter to a total of 9,707 survivors, including 3,743 children. However, 8,194 survivors seeking shelter – or nearly 1 in every 2 survivors – were turned away due to insufficient capacity.
- An additional 1,050 survivors and children were served through transitional housing programs. Emergency and transitional housing programming combined provided more than 496,000 bed nights.
- Additionally, ODVN's relocation program helped 816 adult survivors and 1,129 children into safe homes. Our housing program moved 345 survivors into permanent housing.

¹ The Ohio Domestic Violence Network (ODVN) collected annual membership data from its 76 member programs January through February 2024. All member programs responded.



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- Legal advocates at ODVN's member programs assisted 26,074 survivors in municipal, juvenile, and domestic courts.
- In addition to providing emergency shelter, our programs provided support groups, transportation, and other supportive services to nearly 100,000 survivors and their children, a **35% increase** over the prior year.

Thanks to Attorney General Yost, Governor DeWine, and the 135th General Assembly, Ohio's current per capita domestic violence programs funding rate is 85 cents, up from 32 cents in FY 2022. However, Ohio remains the last in funding domestic violence services in comparison to surrounding states, \$1.31 in Indiana, \$1.41 in West Virginia, \$1.71 in Pennsylvania, \$2.39 in Michigan, and \$3.06 in Kentucky.² If the line item is sustained at \$20 million for FY 26-27, Ohio's per capita DV funding rate would be 85 cents and still well below the level of support domestic violence shelters receive in neighboring states.

The Cost of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence affects families in every corner of Ohio. Nearly 38% of Ohio women and 33% of Ohio men will experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime, a rate higher than the national average. In February 2025, ODVN released a study on the economic impacts of domestic violence in Ohio. The cost—estimated at nearly **\$1.2 billion**—affects all Ohioans, from the direct losses experienced by victims, the cost associated with criminal justice and healthcare systems and costs borne by employers and businesses.³

The largest measured economic losses for Ohio are those resulting from physical health care (\$264.8 million, 22.9%), loss of life (\$239.9 million, 20.8%), and loss of worker productivity (\$227.7 million, 19.7%). Attached to this testimony, please find a handout with more information on how to access the entirety of this economic study.

Adult and child domestic violence survivors depend on our emergency shelters and life-saving services when they are in crisis. Your communities are relying on your support to keep families safe.

We ask that you continue to maintain the domestic violence line-item and if possible, identify ways to increase it to help meet the need in communities.

² ODVN considered only the funding used by our member programs to provide direct services to survivor and surveyed surrounding state coalitions on their general revenue funds for FY 24. Funding streams for prevention, training and other services not directly allocated to domestic violence survivors were not included in these calculations. Additionally, Michigan's member programs serve both sexual assault and domestic violence survivors.

³ Economic Impact of Intimate Partner Violence in Ohio (2025). https://www.odvn.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Economic_Impact_of_Intimate_Partner_Violence_in_Ohio.pdf