



People's Place

Helping people find their path to growth and independence

November 9, 2020

Director Michael S. Jackson
Office of Management Budget
122 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. S.
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Director Jackson:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify before you today. I am Mamie Charest, Executive Director of People's Place.

Through a strong partnership with the Department of Justice, People's Place provides vital services that are critical in Delaware's system response to domestic violence. Victims of domestic violence and their children, as well as perpetrators receive services in Kent and Sussex Counties through Department of Justice (DOJ) funding. Though we have been faced with numerous challenges and changes in operation, we have continued all domestic violence services throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We have had a significant increase in hotline calls for help and requests for services. Domestic violence victims have suffered increased abuse, physical harm and negative effects, including unemployment throughout the pandemic.

We operate three emergency shelters – two with the SAFE (Shelter, Advocacy, Freedom and Empowerment) program, one located in Kent and one located in Sussex County, and a culturally specific shelter program for Spanish survivors. These trauma informed services also include two 24 hour hotlines in English and Spanish; advocacy; safety-planning; crisis counseling; referrals to community services; transitional planning including assistance with housing and employment; and other supportive services such as accompaniment to Court and appointments.

Turning Point provides individualized counseling and support groups for victims in Kent and Sussex Counties. The Therapeutic Children's program assists children in healing, increasing their resilience and reducing the lifetime effects of domestic violence. Turning Point also provides evidence-based intervention services for domestic violence offenders on Probation and respondents in Protection from Abuse orders. Services are provided in five cities.

Support Services
1129 Airport Road
Milford, DE 19963
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Our domestic violence programs provide vital services that bring victims and their children to safety, and provide pathways to healing and empowerment. Moreover, these services are critical in the provision of a core system response in Delaware for victims, as well as offenders who through intervention can identify alternative behaviors to abuse and crime. Domestic violence services significantly contribute to the safety and welfare of our communities.

Our request this year is the same as last year. We continue to provide services as efficiently as possible; however, our operational cost and healthcare insurance continues to rise and our shelter staff, particularly, have significantly depressed wages. We are currently funded through DOJ pass-thru at \$794,300. We were fortunate to also receive Grant-in-Aid (GIA) in the amount of \$40,000 to supplement the DOJ pass-thru. We respectfully request that the GIA funding be moved into the DOJ pass-thru and that the pass-thru allocation increase 5%:

DOJ pass-thru plus GIA Fiscal Year 2021	\$834,300
5% requested increase Fiscal Year 2022	\$ 41,715
Total DOJ pass-thru request Fiscal Year 2022	\$876,015

We are grateful for your continued support of domestic violence services at People's Place.

Sincerely,



Mamie Charest
Executive Director

People's Place – SAFE, Turning Point and Abriendo Puertas
Domestic Violence Services
Fiscal Year 2020

Domestic Violence Services provided:

1,230	Calls to the 24/7 domestic violence hotlines (2 hotlines - English and Spanish) Of those hotline calls, 287 were facilitated by law enforcement following victim screening in on Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) at incident site
95	Victims/Survivors in emergency shelter in Kent and Sussex Counties received ongoing support and healing through Sanctuary Model; advocacy, crisis counseling; safety planning; accompaniment to Court, medical and other appointments; skill building; and other supportive services such as referrals to community services
79	Children in emergency shelter in Kent and Sussex Counties received ongoing support and healing through Sanctuary Model; Child Advocate led activities; childcare when parents attend appointments, support groups and other needs
110	High risk victims, family violence victims and male victims provided hotel stays with food, supplies and advocacy
121	Children of victims provided hotel stays with food, supplies and advocacy
165	Victims/Survivors received community advocacy through DFS referral; and housing and employment support through housing and employment coordinators
212	Victims/Survivors received individual counseling with licensed therapists & community support groups led by a therapist
49	Children and their non-abusive parents impacted by domestic violence in specialized therapy for children and family counseling
323	Offenders of domestic violence receiving evaluation and intervention/treatment in 5 cities

* Domestic violence shelters at SAFE and Abriendo Puertas received VOCA and FVPSA funding through Delaware Criminal Justice Council (DCJC) to support shelter and community services offered.

Services requested and unable to provide due to shelter and other services at capacity:

39	Victims/survivors turned away from shelter due to lack of space
99	Children turned away from shelter due to lack of space
14	Children turned away for individual counseling & family counseling