



Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence
ACTIONALLIANCE



SUSTAINING THE MOVEMENT

**A 10-Year Plan for Virginia's
Sexual & Domestic Violence
Programs**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance (Action Alliance) coordinated the development of this report. The Action Alliance is Virginia's federally recognized state sexual and domestic violence coalition. As a membership organization, the Action Alliance provides resources and support, including a statewide 24/7 crisis hotline, to 74 member agencies with a primary focus on responding to and preventing this violence. The Action Alliance also represents the needs of member agencies in state and federal partnership and policy venues.

The Action Alliance is an advocacy agency dedicated to achieving gender, race, economic and reproductive justice for all Virginians—the essential building blocks of communities where all people can thrive and where sexual and domestic violence can ultimately be prevented.

Our work on this report was partially funded by grants from the federal Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (#2101VASDVC, 2101VASDVC6, 2201VASTC6), the Office of Family Violence at the Virginia Department of Social Services (# FAM-20-127, FAM-22-105) and the Office on Violence Against Women (15JOVW-21-GG-00750-MUMU)

Statewide Hotline for Survivors, Family,
Friends and Professionals

Call 1.800.838.8238
Text 1.804.793.9999
Chat www.vadata.org/chat

Trained Advocates available 24/7 to
provide support.

UNDERSTANDING OUR AUDIENCE

Throughout this Plan, we refer to “Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies” or “SDVAs”. This terminology refers to the community-based and grassroots organizations (primarily nonprofit, and including programs within public agencies) that were born out of the Battered Women’s and Rape Prevention Movements here in Virginia in the late 70’s and early 80’s. These agencies were traditionally volunteer led and community funded initiatives that grew into multi-service crisis response and community prevention agencies that are now woven into the fabric of our communities. These agencies have long been vital champions of gender equality and leaders in community efforts to achieve survivor safety for all and opportunities for healing and thriving through racial, economic and reproductive justice.

We recognize that now, almost 50 years after the doors opened to Virginia’s first Women’s Shelter and Rape Crisis Center, sexual and domestic violence services have evolved to include culturally specific providers and also exist in legal aid, hospital systems, law enforcement and prosecutors’ offices, and other venues.

This document speaks to the critical need to support, sustain, and grow the work of community-based sexual and domestic violence agencies that grew up as grassroots antiviolence collectives and without whom, ending sexual and domestic violence would not be possible.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHY THIS PLAN?

In August 2021, during the second summer of the COVID-19 pandemic, a diverse group of Sexual and Domestic Violence Agency (SDVA) Directors convened to begin discussing the significant and ongoing funding and sustainability challenges faced by Virginia's 70+ crisis response agencies. The Sustainability Planning Alliance (SPA) was formed, consisting of six Executive Directors and Action Alliance leadership. They met 1-2 times a month for the next 18 months. The group represented diverse regions and perspectives across Virginia - including Hampton, Arlington, Fairfax, White Stone, Charlottesville, Harrisonburg, Richmond, and Radford - with public and non-profit organizations represented, dual sexual and domestic violence and single-issue agencies, Black, Brown and White agency leaders, urban, rural, and suburban service areas, and collectively, more than 100 years of direct experience in Virginia's movement to end sexual and domestic violence.

In addition to offering a space in which these unique perspectives and experiences from the antiviolence field could converge and conspire, the SPA collected data from across the state and partners in our field to inform the development of a 10-year Sustainability Plan for Virginia's response to and prevention of sexual and domestic violence. Under this group's supervision, a field-wide survey was administered, a series of focus groups was conducted, and a needs assessment funded through the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) was successfully linked to our sustainability planning work. For survey, focus group, and needs assessment results, themes, and data, please see Appendix B of this plan. Based on these ongoing discussions and data gathering, the SPA offers the following plan and recommendations to the field.

DEFINING SUSTAINABILITY

This definition of sustainability was conceptualized, discussed, and drafted by the Sustainability Planning Alliance (SPA) and affirmed by Action Alliance membership and partners. It is intended to be a roadmap, and an invitation, for advocates, funders, policymakers, and partners to understand what Virginia's sexual and domestic violence field requires to sustain and grow our life-changing work well into the future.

The essence of sustainability is collective good stewardship of resources to achieve balance between short-term needs and long-term stability which makes thriving possible.

Achieving sustainability for Virginia's SDVAs will require that every agency equitably and successfully achieves:

- ✓ A rich diversity of funding and other tangible resources, both public and private, and from all sectors of the community, that both reflects and shapes the well-being of the community.
- ✓ Active partnerships with resource managers who are invested in positive community outcomes that include ending sexual and intimate partner violence.
- ✓ Strong infrastructure that can access and manage diverse resources, support the stable provision of effective crisis intervention and advocacy, and provide wholistic prevention programming throughout the agency service area.
- ✓ A culture of learning, growing, and developing through capacity building as agencies strive to meet short-term needs and long-term stability.
- ✓ A healthy fund reserve that is available to cover any potential unexpected financial obligations and to meet the cash flow needs of the agency for three to six months.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VIRGINIA

Sustainability recommendations are organized by role - with the intention of recognizing that sustainability requires many intersecting partners who hold distinct roles, who can carry out specific actions, and who operate in varying spheres of influence. The roles included are:

- 1) Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies (SDVAs) and Advocates;
- 2) Funders and State Partners;
- 3) Policy Leaders and Legislators; and
- 4) The State Sexual and Domestic Violence Coalition.

Under each of these sections or recommendation categories, you will find high level recommendations followed by specific and measurable outcomes for that recommendation. In this way, the recommendations are intended to operate not just as suggested steps towards movement sustainability, but as a statewide workplan that requires the input and direct action of each systems actor or role outlined within this plan. This plan is not a mandate, rather it is a set of strategies, grounded in shared values and collective expertise gathered from advocates and directors across Virginia's movement to end sexual and domestic violence. It is intended to act as a blueprint towards movement sustainability. Our vision is that these recommendations will become a reality and that at the local, state, and federal level, **we will move in alignment towards a future in which every sexual and domestic violence agency throughout the Commonwealth is thriving and able to effectively meet the full needs of survivors, families, and their communities.**

The Action Alliance, along with our member agencies, will convene an ongoing Sustainability Planning Alliance (SPA) to oversee the implementation process. The SPA will work with funders, state partners, and policy leaders to ensure progress in meeting the desired outcomes outlined within this plan. The Action Alliance will provide dedicated support to community based SDVAs focused on meeting desired sustainability outcomes.

A close-up photograph of pink flowers with green leaves, serving as the background for the document cover. The flowers are in the foreground, slightly out of focus, while the leaves are in the background, more in focus.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE AGENCIES (SDVAS)
AND ADVOCATES

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES, AND HEALTHY STAFF/CULTURE

1. Define the expansive work of Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies (SDVAs) as they address the many presenting traumas that survivors experience, the wide scope of survivor needs, and the vital opportunities to expand effective prevention strategies across communities.

SDVAs are not all the same. Each agency has different needs, resources, partnerships and community demographics, and these lead to unique opportunities, decisions, strategies and outcomes. It is important to understand the agency history, honor that history, but not be confined by that history.

SDVA Director

- a. Create an emergent description of the role of SDVAs in a world in which our work is quickly evolving because of science, technology and a worldview that is grounded in equity, compassion, equality, and justice for all people.
- b. Build staff, organizational, and partner capacity to understand and respond to the various resource, health, and safety needs of survivors.
- c. Invest in cross-field collaboration and work to build funding and partnership opportunities that expand the sphere of SDVA influence.

2. Build a strong diversified financial foundation for the work.

- a. Establish a healthy unrestricted fund reserve that is available to cover any potential unexpected financial obligations and meet the cash flow needs of the agency for three to six months.
- b. Diversify funding sources.

When we over-rely on state and federal funding, we are less nimble and we face more barriers to the work we are being asked to do directly by survivors. This funding is part of the puzzle; it is not the whole pie.

SDVA Director

3. Create robust administrative and operational capacity that supports growth, sustains current programs and staff, and is nimble in the face of programmatic and administrative challenges.

- a. Ensure that agency policies and protocol support financial health and growth – through sound finance policies, strong internal controls, annual audits, trauma-informed personnel policies, and well-resourced benefits programs.
- b. Sufficient administrative, development, and operations staff to apply data analysis and continuous quality improvement agency-wide, manage grants, practice excellence in accounting and recordkeeping, provide robust HR, and manage facilities.

4. Support an agency culture of learning, growing, and developing in which staff, volunteers, board members, and the community want to be involved.

- a. Continually assess the impact of policy decisions on survivors and build resources and skills to garner community support and survivor voices as part of the policy-making process.
- b. An organizational commitment to support the health and wellbeing of staff and volunteers.
- c. Provide ongoing and frequent opportunities for professional development for staff, board members, and long-term volunteers.

A close-up photograph of several pink flowers with green leaves, set against a dark background. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some showing prominent stamens. The lighting is soft, highlighting the delicate texture of the petals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR FUNDERS

FUND ADMINISTRATION, SYSTEM-WIDE HEALTH, AND PUBLIC POLICY

1. Build active, reciprocal, and power-sharing partnerships with sexual and domestic violence agencies (SDVAs).

a. Prioritize funding practices that are flexible, consistent, transparent and help to build trust, and create movement synergy.

b. Advocate to increase state funding and resources for SDVAs.

2. Engage with SDVAs to build a strong infrastructure for the field that can access and manage diverse resources and support well-resourced staff.

a. Assist SDVAs in meeting and exceeding living wage standards and strong benefits programs within their communities and for all advocates across Virginia.

b. Ensure the timely administration of funds, including calls for applications, application submission deadlines, notice of awards, and payment of invoices.

Approximately two-thirds of SDVAs surveyed in 2022 indicated that one of the biggest barriers to achieving sustainability was resourcing the administrative support need for agency staff and leadership.

c. Work with SDVAs to establish an Indirect Cost Rate and include indirect costs in funding applications as one important tool for resourcing sustainable agency infrastructure.

d. Prioritize equitable and data-driven distribution of funds across Virginia SDVAs with the goal of establishing a network of thriving agencies and giving special attention to historical resource deserts, particularly in rural areas of Virginia.

3. Expand effective crisis intervention, advocacy, and wholistic prevention programming across Virginia.

- a. Act as a collaborative partner with SDVAs and the Action Alliance to develop and support comprehensive services and programs that will meet the evolving needs of diverse survivors and promote prevention across all communities, utilizing pilots and other practices that support innovation, emergent strategies, and promising practices in the field.
- b. Recognize that survivors of sexual and domestic violence are impacted by community, state, national and global events (such as pandemics, climate disasters, community violence, etc.), and support SDVAs in adapting to needs and opportunities.
- c. Act in the interests of a statewide network of services that grows influence and resources to address sexual and domestic violence, not one that shifts power and resources from one community to another. Recognize that a loss of funding for one agency is a devastating loss for survivors in Virginia.

SDVA needs are COMPLEX. Survivor experiences are unique and the services/support each survivor needs should also be unique – our “menu of options” funded and reinforced by funders, is often inadequate to meet comprehensive and complex needs of trauma survivors.

SDVA Director

A close-up photograph of several pink flowers with green leaves, set against a dark background. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some showing the center. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the petals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR POLICY LEADERS AND LEGISLATORS

PUBLIC POLICY AND STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING INITIATIVES

1. Work with state and local partners to effectively implement and evaluate Virginia law and to elevate safety and healing for survivors as well as accountability for those who commit sexual and/or domestic violence.

a. Invest in proper and robust implementation of the existing laws at the local level before introducing or adding policy proposals that seek to fix existing problems.

2. Increase state and federal investments in community safety and sexual and domestic violence prevention.

a. Prioritize the availability of sexual and domestic violence prevention and services funding to local sexual and domestic violence agencies across Virginia.

A 2014 study of the average estimated cost for "optimal" services and programs within an SDVA was \$1.1M, and \$1.4M for agencies operating a residential shelter.

As of 2022, only 1/3 of SDVAs had reached that goal.

Based on the criteria used in 2014, the 2023 cost for 24 hour crisis services, counseling and advocacy for survivors of all ages, and community engagement including participation in community coordinated response teams and delivery of prevention programs totals \$1.5M annually, and \$2.2M.

b. Support greater alignment between state and federal funding streams to achieve shared prevention goals.

3. Advocate for the sustainability and growth of Virginia’s local sexual and domestic violence agencies (SDVAs).

a. Establish and/or deepen relationships between elected representatives and local SDVAs.

b. Support coordinated advocacy to increase state funding and resources for local SDVAs.

We want the experience of young people in our communities to be vastly different in 10 years' time. How do we accomplish this? Prevention that is interconnected, strategically designed, and ongoing

SDVA Director

A close-up photograph of pink flowers with green leaves, serving as the background for the document cover. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some showing the center and stamens. The lighting is soft, highlighting the delicate texture of the petals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR THE STATE SEXUAL &
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
COALITION

TRAINING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, AND PUBLIC POLICY

1. Provide ongoing and robust training, technical assistance, and support to SDVAs to advance local sustainability strategies.

a. Prioritize the delivery of training and technical assistance to directors and administrative or operational staff to support grant-writing, reporting, financial stewardship, and innovative/flexible use of funds and resources.

We need to cultivate more "incubators" for new and emerging practices that we can choose to adopt and bring to other agencies.

SPA Members

b. Initiate and expand statewide learning opportunities (including membership caucuses) that prioritize women of color in leadership positions and build the capacity of agency directors, boards, and leadership to effectively cultivate and manage diverse resources.

2. Explore opportunities to expand membership services/offerings.

a. Consider opportunities to expand SDVA benefits program and reduce costs for small agencies through shared benefits or central administration of benefits programs.

Our hope for young people is that they are able to gently and effectively hold each other accountable, they are part of shared learning environments across generations and value intergenerational work, they understand the difference between discomfort and harm, accountability is seen as positive, they have strong relationships throughout childhood that build resiliency.

SPA Members

b. Explore funding opportunities, potential structures, and support for a statewide network of traveling advocates to assist local SDVAs during periods of crisis and/or heavy demand for services.

3. Build and maintain active partnerships with resource managers for major funding (over \$500,000 annually to SDVAs) and with a wide range of state, local and national partners to promote investment in positive community outcomes for diverse survivors while working to reduce and end sexual and domestic violence.

a. Advocate on behalf of SDVAs, survivors, and communities for trauma-informed approaches to funding and partnerships based in mutuality, collaboration, trust, safety, and an understanding of historical and cultural context.

b. Work with state, local, and federal partners to design and deliver unified awareness month and communications messaging for the field and on behalf of all advocates and survivors in Virginia.

4. Create a unified mission, vision and values for the work of the SV/DV field while supporting agency autonomy, highlighting SDVAs and their value and impact, and providing forums and venues for people in the field to gather and share with people in similar roles and across identities.

a. Partner with SDVAs to expand the opportunities for connection, both virtually and in person.

b. Invest in teaching SDVAs how to build their capacity to engage effectively across roles and across areas of work. The future of advocacy will require a nimble, generalist workforce that can share positions, build marketing and development plans, and be ambassadors of the movement within their communities in order to meet agency needs.

c. Recognize the outstanding work being done in SDVAs at both the state and local level and raise awareness in the field and in the public about the impact of advocates, preventionists and SDVA leaders on safety and wellness in communities.

A close-up photograph of pink flowers with green leaves, serving as the background for the text. The flowers are in the foreground, slightly out of focus, while the leaves are in the background, also slightly out of focus. The overall color palette is soft and natural.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

A 10-YEAR, CROSS-DISCIPLINARY VISION

2024

By 2024, all SDVAs have reviewed finance policies and operating procedures to ensure they reflect lessons learned from the pandemic and include provisions that will support nimble emergency responses.

By 2024, 40% of SDVAs will be represented on statewide policy groups such as the Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, the Professional Standards Committee, and the Action Alliance Public Policy Committee, with that representation expanding as terms turn over.

By 2024, SDVAs will assess current staff wages and benefits in relation to both living wages and market rates and will identify priority areas for improvement.

By 2024 SDVAs will assess volunteer management and recognition practices and will identify priority areas for expanding support for volunteers.

By 2024, funding awards and contracts that reimburse expenses rather than disbursing funds in advance will reimburse expenses within 30 days of approval of at least 75% of SDVA invoices and pay interest 100% of the time when that deadline cannot be met.

By 2024, the Action Alliance, SDVAs and major funders are convening at least annually to build relationships and collaborate on implementation of the sustainability recommendations.

By 2024, the Action Alliance will meet with SDVA representatives from around the state to identify new ways to bring people together and facilitate information sharing as well as peer support.

By 2024, the Action Alliance will develop several strategies for regularly recognizing and publicizing the outstanding work of SDVAs and people in the field, with particular emphasis on gender, race, reproductive and economic justice efforts.

2025

By 2025, a majority of SDVAs will have participated in the development of an updated description of the work of SDVAs that recognizes how services and programs will continue to evolve in response to community needs as well as wider influences.

By 2025, comprehensive financial manuals which address internal controls and require annual audits are in place in all of SDVAs with provisions for agency leadership review at least every 3 years.

By 2025, 75% of SDVAs will complete an assessment of administrative, development and operational staffing needs and will create a multiyear plan to meet those needs.

By 2025 at least 50% of SDVAs have improved wages and benefits for workers to meet or exceed living wage guidelines.

By 2025, state funders work with SDVAs and the Action Alliance to develop strategies to 1) strengthen SDVAs when agency sustainability is threatened and 2) to preserve services and programs in communities when community SDVAs are unable to remain open.

By 2025, state funders will partner with SDVAs and the Action Alliance to establish and implement funding practices that allow SDVAs to achieve a living wage for all staff.

By 2025, state funders will partner with SDVAs and the Action Alliance to establish guidelines for staff benefits, including innovative economic justice benefits such as childcare subsidies, eligible to be paid with available state and federal funding which promote diversity, equity and wellbeing for the SDVA workforce.

By 2025, major SDVA funders (those administering \$500k or more to community or statewide SDVAs) will establish administrative practices that provide notice to the field when private, state or federal funds are received, including the amount and a projected timeline for releasing applications for new or continuing awards or negotiating renewals of current awards. Notice will also be provided to the field within 30 days once awards are made, including agencies funded and award amounts.

By 2025, major SDVA funders (those administering \$500k or more to community or statewide SDVAs) will establish administrative practices to ensure that funding announcements allow a minimum of six weeks to prepare and submit applications, and that notice of awards offer a minimum of 10 business days to submit any required revisions or additional materials.

By 2025 funding applications will consistently allow for indirect costs and provide resources for establishing an indirect cost rate.

By 2025, engage with SDVAs, recognizing that culturally specific services require a larger investment in most of Virginia's communities, to develop a plan to increase investments in services to those who have been traditionally underserved.

By 2025, model policies and best practices for financial management, human resources, and healthy organizational practices will be made available to SDVAs for use in their work.

By 2025, the Action Alliance will partner with member SDVAs and major statewide funders to establish and implement policies that help to achieve a living wage for all SDVA staff.

By 2025, the Action Alliance will make regular Director's Trainings and Women of Color Leadership Trainings available to all SDVAs at least annually.

By 2025, the Action Alliance will make Board Member Trainings available to build Board capacity to understand the history of the sexual and domestic violence movement, the issues faced by survivors and SDVAs, and the role of Boards in good governance, sustainability, and advancing movement strategies.

By 2025, the Action Alliance will partner with SDVAs to assess the extent to which collective HR, insurance, and/or benefits are feasible. One suggestion has been to set up a statewide HR agency/service to help with payroll, policy drafting, finding benefits, and perhaps even shared health insurance as well as shared retirement plans. The Action Alliance will also investigate setting up a financial management agency/service to either offer accounting and grants financial management services or work with all agencies to set up similar accounting systems that could help reduce the time spent on grants financial management.

By 2025, the Action Alliance and partners will identify resources to support two unified awareness campaigns in April for Sexual Assault Awareness Month and in October for Domestic Violence Awareness Month and will launch a collaborative Virginia campaign on behalf of advocates and survivors.

2026

By 2026, a majority of SDVAs will have participated in updating the document “Cost of Providing SDVA Services in 2023” created by the Action Alliance, with input from the Sustainability Planning Alliance.

By 2026, Virginia based advocates will report having a strong understanding of the connections between economic factors like fair wages, healthcare, transportation, affordable housing, and the movement goals of survivor autonomy, safety, and justice.

By 2026, at least 75% of SDVAs will have completed an assessment of their facilities, an inventory of their equipment and developed a 10-year plan for improvements and replacements that will support vital services and programs for a well-resourced working environment for staff.

By 2026, 75% of SDVAs will actively participate and engage survivors in Virginia and/or national legislative advocacy activities.

By 2026, all SDVAs have an onboarding, training, and professional development plan that emphasizes equity, intersectionality, and community engagement and drives learning opportunities and growth across the agency.

By 2026, all SDVAs have included in their agency-wide budget, a line item specifying the annual amount to be spent on professional development and growth opportunities across staff.

By 2026, Virginia’s state fund administrators will establish a regular calendar of town halls and feedback loops to improve grant-making processes.

By 2026, Virginia’s state fund administrators for sexual and domestic violence services and programs will make reports on state and federal funds appropriated, administrative costs and set asides, and awards to communities publicly available on an annual basis.

By 2026, at least 60% of Virginia’s state and federal elected representatives will report an active and ongoing relationship with their community SDVA.

By 2026, the Action Alliance will partner with SDVAs to develop a plan to provide agency coverage for local SDVAs who wish to hold staff retreats, have time off after hard times, and have a need for workforce support when there is a crisis.

By 2026, the Action Alliance will implement an array of new opportunities for SDVAs and advocates to connect, support one another and build community.

By 2026, 75% of SDVA Directors and/or administrative and operational staff will have received Action Alliance training, technical assistance, or support in the maintenance and growth of their agency infrastructure.

By 2026, the Action Alliance will partner with SDVAs to create a new recognition event designed to shine a light on work that is building strong and healthy communities.

2027

By 2027, Virginia's state fund administrators for sexual and domestic violence will simplify, streamline, and expand flexibility in funding for local agencies.

By 2027, work with SDVAs to develop funding strategies to respond to the complex needs of survivors, their family members, and others impacted by violence.

By 2027, work with SDVAs to develop agreements to allow and guide flexibility in workplans and budgeting during award periods and for evolution of priorities from one award period to the next.

By 2027, at least 75% of SDVAs will have established an indirect cost rate and will consistently include indirect costs in funding applications where those costs are allowable to support administration and operations of the agency.

By 2027, in partnership with SDVAs, the Action Alliance will expand the offerings of the Training Institute to meet this emerging need for a more generalist workforce which might include new introduction to advocacy and prevention trainings or a new approach to sustainable skills development.

2028

By 2028, all SDVAs will have performed an organizational and community needs assessment to assess the degree to which a 24/7 service coverage model is achievable, sustainable, and consistent with the effective provision of trauma-informed services to survivors.

By 2028, 75% of SDVAs will have funding from a local, state, or federal funder, or formal partnerships for the delivery of services and programs from outside the domestic and sexual violence field to provide resources for specific issues that frequently impact survivors, such as substance abuse, mental health support, or access to affordable housing.

By 2028, at least 60% of Virginia's SDVAs will have an unrestricted fund balance equivalent to at least 3 months of operating expenses.

By 2028, all SDVAs have reviewed personnel policies and benefits programs and made any necessary improvements to ensure they are trauma-informed, consistent with agency values, and provide benefits programs that support the health and wellness of a diverse agency staff team. Provisions will be in place for agency leadership review at least every 3 years.

By 2028, at least 75% of SDVAs will have dedicated fund development support (staff, volunteer, or contract) to ensure that annual fund development goals can be met.

By 2028, Virginia's state fund administrators for sexual and domestic violence services and programs will develop a statewide plan to address and eliminate administrative burdens and to reduce clerical oversight/management of agencies as a strategy for more effective delivery of services at the local level.

By 2028, 75% of awards will include indirect costs.

By 2028, the Commonwealth of Virginia will be able to complete a study of the impact of current laws in response to sexual and domestic violence and identify gaps in policy and practice that would improve outcomes for survivors and communities.

By 2028, Virginia's Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention Fund and the Building Healthy Futures Fund will distribute at least \$5 million dollars annually to SDVAs to support the delivery of evidence informed strategies to prevent sexual and domestic violence.

By 2028, federal and state funding streams like the Rape Prevention & Education (RPE) Fund, the Family Violence and Prevention Services Act (FVPSA) Fund, and Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Prevention Fund will include at least 2-3 shared state prevention strategies or goals.

By 2028, Virginia will have, and be implementing, a statewide plan for the primary prevention of sexual and domestic violence that works across state and local partners to achieve shared prevention goals, strategies, and outcomes. The plan will be authored by the Statewide Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence, including representatives from the House of Delegates and Senate of the Virginia General Assembly, as well as leaders of SDVAs, the Action Alliance, and major state funders of SDVAs.

By 2028, at least 75% of SDVAs report participating in the annual gatherings linked to sustainability planning and report a positive relationship with their major funders.

By 2028, at least 25% of SDVAs will be publicly recognized annually through Action Alliance media efforts.

2030

By 2030, each SDVA will have achieved a funding mix that ensures that no more than 75% of annual operating income from a single source and at least 25% of annual operating income from local and regional sources.

By 2030 all SDVAs will have completed an administrative, development and operational staffing needs assessment, made plans to meet those needs, and provisions will be in place for agency leadership to conduct future assessments at least once every 5 years.

By 2030 all SDVAs will have completed an assessment of their facilities and equipment, established inventories, and made plans to meet future needs. Provisions will be in place for agency leadership to conduct future assessments at least once every 5 years.

By 2030, at least 75% of SDVAs have met or exceeded living wage standards for staff and instituted benefits programs to meet the health and wellbeing needs of their diverse staff.

By 2030, at least 75% of SDVAs report having a robust volunteer engagement and recognition program in place.

By 2030, with support from state fund administrators, state fund appropriations for the provision of sexual and domestic violence crisis services and prevention at local sexual and domestic violence agencies will increase substantially to support the delivery of innovative, effective, and sustainable services statewide.

By 2030, the Commonwealth of Virginia will include an additional \$18 million for services to survivors, offsetting cuts to the Victim of Crime Act funding and ensuring stable and sustainable support for these vital services across Virginia.

By 2030, at least 60% of Virginia's state and federal elected representatives will participate in an annual event with their community SDVA (e.g. a tour of the agency facilities, speaking at a special event, participating in an awareness month activity).

By 2030, state fund contributions for the provision of sexual and domestic violence crisis services and prevention will make up a substantial portion of the average SDVA budget and federal funding will provide at least a comparable portion of each SDVA budget, ensuring a stable base and encouraging local support for the remaining budget needs.

By 2030, all SDVAs will include in their strategic plans, workplans, and/or missions a commitment to addressing the social determinants of health as a core strategy for prevention and trauma-responsive services. For example: partnerships to promote affordable housing stock, advocacy to expand access to transportation and childcare, addressing the increased cost of living for families and parents, and being a part of making robust mental and physical healthcare available to all people in our communities.

2033

By 2033 all SDVAs will either have achieved a fund balance equivalent to at least 3 months of operating expenses or have a plan in place to achieve that outcome.

By 2033 all SDVAs will have established an indirect cost rate and will consistently include indirect costs in funding applications where those costs are allowable.

By 2033 all SDVAs will either have dedicated fund development support, or a long-range plan to establish fund development support, to ensure diversification of funding and stability of programs and services.

A close-up photograph of several pink flowers, possibly gerberas, with dark green leaves visible in the upper right corner. A dark green horizontal band is overlaid across the top portion of the image, containing the title text in white.

DESIRED OUTCOMES BY DISCIPLINE

DESIRED OUTCOMES BY DISCIPLINE

Desired Outcomes for SDVAs and Advocates

By 2024, all SDVAs have reviewed finance policies and operating procedures to ensure they reflect lessons learned from the pandemic and include provisions that will support nimble emergency responses.

By 2024, 40% of SDVAs will be represented on statewide policy groups such as the Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, the Professional Standards Committee, and the Action Alliance Public Policy Committee, with that representation expanding as terms turn over.

By 2024, SDVAs will assess current staff wages and benefits in relation to both living wages and market rates and will identify priority areas for improvement.

By 2024 SDVAs will assess volunteer management and recognition practices and will identify priority areas for expanding support for volunteers.

By 2025, a majority of SDVAs will have participated in the development of an updated description of the work of SDVAs that recognizes how services and programs will continue to evolve in response to community needs as well as wider influences.

By 2025, comprehensive financial manuals which address internal controls and require annual audits are in place in all of SDVAs with provisions for agency leadership review at least every 3 years.

By 2025, 75% of SDVAs will complete an assessment of administrative, development and operational staffing needs and will create a multiyear plan to meet those needs.

By 2025 at least 50% of SDVAs have improved wages and benefits for workers to meet or exceed living wage guidelines.

By 2026, a majority of SDVAs will have participated in updating the document “Cost of Providing SDVA Services in 2023” created by the Action Alliance, with input from the Sustainability Planning Alliance.

By 2026, Virginia based advocates will report having a strong understanding of the connections between economic factors like fair wages, healthcare, transportation, affordable housing, and the movement goals of survivor autonomy, safety, and justice.

By 2026, at least 75% of SDVAs will have completed an assessment of their facilities, an inventory of their equipment and developed a 10-year plan for improvements and replacements that will support vital services and programs for a well-resourced working environment for staff.

By 2026, 75% of SDVAs will actively participate and engage survivors in Virginia and/or national legislative advocacy activities.

By 2026, all SDVAs have an onboarding, training, and professional development plan that emphasizes equity, intersectionality, and community engagement and drives learning opportunities and growth across the agency.

By 2026, all SDVAs have included in their agency-wide budget, a line item specifying the annual amount to be spent on professional development and growth opportunities across staff.

By 2027, at least 75% of SDVAs will have established an indirect cost rate and will consistently include indirect costs in funding applications where those costs are allowable to support administration and operations of the agency.

By 2028, all SDVAs will have performed an organizational and community needs assessment to assess the degree to which a 24/7 service coverage model is achievable, sustainable, and consistent with the effective provision of trauma-informed services to survivors.

By 2028, 75% of SDVAs will have funding from a local, state, or federal funder, or formal partnerships for the delivery of services and programs from outside the domestic and sexual violence field to provide resources for specific issues that frequently impact survivors, such as substance abuse, mental health support, or access to affordable housing.

By 2028, at least 60% of Virginia's SDVAs will have an unrestricted fund balance equivalent to at least 3 months of operating expenses.

By 2028, all SDVAs have reviewed personnel policies and benefits programs and made any necessary improvements to ensure they are trauma-informed, consistent with agency values, and provide benefits programs that support the health and wellness of a diverse agency staff team. Provisions will be in place for agency leadership review at least every 3 years.

By 2028, at least 75% of SDVAs will have dedicated fund development support (staff, volunteer, or contract) to ensure that annual fund development goals can be met.

By 2030, all SDVAs will include in their strategic plans, workplans, and/or missions a commitment to addressing the social determinants of health as a core strategy for prevention and trauma-responsive services. For example: partnerships to promote affordable housing stock, advocacy to expand access to transportation and childcare, addressing the increased cost of living for families and parents, and being a part of making robust mental and physical healthcare available to all people in our communities.

By 2030, each SDVA will have achieved a funding mix that ensures that no more than 75% of annual operating income from a single source and at least 25% of annual operating income from local and regional sources.

By 2030 all SDVAs will have completed an administrative, development and operational staffing needs assessment, made plans to meet those needs, and provisions will be in place for agency leadership to conduct future assessments at least once every 5 years.

By 2030 all SDVAs will have completed an assessment of their facilities and equipment, established inventories, and made plans to meet future needs. Provisions will be in place for agency leadership to conduct future assessments at least once every 5 years.

By 2030, at least 75% of SDVAs have met or exceeded living wage standards for staff and instituted benefits programs to meet the health and wellbeing needs of their diverse staff.

By 2030, at least 75% of SDVAs report having a robust volunteer engagement and recognition program in place.

By 2033 all SDVAs will either have achieved a fund balance equivalent to at least 3 months of operating expenses or have a plan in place to achieve that outcome.

By 2033 all SDVAs will have established an indirect cost rate and will consistently include indirect costs in funding applications where those costs are allowable.

By 2033 all SDVAs will either have dedicated fund development support, or a long-range plan to establish fund development support, to ensure diversification of funding and stability of programs and services.

Desired Outcomes for Government and Private Sector Funders

By 2024, funding awards and contracts that reimburse expenses rather than disbursing funds in advance will reimburse expenses within 30 days of approval of at least 75% of SDVA invoices and pay interest 100% of the time when that deadline cannot be met.

By 2025, state funders work with SDVAs and the Action Alliance to develop strategies to 1) strengthen SDVAs when agency sustainability is threatened and 2) to preserve services and programs in communities when community SDVAs are unable to remain open.

By 2025, state funders will partner with SDVAs and the Action Alliance to establish and implement funding practices that allow SDVAs to achieve a living wage for all staff.

By 2025, state funders will partner with SDVAs and the Action Alliance to establish guidelines for staff benefits, including innovative economic justice benefits such as childcare subsidies, eligible to be paid with available state and federal funding which promote diversity, equity and wellbeing for the SDVA workforce.

2025, major SDVA funders (those administering \$500k or more to community or statewide SDVAs) will establish administrative practices that provide notice to the field when private, state or federal funds are received, including the amount and a projected timeline for releasing applications for new or continuing awards or negotiating renewals of current awards. Notice will also be provided to the field within 30 days once awards are made, including agencies funded and award amounts.

By 2025, major SDVA funders (those administering \$500k or more to community or statewide SDVAs) will establish administrative practices to ensure that funding announcements allow a minimum of six weeks to prepare and submit applications, and that notice of awards offer a minimum of 10 business days to submit any required revisions or additional materials.

By 2025 funding applications will consistently allow for indirect costs and provide resources for establishing an indirect cost rate.

By 2025, engage with SDVAs, recognizing that culturally specific services require a larger investment in most of Virginia's communities, to develop a plan to increase investments in services to those who have been traditionally underserved.

By 2026, Virginia's state fund administrators will establish a regular calendar of town halls and feedback loops to improve grant-making processes.

By 2026, Virginia's state fund administrators for sexual and domestic violence services and programs will make reports on state and federal funds appropriated, administrative costs and set asides, and awards to communities publicly available on an annual basis.

By 2027, Virginia's state fund administrators for sexual and domestic violence will simplify, streamline, and expand flexibility in funding for local agencies.

By 2027, work with SDVAs to develop funding strategies to respond to the complex needs of survivors, their family members, and others impacted by violence.

By 2027, work with SDVAs to develop agreements to allow and guide flexibility in workplans and budgeting during award periods and for evolution of priorities from one award period to the next.

By 2028, Virginia's state fund administrators for sexual and domestic violence services and programs will develop a statewide plan to address and eliminate administrative burdens and to reduce clerical oversight/management of agencies as a strategy for more effective delivery of services at the local level.

By 2028, 75% of awards will include indirect costs.

By 2030, with support from state fund administrators, state fund appropriations for the provision of sexual and domestic violence crisis services and prevention at local sexual and domestic violence agencies will increase substantially to support the delivery of innovative, effective, and sustainable services statewide.

Desired Outcomes for Policy Leaders and Legislators

By 2026, at least 60% of Virginia's state and federal elected representatives will report an active and ongoing relationship with their community SDVA.

By 2028, the Commonwealth of Virginia will be able to complete a study of the impact of current laws in response to sexual and domestic violence and identify gaps in policy and practice that would improve outcomes for survivors and communities.

By 2028, Virginia's Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention Fund and the Building Healthy Futures Fund will distribute at least \$5 million dollars annually to SDVAs to support the delivery of evidence informed strategies to prevent sexual and domestic violence.

By 2028, federal and state funding streams like the Rape Prevention & Education (RPE) Fund, the Family Violence and Prevention Services Act (FVPSA) Fund, and Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Prevention Fund will include at least 2-3 shared state prevention strategies or goals.

By 2028, Virginia will have, and be implementing, a statewide plan for the primary prevention of sexual and domestic violence that works across state and local partners to achieve shared prevention goals, strategies, and outcomes. The plan will be authored by the Statewide Advisory Committee on Sexual and Domestic Violence, including representatives from the House of Delegates and Senate of the Virginia General Assembly, as well as leaders of SDVAs, the Action Alliance, and major state funders of SDVAs.

By 2030, the Commonwealth of Virginia will include an additional \$18 million for services to survivors, offsetting cuts to the Victim of Crime Act funding and ensuring stable and sustainable support for these vital services across Virginia.

By 2030, at least 60% of Virginia's state and federal elected representatives will participate in an annual event with their community SDVA (e.g. a tour of the agency facilities, speaking at a special event, participating in an awareness month activity).

By 2030, state fund contributions for the provision of sexual and domestic violence crisis services and prevention will make up a substantial portion of the average SDVA budget and federal funding will provide at least a comparable portion of each SDVA budget, ensuring a stable base and encouraging local support for the remaining budget needs.

Desired Outcomes for the State Coalition

By 2024, the Action Alliance, SDVAs and major funders are convening at least annually to build relationships and collaborate on implementation of the sustainability recommendations.

By 2024, the Action Alliance will meet with SDVA representatives from around the state to identify new ways to bring people together and facilitate information sharing as well as peer support.

By 2024, the Action Alliance will develop several strategies for regularly recognizing and publicizing the outstanding work of SDVAs and people in the field, with particular emphasis on gender, race, reproductive and economic justice efforts.

By 2025, model policies and best practices for financial management, human resources, and healthy organizational practices will be made available to SDVAs for use in their work.

By 2025, the Action Alliance will partner with member SDVAs and major statewide funders to establish and implement policies that help to achieve a living wage for all SDVA staff.

By 2025, the Action Alliance will make regular Director's Trainings and Women of Color Leadership Trainings available to all SDVAs at least annually.

By 2025, the Action Alliance will make Board Member Trainings available to build Board capacity to understand the history of the sexual and domestic violence movement, the issues faced by survivors and SDVAs, and the role of Boards in good governance, sustainability, and advancing movement strategies.

By 2025, the Action Alliance will partner with SDVAs to assess the extent to which collective HR, insurance, and/or benefits are feasible. One suggestion has been to set up a statewide HR agency/service to help with payroll, policy drafting, finding benefits, and perhaps even shared health insurance as well as shared retirement plans. The Action Alliance will also investigate setting up a financial management agency/service to either offer accounting and grants financial management services or work with all agencies to set up similar accounting systems that could help reduce the time spent on grants financial management.

By 2025, the Action Alliance and partners will identify resources to support two unified awareness campaigns in April for Sexual Assault Awareness Month and in October for Domestic Violence Awareness Month and will launch a collaborative Virginia campaign on behalf of advocates and survivors.

By 2026, the Action Alliance will partner with SDVAs to develop a plan to provide agency coverage for local SDVAs who wish to hold staff retreats, have time off after hard times, and have a need for workforce support when there is a crisis.

By 2026, the Action Alliance will implement an array of new opportunities for SDVAs and advocates to connect, support one another and build community.

By 2026, 75% of SDVA Directors and/or administrative and operational staff will have received Action Alliance training, technical assistance, or support in the maintenance and growth of their agency infrastructure.

By 2026, the Action Alliance will partner with SDVAs to create a new recognition event designed to shine a light on work that is building strong and healthy communities.

By 2027, in partnership with SDVAs, the Action Alliance will expand the offerings of the Training Institute to meet this emerging need for a more generalist workforce which might include new introduction to advocacy and prevention trainings or a new approach to sustainable skills development.

By 2028, at least 75% of SDVAs report participating in the annual gatherings linked to sustainability planning and report a positive relationship with their major funders.

By 2028, at least 25% of SDVAs will be publicly recognized annually through Action Alliance media efforts.

APPENDIX A

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance wishes to thank the following individuals, agencies, and groups for their role in organizing, discussing, compiling, and reviewing this state plan to sustain Virginia's response to and prevention of sexual and domestic violence. Their visionary leadership in sexual and domestic violence advocacy and prevention has been and continues to be critical to advancing this work in our state:

Virginia's Sustainability Planning Alliance (SPA)

- Sanu Dieng, Transitions Family Violence Services, Hampton Roads, VA
- Cartie Lominack, Shelter for Help in Emergency, Charlottesville, VA
- Diana Ortiz, Doorways for Women & Families, Arlington, VA
- Candy Phillips, First Step: A Response to Domestic Violence, Inc., Harrisonburg, VA
- Kristi VanAudenhove, Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance
- Laura Beth Weaver, Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley, Radford, VA
- Jonathan Yglesias, Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance
- Toni Zollicoffer, Fairfax County Department of Family Services, Fairfax, VA

State Partners in Sexual & Domestic Violence Work

- Office on Family Violence, Virginia Department of Social Services
- Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
- Virginia Office of the Attorney General
- Virginia Department of Health
- Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development
- Virginia's Advisory Committee on Sexual & Domestic Violence

Finally, thank you to coalition and sexual and domestic violence agency directors and staff, board members, and leadership for countless surveys, forums, and focus groups that allowed us to engage in transparent and bold discussions, seek and gather critical feedback, and recommit to a powerful shared vision for a future where violence cannot and does not exist in Virginia.

APPENDIX B

SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

Planning for SDVA Funding and Sustainability

Report from the Sustainability Planning Alliance

of the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance

March, 2022

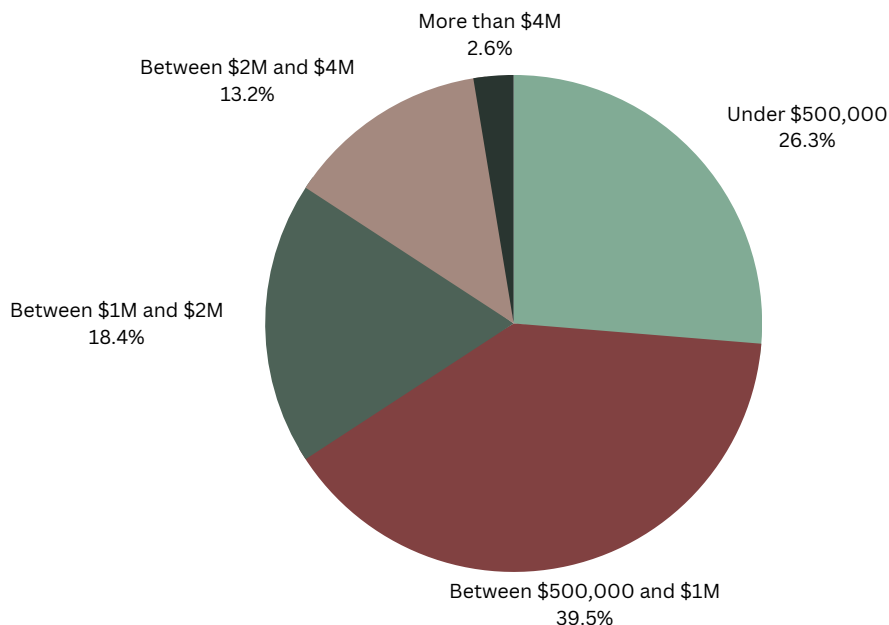
In early March of 2022, we surveyed the Action Alliance's 72 member agencies. 39 surveys were completed. (54%) Our goal was to obtain some very basic information to understand the current funding landscape for Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies in Virginia, and to learn more about how the pandemic has impacted SDVAs and their support of people in their communities. We are interested in understanding both the strengths and the challenges that SDVAs are currently facing so that those can be considered as we develop a 10-year plan to strengthen the role of SDVAs in a community response to sexual and domestic violence.

Survey Results

Nearly two-thirds of the agencies have a current annual sexual and domestic violence budget under one million dollars.

What is the estimated size of your SDV agency budget for your current fiscal year (sexual and domestic violence services, prevention and related administrative costs)?

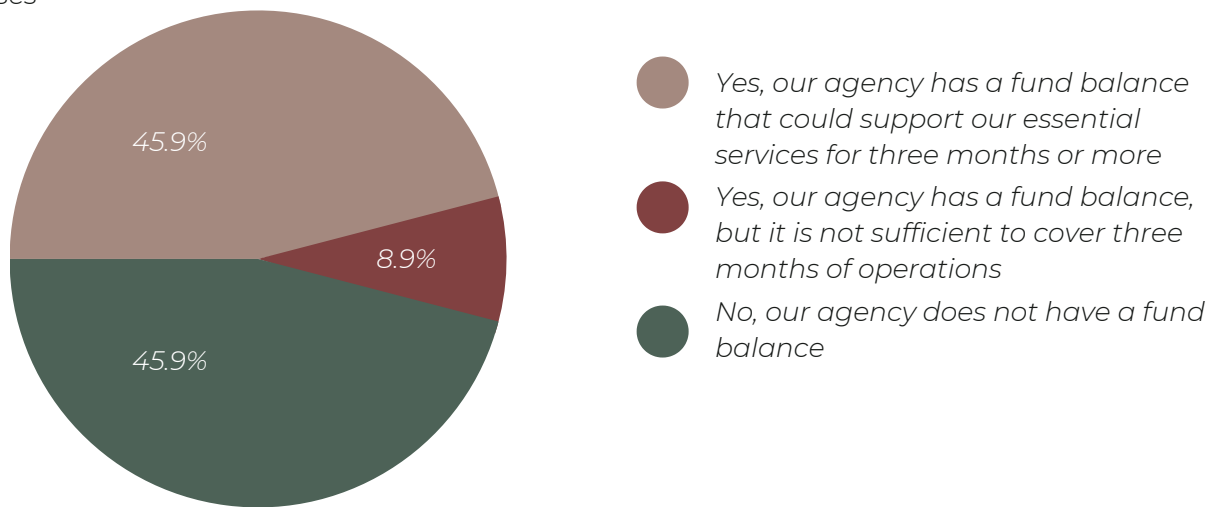
38 responses



In addition to asking about budget size, the survey also asked about the health of the agency fund balance—the cash on hand that makes it possible for agencies to pay for programming and services on a continuous basis in spite of varying schedules for receiving grant funds and receiving proceeds from development efforts. A fund balance equivalent to 3 months of operating funds is considered a minimum requirement for smooth financial management (paying all of your bills on time!). More than half of the SDVAs reported that their fund balance did not meet this standard at this time. Three agencies reported having no accessible fund balance at all.

Does your agency have an accessible fund balance that helps you to manage cash flow and respond to emergencies?

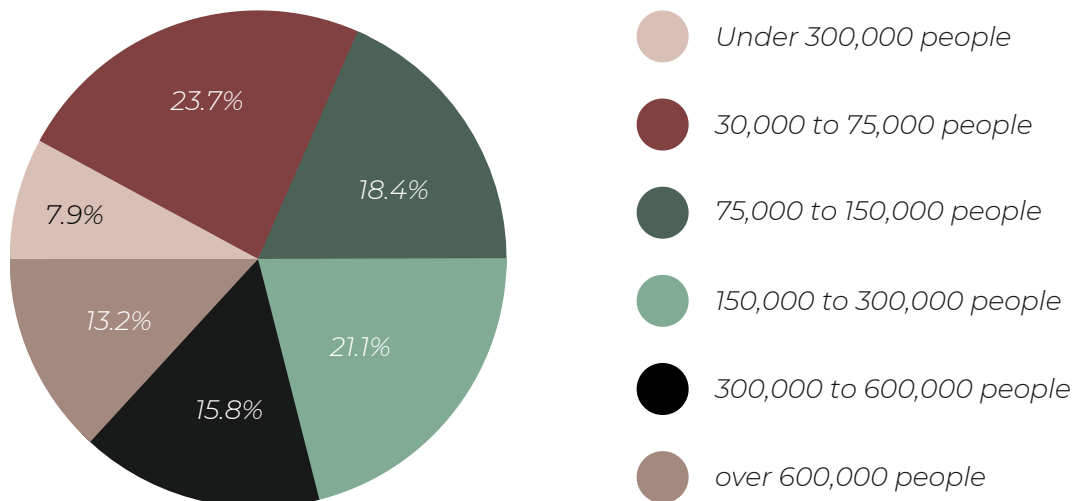
37 responses



SDVAs serve a wide range of populations—varying from fewer than 30,000 people to more than 600,000.

What is the estimated population of your SDVA service area?

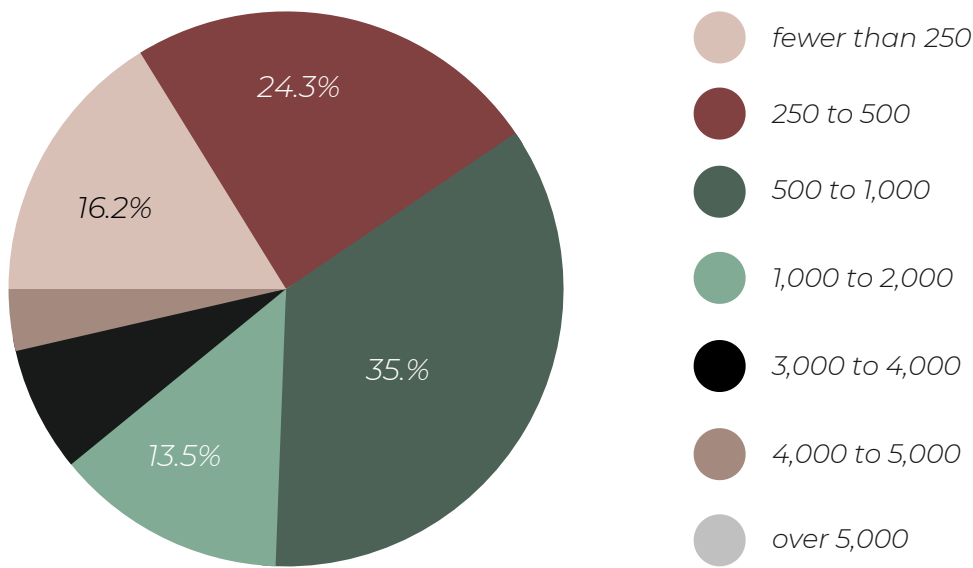
38 responses



As would be expected with such differences in populations served, there is a wide variance in the number of people being served by SDVAs. Agencies were asked about the number of unduplicated individuals served across all SDV services and programs. They were also asked about the number of hotline calls received in the most recent year—which may include multiple calls from one individual. The majority of agencies are serving between 250 and 1,000 individuals each year and answering up to 1,000 hotline calls. Approximately one quarter of the agencies are serving more than 1,000 people each year—up to as many as 4,000.

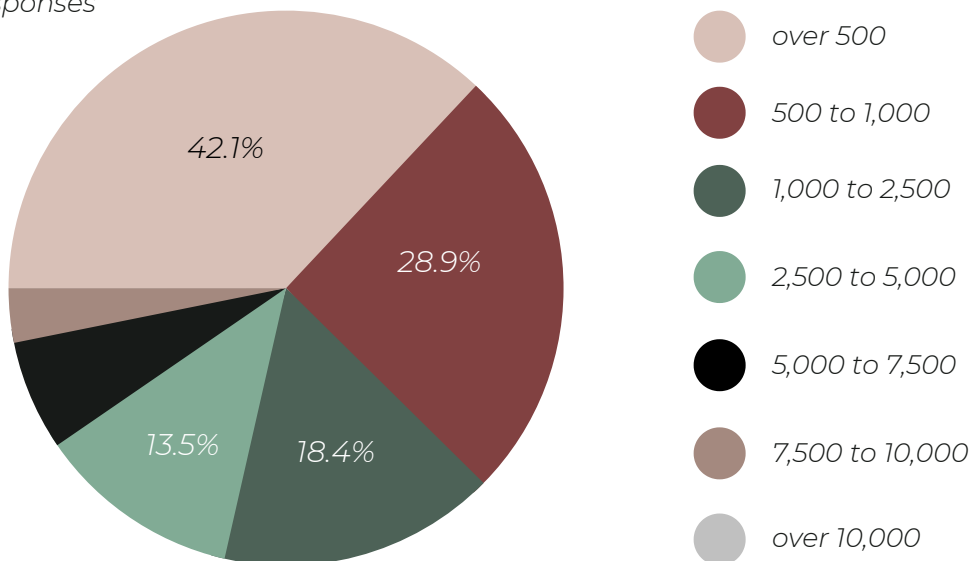
Approximately how many unduplicated people did your agency serve across all of your services and programs, excluding your Hotline, in the last fiscal year?

37 responses



Approximately how many 24-hour Hotline contacts (phone, text, or chat) were made to your agency in the last fiscal year?

38 responses



Agencies were asked to give an approximate representation of the source of their funding in their current budgets. There is tremendous public support for Sexual and Domestic Violence agencies, as indicated by the fact that for 19 of the agencies more than 75% of the funding comes from federal, state or local government. An additional 12 agencies cited those sources as 50-75% of their budgets.

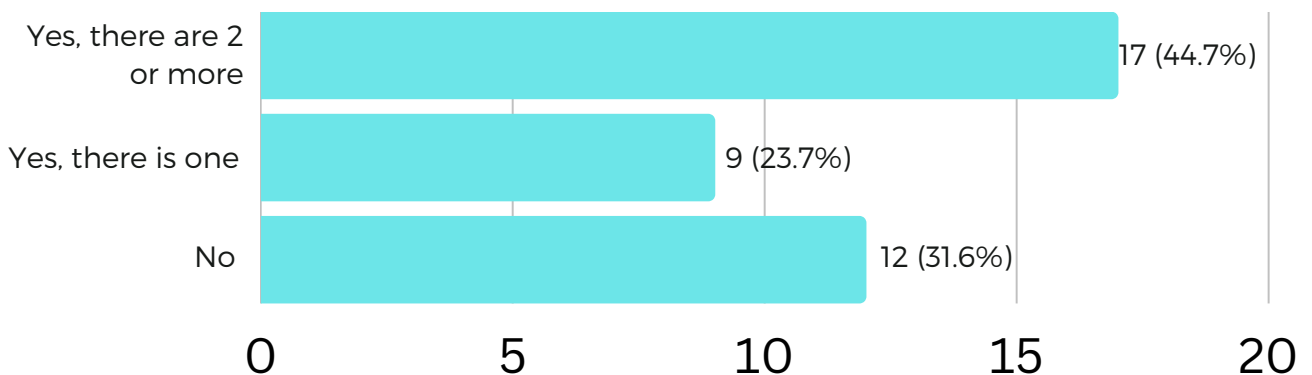
United Way funding, which was core funding for many of the early domestic violence and sexual assault agencies in Virginia, is no longer a significant statewide source of funding. However, for those agencies that do receive these funds, it may be a vital source of local support. Four agencies reported receiving 10-20% of their annual income from United Way, five agencies reported between 5 and 10%, and seventeen agencies receive funding, but it is less than 5% of their budget. Community Foundations on the other hand have become a significant partner, with 30 of the 39 respondents indicating that they receive Community Foundation support ranging from under 5% (16), to more than 10% (4).

SDVAs are also actively engaged in fundraising and nearly all of the respondents indicated that some portion of their budget comes from fundraising events or individual contributions. While the majority are raising less than 10% of their budgets, 5 agencies reported that events bring in 10% or more of their annual budget and individual donations bring in over 10% of budget for 14 agencies (and for 6, it is over 20%).

The survey also asked about another important resources for SDVAs—the presence of a four-year college or university from which they are able to draw interns, volunteers (including Board members) and other expertise. Nearly a third of the agencies reported that they do not have this valuable resource in their community—putting them at a significant disadvantage in meeting match requirements, recruiting and hiring local talent, and building strong Boards.

Is there a 4-year public or private college or university in your SDVA service area from which you draw volunteers, interns, new staff, and/or board members?

38 responses



Agencies were asked about the challenges that they have faced over the past two years (2020 and 2021). Two main themes emerged:

1. Agencies reported high levels of staff turnover (84%), difficulty hiring new staff (82%), difficulty training new staff (55%), challenges maintaining 24/7 service due to being short staffed (50%), and in the comments agency directors noted that they too need more training.
2. Nearly three quarters of the agencies reported experiencing a decrease in returns on fundraising events (73%), and more than half have seen a decrease in individual giving (52%).

It is notable that SDVAs operated throughout the pandemic with very few interruptions to services. Agencies adapted to providing services in virtual environments, developed new models for emergency and longer-term shelter that operated within CDC guidelines, and found ways to provide 24/7 accompaniment, medical advocacy and legal advocacy services even when courts were closed and hospitals were not allowing anyone but patients into their facilities. The last couple of questions capture a small glimpse of how the pandemic has impacted the sustainability of SDVAs, and the demand for SDVA services.

The survey asked about 7 specific elements of sustainability and asked directors to reflect on whether those areas are currently “strong,” “sufficient,” or “insufficient” as they consider the future of the work of their agency. A “not applicable” category was provided specifically for public agencies or umbrella agencies where some of these elements might not apply.

Areas viewed by more than half of the SDVAs as currently strong or sufficient are in bold print and highlighted in green. Areas where more than half of the SDVAs indicated that current resources and engagement are insufficient are in italics and highlighted in pink.

Sustainability Element	# Strong/ Sufficient	# Insuff- icient	#NA
Board engagement	19	15	4
<i>Volunteer engagement</i>	17	<i>21</i>	
<i>Staff capacity to engage in fund development</i>	10	<i>26</i>	2
<i>Administrative support for the ED/Staff</i>	12	<i>26</i>	
Community investment in the organization	19	12	
Relationships with local policy leaders	24	13	1
Relationships with state level policy leaders	18	17	

It is promising that more than half of the agencies feel a strong sense of local engagement and support (although a sizable number reported these same issues as insufficient). Mirroring the prior question, the areas that are most precarious as a result of the past two years are all about the people that make the services happen. It is a tremendous concern that more than half of the agencies report insufficient capacity in those areas.

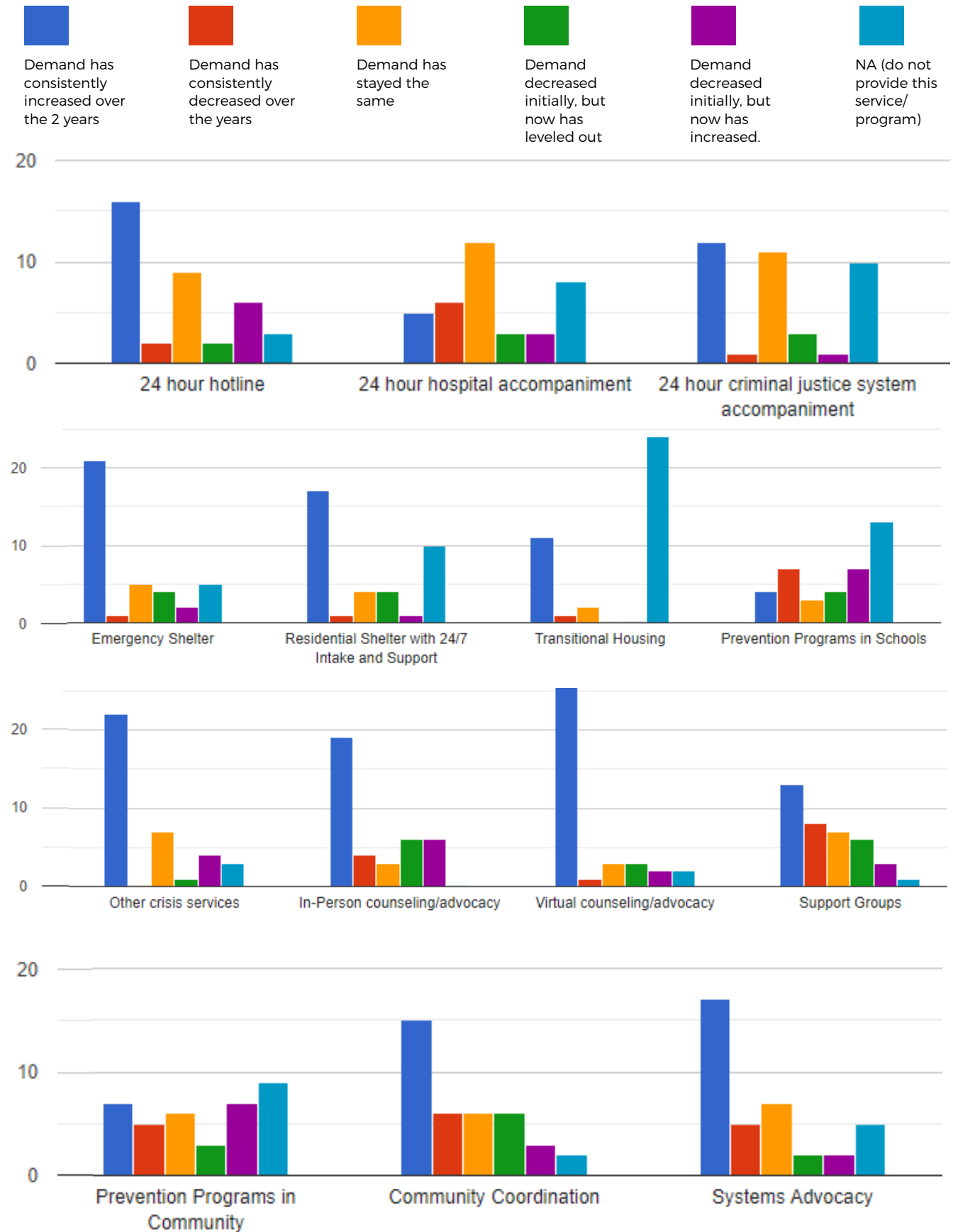
When asked about how demand for services has changed over the past two years, most agencies reported a consistent increase (the blue line on the left) across most services—with the notable exceptions being 24-hour hospital accompaniment and prevention programming in school. Both of those services were significantly impacted by COVID-19, with hospitals prohibiting advocates from entering hospitals prior to vaccines becoming widely available, and schools being closed for much of 2020 and 2022. Of those agencies doing prevention programs in schools, half have seen a recent increase in requests for programming.

Services assessed from left to right in the table below include 24-hour hotline, 24-hour hospital accompaniment, 24-hour criminal justice accompaniment, other crisis intervention services, in-person counseling and advocacy, virtual counseling and advocacy, support groups, emergency shelter, residential shelter with 24/7 support, transitional housing, prevention programs in schools, prevention programs in communities, community coordination of SDV services, and systems advocacy.

The blue line on the left indicates a consistent increase over the two years, the red line is a consistent decrease, the yellow line represents no change in requests for services/programs, the green line represents an initial increase at the start of the pandemic which has since leveled out, and the purple line represents a decrease in the service/program at the start of the pandemic which has since become an increase. The aqua line at the far right represents agencies that do not provide the specific service or program.

(graphs on following page)

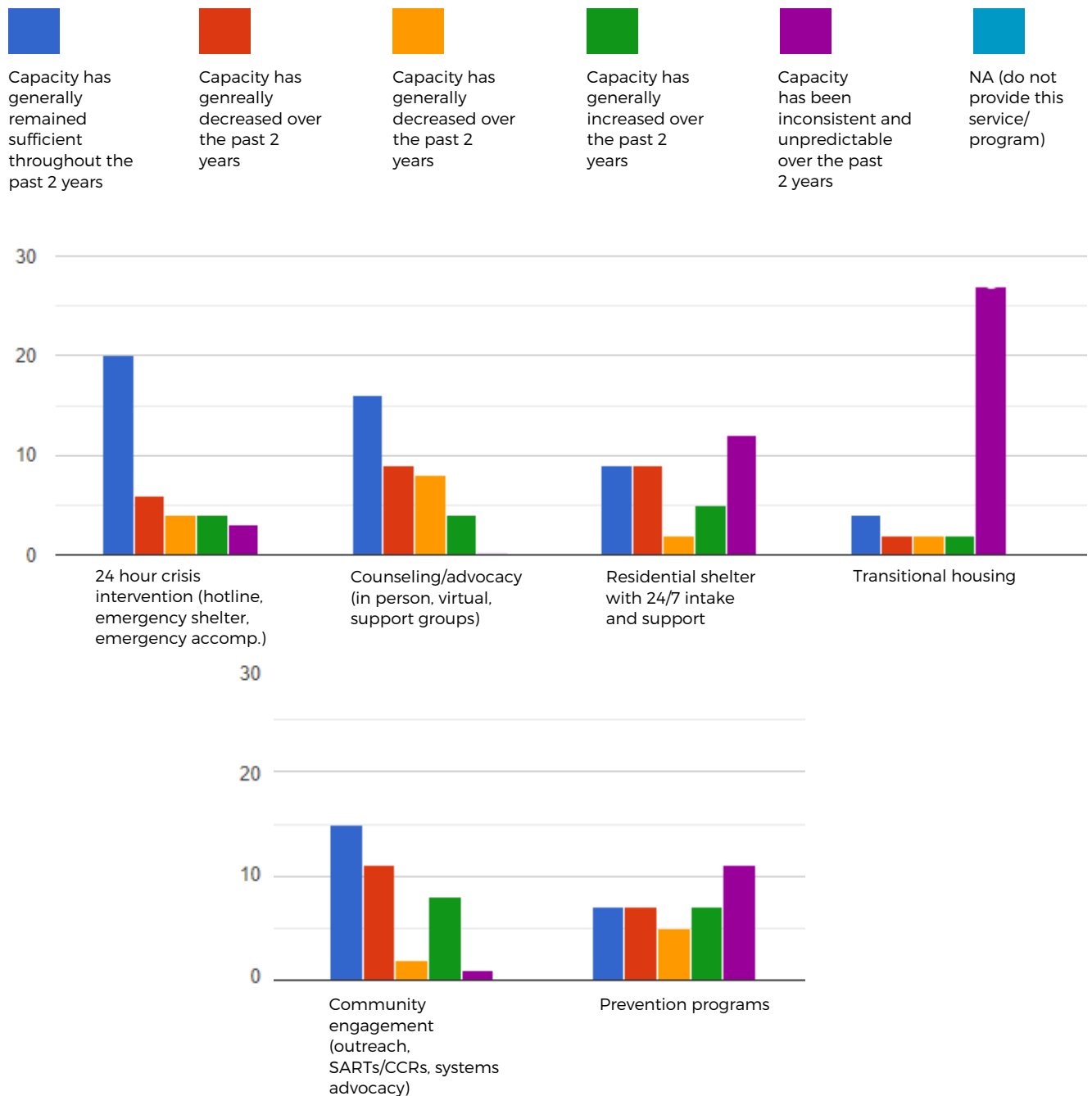
As a result of the pandemic and all of the related community challenges with jobs, housing, and access to a range of services, has demand your agency services and programs been impacted? Please provide an answer in each category.



It is notable that with such increases in requests for services, agency capacity has remained about the same, or has decreased overall (the blue bar and the red bar). Agencies were surveyed about changes to their agency capacity in 6 areas, listed left to right in the tables below:

24-hour Crisis Services, Counseling and Advocacy Services, Residential Shelter and Support, Transitional Housing, Community Engagement, and Prevention.

As a result of the pandemic and all of the related community challenges with hiring, retaining employees and fundraising, has your agency capacity to deliver programs and services been impacted? Please provide an answer in each category.



This mismatch between capacity and demand for services and programs is likely a significant contributor to the high turnover rates in SDVAs over the past two years—along with the general pandemic anxiety and the fact that these front line positions put advocates at high risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

Respondents were offered the opportunity to include narrative comments at the end of the survey. Twelve of the directors shared more about their experiences; a few of those comments included:

Our agency has been impacted by turnover with extended vacancies. Our service area is rural with limited supports in place so it can be difficult to get highly qualified staff, which impacts equity in our service provision.

Staff turnover and the need to provide raises to current staff has been a huge issue in the past two years. I'm so excited that the AA is having the conversation of flexibility on grant modifications with our funders as that always plays a role in when we can hire and how we handle staff turnover.

VOCA and Pandemic relief funds in the form of ARPA, CARES ACT, and PPP have delivered funding levels that initially were proposed 8 years ago when there was a Virginia push by programs and the Action Alliance to fully fund the demand and burdens that were assessed 8-10 years ago (\$18mi gap?). These funds helped in recent years as survivors and our community were dragged down by pandemic challenges impacting finances, ability to work, ability to stay housed, efforts to seek services universally in the community, and isolation with escalating violence. However, these funds also were resourcing DV/SAs in a way that everyone knew was needed but had not been realized (the promise/goal of meeting those needs fully with the funds to do so). Each time VOCA is now cut, it comes with the narrative that we could not count on these funds to be there and be stable; and yet the work is just as robust and needing the services we were able to provide when we were more fully funded. Our staff see the decline in personnel through attrition and less funding and this burdens them and burns them out at a time when we need them more than ever with a critical need to retain experienced and dedicated staff to deliver quality services that survivors need to be able to count on. Inflation making salaries low again. We

HAVE to implement bump ups but where will the money come from? There is difficulty in retention and recruitment and competition for labor. If we were to make an 8 year adjustment (from the \$18 million gap we were trying to remedy 8 years ago) to a current period, to include population increases, cost of living, inflation, COVID challenges, and increased traumatic violence and experiences in our survivors and their families, delivering new programming such as LAP, new centers, etc., the funding needed is higher than the \$18 million gap originally targeted. We cannot afford to go backwards in governmental and other sources of funding. We need to recognize that when everyone cries for more mental health services, part of the outcry is for our services; our services just have not been teased out of an umbrella terminology that many people refer to as mental health. We use jargon and technical terminology but the survivors and their families need us profoundly. We have to do better in Virginia and we have to use our voices and those of our allies to rally for sustained funding increases and stop seeing our requests for funding as begging or as big asks. We need a much greater investment by government to recognize the importance of supporting our generations to eliminate violence used in relationships to traumatize and destroy lives which is limiting everyone's future.

Shelter capacity has been a significant problem, we have spent over \$100,000 on hotels due to the demand and need for emergency housing for survivors in danger. Prior to the pandemic we budgeted 30k and stayed within the budget, currently we are on track to spend 150k this year. I am concerned about next year and how to plan, with COVID funding decreasing, will this need level out.

APPENDIX C

COST OF SERVICES

In 2014, anticipating a significant increase in federal Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) funds, the Action Alliance pulled together a group of SDVA leaders and staff to chart out best practice “core” and “comprehensive” sexual and domestic violence services for communities across Virginia and calculate the cost of those services.

The committee grappled with the question of defining the true cost of “optimal” services as a guide to appropriate funding levels for SDVAs. In defining “optimal” services, the committee applied the following values:

- Trauma-informed advocacy includes addressing the needs of survivors from a holistic perspective—mind, body and spirit;
- Addressing generational trauma is a high priority—providing advocacy services that effectively respond to the impact of violence in the lives of individuals who grew up with violence and then “continued the cycle” requires a high level of expertise and dedication;
- Reducing repeat victimization is a high priority; and
- The criminal justice system is one of many vital systems that offer options for safety to victims which means advocates must develop expertise and relationships with a wide variety of systems.

These values led to the conclusion that survivors receive “optimal” services when advocates have the opportunity to dedicate themselves to developing and practicing consistently trauma-informed services. This means dedicating staff to children and youth as well as adults, and meeting the unique needs of culturally-specific populations. It also means that advocates should be able to devote the necessary hours of advocacy with each survivor while still working reasonable work days and weeks. Advocates who are suffering from secondary trauma as a result of 24/7 chaotic work weeks cannot possibly offer trauma-informed services.

Another important component of optimal services and programs is an array of community-based programming that goes beyond working with individual survivors in crisis. These programs might include community education, participation on community coordinated response teams, systems advocacy and prevention programs.

In 2014, very few SDVAs had the resources to provide this range of services and programs for their communities. As we head into 2023, there has been some

progress, largely due to the increased VOCA funds and anticipated state prevention funds, but there is still a long way to go to achieve an optimal level of programming.

As you consider the costs:

- It is important to recognize that each SDVA has developed to meet the unique needs of the community served by that agency. The resources available in a community and the partnerships that have been built influence the scope of services provided. This description of the cost of services is not intended to limit the services that SDVAs choose to provide.
- The costs presented are only the direct costs associated with the provision of the services described and a portion of the leadership and administrative costs. It is important to remember that agencies have additional costs—including programmatic costs for services that go beyond the scope of the services described below, costs associated with prevention, policy work and raising public awareness, and facility costs related to buildings owned by the agency (e.g. shelters, child advocacy centers, community outreach centers, transitional housing, forensic centers).

In 2014, SDVAs determined that the average cost of salary and benefits for a full-time position statewide was \$50,000. On average, programmatic and operating costs associated with services and programs provided by staff cost about 20% of the total staff costs, and the cost of leadership and administration connected to those services adds another 15% of the total staff cost.

SDVAs determined that an agency would need 16 FTEs to:

- providing 24-hour crisis services (hotline, accompaniment, emergency shelter)
- advocacy and counseling services to survivors of all ages and
- community engagement that includes a volunteer program, community collaboration, systems advocacy, a community education program and a prevention program.

This brought the total cost to \$1,080,000. Agencies operating residential shelters require an additional 6.5 FTEs (a cost of \$450,000 in 2014).

2023 Cost of Optimal Services in a Sexual & Domestic Violence Agency

- The cost of an FTE in 2023, adjusted for inflation, is \$72,500 for salary and benefits.
- Applying the needs identified back in 2014 which recommended 16 FTEs to provide crisis, counseling and community services, the personnel cost in 2023 is \$1,160,000.
- Operations and programs costs would add an additional \$232,000.
- Leadership and administration costs would add \$174,000.
- The total cost in 2023 is \$1,566,000. With the addition of a residential shelter, it would be approximately \$2,200,000.