



**MCEDV.**

The Maine Coalition  
to End Domestic Violence

# 2021 Annual Report

## Our Mission

The Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence (MCEDV) mobilizes collaborative community action with and on behalf of a statewide network of Domestic Violence Resource Centers to ensure that all people affected by domestic abuse and violence in Maine are restored to safety and that perpetrators are held accountable. MCEDV builds partnerships that promote public policy, education, and systems advocacy to create and encourage a social, political, and economic environment that fosters communities where the diversity, dignity, and contributions of all are respected and celebrated, and domestic abuse and violence no longer exist.

## Public Policy

This year during the pandemic, Maine's legislature convened online for the first time. MCEDV approached the session striving to embody the commitments we and our membership made to racial justice in 2020, including advocating for a more expansive vision of what safety means, improving the way existing laws are implemented, and creating pathways to justice and healing beyond the criminal justice system.

Major public policy accomplishments included:

- **Converting a one-time state funding increase** for domestic and sexual violence programs into sustained funding from the state's General Fund budget;
- **Naming economic abuse in law** as a factor to be considered by a court when determining spousal support and division of marital property when a couple divorces;
- **Presenting our report, *Initial Findings on the Effectiveness of Maine's Certified Batterer Intervention Programs***, and working with the legislature to advance key recommendations, including securing continued funding so that Mainers can participate in these programs regardless of their income level; and
- **Creating new training requirements for guardians ad litem**, who wield so much influence over the lives of survivors and their children and yet typically have had minimal training required in the dynamics and impact of domestic abuse and violence.

## Board of Directors

Daryl Fort, President  
Marvin Ellison, Treasurer  
Marie Sola, Secretary  
Peggy Rotundo  
Emily Cain  
Beth Edmonds

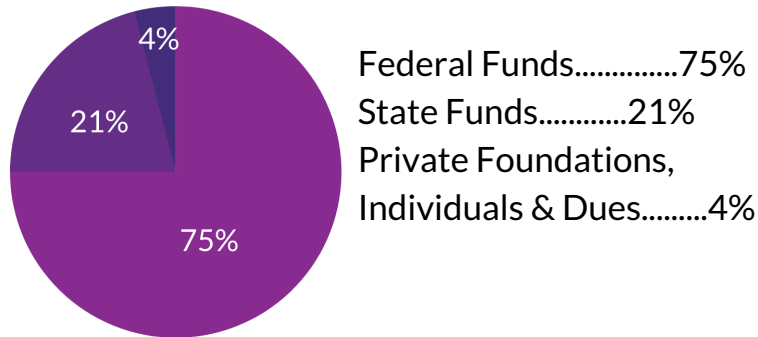
To learn more about our work in the 130th Maine legislature, read our most recent Legislative Review at [mcedv.org](https://mcedv.org).

## Administration

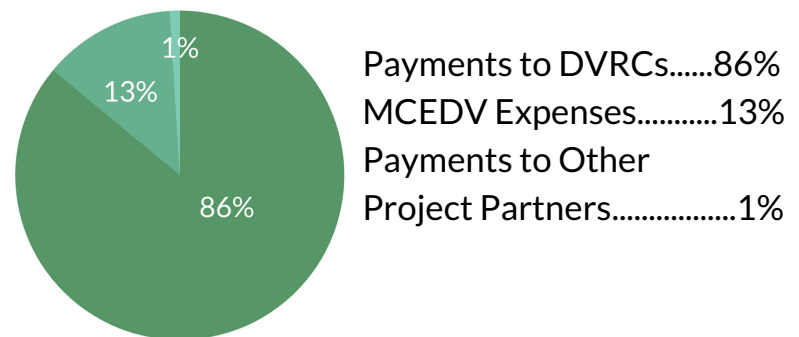
MCEDV administers state, federal and private funds that support Domestic Violence Resource Centers (DVRCs) through a contract with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, grants from the Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women, and from other foundations and individual donors.

In 2021, we administered disbursement of **\$9,263,815 to the DVRCs** while monitoring for compliance with contract provisions and **disbursed an additional \$168,481 to other project and grant partners**, including Maine's network of Certified Domestic Violence Intervention Programs.

### Where Did the Funding Come From?



### Where Did the Funding Go?



## Training and Technical Assistance

MCEDV works to shift the way Maine's systems, and the people working within them, respond to domestic abuse and violence. Here are some highlights:

### Professional Training



We spent **272 hours training 2,728 Maine professionals** - including nurses, law enforcement officers, advocates, child welfare workers and mental and behavioral health workers - to effectively recognize and respond to domestic abuse. **93%** of trainees reported gaining knowledge and skills that would help them respond to survivors in their work.

### Technical Assistance



We spent **1,864 hours providing technical assistance** regarding policy and practice related to domestic abuse for advocates, policy makers and systems partners.

### MCEDV Member Program Support



We supported **19 standing groups of MCEDV member program advocates**, focused on topics as diverse as prevention, finance and administration, and response to nonfatal strangulation.

*"I learned different ways to approach asking about domestic abuse and what resources are available. I've definitely been the nurse apprehensive to ask about abuse because until now if the answer was 'yes' I wasn't sure how to follow up or how to help them if they asked for assistance." - Nurse, Spring 2021*



**MCEDV.**

The Maine Coalition  
to End Domestic Violence

Connecting People, Creating Frameworks for Change.

[www.mcedv.org](http://www.mcedv.org)



**MCEDV.**

The Maine Coalition  
to End Domestic Violence

# The Liberation Fund

Founded in July 2020, the Liberation Fund exists to enable Domestic Violence Resource Centers (DVRCs) to provide survivors with critical resources and immediate relief to increase their safety and financial stability. The fund is administered by MCEDV with direct reimbursements to the DVRCs for expenses they have paid on behalf of survivors. Since its inception, the Liberation Fund has helped over 600 survivors across Maine.

## How the Liberation Fund Helps

For a survivor of domestic abuse, just one expense – no matter the amount – can be a barrier when trying to move toward safety and freedom. Whether it's a tank of gas, an unexpected house repair, or home security camera, the Liberation Fund provides DVRCs the ability to cover expenses that other funding sources cannot.

**In 2021, we provided \$155,495 in direct financial assistance to survivors across Maine through the Liberation Fund, covering expenses like:**

**Personal & Public Transportation:** car payments, repairs, insurance and registration costs; gas cards; bus and airline tickets; taxi fees.

**Stable Housing & Shelter:** security deposits; moving expenses; rent and mortgage payments; heating oil and furnace repairs; security cameras and equipment; hotel, motel, and campground sheltering.

**Personal & Household Necessities:** clothing, groceries, car seats, breast pumps, laundromat quarters, home furnishings, official copies of personal IDs and birth certificates.

**Legal Services:** attorneys' fees for complex Protection from Abuse Orders, family matters cases, and more.

**Medical & Recovery Expenses:** medical procedures, substance use disorder services, eyeglasses, prescriptions.

**Continued Education:** GED credentials, driver's education, enrollment fees, tuition reimbursement, workbooks.

**Communication:** internet access; cell phones, repairs, and minutes; devices for telehealth appointments and support groups.

“

*"I'm reaching out to express my gratitude for the willingness to help cover my portion of the cost of the guardian ad litem... For a while I didn't feel worthy of receiving help... One day I too want to help women/children who have experienced abuse. I know I can make a difference. Again, thank you so very much for helping my daughter and I. It means a lot." - Liberation Fund Recipient*

”



## Join the Movement

On average, survivors who access the Liberation Fund ask for help to overcome obstacles that cost as little as \$300 to resolve. However, many need help obtaining legal representation, especially when children are involved.

Through the Liberation Fund, survivors have received between \$1,000 - \$3,000 to help with their legal fees. This is particularly critical as there is no other funding source available for this purpose in so many parts of Maine. Access to adequate representation and support to navigate the legal system can have a deeply meaningful impact for survivors and their families, and the Liberation Fund is helping to bridge this crucial gap in Maine's civil legal response to abuse.

Overall, providing survivors access to financial assistance is a critical step toward countering the financial abuse and isolation that abusive people use to trap and isolate those they harm. Every dollar contributed to the Liberation Fund directly helps create a path toward a life free from violence for Maine survivors and their children. By donating to the fund, you can make an immediate difference, and no amount is too small to help change a life.

— “

*“We want Maine to be a safe place for all those who are fortunate to call it home. We started the Liberation Fund to provide emergency resources that make an immediate difference in the lives of survivors and their children, but we can't do this work alone. Alongside local advocates, we can build a vision for a safer, more just future for all people.” – Bill and Patty Zimmerman*

” —

## Thank You to Our Liberation Fund Donors

We thank all our donors who have helped make the Liberation Fund a reality, and those who continue to sustain this important component of the work our DVRCs do every day.

- Anonymous
- The Allstate Foundation
- Michael Beebe
- The Clements Foundation, Inc.
- Marvin Ellison
- Foreside Community Church
- Anne Jackson
- The Anne Jackson Family Fund
- Chandra Jalbert Oppenheim
- Bill and Patty Zimmerman Fund

## How to Donate

If you would like to contribute to the Liberation Fund, you can make an online donation:

[www.mcedv.org/donate/](http://www.mcedv.org/donate/)

(Specify Liberation Fund in the “Other” category)

**You can also send a check to: Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence, Attn: Liberation Fund, PO Box 5188, Augusta, ME 04332-5188.**

For more information, or if you have questions about the Liberation Fund, please contact Sarah Grant at [sarah@mcedv.org](mailto:sarah@mcedv.org).



# 2021 DVRC Snapshot

## The Domestic Violence Resource Center Network

Our member Domestic Violence Resource Centers (DVRCs) provide services for people affected by domestic abuse and violence, dating abuse, stalking, elder abuse, and sex trafficking and exploitation. DVRCs are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, via their 24-hour helplines.

## What Did It Look Like in 2021?

When the pandemic arrived in Maine, DVRCs were forced to restrict in-person services, transitioning quickly to phone-based services – relying heavily on the core of their work, the helpline – and exploring new methods of offering services safely and confidentially online.



**Overall, 13,175 people received help from the DVRCs.** 11,375 were directly experiencing abuse and violence. 1,800 were concerned community members who were supporting people affected by abuse. In total, contacts between DVRCs and survivors increased by 8%.

- Call volumes increased by 13%.
- Electronic connections through chat, text, video and email increased by 67%.



DVRC Residential Programs served **963 people** with sheltering, transitional support, housing navigation, and homelessness prevention.

- 647 people, including 277 children, accessed emergency sheltering.
- 213 others, including 119 children, called DVRC transitional housing “home.”
- DVRCs provided 34,935 bed nights in 2021 - more than any recent year.

### **Safe and affordable family-sized housing remains a challenge for survivors.**

DVRCs moved 365 people to permanent housing, but that only represents 38% of adults and children living in our emergency shelters, transitional housing units, and hotels.



DVRC Legal Programs served 5,638 people, primarily in civil court, representing an **18% increase in people served over 2020**, as pandemic court delays kept Mainers in legal limbo.

Help with protection orders is the most common type of legal assistance provided by DVRCs. Advocates and DVRC attorneys helped survivors obtain 2,292 protection orders.

63% of the people who obtained protection orders had children, and 65% of the final orders obtained also covered children.

## Who Did We Help?

On average, advocates connect eight times with a person using DVRC services. In 2021, DVRC advocates:

- Took **17,555** crisis helpline calls;
- Had **39,122** support calls in addition to the helpline; and
- Made **15,219** electronic connections over email, chat, video, and text



DVRC services are designed to be low barrier, without the requirement that people provide demographic data. Of those who shared their personal information with us, we know that last year DVRCs worked with:

- **2,057** people who were homeless.
- **1,339** people who shared they have physical, mental or cognitive disabilities.
- **905** people who identified themselves as male.
- **587** people who identified their age as over 60.
- **572** children who directly accessed services.
- **276** people who identified themselves as LGBTQ+, including 33 people who identified to us as transgender and 18 who identified to us as nonbinary.
- **240** people who identified themselves as Black.
- **167** people who identified themselves as immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers.
- **129** people who were victims of sex trafficking.

**342 volunteers contributed 39,122 hours of service, an in-kind donation of labor worth \$904,500. Statewide, DVRCs experienced a 22% decline in volunteers, as Mainers juggle the pressures of life during the pandemic.**

**On the average day, DVRCs serve between 400-500 people, and field around 80 crisis helpline calls.**

## What Was the Impact?

In addition to helping reduce risks from abusive partners, services help minimize systemic and community barriers to safety and peace. We regularly survey survivors to evaluate our work. Here is what they told us:

- **97%** reported learning about community resources that were available to support them.
- **97%** reported learning strategies to help them plan for their safety and manage the risks they faced.
- **95%** reported feeling that we were able to meet their needs, even when we were not able to meet in person.
- **79%** reported that the pandemic had affected their safety.



# MCEDV.

The Maine Coalition  
to End Domestic Violence

# 2021 CDVIP Snapshot

## The Certified Domestic Violence Intervention Program Network

Maine's Certified Domestic Violence Intervention Programs (CDVIPs) exist to support the safety of victim-survivors, to hold people who use violence against their intimate partners to account, and to change the core beliefs that lead to abusive behaviors.

Previously known as "Certified Batterer Intervention Programs," they are 48-week long group educational programs. Since 2019, MCEDV has provided administrative and programmatic support for the CDVIP network as part of a contract with Maine's Department of Corrections.

## CDVIP Highlights

### Grants Support CDVIP During COVID-19

CDVIPs had to radically rethink how to do their work when the pandemic made convening in-person groups impossible. Thanks to a generous anonymous donor, MCEDV was able to make grants available to Maine's CDVIPs to support their shift to online class delivery.

A total of \$33,925 supported 14 programs to obtain practical equipment and materials needed to keep classes going:

- Laptops, tablets and phones to connect facilitators and participants,
- Videoconferencing platforms that are secure and accessible,
- Headphones to ensure privacy and enhance safety,
- Modifications to office spaces to allow safe co-working,
- And more.

### Participant Fee Reimbursement

In FY 2021, MCEDV reimbursed CDVIPs for \$119,000 in subsidies which allowed low-income participants to attend 4,760 class sessions. Subsidies allow people access to this best practice intervention regardless of their economic position, and often alleviate pressure on families who cannot afford extra strain on their budgets.

— “ —

*“It feels empowering that you believe our work is important and that you are willing to allow us funds to improve the quality of the work.” - CDVIP Director*

— ” —



## Training

During 2021, CDVIPs began offering classes remotely via videoconference, and MCEDV's training efforts shifted to helping them do that work well while remaining focused on safety for victims.

This new approach to training included reimbursing tuition for new educators to receive foundational training, hosting foundational and advanced trainings online, supporting attendance at national virtual conferences, and providing individualized program consultation with an international expert on domestic violence intervention and in program facilitation via videoconferencing.

## Report to the Legislature & Legislative Changes

In January, MCEDV presented a report to the legislature, detailing the progress that had been made in Maine's CDVIPs since the state invested funding in CDVIP in 2019. [\*Initial Findings on the Effectiveness of Maine's Certified Batterer Intervention Programs\*](#) described work to assess the value of Maine's CDVIPs and made recommendations for additional legislative changes to enhance programs' impact.

Following the report's delivery, several significant pieces of legislation passed in the 130th session of the Maine legislature that:

Change the name to "Certified Domestic Violence Intervention Programs," more accurately representing the programs' focus.

Strengthen the communications that keep victims in-the-know about what is happening with their partners/ex-partners who have been sentenced to CDVIP.

Double the amount of funds available to support low-income Mainers' participation in CDVIP.

Continue funding to train CDVIP facilitators and for MCEDV to provide statewide coordination of the CDVIP network.

## What's Next for CDVIP?

In the coming year, MCEDV will continue working with our CDVIP partners, including the Maine Department of Corrections, to build on this strong foundation and make CDVIP more accessible and inclusive for all who need it. We will also be participating in a review of the standards that govern the programs, which will run into 2023.