

Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence 2024 State Policy Priorities

The Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence represents 22 local crime victim service provider agencies supporting survivors in every Iowa county. Intimate partner violence (IPV) remains a preventable but persistent [public health problem](#) impacting almost 1 in 2 women and 40% of men over a lifetime; including 26% of women who experience rape. ICADV is committed to advancing policies to address the urgent needs of survivors as well as promoting comprehensive responses to violence and effective solutions for ending and preventing it.

Invest \$10 million in state funding to improve access to crime victim support services. Iowa invests only \$5 million in dedicated state funds for victim services. Federal funds enhance service provider capacity, but state funds provide essential operational support for local agencies. Lack of funding is crippling agency capacity to meet the demand for services and leaves a growing number of victims without support, especially in rural areas and communities disproportionately impacted by violence. Insufficient funding also misses an incredible opportunity to prevent violence.

Enhance Economic Security to improve access to safety & prevent violence. Escaping violence means losing economic security and the means to regain it. Ensuring people can meet basic needs helps prevent violence, e.g., affordable housing, livable wages, food, health care, good schools, clean air/water.

- Allow early lease termination for IPV victims to reduce a major economic barrier to seeking safety.
- Seal eviction records to reduce a major barrier to housing access and economic security.
- Expand access/eliminate barriers to support services like health care including mental & reproductive health care; food assistance; economic supports. (Barriers include language access; digital access; transportation, etc. in addition to traditional barriers like stigma and coercion.)
- Bolster employment & financial security, e.g., paid leave, minimum wage increase, expanding earned income and child-care tax credits, prize-linked savings programs.

Address barriers to equitable access to support and justice in the legal system. Improve education and training of legal system professionals to ensure an IPV victim-informed approach; create multiple options for violence intervention responsive to needs of victims/communities; address systemic disparities.

- Ensure IPV victims are not punished for surviving: zero tolerance for victim intimidation & coercion; stop arresting victims for violating their own protective orders; prevent dual arrests.
- Ensure immigrant survivors can access legal protections available in current law, e.g., promote statewide standard for U visa certification so victims are not denied access to safety based on where they live.
- Promote systemic changes to achieve equitable access, e.g., effective reforms (probation, commutation) to address disparities; access to behavioral change interventions for people causing harm.

Prioritize policies to help prevent and end violence - enhance equity across all systems to ensure freedom from violence at home and in communities. Inequity is a root cause of violence. Biases and discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, ableness, criminal record, etc., impact how individuals experience violence; how victims access justice; how systems and people respond, how needs are met. Meeting the needs of those carrying the heaviest burden of disparity helps all survivors.

- Ensure employment non-discrimination and safety: protect against workplace harassment and violence; enforce job protections for victims; enact fair chance hiring for Iowans with criminal records (ban the box).
- Uphold civil rights laws: oppose weakening anti-discrimination protections, e.g., religious exemptions or prohibitions reducing access to employment, housing, health care, education, and services.
- Reduce barriers to voting; advance constitutional amendment to permanently restore voting rights for Iowans with felony convictions; eliminate language access barriers.