



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

FATALITY REPORT 20 21



DEDICATION

This report is dedicated to all domestic violence homicide victims, survivors, and those working to end domestic violence in Pennsylvania for future generations.

ABOUT THE REPORT

The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence's (PCADV) annual Fatality Report has been the single most reliable source for information about domestic violence-related deaths in Pennsylvania for more than 20 years.

Pennsylvania doesn't have reporting requirements for domestic violence homicides. PCADV compiles its annual list based on news accounts, police departments, and information received from our 59 local domestic violence programs serving all 67 counties.

PCADV uses a conservative method of identifying domestic violence deaths. We do not include cases where no arrests have been made or where the relationship between victim and perpetrator is unclear. We count fatalities involving current and former intimate partners,

family members, police officers, bystanders, interveners, and others such as former partners killed by new partners or new partners killed by former partners.

We exclude child abuse and neglect deaths because they are reported by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services. However, we include certain child deaths when the deaths are a direct result of domestic violence. These may include situations where the perpetrator kills the entire family or the children/child to harm the parent.

**Our homicide numbers may change on a yearly basis. This depends on when an arrest is made in a domestic violence related homicide; if someone has been acquitted of a homicide; or if it has been determined that the homicide was committed in self-defense.*



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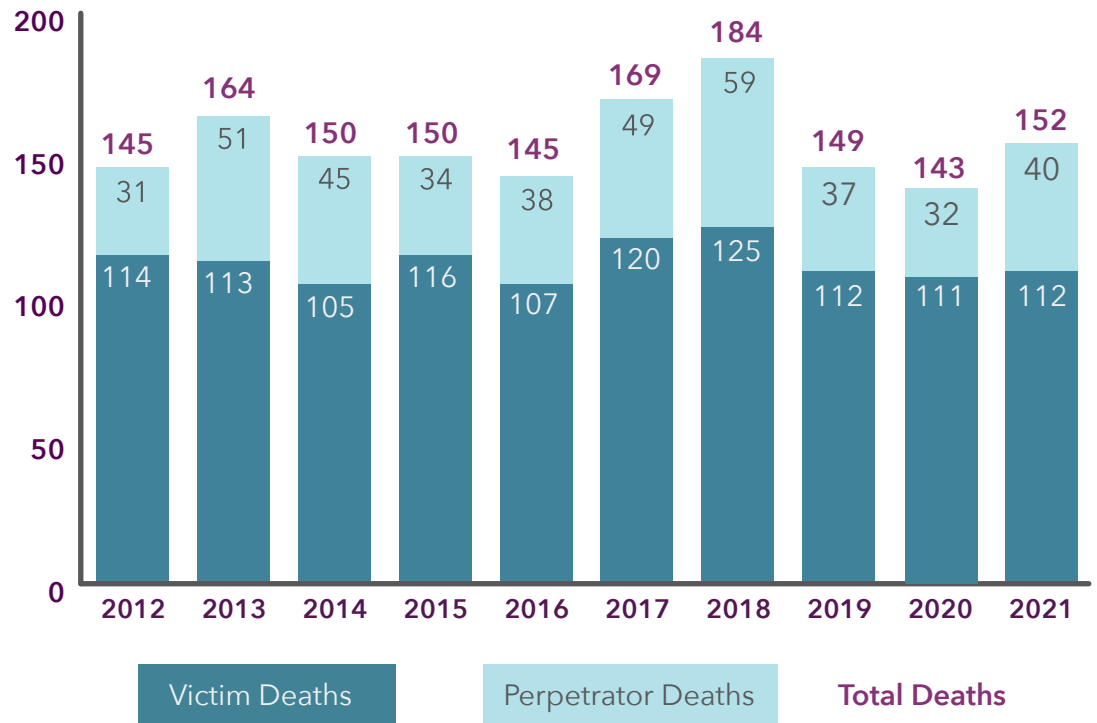
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REPORT OVERVIEW

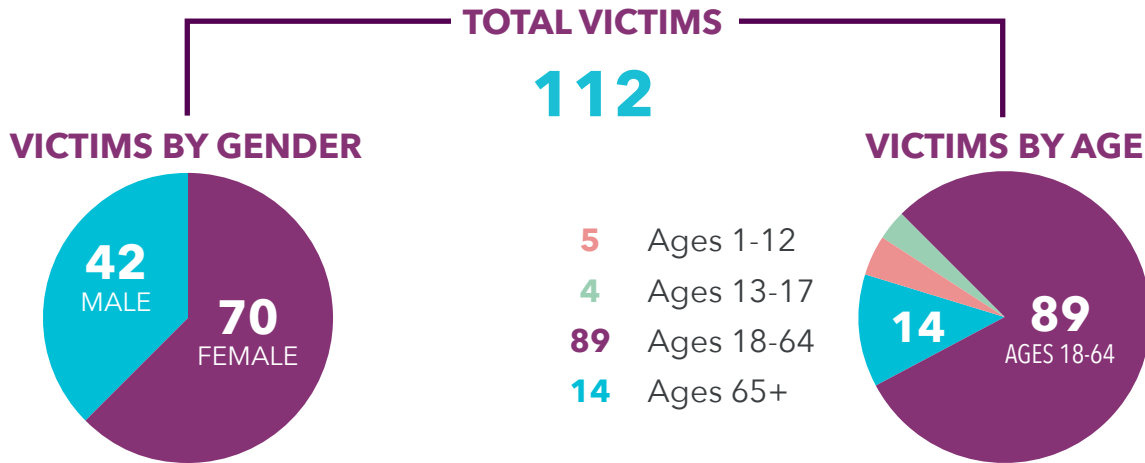
In the last 10 years, more than 1,600 victims and perpetrators have died from domestic violence-related incidents in Pennsylvania.

Those killed included women, children, and men of all ages, races, sexual orientations, and socio-economic groups. In 2021, **112 victims** lost their lives to domestic violence in Pennsylvania. This number includes **70 females** and **42 males**. Additionally, there were **40 perpetrator** deaths.

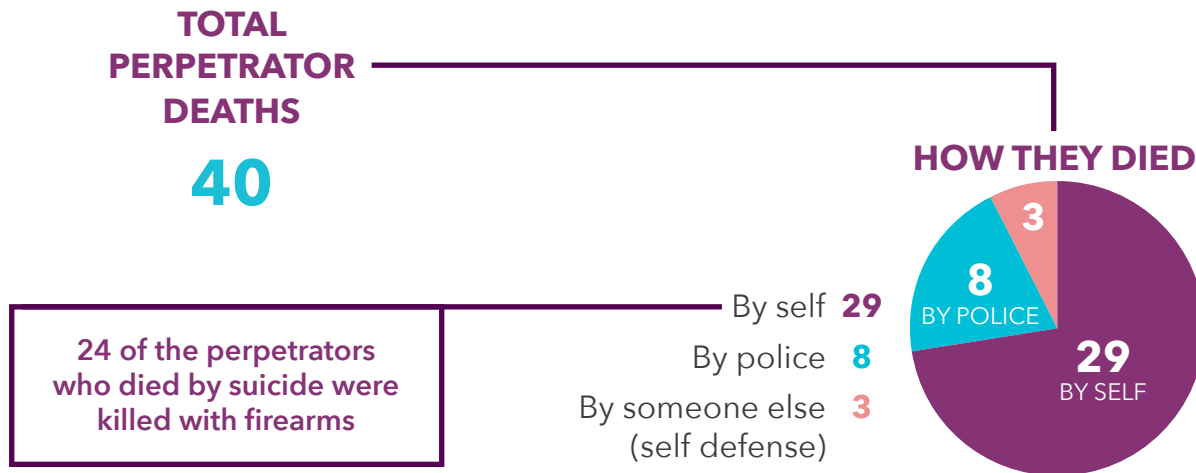
A DECADE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DEATHS



2021 VICTIM DEATHS



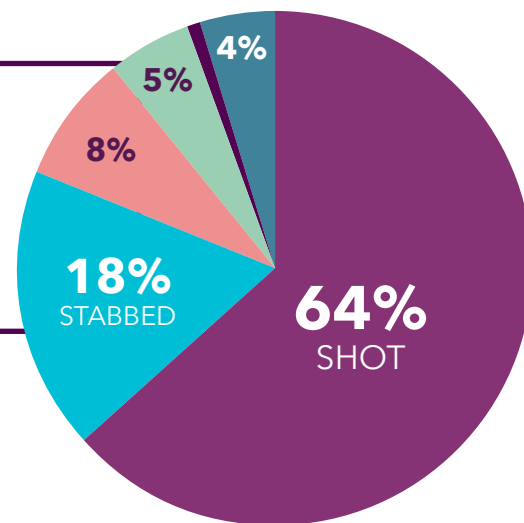
2021 PERPETRATOR DEATHS



HOW THEY WERE KILLED

VICTIM CAUSES OF DEATH

71	Shot	6	Strangled
20	Stabbed	1	Poisoned
9	Beaten	5	Other



A Victim's Story

A 23-year-old man allegedly fatally shot his 21-year-old pregnant girlfriend before he and a friend put her body in a car and set the car on fire. The victim's mother reported her missing after she was last seen getting into the perpetrator's car. When her mother called the perpetrator, he claimed he and the victim had argued and she got out of the vehicle and walked away. Eventually police were able to track the perpetrator's location and find both the victim and the burnt vehicle.

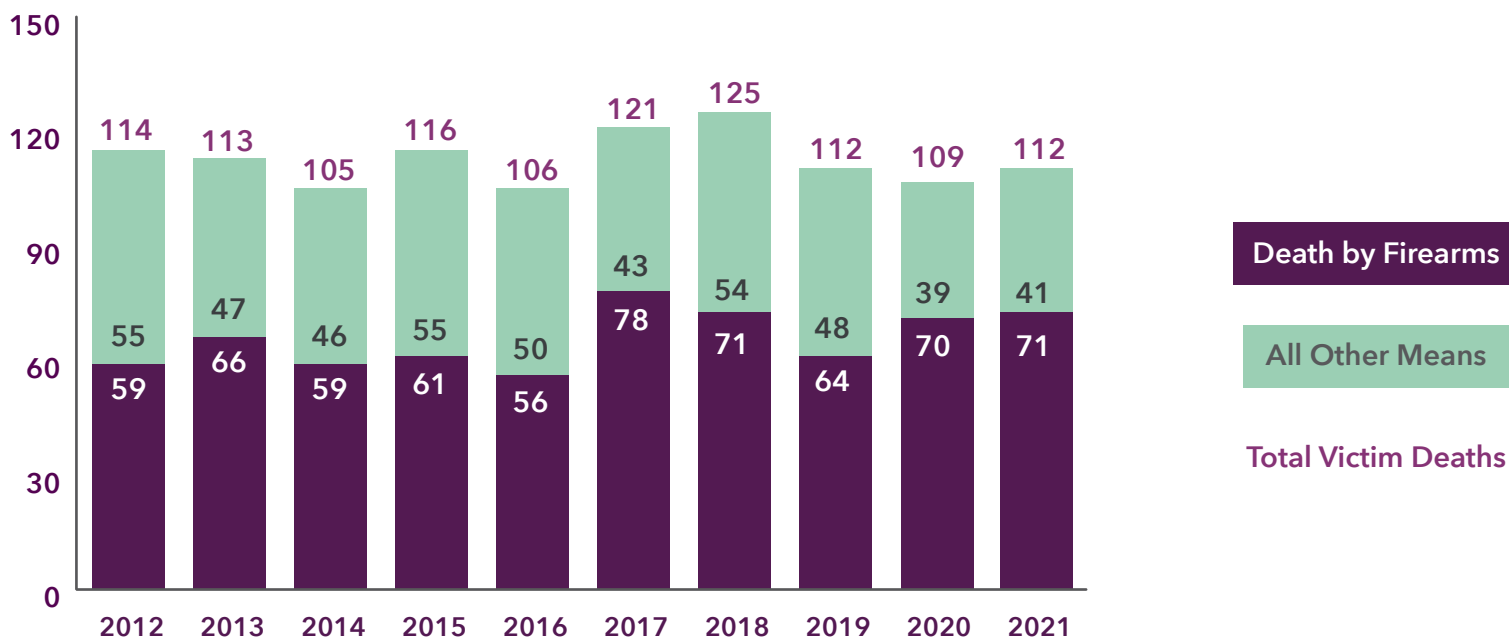
A Victim's Story

A 46-year-old woman allegedly shot and killed her 50-year-old boyfriend after finding out he recently had a baby with another woman. The couple had been dating for about 26 years when he told her that another woman recently gave birth to his daughter. The perpetrator went to the victim's home in hopes of working things out, but a fight erupted when the perpetrator confronted the victim about text messages on his phone between him and his baby's mother. A firearm was laying on the floor by the victim's bed, and the perpetrator said she picked it up to avoid it being used, despite there being no threats made by the victim to use the firearm. She later called 911 claiming that she shot the victim while the two of them wrestled over the gun. When officers arrived at the scene, they found the victim dead in the hallway and the perpetrator bleeding from a gunshot wound in her left arm. The victim's family said he had fulfilled a longtime dream of becoming a dad two months prior when his daughter was born, and that all he wanted to do was be happy and raise his child.

A Victim's Story

A 26-year-old man allegedly shot and killed the 30-year-old mother of his 5-month-old child after being ordered to pay child support. The perpetrator was on active duty in the U.S. Army in Hawaii and was in PA on leave when he murdered his partner. The perpetrator called the victim minutes before the shooting, and neighbors reported hearing two people arguing before hearing gunshots. According to a witness, the victim told the man on the phone many times that he and his mother should leave her alone. The perpetrator's rental car was seen on video footage of the shooting, where the victim walks toward the vehicle's driver side and then turns to walk away before falling down on the street where she was found dead; a muzzle flash can be seen coming from the driver's side of the vehicle. The perpetrator bought two guns, a .22-caliber and a 9mm, along with ammunition, the day before the shooting at a store in one county over from where the homicide occurred.

VICTIM DEATHS BY FIREARMS



WHO ARE THE PERPETRATORS

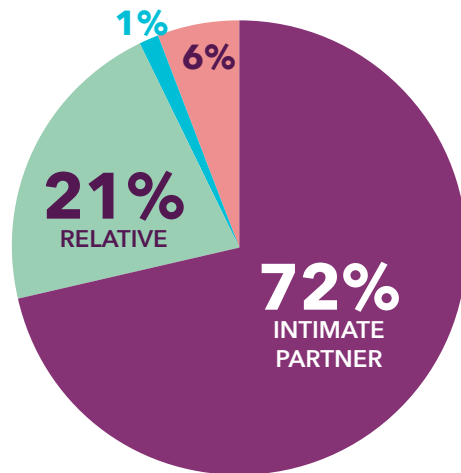
PERPETRATOR GENDER

14
FEMALE

98
MALE

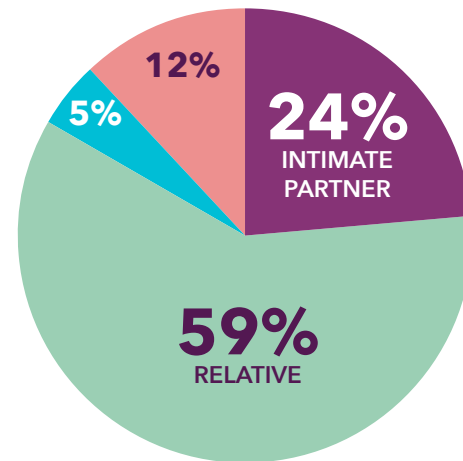
VICTIM RELATIONSHIP TO PERPETRATOR

70 FEMALE VICTIMS



- 50** Killed by a current or former **intimate partner**
- 15** Killed by a **relative**
- 1** Killed by a **romantic rival**
- 4** Killed in domestic violence related incidents

42 MALE VICTIMS



- 10** Killed by a current or former **intimate partner**
- 25** Killed by a **relative**
- 2** Killed by a **romantic rival**
- 5** Killed in domestic violence related incidents

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND PREGNANCY

Pregnancy can often be an especially risky period for victims of domestic violence. Many report their abuse started or intensified when they became pregnant. About 20% of pregnant people experience violence during their pregnancy. The increased risks are even greater for Black pregnant people or those under 20 years old. People with unintended pregnancies are also two to four times more likely to experience physical violence than those with planned pregnancies.

But these statistics only tell part of the story, because abuse of pregnant people is under-identified. Despite being more common than both gestational diabetes and preeclampsia, two conditions for which pregnant people are routinely screened, few healthcare providers screen for domestic violence. Even when screening for domestic violence does occur, some pregnant people, especially those of color, may still not disclose their abuse.

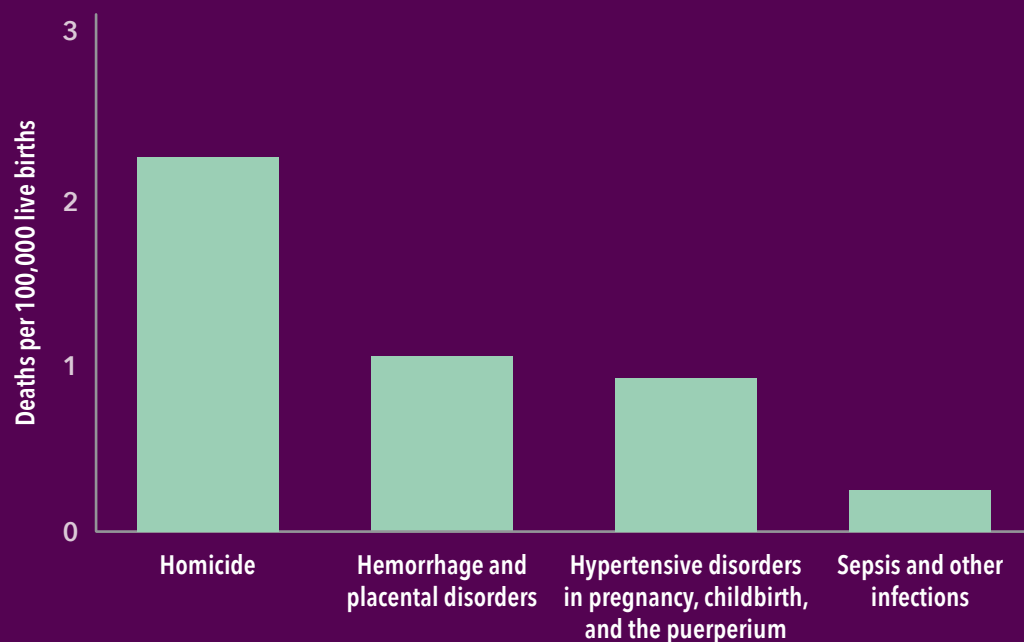
Domestic violence during pregnancy too often leads to deadly outcomes. In fact, **homicide is the leading cause of death among pregnant people in the United States**. Firearms are the leading cause of death for pregnant domestic violence homicide victims. Pennsylvania is no exception to these national trends. Below (and throughout this report) are the stories of a few of the pregnant people who lost their lives to domestic violence in 2021 in Pennsylvania.

A 25-year-old man allegedly shot and killed his 26-year-old partner who was pregnant with his child. The perpetrator had planned to kill his partner when he went to her home. When investigators searched the perpetrator's phone, they found nothing indicating he had told anyone about the child he was having with the victim, but she was messaging him days before the shooting about the baby's gender reveal party. The night of the shooting, the perpetrator left another romantic partner's home and called the victim. Her uncle heard her ask "Are you coming to the front or the back?" before hearing gunshots. Her uncle, who suffers from a physical disability, was unable to walk to the back to see if his niece was involved. The victim was not found until the next morning. The victim's father described her as an amazing human who just wanted to make other people happy, and said she was excited about becoming a mother. Her family has started a foundation to help victims of gun violence in her memory.

20%
**of pregnant
people experience
domestic violence
during their
pregnancy**

A 22-year-old pregnant mother of four was allegedly shot to death in a car by her 24-year-old partner. The victim confided in a friend earlier the day of the shooting that she believed she might be pregnant. She already had one child with the perpetrator, and she told this friend she didn't want this pregnancy to be his baby. On the night of the shooting, the perpetrator was at the victim's home begging for a ride somewhere. The victim asked everyone else in the home if they would go with her to drop off the perpetrator, but no one wanted to go. Less than 90 minutes later, police received a call reporting the shooting, after two witnesses saw the perpetrator run away from the scene. They discovered that the perpetrator had shot his pregnant partner while she was driving him, causing her to crash the car. The victim was described by loved ones as a doting and hardworking mother.

Cause of Death in Pregnant and Post-Partum People in the U.S. (2018-2019)



Wallace, M., Gillispie-Bell, V., Cruz, K., Davis, K., & Vilda, D. (2021). Homicide During Pregnancy and the Postpartum Period in the United States, 2018-2019. *Obstetrics and gynecology*, 138(5), 762-769. <https://doi.org/10.1097/AOG.0000000000004567>.

Homicide is the leading cause of death among pregnant people in the United States.

PCADV'S LETHALITY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

In October 2012, PCADV adopted the Maryland Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) to address the lethal nature of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). LAP is an evidence-based assessment tool used by law enforcement officers responding to intimate partner domestic violence calls. The tool uses a series of questions to determine if the victim is at an increased risk of lethality and helps connect the victim directly with services through the local domestic violence program.

Since its implementation a decade ago, more than 35,000 LAP screens have been conducted in Pennsylvania by law enforcement when responding to intimate partner violence calls. As a result, more than 15,000 victims have sought services from LAP-participating domestic violence programs.



HOMICIDE DASHBOARD

In partnership with the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) and made possible by STOP Grant funding, PCADV in collaboration with the Penn State Data Center, Institute for State and Regional Affairs at the Pennsylvania State University of Harrisburg, developed and maintains a publicly available

Homicide Dashboard. The interactive digital dashboard visually summarizes homicide data we tracked from news accounts, domestic violence programs, and police departments. Information on domestic violence fatalities in PA and the Homicide Dashboard can be accessed at:

[PCADV.org/resources/fatalities](https://www.pcadv.org/resources/fatalities)



A Victim's Story

A 50-year-old man allegedly shot and killed his 47-year-old wife and their two sons (ages 15 and 8) before turning the gun on himself. The perpetrator had purchased the gun just two weeks before the murder-suicide occurred. The wife's brother said that in the months leading up to the killings, the perpetrator had canceled planned family events without offering an explanation. He said it was obvious that his sister wanted to meet, but that her husband wouldn't allow it. Whenever he asked his sister if anything was wrong, she would say no. He became worried for his sister and her family when he had not heard from her in over a week, and so he drove from out of state to check on them. They received no answer when they knocked on the door. Worried, a family member called 911 and asked police to do a welfare check. Upon entering, police discovered the perpetrator and his family deceased in the basement of their home.

HONORING VICTIMS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN PENNSYLVANIA (2021)

Adams County -2

Wanda Baumgardner
James Buss

Allegheny County-18

Katara Lashai Bray
Sally Sines
Christopher Gumm
Nalene Harrell
Brian Devante Jameel Clay
Von Washington
Ana Tratras
John Tratras
Annette Morros
Karli Asti Short
Kai Brown
Aliah Johnson
Helene Nulty
Arquonna Wright
Crystal Leschner
Nandi Fitzgerald
Tatiana "Tay" Hill
Denzel "Buddy" Nowlin, Jr.

Beaver County-4

Jeffrey "JJ" Bright
Jasmine Cannady
John Miklaucic
Chad Hunt

Bedford County-2

Brian Hunter
Michael Claar

Berks County-6

Patricia Baskerville Torres
Katrina Henderson
Eloise Moyer
Heidi Lopez
Phyllis Anderson
Mikerrah C. Page

Blair County-1

Suryadev Aswathappa

Bucks County-2

Jamie Beighley
Charles Thomas, Jr.

Cambria County-2

Tiffany Busch
Jacob Fisher

Carbon County-1

Jeff Beagle

Centre County-1

Robert Farwell

Chester County-7

Arti Madhusudan Ayd
Deborah Brandao
Sharvil Deepak Kulkarni
Shubham Deepak Kulkarni
Kimberly Harris
Jordan Foster
Annabel Rose Meenan

Crawford County-1

Christina Ruhl-Farnsworth

Cumberland County-2

Melissia Hinton-Miller
Joanna R. Miller

Dauphin County-7

Elizabeth Wise
Stanley "Fred" Cooksey
Darius Afshar
Saeed Afshar
Zipporah Afshar
Jeremiah Beamon
Erika Ramos King

Delaware County-2

Rashad Sabree
LaToya Gary

Erie County-5

Madison Zimmer
Zachery Zimmer
Marcus Moore
Amy Hoffer
Rhonda Glover

Fayette County-1

Chad William Lowry

Franklin County-1

Selena Miller

Indiana County-1

Matthew Hill

Lancaster County-7

Mitchell Bewley
Richard Williams
Victoria Preston

Donald Meshey, Sr.
Wesley S. "Big Wes" Frey, Sr.
Alexandria Reynolds
Naraly Archibald

Lawrence County-3

Chyna Cardena
Margaret Kahrer
John Micco, Jr.

Lehigh County-3

Nicolette Law
Jonathan Martinez
Joan Lois Lord Cressman

Luzerne County-3

Mary Susan Barrett
Helena Johnson
Yana Guitson

Mercer County-2

Serena Schoeder
Gretchen Pallack

Mifflin County-1

Betsy Torres

Montgomery County-3

Carla Forde
Adrionne Reaves
Karina Torres

Northampton County-1

Shakeyah Jackson

Northumberland County-2

Richard Karlaza
Sarah E. Jones

Philadelphia County-12

Gladys Coriano
Tyronda Harrington
Christine Gibson
Dianna Brice
Tamara Aiken
Morgan Brxton
Unnamed Male
Unnamed Male
Lindsay Alexis Johnson
Sukea Patton
Eloise Harmon
Margaret Lippi

Schuylkill County-1

Sharon Zimmerman

Washington County-3

Christina Garove
Suzanne DeVos Faingnaert
Dolores Mayberry

Westmoreland County-2

Arthur Hubish
Maria Puskarich

York County-3

Catherine Hartman
Sandra Anderson
Joselito Pagan-Ocasio

PCADV LOCAL PROGRAMS

PCADV has a statewide network of local domestic violence programs that are ready to help.

A Safe Place
Forest and Warren Counties

A Way Out
Potter County

A Woman's Place
Bucks County

Abuse & Rape Crisis Center
Bradford County

Alice Paul House
Indiana County

Alle-Kiski Area HOPE Center
Allegheny and Westmoreland Counties

AWARE
Mercer County

Blackburn Center
Westmoreland County

C.A.P.S.E.A.
Elk and Cameron Counties

Center for Victims
Allegheny County

Centre Safe
Centre County

Community Action/Crossroads Project
Jefferson and Clearfield Counties

Congreso De Latinos Unidos
Philadelphia County

Crisis Center North
Allegheny County

ARISE (Crisis Shelter of Lawrence County)
Lawrence County

Domestic Abuse Project of Delaware County
Delaware County

Domestic Violence Center of Chester County
Chester County

Domestic Violence Intervention of Lebanon County
Lebanon County

Domestic Violence Service Center
Luzerne and Carbon Counties

Domestic Violence Services of Cumberland & Perry Counties
Cumberland and Perry Counties

Domestic Violence Services of Lancaster County
Lancaster County

Domestic Violence Services of Southwestern PA
Washington, Greene, and Fayette Counties

Family Services/ Domestic Abuse Project of Blair County
Blair County

HAVEN of Tioga County
Tioga County

HAVIN
Armstrong County

Huntingdon House
Huntingdon County

Laurel House
Montgomery County

Lutheran Settlement House
Philadelphia County

PPC Violence Free Network
Venango County

Roads to Peace/ Clinton County Women's Center
Clinton County

SAFE (Stop Abuse for Everyone)
Clarion County

Safe Berks
Berks County

Safe Journey
Erie County

SafeNet
Erie County

Schuylkill Hope Center
Schuylkill County

Sullivan County Victim Services
Sullivan County

The Abuse Network
Mifflin and Juniata Counties

Transitions of PA
Union, Snyder, and Northumberland Counties

Turning Point of Lehigh Valley
Lehigh and Northampton Counties

Victim Outreach Intervention Center
Butler County

Victim Services Inc.
Cambria and Somerset Counties

Victims Resource Center
Wyoming County

Victims' Intervention Program
Wayne and Pike Counties

Women Against Abuse
Philadelphia County

Women In Need
Franklin and Fulton Counties

Women In Transition
Philadelphia County

Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh
Allegheny County

Women's Center of Beaver County
Beaver County

The Women's Center, Inc. of Columbia/Montour
Columbia and Montour Counties

Women's Center of Montgomery County
Montgomery County

Women's Resource Center
Lackawanna and Susquehanna Counties

Women's Resources of Monroe County
Monroe County

Women's Services
Crawford County

Your Safe Haven
Bedford County

YWCA Bradford Victims' Resource Center
McKean County

YWCA NorthCentral PA Wise Options
Lycoming County

YWCA of Greater Harrisburg Violence Intervention & Prevention Services
Dauphin County

YWCA of Hanover/Safe Home
Adams County

YWCA York/ACCESS
York County

Visit [PCADV.org](https://www.pcadv.org) to find local programs by location and services offered.