



2025 Impact Report: Focus on Housing

The Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence advocates for the right of all people to live free from domestic abuse and all forms of violence.

Introduction

A safe home is the foundation of a safe life. But for people who've experienced domestic abuse and violence, those two words don't easily go together. Living with an abusive person is dangerous – but too often, getting free means putting one's housing at risk – or losing it altogether.



Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness nationwide for women and children. [Maine's Plan to Prevent & End Homelessness](#) recognizes that meeting the unique needs of victims of abuse is a key part of addressing homelessness overall in our state. MCEDV and our members across Maine provide leadership to meet those needs. Our early grassroots efforts have evolved into a range of programs and strategies to support survivors in securing and retaining housing for themselves and their children. Our statewide office and our network of members across the state are improving the housing status of thousands of Mainers each year. This report explores our impact.

I contacted Through These Doors who eventually transferred me to the care of Safe Voices. I remember walking into that house for the first time and feeling a small bit of safety and hope again. Over the course of almost a year there I worked on obtaining employment, therapy, a vehicle, and the person I used to be before all of this. Advocates supported me mentally, and emotionally. They helped me rebuild myself. – Survivor

Statewide Rapid Rehousing Program

In 2022, MCEDV applied for funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) Domestic Violence Bonus Funds to launch a Rapid Rehousing (RRH) Program. We were awarded a grant for \$526,032. The RRH Program provides rental assistance and supportive services to survivors – either single adults or adults with children – who are fleeing domestic abuse and violence. With these funds, advocates throughout the state have worked to secure housing for survivors, establish connections with landlords, ensure quality dwelling units, and provide holistic wraparound support to those in the program.

MCEDV expanded the Rapid Rehousing program in 2023, and again in 2024, to most recently include 77 vouchers and additional funding for supportive services. In total, MCEDV receives \$1,969,475 from the CoC DV Bonus funds, making it the second largest grant Maine receives in CoC funding.





The continued existence of HUD's DV/SA Bonus Funds is uncertain under the FY 2026 federal budget. Without these funds, our RRH Program is at risk. This program is a critical resource serving individuals and families across Maine. Most of the Mainers served through MCEDV's RRH program are children.

MCEDV's RRH grant also funds outreach services and case management positions at five of Maine's regional Domestic Violence Resource Centers: Caring Unlimited, Family Violence Project, Partners for Peace, Next Step, and Hope and Justice Project. Through case management services, survivors in the RRH Program have easy access to comprehensive and individualized advocacy, safety planning, legal assistance, and housing support. In addition to supporting survivors in the program, RRH Case Managers build relationships with local landlords. Since the launch of the program, advocates have collaborated with 62 unique landlords to support program participants statewide.

In January 2025, MCEDV modified the program so that participants could request rental assistance up to 24 months, rather than just 12. This change came at a critical time, as emergency housing vouchers throughout the state were frozen by Maine Housing in July 2024. With housing vouchers continuing to be in short supply, MCEDV's Rapid Rehousing Program fills a critical gap as the only readily accessible resource for safe and stable housing for survivors in many parts of the state.

RRH Program By the Numbers

181

The number of people housed through RRH since we launched; includes 65 adults and 116 children.

40

The number of Maine towns RRH supported residents, from York to Calais to Limestone, and everywhere in between.

\$1,491

The average monthly rent for program participants.

75%

The percentage of households served in our RRH Program with at least one child.

What Does the RRH Program Offer?

- Rental assistance (up to 100% paid) for 12-24 months, including security deposit, first month's rent, and last month's rent when requested
- Financial assistance up to \$3,300, including:
 - \$500 for moving costs
 - \$1,100 for groceries
 - \$600 for transportation expenses
 - \$1,100 for legal expenses



Direct Financial Assistance Through the Liberation Fund

We believe that survivors know what they need better than anyone else. However, many restricted federal and state funding sources do not permit direct cash assistance to survivors to pay for the very practical things they need, like a new pair of work boots after their partner had destroyed their old ones, or furniture for setting up a new apartment. Historically, the availability of flexible funding for these expenses has been very limited. Too often, the needs simply went unmet.

In response, in 2020, MCEDV worked with generous donors to create the Liberation Fund. This fund exists to enable DVRCs to provide survivors with critical resources and immediate relief to increase their safety and financial stability. It is privately funded, relying on support from donors and foundations to ensure a steady flow of available financial resources.



The AllState Foundation contributed a total of \$29,349 to the Liberation Fund in the last two years, continuing our long history of collaboration around the economic impact of domestic violence.



Since 2020, \$632,043 has been donated and dispersed to over 1,000 survivors in Maine for expenses associated with moving, transportation, legal assistance, and other necessities.

Housing-related expenses are the single biggest expense covered by the Liberation Fund. In many cases, support from the Liberation Fund prevents survivors from becoming homeless in order to escape abuse, by helping secure new housing or by increasing their safety where they are.

Examples of housing-specific needs of survivors addressed by the Liberation Fund:

- A security deposit for a new apartment, in response to stalking and harassment by an ex-partner.
- Trail cameras with night vision to support the safety of a survivor who lived in an isolated location.
- A new wheelchair ramp and U-Haul to support a survivor's relocation.
- Ferry tickets, gas, and new bunkbeds for a survivor fleeing with young children to live with a family member in another part of the state.
- A hotel room for a survivor while law enforcement served her abusive ex-partner with a court order to leave and stay away from their common residence.
- Short term payment of utility bills to prevent disconnection of services and credit damage for a survivor who lost her job because of her abusive partner.
- A new birth certificate, enabling the survivor to meet this requirement for a housing voucher.
- Legal representation to support a survivor in obtaining a court order that granted them the residence and ordered the abusive partner to leave.

DVRC Programs Making a Difference

MCEDV's recent state-level initiatives are adding to the work that regional Domestic Violence Resource Centers have been doing for decades to address the housing needs of survivors and their children. Here's a snapshot:



13 Emergency Sheltering Programs provide refuge for survivors and their children who are fleeing dangerous domestic violence. In 2024, these programs served 542 individuals, including **324 adults and 218 children**. None of the households exiting these programs returned to homelessness.

Funding Spotlight: 11 of the 12 shelters are funded primarily by Maine State Housing Authority's Emergency Shelter and Housing Program (ESHAP). DVRC shelters account for 26% of all ESHAP-funded shelters. Other sources of funding help support the comprehensive wraparound services for shelter residents, including federal victim services grants through the Victims Of Crime Act (VOCA) and the Family Violence Prevention Services Act (FVPSA); Maine State General Funds; MaineCare; United Way; municipal funding; and private donations.



8 Transitional or Supportive Housing Programs provide longer-term, supportive options for individuals and families getting on their feet after experiencing abuse. In 2024, these programs served a total of 261 individuals, including **108 adults and 142 children**. None of the households exiting these programs returned to homelessness.

Funding Spotlight: Four DVRCs fund their Transitional Housing Programs with competitive, discretionary, 3-year grants from the US Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women. These are funds that they apply for and bring into the state that otherwise wouldn't be available. Others rely on a mix of funding from HUD and MaineHousing, and on partnerships with other local agencies, to run their programs. In total, there are 17 FTE Housing Navigators at Maine's DVRCs helping survivors find housing in all parts of the state.



3 DVRCs (Through These Doors, New Hope Midcoast, and Safe Voices) run regional Rapid Re-Housing Programs, complementing the statewide program run by MCEDV. In 2024, these programs served a total of 355 individuals, including **149 adults and 206 children**. None of the households exiting these programs returned to homelessness.

Funding Spotlight: Like MCEDV's RRH Program, these programs are funded with Continuum of Care DV Bonus Funds. Like MCEDV, these DVRCs applied for those funds and successfully obtained them. It's one more example of the federal resources that our network is bringing into the state to address violence.

All DVRCs provide support around housing needs for survivors who never are residents in any of the programs listed above. They help with things like advocating with landlords, providing information about tenant's rights, and locating housing. Much of this work takes place over the 24-hour helpline or in other one-on-one advocacy sessions.



In 2024, DVRC advocates supported 1,402 survivors in 2024 with housing-related advocacy. 99.73% of survivors reported that they had more tools to plan for their safety as a result of individual advocacy support.

All DVRCs help survivors with protection from abuse orders (PFAs), which can play a major role in safely sustaining a survivor's housing and diverting them from homelessness. A PFA can order the abusive person to leave a shared home, and/or to stay away from the survivor's home, regardless of whether it is a shared residence.



In 2024, DVRC court advocacy programs supported 5,980 survivors in obtaining outcomes responsive to their individual safety concerns across Maine's civil and criminal courts. 99.73% of survivors reported that they had more tools to plan for their safety as a result of their work with DVRC court advocates.

Conclusion

Through a range of programs, MCEdV and our network collaborate to meet the housing needs of survivors. We provide emergency refuge for individuals and families fleeing to safety.



We help people locate housing and offer long-term transitional support. We provide flexible financial assistance to fill the gaps where government funding doesn't fit. And our Court Advocacy Programs help survivors obtain relief from the courts to increase safety, regardless of where they are living. Our comprehensive model of safety-focused support for domestic violence survivors and their children is unique among homelessness providers in Maine.

Over five decades, we have created a set of highly effective services, in response to the unique needs of the people we serve. It isn't enough. There aren't enough shelter beds or affordable housing units for all the survivors who need them. Funding constraints continue to limit our efforts to build and make progress. We know what survivors need, and we know how to do it. MCEdV will keep advocating to ensure that every survivor is able to obtain the support and resources they deserve to enjoy peace at home.

We are the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence.



Connecting People, Creating Frameworks for Change.

www.mcedv.org