



PRESS RELEASE

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In Honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, DHS Builds Capacity to Serve Survivors

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – Washington, DC—Today the Department of Human Services (DHS) announced new efforts to improve services for individuals experiencing domestic violence.

“We know that domestic violence can often lead to a housing emergency,” said DHS Director Laura Zeilinger. “Roughly 1 in 4 families who are experiencing homelessness have suffered abuse at the hands of an intimate partner and roughly 8% are experiencing homelessness as a direct result of that abuse. We want to do everything we can to ensure these families have access to the services and supports they need.”

DHS is announcing the recipients of the FY18 Family Violence Prevention and Services Program Grant Awards, which include:

- **\$ 1,869,515 to provide shelter services;**
- **\$ 100,000 to expand capacity for counseling and case management;** and
- **\$ 100,000 to increase outreach services.**

This funding represents a 5% increase from the Department’s FY17 awards and will go directly to the following partners: the District Alliance for Safe Housing, House of Ruth, My Sister’s Place, Mary’s Center, DC Survivors and Advocates for Empowerment, and Community Family Life Services, and the Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project.

In addition, in FY18 DHS will add new staffing support at the Virginia Williams Family Resource Center (VWFRC) to assist families fleeing from domestic violence. In doing so, VWFRC will increase capacity to quickly and effectively respond to survivors needs after hours in addition to usual business hours.

Incorporating safeguards to protect survivors and their families is an essential part of work at DHS—whether it is connecting survivors to housing, providing resources to survivors to meet their basic needs, or incorporating information about domestic violence into day-to-day operations. DHS has and will continue to ensure that the safety of District residents is a top priority.