



Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

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OPDV Transparency Initiative

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DELIVERABLES ACHIEVED SINCE 2021

1. **Increasing participation of agency personnel in community events and town meetings and providing new avenues for public participation in government decision-making.**

Key to OPDV's mission is fostering public awareness about the nature and impact of gender-based violence on individuals and families; its collateral consequences to the community, the workforce and the health and safety of the State; and the importance of holding offenders accountable and helping victims and survivors get the services and support they need. One of OPDV's top priorities is incorporating the input of survivors and other key stakeholders into all policies proposed by the agency. In keeping with this commitment, OPDV created opportunities to gather policy recommendations in several forums.

The agency serves as a centralized clearinghouse for information and best practices in the field; develops awareness campaigns targeting specific audiences to educate about different facets of gender-based violence and its impact; and offers online and printed materials designed for use by service providers, advocates, and professionals in other fields, including law enforcement, education and healthcare, among others. At the end of 2023, OPDV onboarded its first Public Information Officer to help disseminate useful information to the public and those impacted by gender-based violence.

Additional initiatives include:

- **Survivor Listening Sessions:** Survivor listening sessions are an opportunity for survivors to directly communicate needs and ideas with OPDV. These provide inspiration for policy and OPDV's programmatic agenda. The feedback from these sessions underscores how trauma is exacerbated when systems blame, criminalize, and disregard survivors' experiences. The feedback gathered in the first round of these sessions in 2021 is documented in the [first Survivor Listening Sessions report](#), published in January 2022. Building on this work, OPDV held six listening sessions in 2022, involving 27 survivors, and four listening sessions in 2023, involving 24 survivors, through partnerships with domestic and gender-based violence providers. In 2022 and 2023, OPDV also hosted two student listening sessions involving 12 survivors, in partnership with an Enough is Enough (EiE) grantee programs. In keeping with best practices, survivors are compensated for their time and knowledge-sharing and sessions are held in a trauma-informed, professionally facilitated setting. A report will be forthcoming in 2024.

- **Monthly Provider Calls and Calls with Advocacy Groups:** At the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, OPDV started weekly statewide calls to support domestic violence service providers with information, resources, and news from State funding agencies. The calls now take place monthly and continue to see robust participation (averaging 100 participants per call) and provide an avenue for transparent, direct communication with the field. Additionally, OPDV holds monthly calls with the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault, and Prevent Child Abuse New York to ensure that the organizations and their members have direct access to funders and State policymakers to raise concerns and get information necessary to their work within their communities. Additionally, outside of these occurrences OPDV senior staff proactively and regularly conduct outreach to organizations to seek out any emergent concerns and questions.
 - **Domestic Violence Regional Councils (DVRCs):** As the cornerstone of OPDV's policy engagement process and as a means of ongoing communication within the field, DVRCs convene representatives from the State's 10 economic development regions and various State agencies to troubleshoot systemic issues and inform the work of the New York State Domestic Violence Advisory Council (operated through OPDV). For the first time since their inception in 2020, Domestic Violence Regional Councils met in person in 2023. A [DVRC report](#) summarizing cross-regional needs and current efforts was published in 2022.
 - **Policy Listening Sessions:** In 2022 and 2023, OPDV hosted several policy listening sessions for stakeholders and the public. Participants highlighted the need for an updated funding model, solutions to the workforce crisis providers are facing, and ways to address Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding cuts.
2. **Making additional information available to the public on your website, or using social and/or other media, while upholding the State's commitment to language access.**
- **Website:** [OPDV's website](#) hosts a variety of information for the public including Governor's announcements, agency initiatives, public awareness campaigns, training dates, and other services that promote transparency. The most important part of the website is its ability to get resources to survivors in crisis. From orders of protection to information about post-sexual assault and financial compensation, 164,057 individuals visited these resources on our website, representing about 46% of all website traffic. In this digital age, when technology- assisted abuse is being perpetrated in record amounts, the continued expansion of OPDV's website is critical.
 - **Social Media:** OPDV uses social media platforms – [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) (now known as X), [Instagram](#), [Flickr](#) and [YouTube](#) – to implement its statutory mandate to conduct public awareness and education. These are the primary communication vehicles for public awareness, education, and policy campaigns. Since the beginning of the

pandemic, online communication continues to be the most effective means of reaching survivors and the public. The agency's primary campaign this year is a continuation of last year's "Start the Conversation": a campaign to fight the epidemic of gender-based violence by going beyond discussion to enlist the community in combating stereotypes and engaging in existing systemic responses. In 2022, OPDV social media gathered 238,115 impressions across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. In recognition months (April, October) when additional resources are applied to social media campaigns, there is a large increase in metrics for those months. The largest campaign month was October for Domestic Violence Awareness Month when impressions reached 67,226 for the month.

- **Data Dashboard:** The [New York State Gender-Based Violence Dashboard](#) (Dashboard) contains statistical information detailing the State's response to domestic and gender-based violence. The Dashboard has been published by OPDV since 2007, with Dashboards dating back to 2015 available online. In 2022, OPDV met with all state agencies that provide OPDV with data for the dashboard to make sure it reflects all the agencies' current data on whether and how individuals who encounter a system, whether it be Courts, law enforcement, health, or social services, have experienced domestic or gender-based violence. This has allowed OPDV to better quantify available information to better inform local and state decision-making, policies, and programs.
- **Public Service Announcement:** OPDV's most successful use of digital media in 2022 was the use of the public service announcement (PSA). To expand OPDV's reach to men and boys, who play an integral role in ending gender-based violence, the agency worked with Media Services Center to develop the PSA: "[Start the Conversation: Engaging Men and Boys](#)." This PSA is part of the larger 'Start the Conversation' campaign described above. The PSA has expanded OPDV's reach to new partnerships and unique allies including Syracuse University, Columbia University, the MAAC Tournament, and the New York State Public High School Association (NYSPHSA) Championships.
- **Survey Data:** In 2022, OPDV conducted a public opinion poll of 5,000 New Yorkers to develop a clear understanding of the common misconceptions about domestic and gender-based violence that exist across New York State.
- **Language Access:** OPDV continues its commitment to Language Access and has a [Language Access Plan](#) that has been reviewed and approved by the Office of Language Access effective October 1, 2022. All staff are provided information and training on protocols for best practices for providing language access. OPDV also has a Language Access Coordinator who ensures compliance with the plan.

INITIATIVES TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN 2024

1. OPDV plans to build upon our work with the State Archives to finalize its records management policy this year. In updating the OPDV operations manual, OPDV staff plan to include guidance on the required amount of time certain records are required to be retained and the process for evaluation the need to transfer or archive any records or transmit them to the New York State Library.
2. In 2024, OPDV will be updating our internal Operations Manual, which includes instructions to all staff about required reporting under Project Sunlight.
3. OPDV will continue to prioritize making information about its learning available to the public by publishing reports on our work. In 2024, OPDV plans to issue three updated reports detailing our work with the Domestic Violence Regional Councils, Survivor Listening Sessions, and the Fatality Review team.