

## THE INTERSECTION OF HOUSING INSTABILITY & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

### Housing insecurity and domestic violence are fundamentally linked—

neither can be solved without addressing the other. Housing insecurity is a primary reason why survivors across genders and age ranges stay in abusive relationships and why children continue to be exposed to domestic violence—a key risk factor for future perpetration and chronic health conditions. Unstable housing and homelessness make survivors and children vulnerable to new forms of violence, creating a still greater risk that the cycle of violence will continue into new generations.



### Addressing the Issue of Domestic Violence and Homelessness in California

Homelessness is a growing problem in California. Affordable housing across the state is scarce, and lack of housing can result in domestic violence with survivors making the impossible choice between staying in an abusive relationship or becoming homeless.

150,000

The number of California's residents that sleep in shelters, cars, or on the street<sup>6</sup>

18,808

The number of domestic violence survivors and children who stayed in California's domestic violence emergency shelters in FY18-19<sup>7</sup>

58%

Percentage of Californians who have been touched by domestic violence<sup>8</sup>

6-24%

Percentage of the total homeless population who are survivors of domestic violence<sup>9</sup>

55%

Percentage increase between 2013 and 2016 of women in Los Angeles County who experienced homelessness<sup>10</sup>

## California's Domestic Violence Housing First Effort

In California, the Domestic Violence Housing First model is being implemented as an innovative program that responds to the specific needs of survivors with the flexibility required to tailor responses to their individual needs. The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services currently funds 65 agencies across the state to deliver the Domestic Violence Housing First model. The program supports the housing and financial stability of domestic violence survivors and their families through three main pillars:

1

**Flexible financial assistance to help cover the costs of issues directly related to housing or funds that are crucial to housing stability, well-being, and safety for survivors and their families**



They helped me with my deposit, furniture, and beds, living room set, dinner set, and dressers. They help me with diapers and clothing for my 1-year old. We have not had any of these items in years.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOUSING FIRST PARTICIPANT

2

**Survivor-driven, trauma-informed mobile advocacy to focus on the needs identified by survivors rather than pre-determined needs established by agencies**



We've come to learn more about the problems that we have with the domestic violence victims out in the community and how there is not enough resources for them.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOUSING FIRST AGENCY STAFF

3

**Community engagement with housing and other services providers, like car mechanics and furniture moving companies, as well as other members to promote a positive and supportive response to survivors**



I am a cancer survivor and I have a special needs adult son. It is very tough getting by financially, that I sometimes felt it may be better to tolerate the abuse than to suffer financially.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOUSING FIRST PARTICIPANT

## The Impact of the Domestic Violence Housing First on Californians

The Domestic Violence Housing First model has made a significant positive impact on the intersection of domestic violence and homelessness in California.

**\$3 MILLION +**

The amount of flexible funds distributed over the course of 21 months at the 19 agencies studied in the evaluation

**40%**

Percentage of survivors who used financial assistance to obtain new housing

**58%**

Percentage of survivors who used flexible financial assistance to prevent homelessness

**62%**

Percentage of total funding used toward rental assistance. The rest was used for a wide range of expenses, including food, safety measures, transportation, processing fees for utility payments, and childcare costs.

## The Continued Need and Opportunity

Neither homelessness nor domestic violence can be solved without addressing the other. Ensuring the health and well-being of all Californians requires a continued investment in combatting these issues in tandem. Expanding the Domestic Violence Housing First model to reach every community in California will help address the state's homelessness crisis by preventing domestic violence survivors from becoming homeless and providing options to re-house those who are at risk of becoming homeless.

1 "Pressing Issues Facing Families Who Are Homeless." The National Center on Family Homelessness, 2013

2 Clough, A., Draughon, J. E., Njie-Carr, V., Rollins, C., & Glass, N. (2014). "Having housing made everything else possible": Affordable, safe and stable housing for women survivors of violence. *Qualitative Social Work*, 13(5), 671-688.

3 Homeless Children and Youth, Causes and Consequences. National Center for Children in Poverty.

4 Pavao, J., Alvarez, J., Baumrind, N., Induni, M., & Kimerling, R. (2007) Intimate Partner Violence and Housing Instability. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 32(2), 143-146.

5 Breiding, M. J., Chen, J., & Black, M. C. (2014). Intimate partner violence in the United States – 2010. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

6 Continuums of Care to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); [https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-homeless-populations-and-subpopulations-reports/?filter\\_Year=&filter\\_Scope=State&filter\\_State=CA&filter\\_CoC=&program=Coc&group=PopSub](https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-homeless-populations-and-subpopulations-reports/?filter_Year=&filter_Scope=State&filter_State=CA&filter_CoC=&program=Coc&group=PopSub)

7 Joint Legislative Budget Committee Report, California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, Grants Management Victim Services & Public Safety Division. March 2020.

8 [https://blueshieldcafoundation.org/sites/default/files/covers/DV%20Report%209.26\\_FINAL.pdf](https://blueshieldcafoundation.org/sites/default/files/covers/DV%20Report%209.26_FINAL.pdf)

9 As counted on a single night in January over the five year period of 2015-2019. [https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-homeless-populations-and-subpopulations-reports/?filter\\_Year=&filter\\_Scope=State&filter\\_State=CA&filter\\_CoC=&program=Coc&group=PopSub](https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/coc/coc-homeless-populations-and-subpopulations-reports/?filter_Year=&filter_Scope=State&filter_State=CA&filter_CoC=&program=Coc&group=PopSub)

10 <https://www.lafisa.org/documents?id=1385-2017-homeless-count-results-los-angeles-county-presentation.pdf>