

**Support increased funding of domestic violence services for victims and their children and for**

**domestic violence offender treatment (DVOT)**

* Domestic violence victims across the state require more intensive and longer-term services than ever before. Many suffer from physical and mental health problems, substance abuse, chronic poverty, and homelessness due to the abuse experienced. Even while client needs are increasing, **the fee for service schedule has remained unchanged for 20 years.**
* Service providers lost 4 million dollars from their budgets in 2009-2010 due to the recession. **Funds have yet to return to pre-recession levels**.
* Turnover is extremely high in domestic violence organizations: 40% nationally each year for staff, and 211% over the past 5 years for Executive Directors in New Mexico. Domestic violence staff work in extremely challenging environments serving victims and children who have experienced serious trauma and violence. They do this work for low wages and few benefits. Research shows that **when front line workers are paid fairly, turnover decreases, violence against victims and their families is reduced, and victim wellbeing is increased.**
* Domestic violence offender programs have been reliant on fines for two thirds of their funding. Those fines have decreased dramatically in the last few years. Holding offenders accountable is crucial to addressing domestic violence in our communities. **Offender programs need immediate and stable funding to continue to operate until the reasons for the decline in fines is determined and addressed.**
* New Mexico is getting an increase of approximately 4 million dollars from federal funding sources, but those funds require a 20% match that most programs cannot meet. **State funds are critically needed to obtain federal funding.** An additional investment of 1 million dollars from the State of New Mexico will yield a total of 5 million dollars that can be used to address the growing needs of our citizens harmed by domestic violence each year.
* In many areas, **the domestic violence program is one of only a few organizations that provide help to families and in some places it is the only service available**.

Contact: Pam Wiseman, Executive Director, pwiseman@nmcadv.org, 505-554-5973

Gwyn Kaitis, Policy Coordinator, gwyn@nmcadv.org, 505-490-7745