

Violence Free Iowa FAQ

What is Violence Free Iowa: The Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence?

Violence Free Iowa is the statewide federally designated sexual and domestic violence coalition. Violence free Iowa leads and supports a statewide coalition of 25 victim service provider organizations advancing sexual assault and domestic violence prevention efforts, crisis intervention, and long-term stability. Together, we're working to create communities where everyone can feel safe, heal, and thrive.

What does Violence Free Iowa do?

Violence Free Iowa works alongside victim service provider organizations to help strengthen their work and improve how Iowa prevents and responds to sexual assault and domestic abuse.

Our work includes but is not limited to:

- Training and technical assistance for victim service providers and advocates.
- Resources and support to help organizations enhance their programs.
- Statewide clearinghouse for anti-gender-based violence information, resources, and subject matter expertise.
- Capacity building for sexual assault and domestic violence prevention efforts.
- Public policy and victim services funding advocacy.
- Connecting communities, services, policymakers, and systems.
- Legal services for sexual assault and domestic violence survivors and their families.
- Expert witness testimony (as capacity allows).

How did we get here?

For more than four decades, the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV) and the Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault (IowaCASA) worked together to provide statewide leadership to a shared network of victim service provider organizations through trauma-informed training, coordination, and public policy change. This work strengthened sexual and domestic violence victim services across the state and united individual organizations, cross-sector partners, and policymakers to address the needs of survivors.

Earlier this year, their boards and leadership announced a collaborative decision to centralize coalition sexual and domestic violence responsibilities at ICADV, including training and education, technical assistance, prevention, and public policy advocacy representing victim service provider organizations across Iowa.

Now, that work moves forward under a new name - Violence Free Iowa: The Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence.

Why “Violence Free Iowa”?

The name puts the goal first. “Violence Free Iowa” reflects the future we are building, not the problem we are responding to, but the outcome we are working toward. It also reflects the full scope of our mission to address sexual assault and domestic violence, which remain distinct and equally central priorities of our work.

Our responsibility in addressing sexual violence includes dedicated staff with years of state and national victim advocacy experience, broader training and technical assistance, and strengthened capacity to support sexual assault prevention, intervention, and response.

Getting here took time, listening, and learning. Survivors, sexual assault comprehensive program staff, culturally specific program staff, coalition members, our team, and other key stakeholders shared their experiences and feedback throughout the process. Their input and the expertise, creativity, and leadership of outside marketing consultants guided the rebranding effort.

Who is part of Violence Free Iowa?

Violence Free Iowa is a membership-based organization, a coalition of 25 independent, nonprofit victim service provider organizations serving communities across all 99 Iowa counties. These organizations work directly with survivors impacted by sexual assault, domestic violence, human trafficking, stalking, child abuse, homicide, and other violent crimes.

Victim service provider organizations bring their direct service experience and community knowledge to our collective work. Violence Free Iowa connects and supports that expertise statewide through trauma-informed training and education, technical assistance, shared resources, prevention efforts, and public policy advocacy.

Have services for survivors changed?

No. Direct services and support for survivors of sexual and domestic violence remain available. Direct victim services continue through Violence Free Iowa's network of 25 member programs reaching communities across all 99 Iowa counties.

These services include but are not limited to:

- 24/7 crisis support.
- Access to safe emergency housing.
- Medical accompaniment.
- Court and legal advocacy.
- Counseling and support groups.
- Transportation.
- Connections to community resources and support.

If you or someone you know needs help, reach out to your local victim service program or visit [ViolenceFreeIowa.org](https://www.violencefreeiowa.org) to connect with an advocate in your community. You can also call the Iowa Victim Services Call Center at 1.800.770.1560 or text "iowahelp" to 20121. All services are free and confidential.

What is Violence Free Iowa's national impact?

Violence Free Iowa brings experience and perspective to national policy conversations about sexual assault and domestic violence. We work alongside national partners, including the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) and the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (NAESV), to advocate for federal policies and funding that support survivors and strengthen victim services.

This work builds upon decades of leadership and advocacy by ICADV and IowaCASA, which helped expand access to safe, stable housing; advance new approaches to victim services; and increase funding for sexual assault services.

How can I support Violence Free Iowa?

There is a role for every Iowan in creating communities that thrive free from violence. You can learn more about sexual assault and domestic violence, support prevention efforts, advocate for effective public policies and sustainable funding, champion your local victim service organization, donate to support Violence Free Iowa's statewide work, and stay connected with us at www.violencefreeiowa.org.