

Gov. Evers: Announces additional \$2.7 million investment in domestic violence programs and emergency and homelessness shelter services

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today announced an additional \$2.7 million investment in domestic violence programs, as well as emergency and homelessness shelter services, including \$1 million for the Sojourner Family Peace Center, \$1.2 million for Safe Shelter and Homelessness Grants, and \$500,000 for homeless case management services through the State Shelter Subsidy Grant Program. Gov. Evers' investments announced today will help ensure support and services are available for families and individuals who need them.

“We know the past few years have been tough on folks and families across the state, both financially and emotionally, and that many are at risk for homelessness or facing unstable or unsafe housing situations,” said Gov. Evers. “These investments today will help ensure folks have safe, secure, and stable housing, especially as we head into the colder months of the year, and the support they need to overcome some really unthinkable challenges in their lives. As a state, we have a responsibility and a moral obligation to step up and help those who need a hand—that’s what being a Wisconsinite is all about, and it’s the right thing to do.”

The \$1 million investment in domestic violence programming will go to the Milwaukee County Domestic Violence High Risk Team (DVHRT), which operates from and is coordinated by the Sojourner Family Peace Center. This additional funding will enable the DVHRT to build staffing capacity for domestic violence cases that are at high risk for lethality. The DVHRT is multidisciplinary and includes representatives from Sojourner Family Peace Center, the Milwaukee Police

Department, the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office, and the Wisconsin Department of Corrections.

"This money will save lives," said Carmen Pitre, president and CEO of Sojourner Family Peace Center. "The Domestic Violence High Risk Team was launched in 2017 without the funding needed to support the work. Since that time, the level of lethal violence has increased in our community. These funds will allow the team to dedicate the staff needed to manage additional cases of near-fatal violence which will lead to more lives saved."

In July 2021, the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families' (DCF) domestic abuse program received \$2 million in (American Rescue Plan Act) ARPA funds to support a Domestic Violence Housing First (DVHF) Pilot Program. Subsequently, DCF allocated \$4.4 million in Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) ARPA funds to serve domestic violence survivors and families by expanding the DVHF pilot.

DVHF is a proven, evidence-based practice that moves domestic violence survivors into safe, stable, permanent housing as quickly as possible. Once housed, survivors have access to supportive, holistic advocacy resources to rebuild their lives. Four key components of a DVHF model include: a survivor-driven approach, trauma-informed and mobile services, flexible financial assistance, and multifaceted community engagement.

Through the available funding, DCF was able to support nine providers, in addition to funding a training and technical assistance provider and evaluation partner. DCF is allocating an additional \$1.2 million in ARPA funding towards the DVHF pilot to extend the life of the pilot, serve more clients and their families, and enhance the ability for programs to embed this new practice in their agencies. Currently, the program is set to sunset in December 2024, and this additional funding will allow for more clients to be served through September 2025.

"Having access to comprehensive services in a safe environment is critical for survivors and their families to navigate their healing journey and rebuild their lives," said DCF Secretary Emilie Amundson. "This funding is helping us build our network of trusted service providers and ensure survivors have the necessary supports needed to thrive. I am extremely grateful for the governor's continued investment in Wisconsin's children, families, and communities."

DCF is also directing \$800,000 in investments toward their basic services contracts with domestic violence shelter providers. New basic services contracts will be awarded in January, and this additional funding will help current grantees through the shift to a consolidated approach to funding.

In addition to these investments in domestic violence programming, today's announcement includes \$500,000 for [homeless case management services](#) through the State Shelter Subsidy Grant Program and \$1.2 million in Safe Shelter and Homelessness Grants to help Wisconsinites experiencing homelessness and the shelters that serve them during cold weather months. This investment is in addition to the \$6 million Gov. Evers [invested](#) in Safe Shelter and Homelessness Grants in the fall of 2021 for shelters, as well as youth homelessness and runaway shelters, bringing the total investment to \$7.7 million.

Gov. Evers serves as the chair of the Governor's Interagency Council on Homelessness, and the \$500,000 investment in homeless case management services was a recommendation from the Council's 2021-23 Report, [Welcoming Wisconsin Home](#). The report identified key strategies to address homelessness issues across the state and recommended increased funding for case management services and expanding wraparound services that provide stability for families and individuals experiencing homelessness. Funding for these services was also previously proposed in the governor's 2021-23 biennial budget proposal, but was rejected by Republicans in the Legislature.

"Figuring out how to access government and community services can be difficult for anyone, but it is especially challenging for people who are already struggling to find a safe place to sleep at night," said Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) Secretary-designee Kathy Blumenfeld. "Investing in homeless case management services and shelter services will help Wisconsinites when and where they need it most so they can get back on their feet and find a safe and stable home. This is the right thing to do, and I'm grateful for the governor's continued investments."

Last winter, 42 emergency homeless shelters across the state received grant dollars. These funds helped 21,123 individuals experiencing homelessness receive 1,204,484 total shelter nights. Without the additional funding, many Wisconsinites would have been left on the streets during the coldest months of the year.

The state of Wisconsin also recently received \$173,646.87 in reallocated Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG-CV), which will be used to complete outstanding

homelessness prevention and assistance projects.

Gov. Evers' investments announced today are funded by ARPA. The Safe Shelter and Homelessness Grants, State Shelter Subsidy Grant, and the Homeless Case Management Services Grant are administered by DOA. More information is available on the Division of Energy, Housing, and Community Resources [website](#).

An online version of this release is available [here](#).