

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(1)

TO: Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: March 3, 2026

FROM: Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Resolution approving
the Miami-Dade County
Domestic Violence Oversight
Board's Comprehensive
Domestic Violence Plan

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Marleine Bastien.



Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

GBK/wm

MDC001



MEMORANDUM
(Revised)

TO: Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: March 3, 2026

FROM: 
Gen Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Agenda Item No. 11(A)(1)

Please note any items checked.

- “3-Day Rule” for committees applicable if raised**
- 6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing**
- 4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing**
- Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget**
- Budget required**
- Statement of fiscal impact required**
- Statement of social equity required**
- Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Mayor’s report for public hearing**
- No committee review**
- Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3’s present , 2/3 membership ____, 3/5’s ____, unanimous ____, majority plus one ____, CDMP 7 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) ____, CDMP 2/3 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3) (h) or (4)(c) ____, CDMP 9 vote requirement per 2-116.1(4)(c) (2) ____) to approve**
- Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required**

Approved _____ Mayor
Veto _____
Override _____

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(1)
3-3-26

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OVERSIGHT BOARD'S
COMPREHENSIVE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PLAN

WHEREAS, the Miami-Dade County Domestic Violence Oversight Board (“DVOB”) is the County advisory board charged with, among other things, advising the Board of County Commissioners (“Board”) as to all issues that affect or relate to domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, the responsibilities of the DVOB include submitting to this Board “a comprehensive plan, budget and specific recommendations for use of the portion of food and beverage tax proceeds” collected in accordance with section 212.0306, Florida Statutes, and dedicated to the construction and operation of domestic violence center within the County (hereinafter “the plan”); and

WHEREAS, the plan is required by section 212.0306, Florida Statutes, and section 2-983 of the Code of Miami-Dade County (“Code”); and

WHEREAS, the DVOB is further tasked with annually reviewing the plan to ensure that it continues to serve the needs of the community and victims of domestic violence and recommending any needed amendments and modifications to the Board; and

WHEREAS, the Board approved a plan provided by the DVOB in 1996, through Resolution No. R-940-96; and

WHEREAS, this plan was updated once in 2010, via Resolution No. R-751-10, and again in 2019, via Resolution No. R-763-19; and

WHEREAS, at its November 19, 2025 meeting, the DVOB unanimously approved a new updated plan, attached hereto as Exhibit 1, to replace the prior plan and to better address the current needs of the community and domestic violence victims and survivors,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that this Board approves the attached Miami-Dade County Domestic Violence Oversight Board Comprehensive Domestic Violence Plan, 2025, and the recommendations contained therein.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Marleine Bastien. It was offered by Commissioner _____, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner _____ and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Anthony Rodriguez, Chairman | |
| Kionne L. McGhee, Vice Chairman | |
| Marleine Bastien | Juan Carlos Bermudez |
| Sen. René García | Oliver G. Gilbert, III |
| Roberto J. Gonzalez | Keon Hardemon |
| Danielle Cohen Higgins | Vicki L. Lopez |
| Natalie Milian Orbis | Raquel A. Regalado |
| Micky Steinberg | |

The Chairperson thereupon declared this resolution duly passed and adopted this 3rd day of March, 2026. This resolution shall become effective upon the earlier of (1) 10 days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the County Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board, or (2) approval by the County Mayor of this resolution and the filing of this approval with the Clerk of the Board.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
BY ITS BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

JUAN FERNANDEZ-BARQUIN, CLERK

By: _____
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
to form and legal sufficiency.

LCK

Leigh C. Kobrinski



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OVERSIGHT BOARD COMPREHENSIVE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PLAN 2025

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Miami Dade County Domestic Violence Oversight Board (DVOB) is pleased to provide its updated Miami-Dade County Domestic Violence Plan (the “Plan”) for the Board of County Commissioner’s (BCC) adoption. This Plan replaces the current plan which was approved by the BCC in 1996 through Resolution No. R-940-96, updated in 2010 through Resolution No. R-751-10, and amended in 2019 through Resolution No. R-763-19.

A. Statutory Obligations and Requirements

Section 212.0306, Florida Statutes provides for the levy of a local option food and beverage tax (“Food and Beverage Tax”), of which tax proceeds of 15 percent shall be used for the construction and operation of domestic violence centers. Section 7 of the statute provides:

Each county shall also appoint an oversight board including, but not limited to, service providers, domestic violence victim advocates, members of the judiciary, concerned citizens, a victim of domestic violence, and impacted jurisdictions ***to prepare and submit to the governing board of the county for its approval a plan for disbursing the funds made available for the construction and operation of domestic violence centers.*** Each member of the county’s governing board shall appoint a member, and the county manager shall appoint two members, to the oversight board. (emphasis added).

In July 1993, the BCC adopted Ordinance No. 93-75 enacting the Food and Beverage Tax. Consistent with statutory requirements, in 1994, the BBC adopted Ordinance No. 94-156, codified in Chapter 2, Article LXVI of the Code of Miami-Dade County, Florida (“Code”) creating the DVOB and enlarging the DVOB’s oversight role beyond the specified function set forth in section 212.0306, Florida Statutes.

B. Miami-Dade County Ordinance Obligations and Requirements

Section 2-893 of the Code states that the DVOB shall have the following powers, duties, functions and responsibilities:

1. To serve in an advisory capacity to the BCC with respect to all issues affecting or relating to domestic violence;
2. ***To submit to the BCC a comprehensive plan, budget and specific recommendations for use of the portion of the food and beverage tax proceeds dedicated to the provision of domestic violence shelters (hereinafter referred to as "the plan") which shall address the following issues:***
 - a. ***The construction and operation of domestic violence shelters, and the expansion of existing domestic violence shelters;***
 - b. ***The maximization of funds by matching available Federal and State funds;***
 - c. ***The relationship between domestic violence centers, the courts, police, other criminal justice agencies and social services;***
 - d. ***Other issues that the board finds relevant and necessary.***

This plan shall be specific and shall, to the extent practical, detail intended programs, the nature of facilities to be assisted, identify potential complimentary or leveraged funding sources and the amount of funds which could be generated from such sources.

3. To review the plan annually to assure that the plan continues to serve the needs of the total community and victims of domestic violence and to recommend any needed amendments, deletions or modifications to the BCC. The BCC shall only have the power to amend the plan by an affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority.

In furtherance of its statutory and local imposed obligations, the DVOB respectfully presents its updated Plan.

II. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A. Collection and Utilization of F&B Tax for Domestic Violence¹

1. Proceeds Collected 1993 to Date Food & Beverage Tax for Domestic Violence

Proceeds collected \$91,281,167.20
Fund Balance FY 23-24 \$23,378,555.49

2. Proceeds Collected Annually

Annual average collections: Past 5 Years: \$5.458 M

3. Proceeds Used for the Construction of Shelters

a. Shelter 1: Safe Space Central (previously The Lodge)

- Opening Year: 2004
- Cost \$4,067,538
- Adopted Operational Budget: FY 24-25 \$2,304,564
- Capacity: 40 beds at opening, later expanded to 48 beds and 9 cribs.
- Additional costs: The roof was replaced in 2020 with DV F&B Tax funding at a cost of \$248,140.00.

b. Shelter 2: Empowerment Center South

- Opening Year: 2021
- Construction Cost Budgeted: \$16,446,000 Actual: \$18,902,227.00
- Adopted Operational Budget: FY 24-25 \$2,389,162
- Capacity: 59 beds and a kennel to accommodate pets
- Additional information: available land for potential expansion development

B. Community Awareness and Advocacy

1. Service and Structural Enhancements

a. Public Engagement Committee

Provides recommendations to the DVOB strategies to raise community awareness of domestic and intimate partner violence (DV/IPV) issues and needs. The committee carries out this mission through its pillars of education, outreach, and development activities.

b. DVOB Trust Fund

In 2021, the DVOB sought BCC Sponsorship of the DVOB Trust Fund to support the activities of the Public Engagement Committee. Trust Fund approved by the BCC in October 2022.

¹ Source: Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust (HT) for information in Section II A, sub-sections 1, 2, and 3.

c. Centralized Hotline

In response to survivor and community partner feedback in 2020, the DVOB recommended the creation of a centralized hotline and shelter placement process. This initiative created a unified shelter hotline and centralized placement team, eliminating the need for victims to call multiple hotlines.

d. Strategic Partnership

To address shelter capacity issues, the DVOB facilitated a partnership between Lotus House and Community Action and Human Services Department (CASHD) to transfer survivors whose safety was secured but lacked housing to Lotus House and conversely transfer those in homeless shelters with unresolved safety concerns to domestic violence shelters.

2. Community Awareness Events and Presentations

a. First Responders Victims' Rights Roundtable

During National Crime Victims' Rights Week in April 2025, the First Responders Victims' Rights Roundtable brought together community members in Liberty City—an area disproportionately affected by domestic and intimate partner violence—to discuss victims' rights and local response efforts. The event drew 58 attendees, and the DVOB extends its gratitude to the Neighbors and Neighbors Association and the Circle of Brotherhood for their continued partnership.

b. Film Screenings of "The Last Drop"

Originally scheduled for October 2024 but postponed due to Hurricane Milton, the Film Screenings of *The Last Drop* took place in October 2025 during National Domestic Violence Awareness Month (NDVAM). The program featured a powerful film exploring the often-overlooked early signs of relationship abuse that can escalate into violence, followed by a panel discussion with the film's director and local experts. Screenings were held at the University of Miami and Florida International University, drawing 63 and 31 attendees, respectively.

c. Miami-Dade Association of Chiefs of Police

The DVOB's Public Engagement Committee (PEC) presented key updates to the Miami-Dade Association of Chiefs of Police, emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts to strengthen community awareness around domestic and intimate partner violence. Law enforcement agencies were encouraged to appoint a liaison to the DVOB to support ongoing coordination and outreach initiatives.

d. United Way Funded Agencies

The DVOB's PEC Chair and Executive Director, together with CAHSD, presented to United Way-funded agencies, highlighting the board's work and available DV/IPV resources and services. The presentation reached a wide network of nonprofit social service providers supported by the United Way of Miami, fostering stronger collaboration and awareness across the community.

e. Kosovo Delegation

Through Global Ties Miami, the DVOB welcomed a delegation from Kosovo to learn about the board's role and initiatives in addressing domestic violence. The delegation included a Supreme Court judge, prosecutor, law enforcement officer, victim advocate, and the executive director of a nonprofit domestic violence shelter. DVOB partners—including the Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office, CAHSD, Broward County's Women in Distress, the French Consulate of Miami, and the Commission for Women—shared insights on collaborative efforts to combat domestic violence across jurisdictions.

f. National Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) 2024 Kickoff

The DVOB partnered with CAHSD to host the NDVAM 2024 Kickoff at the Stephen P. Clark Center Lobby. The event brought together elected officials, survivors, and community members to raise awareness and highlight the local resources available to support victims, survivors, and their families.

3. BCC and Municipal Government Relations

a. Miami Beach Funding to DVOB

Following DVOB's presentations, the City of Miami Beach approved Resolution #2019-31082 in October 2019, allocating \$125,000 per fiscal year for two years to support domestic violence services.

b. Proclamations

In observance of NDVAM, proclamations were issued by Miami-Dade County and the cities of North Miami Beach, Coral Gables, Miami Beach, Doral, Medley, and West Miami. These presentations provided opportunities to raise awareness of the board's work and engage local governments on community needs.

c. Elected/Appointed Representatives

DVOB held meetings with the Mayor, members of the Board of County Commissioners, and elected and appointed officials from various municipalities to raise awareness about the board's initiatives and obtain feedback related to the needs of their respective communities.

d. Shining a Light on Domestic Violence

In recognition of NDVAM, the Shining a Light on Domestic Violence Campaign illuminated county landmarks and institutions in purple throughout October. The color purple serves as a powerful symbol of courage, survival, and hope, raising awareness about the impact of DV/IPV in our communities.

4. Community Assessment

a. University of Miami Human Rights Clinic (UM HRC)

The DVOB collaborated with UM HRC to assess law enforcement's response to DV/IPV. The International Association of Chiefs of Police has created two assessment surveys used to obtain feedback on this important subject. Funding for these surveys will be supported through a grant that UM HRC will apply for. Results of the surveys will be shared when published.

b. Intimate Partner Violence Study, University of Central Florida, "IPV In Miami-Dade County"

In 2019, the BCC approved the DVOB's recommendation for a countywide study, completed in June 2023. A key finding estimated the cost of DV/IPV in 2020 at \$75.9 million—based on highly conservative calculations. The study further conservatively projected that a 20% reduction in DV/IPV would save the county over \$15 million in economic costs.

III. ONGOING INITIATIVES AND PRIORITIES

A. Shelter Capacity

Limited shelter capacity results in unmet placement needs, forcing alternative arrangements that add to the trauma, compromise survivor safety and access to comprehensive services. This gap, frequently raised by community providers, is also a critical concern for law enforcement, who often struggle to secure safe crisis placement due to unavailable beds. To address this critical shortage of emergency shelter beds, the DVOB will continue to advocate and explore innovative programs, partnerships, public, private and corporate funding to support new emergency safe housing options.

B. Miami-Dade County Domestic Leave Policy

After reviewing the Miami-Dade County Domestic Leave Policy, the DVOB recommended enhancements to benefits and stronger protections for victims and survivors. The DVOB feels strongly that victims should not have to decide between getting medical assistance, attending the judicial processes, and worry about having paid days to address these obligations. Status: adopted on first reading, awaiting final BCC action. The DVOB thanks Commissioner Higgins for sponsoring the legislation. We also extend our gratitude to the brave survivor who brought this issue to the DVOB's attention.

C. Food & Beverage Tax Fund Management

The Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust and the DVOB have individual responsibilities for oversight of the Food & Beverage Tax for the respective portions of the F&B Tax (Domestic Violence and Homeless). When one board manages the fiscal reporting of another that share the same tax funding, it creates a potential conflict of interest and undermines transparency. The current structure blurs the lines of accountability, as the managing board may have competing priorities, or influence over how the funds are reported or allocated. To ensure fiscal integrity, independent oversight and equitable distribution of resources, it is essential that each board maintain separate financial reporting structures, particularly when both are funded by the same public revenue.

D. Cross-Systems Training Homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) and Domestic Violence Systems.

Domestic violence is a qualifying condition for homelessness under the United States Housing and Urban Development (USHUD) definition of homelessness. In 2020, the DVOB partnered with the National Alliance for Safe Housing (NASH) to conduct a "Safe Housing Survey" which examined collaboration between DV, the Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust (HT), and homeless service providers (CoC). Findings highlighted that both systems are under-resourced, facing a lack of affordable housing, and are poorly aligned. Key gaps include limited communication, unclear referral pathways for survivors, and a need for joint training. The DVOB will re-engage with the HT/CoC to explore a coordinated training initiative.

E. Community Action and Human Services Department (CAHSD)²

1. Reporting

Since CAHSD became the sole operator of the four domestic violence shelters in 2020 (including the two that are operated with the F&B Tax Funds overseen by the DVOB), the DVOB has received sparse, incomplete, or inaccurate financial and service data. We continue to work with CAHSD to obtain accurate information necessary for the DVOB to exercise its oversight responsibilities, comply with its obligations, and make informed decisions, and recommendations.

2. Increased Operational Costs

In 2020, CAHSD became the sole operator of all four domestic violence shelters. Prior to 2020, the two shelters operated with F&B Tax Funds for domestic violence were operated by a non-profit entity, Victims Response, Inc. The agency delivered quality services, fully meeting the required deliverables. In 2022, the operational costs increased and the DVOB learned the increase was directly attributed to County staffing costs attributed to salary and fringes. The previous hybrid model of shelter operations by the nonprofit agency had a three-year contract that incorporated a 3% maximum increase in operational cost for the period of the contract. This contractual provision effectively stabilized expenditures, preventing significant year-over-year cost escalations.

3. Salary Parity Victim Advocates

Advocacy Services are vital to supporting survivors and ending household violence. In 2020, the DVOB learned that CAHSD victim advocacy services were not being offered due to recruitment and retention challenges. High turnover disrupts survivor care, undermines trust, strains staff and drives the costs through repeated recruitment, training and certification. Burnout, secondary trauma, and low compensation further fuel attrition, while diverting resources from direct services. Failure to act risks adding to a negative culture and weakens survivor support. County administration should secure and allocate funding to ensure salary and benefits parity for CAHSD Victim Advocates.

4. Safespace Central Expansion Proposal

At its March meeting, the DVOB was made aware of a proposal relating to one of the shelters operating with F&B Tax Funds for domestic violence – Safespace Central. The proposal would involve a partial conveyance of County land in exchange for the development of a new facility that increases bed capacity from 49 to 70 beds. The DVOB unanimously approved an interim amendment to this Plan to this proposal. The board fully supports the proposed development or a substantially similar proposal and recommends the Mayor and BCC approve the proposal that adds additional beds, or any proposal to develop a third shelter.

5. Coordinated Victims Assistance Centers (CVAC) Expansions

² The DVOB recognizes that CASHD is now the Community Services Department (CSD), but during the time period in question the department was CASHD. Therefore, this document refers to the relevant department as CASHD.

The DVOB supports Resolution No. R-256-20, approved by the BCC in 2020, which recommended expanding CVAC locations to North and South Miami-Dade County to improve countywide access for victims and survivors. CAHSD has identified a location in Homestead to serve the South Dade area which is expected to open in 2026. We look forward to the opening of the Homestead CVAC location and timeline for the North CVAC location.

6. Streamlining CAHSD's Reporting Structure

The current structure for the reporting of program services and revenues and expenditures of the Food & Beverage Tax for Domestic Violence Trust Fund between CAHSD and the Homeless Trust is redundant and ineffective. To enhance efficiency, CAHSD should operate independently as a county department rather than a community-based organization. Furthermore, CAHSD's facilities portfolio should include the two shelters currently under the HT's portfolio. These two facilities were built using the DV portion of the F&B Tax and are operated by CAHSD. These changes will create a more efficient and transparent fiscal reporting system. The DVOB urges the County administration to change the reporting and fiscal management structure of the domestic violence portion of the F&B Tax to achieve effective management and reporting of the funding.

7. Enhancing Survivors Self Sufficiency

CAHSD should explore partnerships with Miami-Dade County Public Schools and other academic and trade organizations for training and mentorship programs for shelter participants in culinary programs, construction and other trades by way of internships and scholarships.

8. Federal U Visas

The DVOB advocates eliminating the Federal 10,000 annual cap on U visas. This visa provides nonimmigrant status to victims of certain crimes who have suffered abuse and assist law enforcement in investigations or prosecutions. The legislation enhances law enforcement's ability to address domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and other crimes while ensuring victim protection. The cap leaves victims in legal uncertainty regarding their U.S. status. The DVOB urges the BCC to support legislation calling on the U.S. Congress to remove the cap on U visas.

9. State U Visas

The USCIS Form 1-918B, required for U visa applications, confirms that a qualifying crime occurred, and that the victim has been, is, or is likely to be helpful in its investigation or prosecution, per the U Visa Law Enforcement Certification Resource Guide. Although certification is mandatory for U visa eligibility, law enforcement agencies have discretion over issuing it. Florida lacks a uniform system for processing U visa requests, resulting in inconsistencies—some counties process them quickly, while others delay, leaving victims in limbo. The DVOB advocates that the State, as permitted by law, establish a standardized process for law enforcement U visa certification requests using Form 1-918B or its successor. The DVOB further advocates

for County administration to explore the establishment of a baseline to measure certification timelines across Miami-Dade municipalities and track performance.

10. Pro Bono Immigration Services

Pro bono immigration services for immigrant survivors continue to be a gap in our community. Immigrants and specifically, undocumented women are particularly vulnerable to DV/IPV, as abusers use their undocumented immigration status to further control and terrorize them. Abuse among immigrant women is as high as 49.8%, almost three times the national average. While there are various resources of pro bono services designed to assist survivors of domestic violence in Miami-Dade County, there is a higher demand than capacity. Survivors are often forced to go without this critical service. Often, there is a three to four month waiting list and, in some cases, the reduced fees for the required filing are not affordable to survivors.

The DVOB recommends Miami-Dade County allocate funding in the upcoming FY Budget for Pro Bono immigration services for survivors of IPV in the amount of \$2.5M to serve at least 1000 survivors through direct legal representation and monthly outreach educational individual and group sessions. These outreach educational sessions would be offered throughout organizations serving DV survivors who do not yet have lawful status, or need to adjust status, connecting them to direct legal representation.

11. Partnerships with Private Law Firms for Pro Bono Legal Services

Explore partnership with current Pro Bono services and private law firms to establish and expand a new pool of pro bono legal services for survivors of domestic violence and offer continuing learning education credits to participating attorneys.

IV. CAHSD VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION DIVISION SERVICE DATA

In response to the request from the Domestic Violence Oversight Board (DVOB), the following information is provided by CAHSD for Fiscal Year 2023–2024 (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024). This report outlines the nine Department of Children and Families (DCF) core services, the shelter occupancy rate, average length of stay, unmet shelter placement requests, hotline calls received, staff-to-client ratios, budgeted positions, and vacancies.

The required DCF core services provided include temporary emergency shelter, advocacy and crisis counseling, children’s programming, community education, case management, professional training, information and referrals, safety planning, and a 24-hour emergency hotline.

The data below reflects compliance with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) core service requirements and highlights program performance, service delivery, and resource allocation.

PROGRAM DATA FISCAL YEAR 2023–2024 - October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024

1. Temporary Emergency Shelter

- 953 participants

2. Advocacy and Crisis Counseling

Includes: screening, intake, assessment, case management, linkage to services, legal services, financial assistance, and safety planning

- 2,460 participants
- 16,173 services

Types of Violence	Service	Contacts	Participants	Hours
Dating Violence	Advocacy	32	26	28.33
Domestic Violence	Advocacy	15906	2360	8628.67
Human Trafficking	Advocacy	212	57	106.17
Other Forms of Violence	Advocacy	2	2	2.5
Sexual Violence	Advocacy	14	9	16.92
Stalking	Advocacy	7	6	11.5
Grand Total		16,173	2460	8794.09

3. Children’s Programming

- Participants: 197
- Services: 901 services

Service Detail	Contacts	Participants	Hours
Group Children’s Activity (<i>onsite school-based teen violence prevention, primary prevention, holiday activities</i>)	458	133	791.41
Individual Children’s Activity (<i>after-school tutoring; weekly age-specific groups focused on safety, emotions, and healthy boundaries</i>)	443	64	761.25
Grand Total	901	197	1552.66

4. Community Education

- Participants: 1,021
- Events: 13

Notes/Explanation: VPID delivered thirteen community education and awareness sessions to corrections personnel, mental health staff, and social service staff. Content areas included domestic violence awareness, trauma-informed engagement, and coordinated care practices.

5. Case Management

- Participants: 3,507
- Services: 24,514

Notes/Explanation: Case management services included advocacy, safety planning support, housing navigation, and connections to essential social, legal, and community-based resources.

6. Professional Training

- Participants: 77
- Services: 4 trainings

Notes/Explanation: VPID conducted four professional training sessions for corrections, mental health, and social service professionals to strengthen system-wide victim response, reinforce trauma-informed practices, and support survivor-centered service delivery.

7. Information and Referrals

- **Referrals:** 11,656

Notes/Explanation: Community members and partner agencies received individualized referrals for housing assistance, legal support, domestic violence services, and connections to additional community-based resources.

8. Safety Planning

- Participants: 3,319
- Services: 21,329

Notes/Explanation: Staff completed the development, review, and ongoing revision of individualized safety plans designed to reduce risk, prevent further harm, and strengthen survivors' long-term safety strategies.

9. 24-hour Emergency Hotline: 4,085 Crisis Calls (93,464 minutes)

Program Performance and Service Delivery

Category	Value	Notes / Explanation
Shelter Occupancy Rate	100%	All shelters operated at full capacity with no unmet placement requests during the reporting period.
Average Length of Stay	60 days	Calculated average of 59.76 days rounded to 60 days across all residential programs.
Unmet Shelter Placement Requests	0	All individuals seeking placement were accommodated within the shelter network or alternate sites.

Violence Prevention and Intervention Division – Staff-to-Client Ratio Standards

Participant Range	Staffing Requirement	Notes / Explanation
20 or fewer participants	1 staff, 24/7	Minimum coverage standard ensuring 24-hour supervision and support.
21–49 participants	2 staff (8:00 PM–11:00 PM); 1 staff (11:00 PM–8:00 AM)	Enhanced evening coverage to address higher activity and intake periods, with overnight reduction.
50–99 participants	2 staff, 24/7	Continuous two-person coverage across all shifts for safety and operational efficiency.
100 or more participants	3 staff, 24/7	Required supervisory presence with at least three staff on all shifts due to program scale and participant volume.

(Ratios must remain constant during lunch breaks)

Budgeted Positions: 127

Vacancies: 14

This information reflects CAHSD's continued commitment to maintaining compliance with DCF core requirements, ensuring service excellence across all domestic violence shelters, and providing comprehensive, survivor-centered support services for individuals and families impacted by domestic violence.

PROGRAM DATA FISCAL YEAR 2024–2025: October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025

1. Temporary Emergency Shelter

- 877 participants

2. Advocacy and Crisis Counseling

Includes: screening, intake, assessment, case management, linkage to services, legal services, financial assistance, and safety planning)

- Participants: 1,876
- Services: 12,742

Types of Violence	Service	Contacts	Participants	Hours
Dating Violence	Advocacy	20	12	13.83
Domestic Violence	Advocacy	12640	1829	7537.26
Human Trafficking	Advocacy	52	17	38.50
Other Forms of Violence	Advocacy	13	4	7.83
Sexual Violence	Advocacy	13	11	11.25
Stalking	Advocacy	4	3	2.00
Grand Total		12,742	1,876	7610.67

3. Children’s Programming

- Participants: 161
- Services: 805

Service Detail	Contacts	Participants	Hours
Group Children’s Activity (<i>onsite school-based teen violence prevention, primary prevention, holiday activities</i>)	417	110	878.50
Individual Children’s Activity (<i>after-school tutoring; weekly age-specific groups focused on safety, emotions, and healthy boundaries</i>)	388	51	755.50
Grand Total	805	161	1,634.00

4. Community Education

- Participants: 1,501
- Events: 27

Notes/Explanation: VPID delivered community education and awareness sessions to corrections personnel, mental health staff, and social service staff. Content areas included domestic violence awareness, trauma-informed engagement, and coordinated care practices.

5. Case Management

- Participants: 2,896
- Services: 20,332

Notes/Explanation: Case management services included advocacy, safety planning support, housing navigation, and connections to essential social, legal, and community-based resources.

6. Professional Training

- Participants: 40
- Services: 1 training

Notes/Explanation: VPID conducted one professional training session for corrections, mental health, and social service professionals to strengthen system-wide victim response, reinforce trauma-informed practices, and support survivor-centered service delivery.

7. Information and Referrals

- Referrals: 9,397

Notes/Explanation: Community members and partner agencies received individualized referrals for housing assistance, legal support, domestic violence services, and connections to additional community-based resources.

8. Safety Planning

- Participants: 2,876
- Services: 18,218

Notes/Explanation: Staff completed the development, review, and ongoing revision of individualized safety plans designed to reduce risk, prevent further harm, and strengthen survivors' long-term safety strategies.

9. 24-hour emergency hotline: 3,499 Crisis Calls (79,619 minutes)

Program Performance and Service Delivery

Category	Value	Notes / Explanation
Shelter Occupancy Rate	100%	All shelters operated at full capacity with no unmet placement requests during the reporting period.
Average Length of Stay	55 days	Calculated average of 54.627 days rounded to 55 days across all residential programs.
Unmet Shelter Placement Requests	0	All individuals seeking placement were accommodated within the shelter network or alternate sites.

Violence Prevention and Intervention Division – Staff-to-Client Ratio Standards

Participant Range	Staffing Requirement	Notes / Explanation
20 or fewer participants	1 staff, 24/7	Minimum coverage standard ensuring 24-hour supervision and support.
21–49 participants	2 staff (8:00 PM–11:00 PM); 1 staff (11:00 PM–8:00 AM)	Enhanced evening coverage to address higher activity and intake periods, with overnight reduction.
50–99 participants	2 staff, 24/7	Continuous two-person coverage across all shifts for safety and operational efficiency.
100 or more participants	3 staff, 24/7	Required supervisory presence with at least three staff on all shifts due to program scale and participant volume.

(Ratios must remain constant during lunch breaks)

Budgeted Positions: 123

Vacancies: 21

This information reflects CAHSD’s continued commitment to maintaining compliance with DCF core requirements, ensuring service excellence across all domestic violence shelters, and providing comprehensive, survivor-centered support services for individuals and families impacted by domestic violence.

V. FUTURE SHELTER FACILITIES

Close to 50% of available capacity has been made possible by the DV portion of the F&B Tax. It is important to note that the County has not utilized the County General Revenue Fund to construct any shelter in the last three decades. Existing shelters are usually at or above capacity, leaving victims, and often children, with placement in hotels that provide little to no security or access to a range of services offered at shelters. In short, Miami Dade needs to expand its shelter capacity.

In a county with a population nearing 3 million residents, having only 223 domestic violence shelter beds is alarmingly insufficient. Existing shelters are frequently at or over capacity, leaving survivors—many of whom are fleeing with their children in dangerous and life-threatening situations—without a safe place to go. Appendix 1 reflects the domestic violence fatalities reviewed by our local Fatality Review Team for the respective year.

Compounding the issue, some of the shelters are aging and face ongoing maintenance challenges that can temporarily reduce available space. Additionally, the limited number of beds often cannot accommodate the diverse needs of families, especially those with multiple children or unique family configurations. Expanding the number of shelter beds is not just a matter of logistics—it is a matter of safety, dignity, and justice for survivors seeking refuge and a path to healing. In short, Miami-Dade County needs to expand its shelter capacity.

As projected in Appendix 2 by the Office of Management and Budget's proforma, funding for the construction of a new shelter and for the operations of all three shelters constructed with the F&B Tax DV portion will begin to accrue in 2032-33. Miami-Dade County should prioritize the acceleration of additional capacity.

When considering ways to increase capacity, it is important to note that larger facilities offer greater cost efficiency and higher return on investment in construction. Also important, advanced technological features can increase maintenance costs and require specialized staffing. Finally, to obtain certification and therefore funding from the state for shelter operations and services, justification of need is required.

VI. PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The DVOB makes the following Plan recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners for its approval.

Recommendation No. 1: Advocate for and support the expansion of the Food & Beverage Tax for domestic violence shelters and collection efforts.

Including, as follows:

- Oppose any legislative initiatives, such as SB 1664 (2025 legislative session) and HB 1221, that could negatively impact continuation of funding from the F&B Tax.
- Continue Regulatory and Economic Resources (RER) efforts to bring delinquent existing restaurants into compliance with collections.³
- Continue to advocate for the expansion of the F&B Tax to the Beach Municipalities and include this in Miami-Dade County's legislative priorities. Educate members of the legislature and all elected and appointed officials that the F&B Tax is addressing a critical need for vulnerable individuals through construction of domestic violence shelters and services.
- Ensure that at least 15% of any funding provided by the Beach municipalities as a contribution to the F&B Tax be allocated to the domestic violence portion of the F&B Tax.
- Identify opportunities (such as Dade Delegation Meetings, Dade League of Cities, Dade Days) to raise awareness about the critical importance of the F&B Tax to construct and operate domestic violence shelters and critical services to vulnerable individuals and families experiencing domestic violence.

Recommendation No. 2: Support the expansion of capacity of the County's domestic violence shelters that operate using the F&B Tax, including the construction of a third domestic violence shelter and/or the renovation of the existing two shelters to add additional beds.

Including, as follows:

- Explore the feasibility to bond revenue streams to accelerate development of a third shelter constructed with the DV portion of the F&B Tax.
- Support and finalize negotiations for land exchange and development of a new larger facility in the place of the current Safespace Central.⁴

³ The department of Regulatory and Economic Resources (RER) has recently begun to identify food and beverage establishments that have not been complying with the requirements of the Statute to collect the F&B tax. We are grateful to RER for its efforts.

⁴ The DVOB unanimously approved an interim amendment to this Plan to support the development of a new facility at Safespace Central, increasing bed capacity from 49 to 70. The DVOB fully supports the

- Develop innovative and cost-effective means for expanding shelter capacity. For example:
 - Identify and utilize Miami-Dade County land.
 - Acquire/renovate private or county/public land and or buildings.
 - Expand the Empowerment Center by utilizing the additional available land.
 - Explore innovative best practices, partnerships and seek public, private and corporate funding to support new emergency safe housing options.

Recommendation No. 3: Support survivors of domestic violence and the expansion and coordination of services.

Including, as follows:

- Adoption of the Miami-Dade Domestic Leave Policy: The legislation passed first reading in October 2024. The DVOB urges the BCC to support the proposed amendments to the Miami-Dade County Domestic Leave Policy.
- Partnerships with Private Law Firms for Pro Bono Legal Services: Explore partnerships with existing pro bono service providers and private law firms to establish and expand a new pool of pro bono legal services for survivors of domestic violence and offer continuing learning education credits to participating attorneys.
- Salary Parity Victim Advocates: Secure and allocate funding to ensure salary and benefits parity for CAHSD Victim Advocates.
- Expand Coordinated Victims Assistance Centers (CVAC): The DVOB supports the opening of the Homestead CVAC location in 2026 and looks forward to learning of the timeline for the North CVAC location.
- Enhance Survivors Self Sufficiency and Wellness: CAHSD should explore partnerships with Miami-Dade County Public Schools, local colleges, Career Source, Public Health Trust, Community Health Centers, and Trade Organizations for training and mentorship programs for shelter participants in health care, culinary programs, construction and other trades by way of internships and scholarships.
- Coordination of and Reporting of Services: Direct County Administration to assess the feasibility and cost of creating a services and data reporting dashboard, and to identify potential sources of funding for its development.
- Emergency Funding: Expand and identify additional funding and sources specifically for the use in emergency placements and relocation services.

proposed development or a substantially similar proposal and recommends the Mayor and BCC approve the proposal or a third shelter.

Recommendation No. 4: Streamline F&B Tax fund management and reporting and explore ways to reduce operational costs at the domestic violence shelters.

Including, as follows:

- Explore the cost of privatizing the operations of the two shelters funded by the domestic violence portion of the F&B Tax to reduce operational costs directly related to employee salary and fringe and accelerate the construction with the savings. The DVOB recommends that Miami-Dade County explore using a Request For Information (RFI) to assess interest from private non-profit organizations in becoming certified as a domestic violence shelter service operator/provider.
- Food & Beverage Tax for Domestic Violence Fund Management: Currently, the Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust (HT) manages the portion of the domestic violence funds of the F&B Tax. The DVOB recommends the County administration establish a clear separation of duties reinforcing its commitment to ethical governance and responsible stewardship of public funds and find a suitable County department to assume the fiscal management responsibilities of the domestic violence portion of the F&B Tax.
- Streamlining CAHSD's Reporting Structure: It has been challenging for the DVOB to obtain accurate and complete data from CAHSD. The DVOB urges the County administration to change the reporting and fiscal management structure of the portion of the domestic violence F&B Tax supporting CAHSD's shelter operations and services to achieve effective management and reporting.
- DVOB Ordinance Amendment - Six-Month Revenues and Expenses Report: The DVOB recommends an amendment to the DVOB's Ordinance Section 283-93(7) requiring the county entity managing the funds be responsible for submitting the six-month revenues and expenses report and do so on an annual basis as opposed to every six months.

VII. CONCLUSION

Miami-Dade County faces an urgent but solvable challenge: with nearly 3 million residents and only 223 domestic violence shelter beds, too many survivors still go without safe placement and comprehensive care. The evidence is clear—intimate partner and domestic violence cost the County an estimated \$75.9 million in 2020 alone, and even a 20% reduction would save more than \$15 million⁵—demonstrating that the moral and fiscal cases for action are aligned. The DVOB respectfully urges the Board of County Commissioners to adopt this updated Plan and move swiftly to implement its key recommendations: expand and protect Food & Beverage Tax revenues; accelerate capacity growth by finalizing the Safespace Central redevelopment and pursuing a third shelter, including bonding options; separate fiscal management of the domestic violence portion of the F&B Tax to ensure transparency and eliminate conflicts; require consistent, accurate reporting from CAHSD; pass the Domestic Leave Policy; allocate \$2.5 million for pro bono immigration services; achieve salary parity for victim advocates; open the Homestead CVAC and set a timeline for the North site; strengthen cross-system training with the Homeless Trust; and champion federal and state reforms to improve U visa access and processing. Survivors cannot wait. With this Plan, Miami-Dade can lead with accountability, capacity, and compassion—delivering safety, stability, and justice for families across our community.

The DVOB expresses its deep appreciation for the continued support of the Board of County Commissioners and the Mayor in our shared mission to end domestic violence and strengthen accountability. As we move forward, we urge the BCC to approve this updated Plan and sustain ongoing community engagement to reinforce a coordinated response that protects and empowers survivors. Together, we can build a safer, more responsive, and more just Miami-Dade County for all.

⁵ Source: University of Central Florida, Institute for Social and Behavioral Science, Intimate Partner Violence, Miami-Dade County, and System Responses. April 10, 2023. Julio Montanez, MA and Amy Donely, PhD

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY REVIEW TEAM (DVFRT)

1. Background:

In 1998, The Miami-Dade County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team (DVFRT) was created as one of four jurisdictions chosen by the Florida Governor’s Task Force. Miami-Dade County DVFRT is the model for the state of Florida and the nation for how fatality reviews should be conducted. The primary function of local review teams is to conduct individual case reviews of fatal incidents, generate information, identify effective methods of intervention, and develop and implement findings and recommendations for prevention on a community-wide, systemic level. Review meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month via Zoom platform. The goal of the review team is to bring together professionals from various agencies and backgrounds from the domestic violence arenas to review DV-related fatalities with a “lens of preventive accountability” and promote a culture for policy change and transformation. Numerous Miami-Dade County agencies depend on the DVFRT’s recommendations to analyze their own departments’ future goals and areas of improvements. The DVFRT’s recommendations are inclusive of all populations county-wide.

2. Statutory Obligations and Requirements:

- **F.S. §741.316** - sets forth the definition and organization of Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams, composition of required membership, and duties.
- **F.S. §741.3165** - provides an exemption from the Sunshine Law for certain information obtained by Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams conducting their duties, which is exempt from disclosure.

3. Data:

Domestic Violence-Related Incidents: Data below includes intimate partner and familial incidents. Since 2020, there have been **188** domestic violence related incidents in Miami-Dade County that resulted in death.

Type of DV-Related Incident	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Jan-Oct 2025*	TOTALS
Homicides	21	31	20	25	20	12*	117
Suicides	0	0	1	8	6	2*	17
Homicide/Suicides	8	8	9	6	8	5*	44
Other (Police-involved shooting)	3	0	1	2	2	2*	10
TOTAL	32	39	31	41	36	19*	188

**Note: This is preliminary data. Review of additional documents from the Medical Examiner is necessary to ascertain the inclusion of fatalities which have not been identified to date before this report may be considered finalized for 2025.*

Domestic Violence-Related Deaths: Data below includes intimate partner and familial deaths. Since 2020, there have been **260** domestic violence related deaths Miami-Dade County.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Jan-Oct 2025	TOTALS
Annual Homicides in Miami-Dade County (DV & Non-DV-Related)	287	249	257	205	173	119*	1290
DV-related Homicides	32	41	31	36	33	17*	190
Percent of Annual Homicides that are DV-related	11%	16%	12%	18%	19%	14%*	15%
Annual Suicides in Miami-Dade County (DV & Non-DV-Related)	234	228	262	255	273	212*	1464
DV-related Suicides	7	8	10	14	14	7*	60
Percent of Annual Suicides that are DV-related	3%	4%	4%	6%	5%	3%*	4%
Other (Police-involved shootings)	3	0	1	2	2	2*	10
TOTAL DEATHS	42	49	42	52	49	26*	260

**Note: This is preliminary data. Review of additional documents from the Medical Examiner is necessary to ascertain the inclusion of fatalities which have not been identified to date before this report may be considered finalized for 2025.*

4. Current Challenges and Systemic Gaps


Loss of Oversight and Accountability - Since the dismantling of the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV), the state has lacked an active Statewide Fatality Review Team. This void prevents the comprehensive analysis of domestic violence homicides, making it impossible to identify recurring systemic failures or implement evidence-based prevention strategies.

Lack of Centralized Law Enforcement DV Reporting System - A significant "information silo" exists between local police departments. Because there is no centralized reporting system for domestic violence perpetrators, repeat offenders often move between jurisdictions without a unified record of their history. This lack of data integration creates a dangerous gap in risk assessment during emergency call-outs.





Vulnerable and Underreported Populations - The immigrant community remains uniquely isolated due to a profound fear of seeking help. This results in high levels of unreported violence, where survivors are forced to choose between personal safety and the fear of legal or residency-related repercussions.

Data Break															
Operations and construction of Domestic Violence Shelters															
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2024-25	2024-25	2024-25	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33
	Actuals	Actuals	Adopted Budget	Projections	Adopted Budget	Estimates	Estimates	Adopted Budget	Estimates	Estimates	Estimates	Estimates	Estimates	Estimates	Estimates
Beginning Fund Balance (ST 150 156)	18,004,702	23,378,555	26,869,000	23,406,332	27,499,407	30,646,270	33,487,090	36,488,468	39,656,506	42,997,516	46,518,025	50,224,781	50,224,781	50,224,781	50,224,781
Revenues															
F&B Tax Revenue (15%)	6,422,494	6,666,850	6,623,000	7,300,000	7,110,000	6,823,029	7,027,720	7,238,551	7,455,708	7,679,379	7,909,761	8,147,053	8,147,053	8,147,053	8,147,053
Other Revenues	4,530														
Interest Income	624,785	867,238	600,000	600,000	600,000	624,000	648,960	674,918	701,915	729,992	759,191	789,559	789,559	789,559	789,559
Fiscal Year Collection	7,051,809	7,534,088	7,223,000	7,900,000	7,710,000	7,447,029	7,676,680	7,913,470	8,157,623	8,409,371	8,668,952	8,936,613	8,936,613	8,936,613	8,936,613
Total Revenues (Carryover and Collections)	25,056,511	30,912,643	34,092,000	31,306,332	35,209,407	38,093,299	41,163,770	44,401,938	47,814,129	51,406,887	55,186,977	59,161,394	59,161,394	59,161,394	59,161,394
Expenditures															
Personnel Costs	126,000	145,413	166,035	166,000	191,000	193,865	196,773	199,725	202,720	205,761	208,848	211,980	211,980	211,980	211,980
Operating Costs Shelter 1 (Safe Space)	1,548,373	2,456,424	2,304,564	1,670,787	2,014,774	2,044,996	2,075,671	2,106,806	2,138,408	2,170,484	2,203,041	2,236,087	2,236,087	2,236,087	2,236,087
Other Operating Expenses	3,583	33,351	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,075	5,151	5,228	5,307	5,386	5,467	5,549	5,549	5,549	5,549
Roof & 40 Year Recertification	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capital/Development Costs for 2nd Shelter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Interdepartmental Transfer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Operating Costs Empowerment Center	0	4,871,123	2,389,162	1,965,138	2,327,363	2,362,273	2,397,708	2,433,673	2,470,178	2,507,231	2,544,839	2,583,012	2,583,012	2,583,012	2,583,012
Capital- Renovations Safe Space	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Development for 3rd Shelter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CAPITAL TRANSFETS TO ST010	0	0	0	0	25,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	500,000	0	0	0
Total Expenditures	1,677,956	7,506,311	4,864,761	3,806,925	4,563,137	4,606,209	4,675,302	4,745,432	4,816,613	4,888,862	4,962,195	5,036,628	5,036,628	5,036,628	5,036,628
both centers total	23,378,555	23,406,332	29,227,239	27,499,407	30,646,270	33,487,090	36,488,468	39,656,506	42,997,516	46,518,025	50,224,781	53,624,766	53,624,766	53,624,766	53,624,766
	1,548,373	7,327,547	4,693,726	3,635,925	4,342,137	4,407,269	4,473,378	4,540,479	4,608,586	4,677,715	4,747,880	4,819,099	4,819,099	4,819,099	4,819,099

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN NUMBERS







Intimate partner violence alone affects more than 12 million people every year.







1 in 4 (24.3%) women

and







1 in 7 (13.8%) men



Women ages 18 to 24 and 25 to 34 generally experience the highest rates of intimate partner violence.

aged 18 and older in the US have been the victim of severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime.



Domestic violence issues lead to nearly 8 million lost days of paid work each year, the equivalent of over 32,000 full-time jobs.



1 in 10 high school students has experienced physical violence from a dating partner in the past year.

STATE STATISTICS

106,515



domestic violence offenses were reported to law enforcement.

6,620



requests for emergency shelter went unmet due to lack of capacity and resources

217



individuals died because of domestic violence homicide, representing approximately 20 percent of all homicides in Florida.



80,493

crisis hotline calls

63,217

arrests for domestic violence related crimes

Sources: National Domestic Violence Hotline, 2020 Florida Department of Law Enforcement Uniform Crime Report, and 2024 Florida Department of Children and Families Domestic Violence Annual Report

The Economic Cost of Intimate Partner Violence

The total economic cost of intimate partner violence (IPV) in Miami-Dade County for 2020 was \$75,884,459, based on conservative estimates. A 20% reduction in IPV could save over \$15 million. Limitations include non-county-specific data and the use of domestic violence (DV) and IPV interchangeably due to limited data. Despite this, the study offers innovative methods and a framework for other counties. The recent slowdown in the decline of IPV-related offenses highlights the need for continued public investment and private partnerships to address this issue and reduce its economic impact on taxpayers.

Source: Miami-Dade County and University of Central Florida Institute for Social and Behavioral Science Intimate Partner Violence, Miami-Dade County, and System Responses (April 2023).



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