

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

## HOUSING FIRST: KING COUNTY REGION

### FLEXIBLE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE RESULTS

#### AUGUST 2016 – JULY 2018

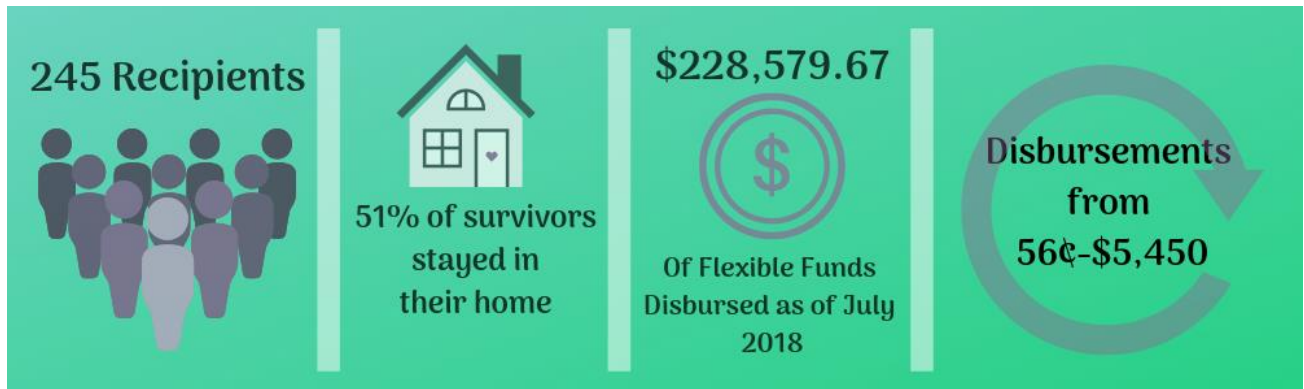
The [Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence \(WSCADV\)](#) is working with eight agencies across Washington State to implement the [Domestic Violence Housing First \(DVHF\)](#) approach. The DVHF approach focuses on helping survivors get into safe and stable housing as quickly as possible and providing services to help them move forward with their lives. Four of these agencies are in King County, WA: LifeWire, New Beginnings, Northwest Network, and InterIm Community Development Association.

#### King County DVHF Programs



These four agencies have been providing survivor-driven, trauma-informed, mobile advocacy, utilizing flexible financial assistance, and engaging with the community to support survivors in their housing stability.

As of July 2018, **\$228,579.76** in flexible funds had been disbursed to 245 individuals and families. Funds disbursed ranged from fifty-six cents (renters insurance) up to \$5,450.00 (rental assistance). **Over half (51%) of survivors were able to stay in their own home** as a direct result of receiving flexible financial assistance and advocacy.

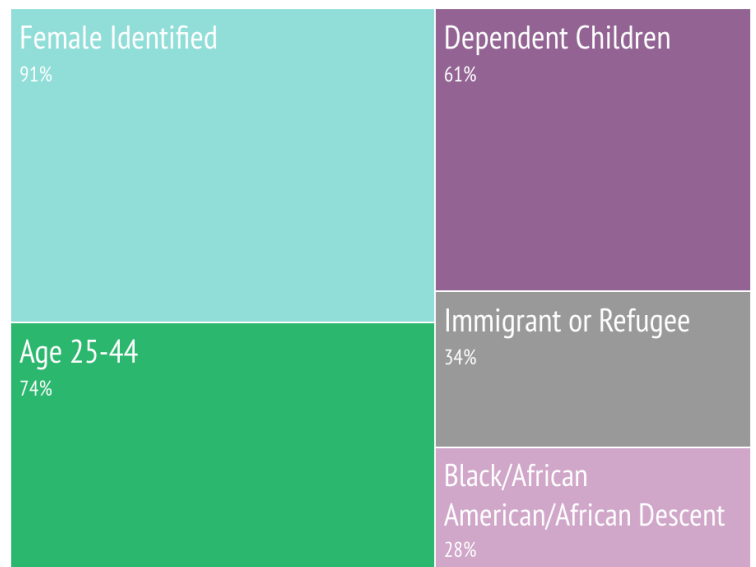


## DEMOGRAPHICS:

Each agency receiving flexible financial assistance enters data into a [flexible financial assistance tracker](#). In addition to tracking how funds are used, agencies also enter basic demographic information.

Almost all survivors (91%) who received funds identified as female, 4% identified as male, 2% as transgender and the remaining was unknown or not reported. Thirty-nine percent were 35-44 years old, 35% were 25-34 years. Almost one third (29%) identified as White/European American and close to another third (28%) as Black/African American/African Descent, 18% identified as Asian, the remaining identified as multiracial, Hispanic or Latino/a, or Native American/Alaska Native.

Over half (61%) of survivors had children living with them and 34% identified as an immigrant or refugee.



## ADVOCACY AND FLEXIBLE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

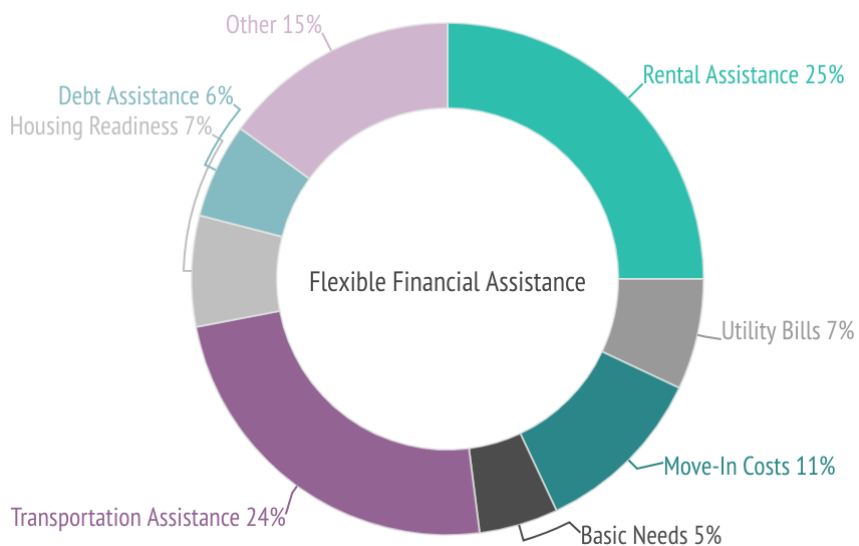
Domestic violence advocates use flexible financial assistance to meet the unique and individual needs of survivors. Since August of 2016, advocates made 428 unique disbursements to 245 survivors.

**73% of the disbursements made were coupled with additional advocacy services**, including legal advocacy, housing search and support, DSHS advocacy, and safety planning. Advocates have said time over time that the flexible financial assistance is a tool to help survivors but most of the time survivors need support beyond financial assistance to retain or establish safety and stability.

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*“Our most effective strategy is providing intensive, culturally sensitive services. Mobile advocacy continues to be an important factor.”*

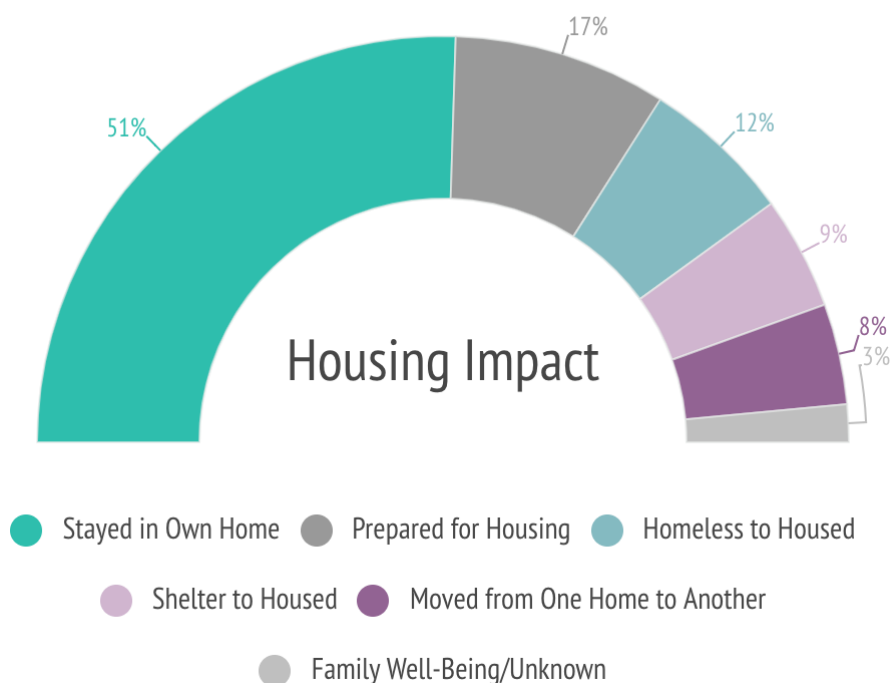
Almost one third of survivors (30%) received financial assistance more than once, with one survivor receiving fourteen disbursements to help them move from living in a shelter to stably housed. This included payments for housing application fees, as well as utility and rental assistance. The majority (70%) of survivors only received flexible financial assistance once. Flexibility in funds and programming means that advocates can address survivors’ immediate and longer term needs around safety and stability, whether it be via one-time assistance or support over time.



Rental assistance and transportation assistance accounted for the largest percentage of payments, 25% and 24% respectively, followed by move-in costs (11%), housing readiness (7%), utility bills (7%), debt assistance (6%), and the remaining for education/training, moving costs, children’s needs and legal assistance.

## IMMEDIATE HOUSING IMPACT:

As a direct result of receiving flexible financial assistance, slightly over half (51%) of survivors stayed safely in their own home, avoiding relocating or potential homelessness. Other survivors moved from homelessness to housed (12%), from shelter to housed (9%), or moved homes (8%). Seventeen percent of funds were used to support survivors in preparing for housing; including education and training, and transportation assistance. The remaining 3% received funds resulting in overall family well-being \*.



## CHALLENGES:

Each agency participating in the Demonstration Project has encountered their own unique barriers to implementing the DVHF approach, including learning new procedures and advocacy practices. The most shared challenge being lack of affordable housing.



"The state of the housing market in King County is the root of many of our challenges housing survivors"

Each agency will continue to receive flexible financial assistance and technical assistance on implementation of DVHF through 2019. Each year, reports will be compiled to share lessons learned and results from flexible financial assistance disbursement. Stay up to date by checking out our webpage and signing up for our quarterly newsletters: [www.wscadv.org/dvhf](http://www.wscadv.org/dvhf)

\* Family Well-Being involves supporting survivors to stay stable by providing assistance for things like food, bus passes, car repair, cell phone minutes and children's needs. When advocates support survivors financially in these ways, survivors have the money to pay for their rent, search for housing, etc. As of January 1, 2018, Family Well-Being is no longer included as a housing outcome. It is recognized as an essential component of housing stability but not an actual outcome.