



National Alliance to
End Sexual Violence

Sexual Assault Services Program

FY 23 Appropriation: \$78.5 million

FY 24 Appropriation: \$78.5

Authorized at: \$100 million

FY 25 Request: \$100 million

"Working at MRCCAC is a journey of empowerment and compassion. Every day, we witness the extraordinary strength of survivors and the dedication of our team. It's a place where healing begins, and hope is restored." –Texas Rape Crisis Center Advocate

"Before coming here, I felt so numb. I was lost and alone. But after my first visit here, I realized that I wasn't." Survivor at a Pennsylvania Rape Crisis Center

Sexual Assault Victims Deserve Recovery Services.

The Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP), administered by the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) in the U.S. Department of Justice, was authorized in 2005 through the Violence Against Women Act as the first federal funding stream dedicated to the provision of direct services to victims of sexual violence. According to [OVW's most recent report on the SASP program](#):

- Over **55,000 individuals** received services annually through SASP;
- Over **300 advocates** and counselors were funded at local programs; and
- Almost **30,000 survivors** received medical or legal advocacy.

"We have had to make substantial cuts to our counseling staffing, leaving victims waiting sometimes months for an opening with a therapist or in a support group. Many groups that were previously offered have had to be canceled. Staffing is stretched so thin that there is no other option." –Florida Rape Crisis Center

"We are not able to afford the competitive salaries that are existing for counselors in this current market. Our grant funding would never be enough to cover those salaries." –Oregon Rape Crisis Center

Rape crisis centers struggle. The nation's 1,500 sexual assault programs often lack the resources to meet victims' most basic needs. National attention to the problem of sexual assault, in addition to conditions created by the COVID pandemic, has meant more victims have come forward seeking recovery services. According to a 2023 survey by NAESV:

- Nearly 70% of programs saw an increased demand for services.
- 33% of programs report a waiting list.
- 57% of programs experienced a reduction in staffing.
- 48% of programs lack a therapist on staff.

The Need is great.

According to a 2022 report from [the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey](#):

26.8% of women and 3% of men have experienced a completed or attempted rape in their lifetime. Victims of sexual assault suffer.

They are more likely to struggle professionally, academically, and from depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, and to contemplate suicide.

Current funding levels are inadequate. As an example, in FY 23, the states of Kansas, Kentucky, and New Hampshire each received less than \$1 million to serve the entire state.

Across the country, SASP funds support the critical services victims need most.

SASP funds support services in every state.

Formula grants are awarded to states, territories and tribes to support efforts to provide services to adult and minor sexual assault victims and their families. Grants can be used for critically important intervention and advocacy services, especially accompaniment through medical and criminal justice systems.

SASP funds support culturally specific

organizations. Grants support intervention and related assistance for communities of color by organizations like the United Somali Women of Maine and the Hmong American Women's Association in Milwaukee.

SASP funds ensure quality services. Through support of coalitions which provide training and technical assistance, SASP helps ensure that victims receive high quality services and improved responses from the justice and medical systems.

Advocates help the criminal justice system respond better. Research shows that when victims receive advocate-assisted services following assaults, they receive more helpful information, referrals and services and experience less secondary trauma or re-victimization by medical and legal systems.

Rape survivors supported by advocates were 59% more likely to have police reports taken than survivors without advocates, whose reports were only taken 41% of the time.

Advocates help victims heal. When advocates are present in the legal and medical proceedings following rape, victims fare better in both short- and long-term recovery, experiencing less psychological distress, physical health struggles, sexual risk-taking behaviors, self-blame, guilt, and depression.

I feel like I can finally move forward in my life and I am so thankful for the opportunity to heal after feeling stuck for so long. This program made all the difference for me
-Ohio survivor

Congress can be an essential part of the solution by increasing appropriations for the Sexual Assault Services Program to \$100 million.

HAVE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS? Contact Terri Poore, Policy Director at terri@endsexualviolence.org.