Examining the Effects of Arrest on Domestic Violence Survivors in New York State

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Introduction

Domestic violence (DV) is an urgent and deeply complex issue that requires nuanced and survivor-centered responses.[1] In 2022, New York State reported more than 85,000 victims and survivors, representing a 12 percent increase in cases in New York City since 2021.[2] These numbers may reflect an undercounting: the United States Department of Justice reports that many DV incidents never reach law enforcement due to fear, stigma, or lack of trust in the criminal justice system.[3] Close to 70 percent of all New York State DV survivors were hurt by their intimate partner, while 30 percent were victimized by another family member.[4] The vast majority of DV survivors in New York State are women (80 percent of reported cases).[5]

For decades, jurisdictions have relied on law enforcement and, in many states, mandatory arrest policies to address DV.[6] The arrest-centered approach gained traction in the 1990s in response to community demands that the police take violence against women seriously and act decisively.[7] This shift to focus on arrest was intended to promote survivor safety and hold people who cause harm accountable.[8] However, research reveals that prioritizing arrest to address DV can have unintended negative consequences.[9]

This report explores survivors' experiences with arrests related to DV incidents in New York State. It underscores the urgent need for holistic, community-based strategies that prioritize survivor well-being and long-term safety. The findings also highlight the limitations of a law enforcement–centered response. By centering survivor voices, this study illuminates potential gaps in New York State's current response to DV and provides recommendations to address the needs of survivors more holistically.

Background

New York adopted a mandatory arrest policy 30 years ago, which requires police to make an arrest in any case involving DV if there is probable cause to do so.[10] Mandatory arrest, one of the more widespread policies that placed law enforcement at the center of the strategy to end DV, was adopted out of concern that law enforcement was not addressing the issue in effective ways.[11] Concerns centered on the fact that law enforcement often overlooked or minimized DV incidents, treating them as private matters rather than as criminal acts.[12] Advocates argued that mandatory arrest laws would ensure a more consistent and immediate response, increase survivor safety, and hold abusers accountable by removing them from the home and initiating legal action.[13]

Mandatory arrest policies did result in an increase in arrests.[14] However, research over the last 30 years has demonstrated that mandatory arrest policies had unintended negative consequences including exacerbating survivors' unmet needs, the criminalization of survivors, and existing racial disparities in the "prevalence and severity" of DV.[15] The following examines the unintended negative consequences arrests can have on survivors' safety and well-being. This Background section ends with a summary of research on alternative responses to DV other than law enforcement.

Unmet needs

Research shows that criminal justice responses often fail to meet DV survivors' needs and, in some cases, make them worse. Studies document that survivors' needs extend beyond what law enforcement can provide and include housing, childcare, financial stability, and medical or mental health support.[16] Studies also document loss of income, housing, or benefits; court-related costs and fees; and traumatization through coercive practices, jail confinement, or mistreatment based on gender identity. A growing body of research shows that survivors require a range of social service responses—such as mediation, crisis prevention, mental health care, and financial or housing assistance—that the criminal justice system is not equipped to deliver.[17]

Criminalization of survivors

There is evidence that suggests law enforcement can misidentify the person causing harm, resulting in survivors being arrested with (known as a dual arrest), or instead of, their partners. The complexity of DV situations can thus lead to survivors being criminalized by the very system meant to protect them.[18]

Across the board, studies show that mandatory arrest has significantly increased arrest rates for women, despite evidence indicating women have not become more violent.[19] Arrest rates for women are estimated to have increased by 25 to 35 percent in connection with mandatory arrest laws, in part due to large increases in dual arrests.[20] Additionally, mandatory arrest policies significantly increased arrest rates for women in same-sex relationships.[21]

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Mandatory arrest can also exacerbate race- and gender-related barriers faced by Black women. Black women often find themselves at the crossroads of racial inequities in the criminal justice system and poor responses to DV, such as "nonchalance, minimization, and victim-blaming."[22] Even with mandatory arrest laws, Black women are less likely to see their calls for help result in an arrest of their partners when compared to white women.[23] Policies that attempt to rectify the problem—such as mandatory arrest—are "insufficient for women whose concerns are also deeply rooted in racial discrimination, economic instability, and other forms of structural inequality."[24]

The need for alternative responses to DV

Arrest-focused interventions can erode trust in the system and deter survivors from seeking help.[25] Additionally, many survivors will not turn to the criminal legal system for help.[26] In line with the literature on the negative consequences of mandatory arrest policies, advocates for better responses to DV are increasingly shifting toward investing in community-based prevention and response services that are more inclusive and tailored to the diverse needs of survivors. Advocates' efforts mirror work that focuses on community safety, 911 calls, violence intervention, and community-based programming that does not exclusively rely on the police or incarceration to make communities safer.[27]

By focusing on culturally competent, survivor-centered approaches, contemporary initiatives aim to create safer, more accessible social services for people from all backgrounds and with a variety of experiences. This advocacy shift prioritizes holistic solutions that address the root causes of DV while offering long-term, supportive care to people and families affected by violence.

About This Study: Understanding the Impact of Arrest and the Needs of Survivors

The Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) conducted a qualitative study to explore survivors' experiences with arrests related to DV incidents in New York State. The study is driven by the hypothesis—grounded in the research outlined in the previous Background section—that arrest does not always meet survivor needs and exacerbates survivor challenges related to safety, housing, finances, child custody, and mental health. The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How does an arrest made during a DV call impact survivors?
2. To what extent, if at all, does arrest meet DV survivors' needs?

To answer these questions, Vera conducted semi-structured interviews with 35 people across New York State who self-identified as survivors of DV on the impacts of arrest during a DV incident on their safety and well-being. Data collection took place from March to September 2024.[28]

Study sample

The study's sampling criteria ensured participants could provide recent and relevant insights into the effects of DV arrest policies on survivors in New York State. Participant criteria consisted of the following:

- Participants must have been involved in a DV incident that resulted in either the participant's or their partner's arrest.[29]
- Participants must have been 18 years old or older at the time of the incident.
- The incident must have occurred between 2020 and 2024.
- The arrest must have taken place within New York State.

Vera used snowball sampling, a convenient recruitment method for studying hard-to-reach communities.[30] The research team collaborated with DV service providers across New York State to distribute physical and digital flyers. Recruited participants were encouraged to share information about the study with eligible people in their networks. Figure 1 provides an overview of the demographic characteristics of the participants involved in the study.

Figure 1

Study sample demographics

Variable	Number	Percentage
Gender	**35**	
Cis man	8	23%
Cis woman	19	54%
Nonbinary person	2	6%
Trans man	1	3%
Trans woman	5	14%
Sexual Orientation	**35**	
Bisexual	7	20%
Fluid	1	3%
Gay	2	6%
Heterosexual	23	66%
Queer	2	6%
Race	**35**	
Black	21	60%
Multiracial	5	14%
Other	2	6%
White	7	20%
Ethnicity	**35**	
Hispanic	11	31%
Non-Hispanic	24	69%
Parent or Caregiver Status	**35**	
Parent or caregiver	18	51%
Not a parent or caregiver	17	49%

Annual Individual Income Range	35	
$10,000 to $25,000	12	34%
$25,001 to $50,000	5	14%
$50,001 to $75,000	11	31%
$75,001 to $100,000	1	3%
Prefer not to say	3	9%
Unsure	3	9%
Arrest Status	**35**	
Police arrested multiple people, including participants	3	9%
Police arrested participant only	9	26%
Police arrested partner only	23	66%
Arrest Location	**35**	
New York City (five boroughs)	20	57%
NYC borough: Bronx	7	20%
NYC borough: Kings (Brooklyn)	7	20%
NYC borough: New York (Manhattan)	4	10%
NYC borough: Queens	2	6%
Albany County	4	11%
Broome County	1	3%
Erie County	1	3%
Nassau County	1	3%
Schenectady County	1	3%
Suffolk County	2	6%
Unknown	4	11%
Westchester County	1	3%

Who Called Police	35	
Another household member	2	6%
Bystander or community member	9	26%
Don't know	1	3%
Participant	14	40%
Partner	7	20%
Police initiated	2	6%

Note: The percentages in this table are rounded to the nearest integer, hence some categories in which the percentage total is greater than 100 percent.

Vera intentionally attempted to oversample traditionally underrepresented voices in DV research, specifically targeting BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and criminalized survivors, as well as people living outside of New York City, with a specific focus on rural New York.[31] To bolster recruitment efforts for traditionally underrepresented groups, Vera engaged with community organizations and service providers across New York State (including in rural counties) that worked with specific marginalized communities. Vera successfully oversampled Black people (60 percent of participants), non-cisgender people (23 percent of participants), and non-heterosexual people (34 percent of participants). Reaching more participants from rural areas in New York proved difficult. According to police department data from 2023, more than 50 percent of all intimate partner violence incidents reported to police took place outside of New York City.[32]

The sample's proportions reflect the study's intentional focus on capturing the experiences of marginalized groups that are disproportionately impacted by systemic inequities and may face unique challenges in interactions with law enforcement during DV incidents. The study also sought to address important gaps in previous research, especially by hearing from survivors in rural counties.[33]

Reflections on study design

The study reflects an initial effort to understand the experiences of DV survivors with police during a DV incident in New York State.[34] Due to the exploratory nature of the study, the design did not sample with the goal of generalizability. While the study provides valuable insights, it may have limited generalizability because of three issues: inadequate representation of experiences, focus on survivors, and a narrow scope.

Representation of experiences. The study's findings are more representative of New York City residents than of rural residents. Recruiting participants from outside New York City proved particularly challenging because service providers in under-resourced regions may be less able to respond to requests to disseminate flyers and have less familiarity or connection with Vera. Additionally, the study's recruitment strategy (snowball sampling from social service providers) resulted in a sample of people struggling with poverty (for example, 23 out of 35 participants reported housing insecurity at the time of the interview). Therefore, the report's findings may not be

generalizable to all DV survivors. DV occurs across all socioeconomic levels, but the impact of it is particularly negative for people with fewer resources.[35]

Survivor focus. The study—by design—focuses solely on survivors' experiences of arrest after a DV incident. Although focusing on survivors provides crucial insights into experiences with the police during a DV incident, it does not include perspectives from other stakeholders involved in DV cases, such as the responsible party, family members, service providers, or law enforcement.

Narrow scope. The research is not a formal evaluation of specific arrest policies and/or practices. Rather, it provides a qualitative exploration of survivor experiences and perceptions related to arrest and, therefore, of law enforcement policies or practices related to responding to DV incidents. Additionally, the study does not explore the participants' history with DV or the details of the DV-related incident that led to their interaction with the police. Rather, the study aims to understand the experiences of survivors with law enforcement and contributes to the growing body of evidence on policing and its impact as it relates to DV.

Findings: Diverse Experiences Require Diverse Responses

The qualitative study asked participants to share their stories of arrest related to a DV incident—specifically, how it impacted their lives and their families—with the goal of informing state policies for DV intervention. The Vera research team heard about a wide range of experiences. In fact, the team talked to 35 people and collected 35 unique stories. The diversity of the stories created a challenge for synthesizing responses, which became a finding in and of itself. The complexity of the participants' stories reflects the complexity of the circumstances surrounding arrests related to DV and complicates public policy attempts at simple, streamlined solutions.

The findings are organized into three sections:

- participants' experiences of arrest;
- participants' perspectives on alternatives to law enforcement responses and prevention; and
- participants' stressors that stem from law enforcement response.

Taken together, the findings suggest that arrest should be one of a variety of options to respond to DV incidents. For some participants, arrest helped them feel safe, de-escalated the situation, and felt responsive to their needs. However, only five participants described this ideal situation. Many more described varying degrees of satisfaction with police responsiveness or with whether their needs were met. For example, only one participant explicitly stated that she called the police for the person causing her harm to be arrested and engaged in the criminal justice process. Most participants reported that arrest complicated their lives, created additional burdens for them to navigate, and was unresponsive to their desired outcomes.

The study's findings align with broader research on arrest and DV incidents. Survivors often develop a range of strategies to protect themselves and their children, such as maintaining contact with an abusive partner to de-escalate violence, hiding financial resources, and/or relying on community networks for safety.[36] Law enforcement intervention, particularly mandated arrest or protective orders imposed without consent, can sometimes disrupt these strategies—limiting autonomy or escalating risk.[37]

Participants shared how arrests related to DV incidents affected their lives and families. Of the 35 people interviewed, only 14 reported contacting law enforcement themselves in response to a DV incident. Vera's analysis suggests that arrest can constrain options available to survivors and require them to engage with the criminal justice system even when they did not choose that path.

This Findings section organizes the most prevalent themes that emerged when participants shared ideas for alternative responses that complement law enforcement or prevent an incident that requires law enforcement intervention in the first place.

Finding 1: Survivors' experiences of arrest are influenced by social identity

This section focuses on the participants' direct interactions with police and how they interpreted those encounters and their outcomes in shaping their sense of safety and support. Participants' decisions and identities, including race, gender, sexuality, and gender presentation, emerged as themes influencing how they interpreted and evaluated police responses.

Vera did not ask participants about how their identity may have impacted their interactions with law enforcement during the arrest related to a DV incident. Yet, several participants (seven), without prompting, shared their belief that the police's behavior toward them related to their identities (specifically their race and gender). Some believe the police connected their identities to their choices in handling the situation and reacted accordingly. Vera concludes that social identity, in turn, impacts whether participants perceived the intervention as helpful or harmful. Understanding these identity-based perceptions is critical to developing responses that survivors experience as safe and supportive and should be an area for future research.

"I didn't want to call the police because I didn't want to see him in jail. Because I loved him, you know. We just had little issues. [He] just had to be arrested just to stop him at that moment. [The police] gave me [an] order of protection from the gate. Period. I didn't want one."

Who calls the police? What survivors want during a crisis

Participants shared that, in their experiences, who initiated the call to police in response to a DV incident impacted how police engaged and the outcome. Some participants (15) perceived that whoever made the first call influenced how the incident was understood and addressed. Participants described three initiators of calls that led to police involvement: a third party (14), the participant (14), and the participant's partner (7). The following reflections reveal how study participants interpreted the role of police involvement and how, from their perspective, their priorities were not always centered.

When survivors called the police, they described a range of motivations. The patterns that emerged primarily focused on a need for support to de-escalate the situation, temporary separation, or medical attention. For example, Nadia (Latina, multiracial, cisgender, 47-year-old woman) wanted a reprieve from her partner.[38] She reported:

> I love Connor. . . . I don't want to see him in jail. . . . I just wanted him to leave me alone. I didn't want to call the police because I didn't want to see him in jail. Because I loved him, you know. We just had little issues. [He] just had to be arrested just to stop him at that moment. [The police] gave me [an] order of protection from the gate. Period. I didn't want one. I didn't. I didn't press charge[s]. [They] wanted me to press charges so he could have stayed in jail.

Another participant, Chantelle (white, cisgender, 30-year-old woman), shared that safety was her motivation for calling the police:

> I just wanted him away from me at that point. . . . My point is, I just wanted to feel safe at that point. Like . . . I didn't want the violence to escalate. So, I just needed the police to show up and, you know, separate me from the situation.

In some cases (three out of 35), survivors reported that medical attention, in addition to their safety, was a concern in their law enforcement interaction. These three participants reported that they felt as if their health concerns came second to law enforcement priorities. For instance, Jessica (Latina/multiracial, cisgender, 27-year-old woman), who was pregnant at the time of the incident, recounted waiting more than an hour for the police to arrest her partner before being offered transportation to a hospital. By that point, Jessica's sister had arrived to accompany her to the emergency room for medical assistance.

Vera's interview data, consistent with DV research finding that police and survivors' goals often diverge, suggests that survivors' goals for police involvement during a DV incident may differ from police responsibilities, even when survivors initiate police contact.[39] Mandatory arrest policies, which require officers to make an arrest if there is probable cause to believe that a DV offense has occurred, can conflict with survivors' wishes for paths to safety without legal entanglement (such as de-escalation or temporary separation).[40]

Seven participants reported that their partners initiated the call to the police. Research shows that people who cause harm can often navigate the criminal justice system to their advantage.[41] Calling for help first, often framing themselves as victims, is one method. Brittany (Black, cisgender, 48-year-old woman) shared her belief that her partner's call to police may have shaped the police response:

> When they came, they were not very helpful for me. We both had bruises. We both had, you know, needed to have medical attention. But because he called, I guess you know, they kind of sided with him. . . . And that was my mistake, which they told me not so nicely that day, you know? They weren't very helpful to me. They were very helpful and very attentive to him. . . . As soon as he let them know that he called, they immediately were dealing with him. In a manner that I felt like they should have been dealing with me. There was one officer who kept saying, you know, well, I should have called them. I should have called them. I shouldn't have let it get to the point where he called first because now it looks bad on me and I'm like, "Are you serious right now?" You know? But they actually were very serious. They [weren't] very, very helpful to me at all.

Brittany's experience highlights how survivors can feel penalized for decisions made in high-stress situations. Her account underscores that survivors may perceive police responses as contingent on

their actions, raising concerns that access to help may depend on whose version of events is heard first. This points to the need for further research to better understand these dynamics.

During complex DV calls, when law enforcement arrives to find ambiguous or conflicting circumstances, the requirement to make an arrest can result in the arrest of both people (dual arrest) or the wrong person (survivor), potentially leading to negative consequences.[42] Indeed, in Vera's interviews, more than one-third of participants (12 out of 35) recounted experiences of being arrested, some as part of a dual arrest, which left them criminalized and traumatized instead of supported.

Vera's study suggests that police intervention and arrest is made more complicated by the possibility of survivors being arrested alongside their partners. When participants reported being arrested with their partners, they stated that they received equal or even harsher punishments compared to their partners who caused harm, adding more strain on their safety and needs.

Brittany's case illustrates how the criminal legal system cannot always address the complex dynamics of harm, safety, and accountability in ways that align with the needs of those involved in the DV incident:

> You know, we both got arrested. He was released before I was. That part I didn't understand either. He had pressed charges, so I had an assault charge in the second degree, which I felt was insane. Eventually we did, you know, talk, but we never came to an agreement. We never dropped the charges on either one of us, and he ended up only getting probation. And I ended up with probation. I ended up with anger management. I ended up in therapy as well. So, it was a lot for me.

Race and gender in navigating an arrest

Although the study did not ask participants to answer questions related to their race and/or gender (outside of demographic information collection at the end of the interview), many participants opined about the ways their identities may have played a role in the outcomes of law enforcement responses to the DV incident and, in turn, how they perceive the police as an access point for safety during a DV incident.[43]

Katrina (Black, cisgender, 41-year-old woman) shared an experience that illuminates the ways that racial biases can emerge when there is an arrest. Katrina reported that her lighter-skinned, Latinx partner harmed her in a DV incident and that their racial differences might have influenced the police's perception and response.

> So, basically, when [the police] pulled up, we were standing up physically gathered together, so it looked like we were attacking each other or that I [was attacking him] because I was yelling more. It seemed like I was the attacker. And it was a racial difference between me and him. You know what I mean? That also played a lot into it. And he's a lot more proper and patient with the police than I am. I was hysterical. I was going off. I wanted him to hear my point. But I guess I went about it in the wrong direction.

Katrina's experience highlights how participants feel that factors such as race, emotional expression, and demeanor shaped the way police responded to them during ambiguous DV incidents. Participants described experiencing racial bias in these interactions, which left them feeling that the

response was harmful and added to the complex and traumatic circumstances they were already navigating. Survivors of color may feel like they need to behave in a certain way so as not to trigger a racially motivated reaction from the police or other actors.[44] Police motivations for acting in a certain way during DV situations are beyond the scope of the study; however, participant responses show that law enforcement actions can shape survivors' perceptions of the police as a safe solution to DV.

For example, one participant, John (multiracial, cisgender, 32-year-old man), explained that he felt the police did not believe him when he told them that his girlfriend was the person causing the harm because he was the man in a heterosexual relationship: "No matter what you do as a man you run a high risk of being arrested." John's account reflects how gender norms can influence how people perceive police as a viable pathway to safety. Although research on DV against men is limited, studies indicate that one in 10 men experience DV, and men make up 24 percent of DV survivors.[45] In 2023, in New York State, more than 6,300 men were victims of DV.[46]

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The distrust that some participants have of law enforcement further underscores the need for alternative approaches that prioritize safety and support over punishment. Even when someone is not subjected to an arrest themselves, negative interactions with law enforcement can erode trust and discourage survivors from seeking help in the future. Tristan (Black, trans, 27-year-old, nonbinary person), recounted uncomfortable interactions with and harmful transphobic comments made by police during their DV case. Despite fully cooperating with them, Tristan shared that officers made inappropriate and transphobic comments about their appearance and gender identity/expression. This experience eroded their trust in law enforcement, leading them to say they would not call the police again if faced with another DV incident.

Survivors' perceptions of police and the criminal justice system interventions during a DV incident are influenced by their experiences and inform their beliefs about whether an arrest will meet their needs, including safety. Some of those experiences are shaped by race, gender, and the mechanics of the process itself, such as who calls the police.

Finding 2: Alternatives to complement law enforcement are needed

New York State is one of 24 states with a mandatory arrest law that, by design, eliminates police discretion.[47] The study asked participants to share their opinions about mandatory arrest policies versus police discretion. The sample was split—with half sharing they supported mandatory arrest policies and half supporting discretion. However, most participants, even those who supported mandatory arrest policies, felt that broader options were needed to address the needs of those

involved in a DV incident. This section begins with participants' ideas for a broader range of options to respond to DV incidents and then illuminates the numerous challenges—and few benefits—participants connect to arrest.

Three-quarters of participants (27 out of 35) noted a distrust in law enforcement–centered DV responses. A few participants offered examples of alternatives to traditional law enforcement interventions for DV. For example, Rosy wanted help accessing affordable and safe housing for her and her children that would help alleviate the reliance she had on her ex-partner for housing. Tristan reported that if, at the time of the DV incident that led to arrest, they and their partner had had access to financial support, including employment opportunities, they would have relied less on each other to make ends meet, including choosing to not live together.

Maxine (Black/Latina, cisgender, 29-year-old woman) advocated for a crisis intervention team trained to handle DV cases with a noncarceral, nonpunitive approach:

> I wish that there was some kind of crisis intervention team that could be sent out to domestic violence situations to try to meet the situation. . . . It would work for family, you know, arguments. It would work for people with mental health [conditions]. Police can't deal with any of this stuff. . . . They basically . . . told me he had to be arrested or otherwise they were leaving.

Maxine's experience, in which the only help police offered was an arrest, highlights the limitations of law enforcement in addressing complex DV situations. Maxine, along with half of the participants in the study, reported that, should there be a future DV incident, she would *not* call the police again. The frustration and disappointment of police interventions underscore the need for alternative approaches that prioritize safety and support. Though sparse, there are developing alternatives that give people more options to access support that is not the police. For example, in jurisdictions like Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Dayton, Ohio, these alternatives allow people to access support that focuses on de-escalation and connection to social services (government- and community-run programs) without direct contact with the criminal justice system.[48]

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Participants' desire for a holistic approach does not imply they *never* want the police to intervene or arrest someone who is harming them. Rather, they suggest that relying on police intervention as their only option is insufficient. A law enforcement–centered approach positions police intervention as the primary and most effective response to DV, elevating it above other options without centering survivors' perspectives. For example, Jessica reported that she needed medical attention and wanted her partner to get mental health

support. She shared with Vera researchers that, although she wanted a separation from her partner at the time, she did not want him to be incarcerated. For Jessica, the arrest took away something she wanted and needed: for her parenting partner to have a role in their children's lives. Similarly, another participant, Ellen (Black, cisgender, 25-year-old woman), shared that she did not want her ex-partner arrested or incarcerated. Her primary concern was safety and temporary separation from her ex-partner, and she also wanted to be connected to better mental health services for herself.

Law enforcement priorities may not fully address survivors' nuanced wants and needs, which can cause tension and disappointment during the interaction with law enforcement. Participants' stories suggest that survivors would benefit from having an array of options or the ability to provide more input into what happens when the police are called to a DV incident. Potential solutions also are not limited to the moment of a DV incident or crisis, though this is when they may be most urgent and when police typically intervene.

Prevention

One-third of participants (12 out of 35) believed their DV incidents could have been prevented if they and their partners had had access to underlying support services, particularly in areas of mental health and substance use treatment. They emphasized the need for resources to address root causes of conflict. Julie (Black, cisgender, 24-year-old woman) said: "If [he] would have got help and it would have been better, I'll be with him right now." Tristan reported that financial struggles, such as unemployment, were a strain on their relationship and mental health. Tristan said the financial stress did not justify any abusive behavior, but financial security could have mitigated DV.

Another participant, Sarah (multiracial, cisgender 29-year-old woman), shared:

> I feel like counseling could have helped because there was a lot of things going on within the relationship, like he always accused me of cheating or lying, like everywhere I went, he had a baby monitor set up in the house that I didn't even know. . . . I think that . . . he needed therapy more so than I did, but [we] definitely should have had some type of therapy we weren't [getting]. We didn't have good communication and I think that's what led to the physical part of it.

Sarah's and Julie's reflections are emblematic of the most common themes from the interviews. Vera researchers repeatedly heard about a desire for social support that would keep participants safe and, for some, prevent violence. The most common ideas mentioned were mental health support through counseling services, more secure and affordable housing options, and financial stability, including more employment opportunities, for all parties involved.

Finding 3: Arrests increase stressors on survivors

Participants shared ideas for more expansive options beyond police intervention, in part because of their negative experiences with arrest. The study found an arrest for DV can initiate and/or amplify a complex and often challenging journey for survivors, many of whom are already navigating the challenges created by violence. While intended to provide safety and accountability, participant accounts suggest that the justice system's response can produce unintended negative consequences that worsen existing struggles and hinder survivors' recovery. Housing instability, financial struggles, mental health issues, and the impact on children are just some of the

aftershocks participants reported facing. Their stories of increased strain connected to the arrest support the call for more holistic, survivor-centered DV approaches. The insights shared by participants highlight critical gaps in the current approach to DV incidents and raise important questions about how to better support survivors struggling with DV and poverty as they navigate multifaceted challenges.

Housing instability and financial hardships

Housing instability was a common theme for study participants, with 23 out of 35 reporting that they were still looking for housing at the time of their interview. Nine did not live in permanent housing, two lived in shelters, and two were in rehabilitation or treatment facilities.

"He was the one working while I was at home with my son. So, he was supporting us. So yeah, that was a struggle and then it was, you know, it was hard trying to find childcare or [a] job. . . . Because now I have to take care [of] my son on my own."

Many participants reported living temporarily (and in some cases, longer-term) with family members or friends because of orders of protection. They described having to navigate difficult living arrangements with limited choices. For example, Rosy (Latina, cisgender, 39-year-old woman) was seeking safer housing after a long history of racist abuse from her neighbors. Rosy had struggled to find an affordable home for her and her children after she left her abusive ex-partner. However, after exhausting all her options—leveraging her employer's social assistance program and exploring living with trusted family hours away—she turned to her ex-partner for housing during a moment of crisis. With nowhere else to go, she was forced back into a dangerous situation. She reported that there was another DV incident after she moved in that led to an arrest. After the arrest, Rosy returned to her old apartment even though she was afraid of the continued racist abuse from neighbors. At the time of the interview, Rosy was still searching for alternative housing.

Similarly, limited housing options can force people to stay in unsafe situations. Lexy (multiracial, cisgender, 22-year-old woman) relied on her ex-partner for housing. Even now, after he was incarcerated, she is staying with friends and family and still seeking affordable housing. Reflecting on her situation, Lexy stated that she would not have stayed with her abusive ex-partner had she been able to pay for her own housing. Megan (multiracial, transgender, 21-year-old woman) also relied on her ex-partner for housing. After the arrest, she was bouncing between shelters, sleeping on trains or on the street, and staying at hotels or hostels. She eventually returned to her ex-partner's mother's home until she was able to afford a place on her own, risking continued DV incidents given her proximity to her ex-partner's family.

Vera's interviews revealed that resources for relocation were a major challenge and typically only readily available to people with supportive networks of family and friends or those already connected to social services.

To examine if police contact was an entry point to accessing services, Vera researchers asked participants whether police intervention in their DV cases helped them access temporary or long-term housing. Though outside the traditional responsibility of law enforcement, in some New York jurisdictions, when police arrest someone in connection to a DV incident, they are trained to connect

survivors (and their families) to social services such as housing.[49] Most participants (33) reported police did not connect them to services that could provide housing support, and arrest did not open pathways to such assistance. Maxine shared her experience: "No, [the police] never did anything. They just told me that the only way I can get him out of my house is if I had him arrested. That was the most housing advice that they gave me." This highlights both the limits of police intervention, which largely centers arrest and orders of protection, and the gap in connecting survivors to resources that could address urgent housing needs.

Vera's study found that financial instability can accompany and amplify other difficulties, such as displacement from housing, especially when the arrest involves the primary financial supporter. When asked about the impact of arrest, Maxine told Vera, "I just felt scared, like, what am I going to do now? I'm losing half of my income, you know? How am I going to be able to keep up my bills, you know?" Without financial support, survivors in this study reported facing difficulties paying rent, affording childcare, or maintaining employment, all while navigating the emotional and physical toll of domestic violence.

Katrina explained the cascading effects of this financial instability on childcare and employment:

> He was the one working while I was at home with my son. So, he was supporting us. So yeah, that was a struggle and then it was, you know, it was hard trying to find childcare or [a] job with the right amount of, like, the right time, not just the hours, but the timing. Because now I have to take care [of] my son on my own. So, it's like, you know, so for childcare, I wouldn't be able to because I would have to get a minimum wage job being that . . . I don't have a college degree or things like that. So. Yeah, I wouldn't be able to afford a babysitter, and you know . . . that would be a lot.

A lack of resources and stability makes it difficult for survivors to seek safety, pursue legal options, or rebuild their lives independently. The housing and financial challenges survivors articulated related to the arrest made during a DV incident are not an argument against law enforcement involvement altogether. Instead, participants' experiences show that without a broader range of supports, arrest alone can compound harm rather than promote safety.

Impact on children and mental health

Five participants in the study were engaged in custody cases at the time of their interviews. All stated that the arrest further complicated their family dynamics. For example, Katrina spent six months fighting to regain custody of her child after they were placed in foster care due to the arrest.[50] In another case, Rosy struggled to find affordable, stable housing appropriate for her children—she was not comfortable having her children live in a shelter and was in a long custody battle for her children, which amplified the tension between her and her ex-partner. Rosy had to navigate these systems while addressing a new case that resulted from the arrest of her ex-partner.

The negative impact on children can be particularly profound.[51] Both the DV incident and the subsequent arrest can be traumatizing for children and damage relationships with both arrested and non-arrested parents. Katrina shared:

> Well, yes, unfortunately . . . my son saw him get arrested. So, like, you know, like he was really scared of cops for a while. Like I had to keep talking to him over and over and let him

> know that, you know, it's not that, you know, the cops were trying to hurt [his dad]. You know, they just have to take them away to calm down. You know, so he was [also] a little afraid of cops for a while.

Participants with children, whether they or their co-parent were arrested, reported facing additional challenges beyond criminal proceedings. Participants shared their struggles navigating family court, arranging childcare, managing financial instability, and making decisions about their family's future. Another participant, Lina (Black, cisgender, 32-year-old woman), struggled with the choices she had to make once her ex-partner was arrested. Lina's ex-partner was the primary breadwinner for her family, as Lina stayed home to take care of her child while she also struggled with depression and substance use. After the arrest, Lina's mental health struggles, substance use, and unemployment were used against her during a custody battle. With the support of family members, Lina eventually gained custody and accessed mental health support, but acknowledges that the criminal justice system and proceedings amplified her mental health struggles and almost resulted in her losing custody to the state.

Finally, the mental health toll on survivors—especially those who are criminalized—can be severe. For some, this was their first arrest and contact with the criminal justice system. Many participants reported feeling criminalized despite their innocence and connected this experience with long-term, adverse psychological impacts like depression. Five participants with mental health challenges such as anxiety, depression, or PTSD reported that the arrest and navigating the criminal justice system worsened these issues.

Conclusion

The study found diversity among survivors' experiences that require diverse intervention strategies. Centering survivors' experiences illuminates the importance of investing in a much broader set of solutions to address DV than law enforcement alone. Especially in moments of crisis when intervention is needed, communities cannot exclusively rely on arrest. It is critical to listen to the variety of experiences within the stories presented here.

Vera's findings suggest that effective DV solutions must address needs before, during, and after arrest. Although survivors seek safety, their needs extend beyond what arrest and the criminal justice system can provide. Participants shared ideas for prevention and alternatives to law enforcement. These survivors' insights can serve as a foundation for the development of comprehensive recommendations to improve outcomes for DV survivors.

However, participants' complex experiences do not imply that they never want the police to intervene or arrest someone who is harming them. Rather, they suggest that police intervention alone is insufficient and that survivors would benefit from having an array of options or the ability to provide more input into what happens throughout the process.

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About citations

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The Vera Institute of Justice is powered by hundreds of advocates, researchers, and policy experts working to transform the criminal justice and immigration systems until they're fair for all. Founded in 1961 to advocate for alternatives to money bail in New York City, Vera is now a national organization that partners with impacted communities and government leaders for change. We develop just, equitable solutions so that money doesn't determine freedom; fewer people are in jails, prisons, and immigration detention; and everyone is treated with dignity. Vera's headquarters is in Brooklyn, New York, with offices in Washington, DC; New Orleans; and Los Angeles. For more information, visit vera.org.

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Notes

[1] This report uses the term domestic violence (DV) throughout. DV encompasses abuse in any domestic setting, including between family members. Intimate partner violence (IPV) occurs in close, personal relationships (for example, between spouses or romantic partners). Gender-based violence (GBV) is an umbrella term that refers to harmful acts directed at people based on their gender or gender identity, including physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse. It is rooted in power imbalances and societal norms that disproportionately affect women, girls, and transgender and gender nonconforming people. Within the overall demographic of women, women of color and queer women are further disproportionately affected. See UNICEF for Every Child, *Gender-Based Violence Information Pack* (New York: UNICEF for Every Child, 2021), 1, https://www.unicef.org/serbia/sites/unicef.org.serbia/files/2021-02/Eng_GBV_web.pdf; Leah Gilbert, Xinjian Zhang, Marcie-jo Kresnow, et al., "Intimate Partner Violence and Health Conditions Among U.S. Adults—National Intimate Partner Violence Survey, 2010–2012," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 38, no. 1–2 (2023), 237–261, 254–255, https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605221080147; Francine Sherman, *Unintended Consequences: Addressing the Impact of Domestic Violence Mandatory and Pro-Arrest Policies and Practices on Girls and Young Women* (Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention, 2016), 7, https://perma.cc/C9D9-MGMV; and Nkiru Nnawulezi, Jasmine Engleton, Christopher Murphy, et al., "'Isn't There Any Other Way Than Calling the Cops?': How Differences in Initiation of Police Intervention Influence Survivor Safety," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 37, no. 23–24 (2021), https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605211064287.

[2] New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli, *Economic and Policy Insights: Domestic Violence: Recent Trends in New York* (Albany, NY: New York State Comptroller, 2023), 2, https://perma.cc/J7YV-XXCP.

[3] Patricia Tjaden and Nancy Thoennes, *Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, 2000), 49–50, https://perma.cc/N69A-F3G3. The report estimates 48 to 87 percent of incidents go unreported. The range is due to the data being disaggregated by gender and type of victimization: 48.1 percent of women who were victims of stalking did not report their victimization to the police; 87 percent of men who were physical assault victims did not report their victimization to the police.

[4] DiNapoli, *Economic and Policy Insights*, 2023, 2.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Sandhya Kajeepta, Lisa Bates, Katherine Keyes, et al., "Generalized and Racialized Consequences of the Police Response to Intimate Partner Violence in the U.S.: A Systematic Scoping Review," *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 78 (2024), 1–13, 2, https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1359178924000375. Mandatory arrest laws require police to make an arrest when responding to a DV incident when there is probable cause to believe an offense has been committed.

[7] Ibid.

[8] James Dao, "Albany Set to Require Arrest in Domestic Violence Cases," *New York Times*, June 22, 1994, https://www.nytimes.com/1994/06/22/nyregion/albany-set-to-require-arrest-in-domestic-violence-cases.html.

[9] See generally Kajeepta, Bates, Keyes, et al., "Generalized and Racialized Consequences," 2024.

[10] New York passed its mandatory arrest policy, the Family Protection and Domestic Violence Intervention Act, in 1994. Since then, the mandatory arrest law for family offenses has been renewed every few years. For more, see Dao, "Albany Set to Require Arrest," 1994. The latest extension expires on September 1, 2027. N.Y. Crim. Proc. Law § 140.10(3.b). New York's policies were part of a larger, national movement aiming to address gender-based violence, including legislation like the federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which passed in 1994. For more on VAWA, see Leigh Goodmark, "Reimagining VAWA: Why Criminalization Is a Failed Policy and What a Non-Carceral VAWA Could Look Like," *Violence Against Women* 27, no. 1 (2021), 1–18, 2–4, https://perma.cc/5SRX-3QHH.

[11] Goodmark, "Reimagining VAWA," 2020, 2–4; and Leigh Goodmark, "Stop Treating Domestic Violence Differently from Other Crimes," *New York Times*, July 23, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/23/opinion/domestic-violence-criminal-justice-reform-too.html.

[12] Dao, "Albany Set to Require Arrest," 1994.

[13] Ibid. For more information see Lawrence W. Sherman and Richard A. Berk, *The Minneapolis Domestic Violence Experiment*, 1–2, (Arlington, VA: National Police Foundation, 1984), https://perma.cc/44YV-PMK8.

[14] David Hirschel, Philip McComack, and Eve Buzawa, "A 10-Year Study of the Impact of Intimate Partner Violence Primary Aggressor Laws on Single and Dual Arrest," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 36, no. 3–4, (2021), 1357.

[15] Kajeepta, Bates, Keyes, et al., "Generalized and Racialized Consequences," 2024, 10.

[16] For information on the wide variety of unmet needs, see Eleanor Lyon, Shannon Lane, and Anne Menard, *Meeting Survivors' Needs: A Multi-State Study of Domestic Violence Shelter Experiences* (Hartford, CT: University of Connecticut, 2008), 10, https://perma.cc/VHB2-2QJ4. For housing-specific research, see Charlene K. Baker, Kris A. Billhardt, Joseph Warren, et al., "Domestic Violence, Housing Instability, and Homelessness: A Review of Housing Policies and Program Practices for Meeting the Needs of Survivors," *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 15, no. 6 (2010), 430–439,

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2010.07.005; and Cynthia Fraga Rizo, L.B. Klein, Brittney Chesworth, et al., "Intimate Partner Violence Survivors' Housing Needs and Preferences: A Brief Report," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 37, no. 1–2, (2022), 958–972, https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260519897330. For childcare-specific research, see Beth Archer-Kuhn, Judith Hughes, Michael Saini, et al., "A Balancing Act When Children Are Young: Women's Experiences in Shared Parenting Arrangements as Survivors of Domestic Violence," *Journal of Family Violence* 39, no. 2 (2024), 221–233, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-022-00452-z; and Shanti Kulkarni, Holly Bell, and Lauren Wylie, "Why Don't They Follow Through? Intimate Partner Survivors' Challenges in Accessing Health and Social Services," *Family and Community Health* 33, no. 2 (2010), 94–105, https://www.jstor.org/stable/44954177.

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[18] See Leigh Goodmark, "Gender-Based Violence, Law Reform, and the Criminalization of Survivors of Violence," *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy* 10, no. 4 (2021), 13–25, https://search.informit.org/doi/epdf/10.3316/informit.182448386996612.

[19] Mekha Rajan and Kathy A. McCloskey, "Victims of Intimate Partner Violence: Arrest Rates Across Recent Studies," *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma* 15, no. 3–4 (2007), 27–52, 35–42; Meda Chesney-Lind, "Criminalizing Victimization: The Unintended Consequences of Pro-Arrest Policies for Girls and Women," *Criminology & Public Policy* 2, no. 1 (2006), 81–90; and Leigh Goodmark, *Imperfect Victims: Criminalized Survivors and the Promise of Abolition Feminism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2023), 30–31, 51.

[20] Rajan and McCloskey, "Victims of Intimate Partner Violence," 2007, 35–42; and Goodmark, *Imperfect Victims*, 2023, 27.

[21] See David Hirschel, *Domestic Violence Cases: What Research Shows About Arrest and Dual Arrest Rates* (Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, 2008), https://perma.cc/CTP2-CERS; and David Hirschel and Philip D. McCormack, "Same-Sex Couples and the Police: A 10-Year Study of Arrest and Dual Arrest Rates in Responding to Incidents of Intimate Partner Violence," *Violence Against Women* 27, no. 9 (2021), 1119–1149, 1135, https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32515299.

[22] Michele R. Decker, Charvonne N. Holliday, Zaynab Hameeduddin, et al., "'You Do Not Think of Me as a Human Being': Race and Gender Inequities Intersect to Discourage Police Reporting of Violence Against Women," *Journal of Urban Health* 96, no. 5 (2019), 772–783, 780, https://perma.cc/BU4S-8L3W.

[23] Hirschel and McCormack, "Same-Sex Couples and the Police," 2021, 1136.

[24] Decker, Holliday, Hameeduddin, et al., "'You Do Not Think of Me as a Human Being,'" 2019, 780.

[25] See Linsey A. Belisle, Shon Reed, Elizabeth Clark, et al., "Diverse Intimate Partner Violence Survivors' Experiences Seeking Help from the Police: A Qualitative Research Synthesis," *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse* 25, no. 5 (2024), 4045–4061, https://doi.org/10.1177/15248380241270083.

[26] Donna Coker, Sandra S. Park, Julie Goldscheid, and Tara Neal, *Responses from the Field: Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Policing* (New York: American Civil Liberties Union Foundation, 2015), https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2709499.

[27] For information on 911 calls, see Vera Institute of Justice, *911 Analysis: Our Overreliance on Police by the Numbers* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2022), https://www.vera.org/publications/911-analysis; Charles Branas, Shani Buggs, Jeffrey A. Butts, et al., "Reducing Violence Without Police: A Review of Research Evidence," John Jay College of Criminal Justice Research and Evaluation Center, November 9, 2020, https://perma.cc/TN9F-4VAJ; and Richard Mendel, *Protect and Redirect: America's Growing Movement to Divert Youth out of the Justice System* (Washington, DC: Sentencing Project, 2024), https://perma.cc/7BL2-LL73.

[28] A note about compensation and analysis: Vera paid all participants $50 as compensation for participation. Interviews lasted between 30 minutes and two hours and were recorded using web conferencing via Zoom after obtaining consent from each participant. Zoom automatically transcribed the audio recordings, and researchers used these transcripts for analysis. Vera employed a thematic approach to analyze interview data, using an inductive process to develop a codebook by reading through the data and allowing concepts to emerge from the text. Vera conducted multiple rounds of transcript review and built on the codebook iteratively. Vera resolved coding discrepancies through discussion among team members.

[29] New York DV arrest policies apply to a broad range of familial relationships under CPL 530.11. Due to capacity restraints, Vera's study chose a narrower scope by focusing on intimate partner relationships. Seventy percent of domestic violence incidents involve IPV. DiNapoli, *Economic and Policy Insights*, 2023, 2.

[30] Georgia Robins Sadler, Hau-Chen Lee, Rod Seung-Hwan Lim, et al., "Recruitment of Hard-To-Reach Population Subgroups Via Adaptations of the Snowball Sampling Strategy," *Nursing & Health Sciences* 12, no. 3 (2010), 369–374, https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20727089.

[31] Rachel A. Connor, Laura Johnson, Bagrat Hakobyan, et al., "Outcomes Associated with Arrest for Domestic Violence: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis," *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse* 26, no. 3 (2024), 528–545, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/15248380241284777. People outside of New York City are included as underrepresented voices because research shows they experience higher rates of DV and lower rates of access to services. See Corinne Peek-Asa, Anne Wallis, Karisa Harland, et al., "Rural Disparity in Domestic Violence Prevalence and Access to Resources," *Journal of Women's Health* 20, no. 11 (2011), 1743–1749, https://perma.cc/T9DS-NXSN. According to the New York State Rural Housing Coalition, about 22 percent of people in New York State live in rural counties. See Michael Borges, John W. Sipple, and Bob Scardamalia, *State of Rural New York* (Albany, NY: Rural Housing Coalition of New York, 2023), https://perma.cc/YN89-Q2KR.

[32] See New York State, Division of Criminal Justice Services, "Domestic Violence Victim Data by County: 2023," (compare totals from menu options "New York City" and "Non-New York City"), https://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/crimnet/ojsa/domesticviolence2023/index.htm.

[33] Nicole Youngson, Michael Saxton, Peter G. Jaffe, et al., "Challenges in Risk Assessment with Rural Domestic Violence Victims: Implications for Practice," *Journal of Family Violence* 36, no. 5 (2021), 537–550, https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10896-021-00248-7; and Amanda Hall-Sanchez, "Intimate Violence Against Rural Women: The Current and Future State of Feminist Empirical and Theoretical Contributions," *Sociology Compass* 10, no. 4 (2016), 272–283, https://compass.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/soc4.12358.

[34] Victoria Frye, Mary Haviland, and Valli Rajah, "Dual Arrest and Other Unintended Consequences of Mandatory Arrest in New York City: A Brief Report," Journal of Family Violence 22, no. 6 (2007), 397–405, 400.

[35] Connections for Abused Women and Their Children, "Socioeconomic Risk Factors for Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence," August 30, 2024, https://perma.cc/9RUJ-SR94.

[36] Noelle M. St. Vil, Bushra Sabri, Vania Nwokolo, et al., "A Qualitative Study of Survival Strategies Used by Low-Income Black Women Who Experience Intimate Partner Violence," *Social Work* 62, no. 1 (2017), 63–71, https://perma.cc/22FP-LU5K.

[37] Punitive responses such as arrest did have a short-term deterrent effect among the least marginalized populations studied. Lawrence W. Sherman, Janell D. Schmidt, Dennis P. Rogan, and Douglas A. Smith, "The Variable Effects of Arrest on Criminal Careers: The Milwaukee Domestic Violence Experiment," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 83, no. 1 (1992), 137–169, 139, 163, https://scholarlycommons.law.northwestern.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=6733&context=jclc.

[38] Participants' names have been changed to protect their identities.

[39] Nnawulezi, Engleton, and Murphy, "'Isn't There Any Other Way,'" 2022; Pamela Caudill Jordan, Jacob Aylward, and Lillian Agbeyegbe, *Survivors' Perspectives on Improving Maryland's Response to Domestic Violence* (Crownsville, MD: Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy, 2024), https://perma.cc/BZM4-EWA3; and New York State Municipal Police Training Council, *Law Enforcement Domestic Incident Model Policy* (Albany, NY: New York State Municipal Police Training Council, 2023), 9, https://perma.cc/DP86-MQWV.

[40] For an example of alternative pathways to safety, see California's C.R.I.S.E.S. Grant Pilot Program, California AB 118 (2021–2022), https://perma.cc/NC25-4YUG.

[41] Heather Douglas, "Legal Systems Abuse and Coercive Control," *Criminology & Criminal Justice* 18, no. 1 (2018), 84–99, 86–87.

[42] Hirschel, McCormack, and Buzawa, "Primary Aggressor Laws," 2017.

[43] Melissa E. Dichter and Karin Rhodes, "Intimate Partner Violence Survivors' Unmet Social Service Needs," *Journal of Social Service Research* 37, no. 5 (2011), 481–489. Although this study did not ask participants about their immigration status, research shows that immigrant survivors have reported growing anxiety over being detained when appearing in court. See National Network to End Domestic Violence, ASISTA Immigration Assistance, Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network, et al., *2017 Advocate and Legal Service Survey Regarding Immigrant Survivors* (Falls Church, VA: Tahirih Justice Center, 2017), 1, https://perma.cc/QK4U-6L54.

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[43] Veran Kolbe and Andreas Büttner, "Domestic Violence Against Men—Prevalence and Risk Factors," *Deutsches Ärzteblatt International* 117, no. 31–32 (2020), 534–541, https://perma.cc/8QXH-PZJ2; M.C Black, K.C. Basile, M.J. Breiding, et al., *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report* (Atlanta: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011),

https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/137399; and Jennifer L. Truman and Rachel E. Morgan, *Nonfatal Domestic Violence, 2003–2012* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014), https://perma.cc/UTK7-E4D8.

[46] New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, "2023 New York State Gender Based Violence Dashboard," https://mypublicdashboard.ny.gov/t/OPDV_PUBLIC/views/NYS2023Gender-BasedViolenceDashboard/DomesticViolenceVictims?%3Aembed=y&%3AisGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y.

[47] Most researchers base their classification of mandatory arrest laws on the degree of officers' discretion in arrest. However, discrepancies in legal classification remain. For the purposes of this document, Vera uses Chin's categorization. Yoo-Mi Chin and Scott Cunningham, "Revisiting the Effect of Warrantless Domestic Violence Arrest Laws on Intimate Partner Homicides," *Journal of Public Economics* 179 (2019), 3, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2019.104072.

[48] See City of Albuquerque, "Albuquerque Community Safety Responders Provide Critical Support to Family in Crisis," press release (Albuquerque, NM: City of Albuquerque, August 26, 2025), https://perma.cc/3EAC-63VQ; and Council of State Governments Justice Center, "Mediation Response Unit — Dayton, Ohio," December 2022, https://perma.cc/V2LJ-KG7E.

[49] See New York State Municipal Police Training Council, *Law Enforcement Domestic Incident Model Policy*, 2023. Although not required, police departments are directed to establish best practices that do connect survivors with social services.

[50] This study did not go into detail about the history of custody battles or pathways by which children of study participants go into the foster care system.

[51] Yvonne Humenay Roberts, Frank J. Snyder, Joy S. Kaufman, et al., "Children Exposed to the Arrest of a Family Member: Associations with Mental Health," *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 23, no. 2 (2014), 214–224, 219–221, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-013-9717-2.