



JDI 2020 Policy Framework Focus on COVID-19 & Disparities

This document highlights JDI's emergent work in light of the COVID-19 crisis in addition to our ongoing budget, legislative, and systems advocacy. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of all of the policy priorities JDI supports.

As the state coalition, Jane Doe Inc.'s (JDI) highest priorities include advocating for: 1) flexible and needs-based allocation of resources for services for survivors of sexual and domestic violence and 2) centering the needs of all survivors in system (education, health, legal, economic) practices, policies and legislation.

JDI's current policy efforts fall into three broad areas for advocacy and change: **SDV Education/Prevention, Racial Equity, Economic Justice, and Human Rights**. Legislation and policy efforts may fit into more than one of these categories. JDI engages in many areas of policy that affect the lives, choices, and safety of survivors. Some policy efforts will focus on specific provisions related to sexual and/or domestic violence; many will address broader policies that are critically important to the lives of survivors and their families and to supporting healthier, safer, and more equitably resourced communities.

Key grounding principles

- JDI and our member programs work on behalf of all victims and survivors of sexual and domestic violence.
- Multiple societal factors affect the lives of survivors, determine levels of access to support, and/or further marginalization and victimization. These include, but are not limited to, white supremacy/racism, sexism, rape culture, homo-/bi-/trans- phobia, anti-immigrant sentiment and ableism.
- Centering the most marginalized (unserved, underserved and inadequately served) individuals and communities will improve outcomes for all of those who experience violence in their lives. A focus on the impact of systems and legislation on these communities will inform all policy efforts.
- In upholding our commitment to racial equity and the dignity and human rights of all people, we assess the impact of public policy on communities of color who are disproportionately represented in and harmed by the criminal legal system and challenge policies that contribute to mass incarceration.
- Needs-based, adequate state funding is essential to support the life-saving (free and confidential) efforts of community-based sexual and domestic violence programs to support survivors and promote safe and violence-free communities.
- Our work cannot be achieved in a vacuum; it requires collaborations, partnerships and communications with multiple stakeholders.
- Because language choice in policy and systems advocacy is central in establishing both intent and effect, we will promote the use of people-first language in our policy advocacy (e.g. survivors who are undocumented; people who have caused harm, people with disabilities)

COVID-19 Responses, Equity, and Survivors of DV/SA

Because COVID-19 has laid bare and heightened inequities already rampant in our communities, JDI is engaging in policy initiatives to 1) ensure that the needs of all survivors are actively represented in COVID-19 state and federal responses and 2) address the disparate impact of this virus on those most impacted by structural racism and poverty. We are supporting legislation that will ease the economic impact of this pandemic on those most vulnerable in Massachusetts, participating in sign-on letter campaigns on the state and federal level, and are actively participating in a number of state task forces that are contemplating access to justice, housing, immigrant experience, and more amidst this crisis. The

following information provides a description of current efforts that JDI is actively engaged in in response to the COVID19 crisis.

JDI COVID-19 Related Advocacy Efforts in Massachusetts

SDV Education/Prevention

Government Administration and Agencies: JDI has worked closely with leadership at Department of Public Health, Executive Office of Health and Human Services and the Governor's Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence to increase responsiveness on a range of issues including access to Personal Protective Equipment supplies to the availability of flexible funding for SDV programs.

MA House of Representatives Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Initiative: JDI has prioritized communicating with Massachusetts state legislators to share the experiences of sexual and domestic violence programs across the state. JDI is a member of the MA House of Representatives Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Initiative which is a statewide initiative sponsored by Speaker Robert DeLeo and chaired by Representative Claire Cronin and Representative Marjorie Decker. This initiative seeks to engage the legislature with statewide DV/SA stakeholders to highlight emerging needs of survivors amidst the COVID-19 crisis.

Racial Equity

Advocacy for People Who are Detained in Prisons, Jails or ICE Facilities: People in detention centers, prisons, and jails in Massachusetts and nationally are far more likely to contract COVID-19. JDI recognizes that communities of color are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 due to social and systemic inequities and this recognition must include those who are confined and that the vast majority of women and transgender people in prisons are survivors of domestic violence, sexual abuse and/or trafficking. JDI will advocate for efforts to mitigate harm to those in prisons and jails during this crisis, including decarceration efforts, while always holding and centering the competing safety needs of survivors of domestic and sexual violence. We are working with the MA Public Health Association and Families for Justice As Healing to continue to advocate for the needs of all survivors on this issue. JDI will continue to engage membership on these important issues in the coming months.

Omnibus Policing Reform Legislation

As a coalition to end sexual and domestic violence, JDI has an important voice in advancing efforts towards harm reduction in policing practices. The needs of survivors of sexual and domestic violence are often cited as reasons to oppose measures that increase police accountability within criminal legal systems. We are supportive of measures in this legislation that seek a complete ban on the most violent of police tactics, a ban on the use of facial recognition technology, strict limits on qualified immunity, and measures to prevent sexual assault in police custody. JDI supports policing reform efforts that go hand-in-hand with additional legislation that comprehensively addresses the harm caused by incarceration, structural racism and separation of families who are disproportionately Black and Brown. This means resourcing black and brown communities, getting police out of schools, and releasing some people from prisons and jails in Massachusetts. We see this legislation as a step towards reducing some harm in policing practices.

H4963 An Act Regarding Decarceration and COVID-19 - An Act regarding decarceration and COVID-19 appropriately balances public safety needs against the imminent public health threat of COVID-19 and takes important and necessary steps to release people from incarceration so that the virus does not spread quickly in our jails and prisons, and in turn, to staff, families and our health care system. JDI's advocacy on this and related bills focuses on ensuring the needs of all survivors of sexual and domestic violence are prioritized in the legislation and if passed, implementation.

Economic Justice

JDI has advocated for the following legislation and also recognizes that the ongoing needs of survivors are ever-evolving as the extent of the economic and social impact of this pandemic unfolds. We are aware of the emergency needs of survivors and programs that serve them such as access to food, rent assistance funds, transportation and will support efforts to make these resources available to our communities.

H4647 Moratorium on Evictions and Foreclosures - Signed into law by Governor Baker on April 20, 2020, this law (1) temporarily halts all stages of most evictions for tenants. Specifically, it stops landlords from sending notices of eviction and filing new eviction cases; stops courts from scheduling non-emergency hearing, entering judgments and issuing executions; stops sheriffs from levying on executions to remove tenants; applies to most evictions with limited exception for true emergencies involving conditions or conduct endangering the health and safety of others; prevents late fees and negative credit reporting for COVID-19 affected tenants. For homeowners, the law (2) temporarily stops foreclosures; requires lenders to offer mortgage forbearance for those affected by COVID-19 with payments added to the end of the loan; prevents negative credit reporting for homeowners in forbearance; gives landlords access to tenant's last month's rent to cover expenses. This law also pauses evictions on small businesses.

H4622 An Act to provide short-term relief to families in deep poverty - Reported Out of Committee!

This bill would provide an immediate supplemental one month's worth of benefits to the 30,000 families receiving TAFDC and 19,000 elders and individuals with disabilities receiving EAEDC cash assistance. This bill was reported favorably by the Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities and moving to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Massachusetts Emergency Task Force on Coronavirus and Equity: JDI endorses the Massachusetts Public Health Association's [Equity Platform](#) as it aligns closely with our own. The focus of their advocacy efforts including demands to 1) Pass Emergency Paid Sick Time 2) Ensure Everyone Has Access to Safe Quarantine 3) Enact a Moratorium on Evictions, Foreclosures & Termination of Public Benefits and 4) Ensure Immigrants Have Safe Access to Testing & Treatment. 4) Data principles and 5) Decarceration.

Other Systems Response Needs

Ensuring Access to Courts: JDI participates in the Access to Justice Task Force which is addressing legal system issues including access to 258E Harassment Prevention Orders, 209 Protection Orders.

Centering the Needs of Culturally Specific and LEP Programs and Survivors: JDI will convene culturally-specific providers to assess gaps in system responses for culturally-specific and LEP communities in the wake of this pandemic

Keeping Guns out of Essential Services Classification: JDI has worked with the Governor and AG to ensure that gun distributors are not deemed essential services during the stay at home order.

Federal Advocacy:

JDI takes federal policy guidance from our national partners, National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (NAESV) and the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV). We have and will continue to advocate for the inclusion of DV and SA specific funding in any federal COVID-19 relief legislation to ensure ongoing availability of SASP funding, funding of STOP Formula Grants, Transitional Housing, Rural programs, Legal Assistance to Victims, and support for families in the justice system. We are also advocating for provisions that specifically support immigrant survivors including the availability of stimulus refunds for those paying taxes with an ITIN, restrictions on additional funding of ICE, and a moratorium on ICE raids and arrests during this time.

Sign on Letters: JDI has signed-on to a number of state and federal advocacy efforts in response to COVID-19 related efforts. JDI will sign-on to requests if the request is consistent with our overall policy priorities and framework:

Massachusetts		
Name	Sponsor	Description
Emergency Task Force on Coronavirus & Equity: Top Priority Policy Recommendations	Massachusetts Public Health Association	Top 5 priorities: expand earned sick time; ensure immigrants have access to testing and treatment; pass a moratorium on evictions, foreclosures and termination of public benefits; make sure everyone has access to safe quarantine; Additional Priorities: data principles, decarceration
COVID19 Letter to ICE-Sheriff Partnerships	Massachusetts Law Reform Institute & Prisoners' Legal Services of Massachusetts	Urge ICE Boston Enforcement and Removal Operations to protect the health of immigrants in ICE custody and to release immigrants in ICE custody in New England detention facilities
Call for strong moratorium on evictions and foreclosures	MLRI	Call upon Governor, House and Senate for moratorium on evictions and foreclosures and to support renters and homeowners
National		
Name	Sponsor	Description
DV-SA COVID19 Phase 3 Sign-On	NNEDV/NAESV	Urge House and Senate to include funding for SADV services through funding streams in the 3rd stimulus package
Suspend Title IX Rulemaking During COVID19 Crisis	NWLC	Letter to Secretary DeVos, Director Mulvaney, Secretary Marcus and Administrator Ray to suspend the rulemaking process for the proposed regulations implementing Title IX until after the national emergency declared on March 13th has ended and both institutions of higher ed and K-12 schools resume regular operations
Open Letter in Support of the DV Community	Guns Down America	Open letter to the public in support of the DV community in reaction to increase of gun sales in reaction to the COVID19 Crisis
Letter to US House and Senate Judiciary Committee on COVID19 and Criminalization	National Center for Lesbian Rights	Calling on Congress to pass measures to help stop the use of criminalization and surveillance and to invest more in addressing the human needs of marginalized communities
Open Letter to Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer and Leader McCarthy	Protecting Immigrant Families	A call to Members of Congress to support passage of COVID-19 relief package that includes low- and moderate-income immigrants. Provisions include: halt implementation of DHS public charge regulations, ensure access to healthcare regardless of immigrant status or income, ensure access to stimulus rebates for everyone who files tax returns, ensure access to nutrition assistance, ensure COVID-19 information is available in multiple languages, and ensure adequate funding for safety net healthcare providers.
DV-SA COVID19 Phase 4 Sign-On	NNEDV/NAESV	Urge House and Senate to include funding for SADV services through funding streams in the 4 th stimulus package and immigrant specific protections
Moment of Truth Letter	National SDV Coalitions	National sign-on letter calling on SDV Coalitions to re-examine their relationships to criminal legal system responses and center the leadership of people of color

Ongoing Legislative Priorities

Education and Prevention

A key strategy to ending sexual and domestic violence is to increase access to education and prevention resources so that sexual and domestic violence do not occur in the first place. This includes social norms change and broad-based education for youth, parents, educators, and all community members. Prevention and intervention are interconnected components of the work of community-based sexual and domestic violence organizations. Funding must be available for prevention efforts across the lifespan in order to reduce violence and to promote a vision for non-violence and equity.

2019-2020 Priorities:

An Act Relative to Sexual Violence on Higher Education Campuses (H4418)

Comprehensive legislation to address policy, prevention and services to student experiencing sexual assault at institutions of higher education. **Lead Sponsors:** Sen. Michael Moore and Rep. Tricia Farley-Bouvier

Act Relative to Healthy Youth (S263/H410)

Ensure that sexuality education, when taught, is age appropriate and medically accurate.

Lead Sponsors: Sen. Sal DiDomenico, Rep. James O'Day, and Rep. Paul Brodeur

Racial Equity and Economic Justice

Economic justice is critical for all individuals in the Commonwealth, including victims and survivors who face significant economic barriers after experiencing violence. Economic inequity and abuse is often a tool to disempower and trap survivors in abusive and unsafe situation. To remove these barriers, JDI supports a broad range of policy and legislative changes to improve survivors' access and outcomes related to employment, public benefits, housing, and health care.

2019-2020 Priorities

An Act to Lift Kids out of Deep Poverty (S36/H102)

Set a floor on cash assistance at 50% of the federal poverty level

Lead sponsors: Sen Sal DiDomenico and Rep Marjorie Decker

On Solid Ground Coalition JDI is a member of OSG and supports the full policy agenda: <https://onsolidgroundma.org/>

Human Rights

Human rights for all people are essential to a world free of violence and oppression and to addressing societal inequities. Survivors who are members of communities of color, immigrant communities, LGBTQ/T communities, Muslim communities, and/or are persons living with disabilities, and other marginalized identities face additional barriers to accessing support, safety, and healing. In our current political climate, immigrant survivors from all communities and cultural backgrounds face heightened risk of deportation and detainment. Immigrant victims are more terrified than ever of calling police, seeking restraining orders or seeking other help when their communities are under attack. Language and cultural barriers exacerbate these challenges.

2019-2020 Priorities:

An Act to Protect the Civil Rights and Safety of All MA Residents (Safe Communities Act) (S1401/H3573)

Preserve and restore community trust in police by separating law enforcement and immigration, making it safer for survivors to come forward to seek support and services.

Lead Sponsors: Sen. James B. Eldridge, Reps. Ruth Balser and Liz Miranda

Other Systems Change Efforts

The above policy areas are not inclusive of all systems and issues that affect survivors in MA. JDI is committed to supporting institutional and structural changes that support survivors and promote safer and healthier communities. For example:

High Risk Advocacy Convenings: JDI hosts regular convenings with member programs engaged in high-risk advocacy with survivors at increased risk of lethality. In response to data highlighting increased risk of homicide among black women, immigrants, and other marginalized communities, JDI, along with our partners at the Massachusetts Women of Color Network, is interested in developing guidance on recommendations for high risk advocacy when working with marginalized communities.

DV/SA Programs and Our Relationship to the Criminal Justice System: In 2020-2021, JDI is exploring our relationship to criminal justice responses as it intersects with our understanding of racial and economic equity. We look forward to exploring our positions and roles in a range of advocacy efforts from restorative justice to abolition.

Task Force, Advisory Board, and Coalition Participation: SANE Advisory Board; Governor's Council on Sexual and Domestic Violence; Justice Involved Women Panel; Domestic and Sexual Violence Council; Safe Communities Coalition; Healthy Youth Coalition; Every Voice Coalition

Budget Request for FY2021

JDI advocates with and on behalf of all Sexual and domestic violence programs in Massachusetts to ensure that local programs have resources to meet the needs of victims and survivors in their communities. We understand the impact of COVID-19 on our state's revenue has been significant. That said, the complex needs of survivors are only increased by the isolation of this pandemic. JDI is urging the legislature to prioritize the needs of survivors and challenge any cuts to these line items. We are advocating for an approach that prioritizes **raising progressive revenue** as a method of mitigating the disparate impact of this pandemic on our most marginalized communities. JDI is advocating for the following services funding:

DPH Line Item 4513-1130: Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Prevention and Treatment Services

JDI Total Funding Request: \$45,233,631 (\$5.38 million increase over H2)

Based on a survey of JDI member programs who are direct service providers, JDI learned there is a resounding need for programs to increase their advocacy and outreach in order to meet the needs of survivors in their communities they serve. Between FY18-FY19, 84% of programs experienced an increase in request for services and 63% of those programs were unable to meet the demand for services. The COVID-19 crisis will undoubtedly result in an escalation of critical services for survivors who not in safe enough positions to reach out due to stay-at-home orders. **JDI acknowledges the fiscal constraints caused by this pandemic, but emphasizes that increased services for survivors are needed now more than ever. Any cuts to sexual and domestic violence service providers would be devastating to the safety and wellbeing of all residents of the Commonwealth.**

DPH Line Item 4513-1131: Healthy Relationships Grant Program

JDI Total Funding Request: \$1,000,000 (level funding with H2)

Following on the heels of a first time \$1 million investment in prevention programming in FY2020, JDI is advocating that the legislature again follow the lead of the Administration and allocate \$1 million towards the Healthy Relationships Grant Program. A total of six partnerships across the Commonwealth received funding through this line to provide prevention education programming to youth across the Commonwealth with an emphasis on programming for marginalized identities.

DPH Line item 4510-0810: Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) and Pediatric SANE

JDI Total Funding Request: \$ 5,968,984 (level funding with H2)

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Jane Doe Inc., the Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence advocates to improve access to services, resources, and justice for all communities. Our Coalition is comprised of 58 member sexual and/or domestic violence organizations located throughout the Commonwealth. JDI works with our members and community partners to eliminate conditions that enable sexual and domestic violence to occur and advance the cause of justice.