



This document highlights Jane Doe Inc.'s (JDI's) emergent policy and systems change work and includes the rationale behind our ongoing budget, legislative, and systems advocacy.

As the federally recognized state coalition, JDI's 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, etc.) practices, policies and legislation.

JDI's current policy efforts fall into five broad areas for advocacy and change: ***Sexual and Domestic Violence Education/Prevention, Racial Equity, Economic Justice, Human Rights and Access to Justice for Survivors***. 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)

JDI Policy Agenda Explained

Priority and Supported Legislation:

For a PDF document of JDI's Priority Legislation click here:

https://janedoeinc.wildapricot.org/resources/Documents/Policy/Legislation2122/JDI_Legislative_Priorities_2122.pdf

For a PDF document of JDI's Supported Legislation click here:

https://janedoeinc.wildapricot.org/resources/Documents/Policy/Legislation2122/JDI_Legislative_Supporting_2122.pdf

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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 community-healing, non-violence and equity.

Racial Equity

JDI understand that the root cause of sexual and domestic violence is oppression in all its forms including racism and white supremacy. White supremacy culture sanctions the use of power and control by institutions, systems, and individuals to access resources at the expense of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and other People of Color) communities. We cannot challenge the interpersonal use of power and control by those who cause harm in the context of sexual and domestic violence without simultaneously challenging systemic racism. Advancing policies that center the needs of those most impacted by racism is central to our efforts to end sexual and domestic violence. Racial equity is necessary for all individual in the Commonwealth, including victims and survivors.

Economic Justice

Economic justice is critical for all individuals in the Commonwealth, including victims and survivors who face significant economic barriers after experiencing harm. Economic abuse can be a tool to disempower and trap survivors in abusive and unsafe situations. This inequity re-experienced by survivors as they attempt to navigate systems that fail to meet the complex needs of low-income survivors. To remove these barriers, JDI supports a broad range of policy and legislative changes to promote economic stability for survivors in a number of ways including access to affordable housing, access to basic benefits, employment protections, and more.

Human Rights

Human rights for all people are essential to a world free of violence and oppression and to addressing societal inequities. Immigrant communities, LGBTQ/T communities, Muslim communities, sex workers, people living with disabilities, and other identities at the intersections of oppression face additional barriers to accessing support, safety, and healing. Amidst a political climate marked by an escalation of hate crimes against AAPI Communities, the relentless attacks on transgender communities and the ongoing targeting of immigrant communities for immigration enforcement, JDI actively seeks to collaborate with those most impacted by structural violence and supports policy initiatives that promote the wellbeing and safety of these communities.

Access to Justice and Safety for Survivors

How systems respond to survivors can often make or break a survivor's willingness or ability to seek help. To this end, JDI prioritizes legislation that holds systems accountable to the complex needs of all survivors. We uplift legislation that is responsive to emerging needs and ensures the broadest access to safety and justice for survivors.

2021-2022 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. The following is a sample of our systems change work:

Massachusetts Safe Housing Initiative: Made possible with FVPSA CARES Act funding from Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), this project is a collaboration between DPH, JDI, Casa Myrna Vasquez, Piltch Associates and the Governor’s Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence.

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 supporting the development of 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 began 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. See the following statement from JDI for our analysis: [Rethinking Our Relationships to the Criminal Legal System](#).

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

FY22 Budget Priorities

JDI has traditionally focused our budget advocacy on three sexual and domestic violence line-items. These SDV budget line items identified below are critical to supporting community-based SDV services and treatment. The various services provided by these programs facilitate survivor healing and offer prevention education and programming. This year we also want to bring attention to the critical importance of investing in housing resources.

Sexual and Domestic Violence

DPH Line Item 4513-1130 Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Prevention and Treatment Services.....	\$50,341,295
DPH Line Item 4513-1131 Healthy Relationships Grant Program.....	\$1,000,000
DPH Line Item 4510-0810 Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner and Pediatric SANE.....	\$6,000,448

Housing Resources

JDI recognizes that issues of safe and affordable housing deeply intersect with the growing needs of survivors. JDI member programs identified the need for housing advocacy as a central need for survivors. With increased funding to the services line-item (DPH 4513-1130) in FY21, many SDV programs are actively enhancing their capacity to provide this much-needed advocacy and outreach. Robust funding of programs including MRVP, RAFT, HomeBASE, and overall housing wraparound services is critical to the needs of survivors and their families. Funding these housing support programs allows SDV providers to maximize permanent housing opportunities for survivors. Access to housing programs directly improves survivor outcomes by providing survivors with access to safe and permanent housing, thereby helping to address the intersections of homelessness and violence.

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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.