

Increased Annual Funding for South Carolina's Rape Crisis Centers



South Carolina's 15 Rape Crisis Centers are an essential and foundational component of the public safety and community response to, and prevention of, sexual assault.

It is critical that annual recurring state appropriation to support these 15 organizations who meet the *Department of Public Health's Standards and Outcomes for Rape Crisis Centers* to be increased from **\$1.5 million to \$3 million**.

Why is this Funding Needed?

Sexual violence is widespread and can cause significant negative health impacts on victims. This increased investment will help promote stability in funding and ensure that victims of sexual violence will be able to access the help they need in the wake of a violent assault.

- In 2024, 3,523 cases of sexual battery or criminal sexual contact were reported to SLED.^[1]
- Victimization occurs over the lifespan; the highest numbers of victims are under the age of 18, but there are also victims over the age of 65.
- The Bureau of Justice Statistics estimates that only 24% of sexual assaults are reported to law enforcement.^[2]
- The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey estimates that 44.9% of women in South Carolina have experienced at least one form of contact sexual violence (includes rape, sexual coercion, unwanted sexual contact).^[3]
- Each sexual assault is estimated to result in \$122k in lifetime costs^[4]. When multiplied just by the number reported to law enforcement in SC, the aggregate cost soars to \$429 million.

[1] 2024 Crime in South Carolina.pdf

[2] Criminal Victimization, 2024, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics

[3] National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2023/2024 Sexual Violence Data Brief, CDC

[4] Lifetime Economic Burden of Intimate Partner Violence Among U.S. Adults - PubMed

In 2024:

- **3,536** new primary survivors of sexual assault sought services from a rape crisis center
- **2,037** adults, **1,499** children under 18
- **427** (12% of total primary victims) said they reported the incident to law enforcement
- Over **7,000** sexual assault crisis calls were received by 24/7 hotlines in the state
- *Services included:* hospital accompaniment, counseling, advocacy, civil legal assistance

This additional funding would be administered by the South Carolina Department of Health to the Rape Crisis Centers that meet the current standards and outcomes. Organizations are required to submit a budget that meets program guidelines on allowed expenditures and to provide financial and program activity/outcome reports.

SCCADVASA and all programs eligible for this funding are within the state of South Carolina and the use of funds would be to support victims of crime in communities across the state.