

2026 -- H 8156

=====
LC005784
=====

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

—————
A N A C T

RELATING TO CRIMINAL PROCEDURE -- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACT

Introduced By: Representatives Tanzi, Casimiro, Alzate, Boylan, Furtado, Cortvriend,
Donovan, Stewart, Kislak, and Hull

Date Introduced: February 27, 2026

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 12-29 of the General Laws entitled "Domestic Violence Prevention
2 Act" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **12-29-13. Domestic violence and sexual assault survivor services fund.**

4 (a) The general assembly finds and declares that domestic and sexual violence is a serious
5 public health problem in Rhode Island, resulting in numerous severe injuries and deaths annually
6 and significant first responder services, health and court costs, and that evidence-based domestic
7 violence and sexual assault direct services programs are critical lifesaving tools to mitigate the
8 continuing toll that such violence takes on our communities, cities, and towns. With decreased
9 available federal funding for survivor services, the availability of state funding for such victim
10 services is even more important. It is therefore in the best interest of the state to establish a fund to
11 promote effective programs providing expert direct victim services for survivors of domestic
12 violence and sexual assault in Rhode Island.

13 (b) Domestic violence and sexual assault survivor services fund.

14 (1) There is established the domestic violence and sexual assault survivor services fund, to
15 be administered by the Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) administrator for the State of Rhode Island
16 ("DVSASS Fund Administrator")

17 (2) The domestic violence and sexual assault survivor services fund ("fund") monies shall
18 be used to fund evidence-based direct services nonprofit organizations with the primary purpose of
19 providing services and advocacy for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking,

1 trafficking and dating violence in the State of Rhode Island.

2 (3) The fund shall be established with a one-time investment of one million dollars
3 (\$1,000,000) from the general fund in its inaugural year. Thereafter, the fund shall be sustained by
4 ten percent (10%) of proceeds from any settlement entered by the attorney general resulting from
5 a multi-state initiative, not to exceed five million dollars (\$5,000,000) per settlement. The fund
6 shall be eligible and empowered to receive and deposit any monies from philanthropic donations.

7 (4) The DVSASS administrator shall convene a domestic violence and sexual assault
8 survivor services fund statewide advisory committee for the fund comprised of those with
9 knowledge, experience, training, and/or expertise in the field of prevention of domestic violence,
10 sexual assault, stalking, trafficking and dating violence. The committee members shall include, but
11 shall not limited to, the executive director of the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic
12 Violence, or designee; the executive director of Sojourner House, or designee; the executive
13 director of Day One, or designee; the director of the department of health, or designee; the director
14 of the department of human services, or designee; the attorney general, or designee; and the general
15 treasurer, or designee; and the director of the department of public safety grant administration
16 office, or designee.

17 (c) The domestic violence and sexual assault survivor services fund committee shall be
18 responsible for stewarding the fund and decisions related to the funding of nonprofit organizations
19 providing services and advocacy for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking,
20 trafficking and dating violence in the State of Rhode Island, and shall:

21 (1) Develop a plan and budget for distribution of funds;

22 (2) Develop criteria for awarding and distributing funds to eligible nonprofit organizations
23 whose primary missions include reducing domestic violence and/or sexual assault in Rhode Island;

24 (3) Issue requests for proposals to providers, organizations, firms, or entities that will
25 provide services to the committee; and

26 (4) Review proposals for the funds and make final determination of grant awards.

27 (d) The DVSASS administrator shall monitor and report annually on the use and impact of
28 the fund, including a detailed accounting of expenditures and funded programs. The annual report
29 shall be posted on the department of public safety website and transmitted to the general assembly
30 no later than February 28, 2027 and each year thereafter; and

31 (e) The DVSASS administrator shall promote the general development and sustaining of
32 trauma-informed services and specialized advocacy for victims of domestic violence, sexual
33 assault, stalking, trafficking and dating violence in Rhode Island.

1 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

=====
LC005784
=====

EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO CRIMINAL PROCEDURE -- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACT

1 This act would create the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survivor Services Fund
2 in Rhode Island to provide stable state funding for evidence-based nonprofit organizations that
3 deliver direct services and advocacy to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking,
4 trafficking, and dating violence. It also would establish funding sources, including an initial one
5 million dollars (\$1,000,000) appropriation by the general assembly in its fiscal year 2027 budget
6 and a portion of certain attorney general settlements, and establish an advisory committee with
7 annual reporting requirements to oversee and ensure accountability for how the funds are
8 distributed and used.

9 This act would take effect upon passage.

=====
LC005784
=====