



Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

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Member Organizations

**The Umbrella Center for
Domestic Violence Services**
Ansonia, CT

The Center for Family Justice
Bridgeport, CT

Women's Center
Danbury, CT

**Domestic Violence Program
United Services**
Dayville, CT

The Network
Enfield, CT

**Domestic Abuse Services
Greenwich YWCA**
Greenwich, CT

Interval House
Hartford, CT

**Chrysalis Domestic Violence
Services**
Meriden, CT

New Horizons
Middletown, CT

Prudence Crandall Center
New Britain, CT

**The Umbrella Center for
Domestic Violence Services**
New Haven, CT

Safe Futures
New London, CT

Domestic Violence Crisis Center
Norwalk, CT

Women's Support Services
Sharon, CT

Domestic Violence Crisis Center
Stamford, CT

Susan B. Anthony Project
Torrington, CT

Safe Haven
Waterbury, CT

**Domestic Violence Program
United Services**
Willimantic, CT

**CCADV Applauds CT Senate Passage of Comprehensive
Domestic Violence Protection Bill**

-Calls on CT House of Representatives to Vote on Bill Quickly-

Glastonbury, CT – Today, Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) applauded the Connecticut Senate for passage of a bill (Senate Bill 1091) that includes key protections for survivors of domestic violence and called on the Connecticut House of Representatives to follow with swift passage. The bill passed the Senate with overwhelming bipartisan support in a vote of 35-1.

“This comprehensive measure makes Connecticut the third state in the country to address coercive control in our family violence restraining order law,” said Steven Eppler-Epstein, Interim CEO. “This bill addresses the real experiences of survivors with all forms of domestic violence, not just physical abuse. It ensures court-ordered relief for the many non-physical tactics abusers use to gain and maintain control over their victims.”

Coercive control entails power and control over the victim through actions such as isolation, humiliation, intimidation, and domination. It does not relate to a single incident but is a purposeful pattern of behavior that takes place over a period of time in order to make the victim dependent on the abuser. Emotional and psychological abuse have been found to be the most common form of intimate partner violence with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reporting in 2015 that over one-third of both women and men experience psychological aggression by an intimate partner in their lifetime. California and Hawaii both added coercive control to their civil restraining orders in 2020, while 15 other states have modernized their restraining orders to cover non-physical abuse.

“The addition of coercive control to the state’s restraining order is a common sense step that will help protect victims before behaviors begin to escalate,” said Suzanne Adam, Executive Director, Domestic Violence Crisis Center, which serves Stamford, Norwalk and several surrounding towns. “We hear from many victims about forced isolation from family and friends, hiding of joint assets, prohibitions on working or leaving the house, and veiled threats like displaying or cleaning weapons in front of the victim. These abusive behaviors are exactly the red flags that courts need to recognize and protect against.”

Senate Bill 1091 also makes several other important changes to protect victims:

- Establishes a grant program to provide low income victims with legal representation when applying for a restraining order. This not only strengthens the family’s safety, but also has a positive impact on the operation of family court. Legal representation has been found to increase the possibility of a victim obtaining a restraining order from 32% to 83%.
- Requires landlords to change the locks on a victim’s individual dwelling unit when the victim has received a court order of protection. The landlord must change the lock (or allow the tenant to change the lock) within 48 hours and may charge the actual, reasonable cost back to the tenant.

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- Amends the definition of family violence crime to include violations of court orders issued for family violence and requires the court to consider the heightened risk posed to victims when determining bond for violations of court orders. Repeated violations of court orders often represent a course of conduct that equates to stalking which is intended to subject the victim to ongoing emotional distress.

CCADV would like to thank all of our champions in the Senate, especially Senators Mae Flexer, Alex Kasser, Martin Looney, Bob Duff and Gary Winfield. We are grateful for their ongoing leadership and commitment to protecting survivors of domestic violence.

CCADV and our 18 member organizations call on the Connecticut House of Representatives to bring Senate Bill 1091 to the floor for a vote quickly. Victims should not have to wait any longer for comprehensive protections from coercive control.

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Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Inc. is the state's leading voice for victims of domestic violence and those organizations that serve them. We are a membership organization of the state's 18 domestic violence organizations. Help is available to victims 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by visiting www.CTSafeConnect.org or by texting/calling (888) 774-2900. For more information about CCADV, please visit www.ctcadv.org.