



Pennsylvania Coalition to  
Advance Respect

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**a division of respect together**

## **Pennsylvania's Rape Crisis Centers Are in Crisis—It's Time to Act**

August 28, 2025

### **Dear Members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly:**

Pennsylvania's 48 rape crisis centers are serving survivors around the clock—unpaid—because the state budget remains unpassed. This is unsustainable and puts survivors at risk.

For more than five years, rape crisis centers have faced flat funding. Our call for an \$8 million increase to the DHS Rape Crisis line item has gone unanswered. Now, the budget impasse compounds years of underfunding and threatens the stability of these essential services for survivors of sexual assault.

The consequences are clear:

- Centers are taking on debt—maxing out credit cards and lines of credit—just to keep doors open and hotlines running.
- Staff are being laid off or working without pay, showing extraordinary dedication to supporting survivors.
- Prevention programs are being cut, leaving communities without tools to stop sexual violence before it happens.
- Survivors face long waitlists for therapy and legal help, compounding trauma and creating lasting financial and emotional harm.

Despite these challenges, Pennsylvania's rape crisis centers remain committed to survivors—supporting victims during forensic exams, or on the hotline at 2:00 a.m., helping families impacted by child sexual abuse, and educating thousands each year to prevent violence. But without action, this commitment is at risk.

Advocates are keeping their side of the commitment to survivors by showing up 24/7, even unpaid. Now it is time for Pennsylvania's leaders to keep theirs—by passing a budget that reflects the value of these life-saving services.

We urge you to act without further delay. Survivors cannot wait. Pass a budget with a meaningful funding increase for rape crisis centers across the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joyce Lukima".

Joyce Lukima, COO