



**The Sexual Battery Victims' Access to Services Act
Rape Crisis Program Trust Fund - Rape Crisis Services in Florida**

**Report Issued by the Division of Family Health Services
Sexual Violence Prevention Program**

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**Report to the Florida Legislature:
The Sexual Battery Victims' Access to Services Act,
The Rape Crisis Program Trust Fund, and
Rape Crisis Services in Florida**

Executive Summary

The Department of Health, Sexual Violence Prevention Program (SVPP) is honored to provide the Florida Legislature the 2007-2008 Rape Crisis Program Trust Fund legislative report, as mandated by section 794.055, *Florida Statutes*. In 2003, the Florida Legislature created "The Sexual Battery Victims' Access to Services Act" and the Rape Crisis Program Trust Fund (RCPTF) within the Department of Health. The Act created a funding system for distribution of monies generated by a \$151 surcharge assessed on offenders convicted of sexual battery and other offenses, including many of the aggravated battery and other battery offenses. While the clerk of the court retains \$1 of the surcharge as a service fee, \$150 goes to the Rape Crisis Program Trust Fund. This Act also requires the department to contract with a statewide, nonprofit association to distribute these funds for the provision of sexual battery recovery services. The department contracts with the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence, Inc. (FCASV), a statewide nonprofit organization committed to victims and survivors of sexual violence and the rape crisis centers who serve them. FCASV subcontracts with rape crisis centers throughout the state to serve victims and enhance services.

Collections to the RCPTF have increased over the past several years due to efforts by the Florida Department of Health, the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence, rape crisis centers, prosecutors, probation officers, and judges. As a result, rape crisis centers have improved and increased their services to victims by providing crisis intervention, advocacy, 24/7 access to hotlines, and system coordination.

From September 2003 to June 2008, county clerks deposited \$6,055,838 into the trust fund. In 2007-2008, Florida Council Against Sexual Violence received \$289,690 to provide statewide initiatives in support of victims, while 31 certified rape crisis centers received \$1,158,762 that served 9,682 new primary and secondary victims and 26,729 victims initially seen prior to July 2007, and continued to receive services. These victims received 136,139 sexual battery recovery services.

The Scope and Impact of Sexual Violence

In 2007, Florida Department of Law Enforcement reported 11,214 forcible sex offenses and 3,064 arrests. According to national researchers, approximately one out of every nine adult women in Florida has been the victim of forcible rape, which equates to over 700,000 women in Florida (Ruggiero and Kilpatrick, 2003). Many victims fear disgrace if they tell family and friends about the abuse, and suffer alone (Jewkes, Sen, and Garcia-Moreno, 2002).

Sexual violence is costly to the community well-being.

- Victims of sexual assault who do not receive services are in danger of increased substance abuse and mental health problems including major depression, suicide, and post-traumatic stress disorder (National Center for Victims of Crime, 1999).

- Rape is responsible for 11% to 20% of teenage pregnancies (Boyer and Fine, 1993).
- Rape victim visits to medical providers increase almost 60% a year after the assault and more than 30% in the second year after the assault (Koss, 1993).

Sexual assault hurts the state's economy, and the economic impact worsens if victims do not receive the services they need to regain their stability.

- The National Institute of Justice estimates that rape and other sexual assaults of adults cause an annual minimum loss of 127 billion dollars, or about \$508 per U.S. resident. This figure makes sexual assault the costliest crime, even higher than murder (U.S. Department of Justice, Victim Costs and Consequences: A New Look, 1996).
- The 2007 Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Crime Report states that one forcible sex offense occurs every 47 minutes, one forcible rape occurs every 86 minutes, and one aggravated assault every six minutes. Experts agree that this is a low estimate and approximately 90% of sexual offenses go unreported to law enforcement.

The Response to Sexual Violence: Rape Crisis Services

During the 2007-2008 fiscal year, the Department of Health contracted with the FCASV to subcontract \$1,158,762 to 31 certified rape crisis centers for the provision of services to primary and secondary victims of sexual battery. Rape crisis centers utilized many new and innovative strategies to serve new victims and ensure that services are available to underserved populations. For example:

- The Refuge House uses RCPTF money to support small rural offices where other social services are absent. This allows survivors seeking services to access them locally. The trust fund also supports training for the counselors in the small, rural offices so that the counseling and information that they offer to survivors can be current and innovative.
- Palm Beach County Victim Services supports an advocate with RCPTF funds, to coordinate the forensic medical follow up of rape victims. The incumbent works extensively with Palm Beach County Health Department. Clients and medical professionals value the personalized attention and follow up.

In 2007-2008, 36,411 victims received the following sexual battery recovery services:

<u>Type of Service</u>	<u>Number of Services Provided</u>
Advocacy and Accompaniment	32,408
Crisis Intervention	28,972
Hotline calls	11,041
Information and Referrals	48,117
Forensic Exams	2,391
Support Group	2,848
Therapy	<u>10,362</u>
Total	136,139

RCPTF Allocations by Program
7/1/07-6/30/08

Program	Counties Served	Total Award
Abuse Counseling and Treatment Center (Ft. Myers)	Lee, Henry, Glades	\$ 45,483
Alachua County Rape Crisis Center (Gainesville)	Alachua, Bradford, Union	\$ 37,930
Another Way, Inc. (Bronson)	Levy, Gilchrist, Dixie, Hamilton, Lafayette, Suwannee, Columbia	\$ 76,917
Bridgeway Center, Inc. (Ft. Walton)	Okaloosa	\$ 15,511
Broward County Sexual Assault Treatment Center (Ft. Lauderdale)	Broward	\$ 66,448
Center for Abuse and Rape Emergencies (CARE) (Punta Gorda)	Charlotte	\$ 14,250
Children's Advocacy Center Sexual Assault Response Team (Daytona)	Volusia, Flagler	\$ 35,700
COPE (Defuniak Springs)	Walton	\$ 12,662
Creative Services, Inc. (Ocala)	Marion	\$ 18,936
Crisis Center of Tampa Bay	Hillsborough	\$ 43,937
The Dawn Center (Brooksville)	Hernando	\$ 13,408
Family Service Centers, Inc. (Clearwater)	Pinellas	\$ 40,858
Haven of Lake and Sumter Counties (Leesburg)	Lake, Sumter	\$ 28,448
Lakeview Center, Inc. (Pensacola)	Escambia, Santa Rosa	\$ 32,277
Manatee Glens Rape Crisis Services (Bradenton)	Manatee	\$ 17,929
M.U.J.E.R., Inc. (Homestead)	South Miami-Dade	\$ 26,698
Palm Beach County Victim Services (West Palm Beach)	Palm Beach	\$ 51,124
Peace River Center for Personal Development, Inc. (Lakeland)	Hardee, Highlands, Polk	\$ 50,233
Project HELP, Inc. (Naples)	Collier	\$ 19,373
Putnam County Health Dept. (Palatka)	Putnam	\$ 13,744
Quigley House, Inc. (Orange Park)	Clay	\$ 13,993
Refuge House, Inc. (Tallahassee)	Franklin, Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, Wakulla	\$ 91,299

Roxcy Bolton Rape Treatment Center (Miami-Dade)	Miami-Dade	\$ 63,935
Safe Place and Rape Crisis Center (SPARCC) (Sarasota)	DeSoto, Sarasota	\$ 30,862
Safety Shelter of St. Johns County, Inc.	St. Johns	\$ 13,597
Salvation Army Rape Crisis Program (Panama City)	Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Washington	\$ 68,167
Sexual Assault Assistance Program 19th Circuit (Ft. Pierce)	Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, St. Lucie	\$ 50,601
Sexual Assault Victim Services (Viera)	Brevard, Seminole	\$ 44,979
Sunrise of Pasco County, Inc. (Dade City)	Pasco	\$ 20,623
Victim Service Center of Orange County (Orlando)	Orange	\$ 40,203
Women's Center of Jacksonville	Baker, Duval, Nassau	\$ 58,637
TOTAL		\$ 1,158,762

Improving Rape Crisis Program Trust Fund Collections

FCASV in partnership with the Department of Health has encouraged rape crisis centers across the state to develop local plans to increase collections in their community. From discussions with Clerks of Court and probation officers to presentations with circuit judges and state attorneys, advocates reached out to criminal justice professionals in their communities to ask that the RCPTF surcharge be imposed in all required cases. A few rape crisis centers put together circuit-wide meetings, bringing together criminal justice professionals to brainstorm ways to increase collections. The Florida Council Against Sexual Violence arranged meetings with judges around the state to discuss the RCPTF surcharge.

Other Funding Sources for Rape Crisis Centers

Victims of Crime Act (Federal): The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding, which began in 1986, enabled rape crisis centers to survive through the 1990s. This program, funded from the United States Department of Justice through the Office of the Attorney General of Florida, provides funding for direct services to most of Florida's rape crisis programs.

Violence Against Women Act (Federal): The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), passed in 1996 and reauthorized in 2000 and 2005, has improved the systemic response to sexual violence in Florida. The Rape Prevention Education Program provides funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) through the Florida Department of Health, Sexual Violence Prevention Program (SVPP). This source supports many of Florida's rape crisis hotlines and primary rape prevention education.

Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant (Federal): The Florida Department of Health's SVPP funds nine rape crisis centers to provide victim services through the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant.

Service Standards and Certification of Rape Crisis Centers

FCASV is responsible for service standards and the certification process for Florida's rape crisis centers. Service standards and certification are based on the following:

- A broad array of high quality, sexual violence services must exist in every community.
- Victims are best served through sexual violence services provided in the context of a coordinated, collaborative, and multidisciplinary approach including medical/forensic providers, advocates, criminal justice professionals, and social service providers.
- All service providers must have victim empowerment as the cornerstone of service delivery.

In December of 2007, FCASV updated and printed the *Certification Standards* manual, which describes rape crisis center eligibility and certification requirements. The manual was distributed to currently certified rape crisis centers and programs interested in becoming certified.

In January of 2008, FCASV initiated on-site certification monitoring of currently certified and applicant programs, utilizing ENSYNC Diversified Management Services, Inc. as an independent reviewer. It is critical that centers are able to demonstrate their ability to effectively operate and provide quality services to primary and secondary victims of sexual assault. ENSYNC monitored fifteen rape crisis centers during the fiscal year 2007-2008.

Monitoring occurs every two years to ensure certified rape crisis centers are in compliance with service, organizational management, and ethical standards. FCASV offers on-site technical assistance prior to certification monitoring at anytime upon request.

Conclusion

Each victim of sexual violence has suffered terrible trauma. The RCPTF funding helps to ensure that sexual violence victims have access to basic services including 24/7 hotlines, crisis intervention, advocacy, counseling services, therapy, medical/forensic intervention, service coordination, and community awareness. Victim advocates in rape crisis centers throughout the state diligently work to provide professional, compassionate services to all who have experienced this terrible trauma.

The Department of Health, SVPP joined state and community partners to develop the first-ever, five-year strategic plan to prevent sexual violence in Florida. With funding, guidance, and support from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the SVPP with state and community partners, created a common vision statement, mission statement, and six goals. Through the year 2012 and beyond, statewide partners will work together on preventing sexual violence in their communities by addressing each community's unique needs, cultures, and resources.

The Department of Health, SVPP, in partnership with the FCASV and Florida's rape crisis centers, continues working to ensure that each victim has an opportunity to receive services and heal. The Florida Department of Health remains committed to providing funding to 31 certified rape crisis centers and FCASV to ensure sexual assault victims are served.

Certified Rape Crisis Centers in Florida

Abuse Counseling and Treatment, Incorporated (ACT)

Fort Myers

Alachua County Office of Victim Services

Gainesville

Another Way, Incorporated

Bronson

Bridgeway Center

Fort Walton Beach

Broward County Sexual Assault Treatment Center

Fort Lauderdale

Center for Abuse and Rape Emergencies (CARE)

Punta Gorda

The Children's Advocacy Center of Volusia and Flagler Counties Sexual Assault Response Team

Daytona Beach

Chautauqua Office of Psychotherapy and Evaluation (COPE)

DeFuniak Springs

Creative Services, Incorporated

Ocala

Crisis Center of Tampa Bay

Apple Services

Tampa

The Dawn Center

Spring Hill

Family Service Centers Rape Crisis Program and Sexual Assault Victim Services

Clearwater

Haven of Lake and Sumter Counties, Incorporated

Leesburg

Lakeview Center Rape Crisis and Rape Awareness Programs

Pensacola

Manatee Glens Rape Crisis Services

Bradenton

Mujeres Unidas en Justicia, Educación y Reforma (M.U.J.E.R.), Incorporated (Women United in Justice, Education, and Reform)

Homestead

Palm Beach County Victim Services

West Palm Beach

Peace River Rape Recovery and Resource Center

Lakeland

Project Help, Incorporated
Naples

Putnam County Health Department Sexual and Physical Violence Intervention Program
Palatka

Quigley House, Incorporated
Orange Park

Refuge House, Incorporated
Tallahassee

Roxcy Bolton Rape Treatment Center/Jackson Memorial Hospital
Miami

Safe Place and Rape Crisis Center (SPARCC)
Sarasota

Safety Shelter of St. Johns County, Incorporated
Saint Augustine

Salvation Army Domestic Violence and Rape Crisis Program
Panama City

Sexual Assault Assistance Program
State Attorney's Office, 19th Circuit
Fort Pierce

Sexual Assault Victim Services
Viera

Sunrise of Pasco County, Incorporated
Dade City

Victim Service Center of Orange County
Orlando

Women's Center of Jacksonville Rape Recovery Team
Jacksonville

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