

February 2016

Message from Commissioner Cecile Noel



This is an unprecedented time for New York City and specifically its unparalleled domestic violence advocacy community. The Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence (OCDV) has heard from many of you about the many questions raised and fears created by the release of the federal administration's new guidelines on federal immigration enforcement and related enforcement activity here and across the country. Specifically, advocates have asked us how these new federal enforcement policies will impact immigrant survivors of domestic violence in New York City. The City continues to stand with the 40% of New Yorkers who are foreign born and in particular is steadfast in its mission to protect the rights of every victim of domestic violence, regardless of immigration status. This has been a goal of our office since it was created.

To ensure that all victims of domestic violence are aware of the City's commitment to them in this new and uncharted territory, we ask you do the following:

Know where survivors of domestic violence can access high-quality immigration legal services.

Each of the City's [Family Justice Centers](#) provides comprehensive immigration legal services on-site. These services are provided by our partner agencies and are free and confidential. Survivors can also access free, safe immigration legal help by calling the [ActionNYC](#) hotline at 1-800-354-0365. ActionNYC is a program that offers free and safe immigration legal help from trusted community organizations, in the community and in the languages of the community.

Be aware of the City's confidentiality policies with regard to immigration status.

New York City has a confidentiality policy to protect immigration status and other personal information. If an immigrant does share his or her immigration status, City employees must keep this information confidential and treat it like other confidential information held by the City.

For those survivors who want to report a domestic violence crime to the NYPD, know that police officers are prohibited from asking about immigration status from crime victims and witnesses.

Further, the NYPD does not conduct federal immigration enforcement.

If you or others in your community hear about an immigration enforcement raid, you can report it.

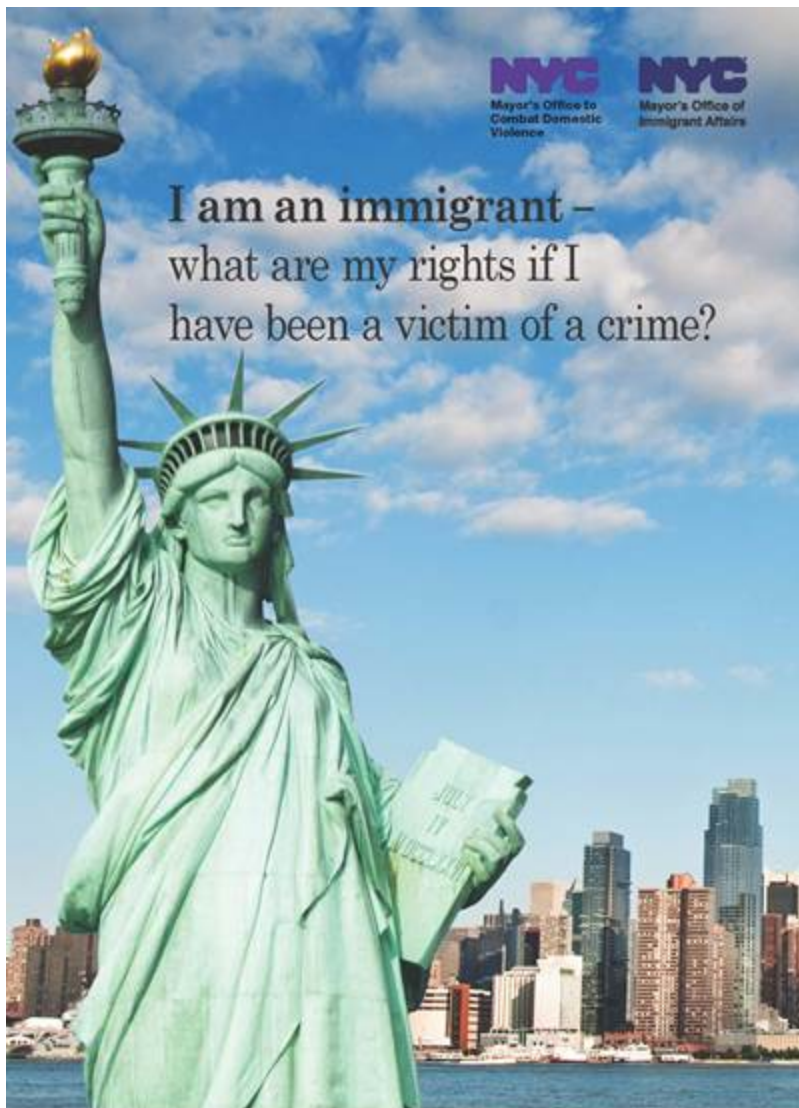
You can contact the [Legal Aid Society](#)'s hotline at 1-844-955-3425.

Remember that all New Yorkers, regardless of immigration status, can continue to access City services.

Call 311 or visit the [Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs](#) (MOIA) for more information, and please see MOIA's [Resources for New York City Immigrants](#). Additionally, domestic violence resources in every community are available on the [OCDV website](#) or by calling the City's 24-hour domestic violence hotline at 1-800-621-4673.

Together, we can continue to protect the rights of all immigrant victims of domestic violence by spreading the word that New York City is a safe city – a City that fully supports the rights of immigrants to safely access supportive social and legal services and live a life free from abuse.

- Cecile Noel



Resources for Immigrant Crime Victims

>>> You can report the crime

If you have been the victim or witness of a crime, or are not sure, contact the New York City Police Department. Police officers are prohibited from asking about the immigration status of crime victims and witnesses.

For emergencies call 911. For non-emergencies call your local precinct.

>>> You can get help.

Many New York City government agencies provide free services including emergency shelter, counseling, health care, child care and other family services. **Call 311 to learn more about these services.**

If you have been a victim of domestic violence, you can get free help at a New York City Family Justice Center, including criminal justice, civil legal, and social services all in one location. **Call 311 to be connected to a Family Justice Center near you.**

>>> You can learn about your immigration options.

Some immigrant victims of crimes may be able to get immigration visas called U and/or T visas. These visas protect victims of certain serious crimes who help law enforcement in the investigation or prosecution of those crimes.

U visas provide immigration benefits to crime victims who have suffered substantial mental or physical abuse as a result of the crime. T visas provide immigration benefits to victims of trafficking. U and T visas provide:

- Temporary immigration status
- Access to a work permit
- Opportunity to apply for permanent residence (known as a green card) for visa holders and their family members
- Access to cash assistance, Medicaid, a Social Security number, a driver license, and various other public benefits

In order to apply for a U or T visa, you must get a certification form from a law enforcement agency confirming that you meet certain requirements for the visa. **Visit nyc.gov/immigrants to learn more about the U and T visa certification form and how to request it from a law enforcement agency.**

Get free, safe immigration help to find out if you are eligible for a U or T visa or any other immigration benefits. **Call 311 and say "ActionNYC" to make an appointment with a trusted immigration service provider in your community.**

We know immigrant survivors of domestic violence are particularly vulnerable, especially when it comes to disclosing the abuse they have suffered to the authorities. OCDV has worked with Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs to increase access to U and T visas, and together recently released a fact sheet outlining resources for immigrants who are crime victims. (See the [Huffington Post op-ed](#) by OCDV Commissioner Noel and MOIA Commissioner Agarwal.)

These federal immigration visas protect immigrant victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, human trafficking, and other serious crimes, who are helpful to a law enforcement investigation or prosecution. Each visa has several eligibility requirements and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, a branch of the Department of Homeland Security, is the only agency with the authority to provide either immigration status. We do not know at this point how the current federal

administration's executive order will affect these programs, but will be monitoring them closely. City-funded immigration attorneys are available at each of our FJCs and ready to provide consultation and representation around domestic violence related immigration remedies.

2017 NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS RIGHTS WEEK

Healing Thriving Rising


32nd Annual
New York Crime Victims
Candlelight Vigil
Sunday, April 2, 2017
2:00—4:00 PM

West End Collegiate Church
245 West 77th Street
at West End Avenue
New York City

Photos of loved ones may be displayed at the ceremony
Counselors and child care available on premises
Ramp access to sanctuary
Sign language interpreter
Simultaneous Spanish and Mandarin translation
Refreshments and fellowship following ceremony

SPONSORED BY
The Office of the New York State Attorney General
The Downstate Coalition for Crime Victims
The New York County District Attorney's Office

For further information:
(212) 335-9040



JOIN US FOR THEATER BY STUDENT PLAYWRIGHTS



Seeing Rape

"I had turned a monster into art."

—Student Playwright

Part of the Sexual Justice Program at John Jay College

Fri, March 17, 7pm

Sat, March 18, 7pm

Sun, March 19, 2pm

Gerald W. Lynch Theater

524 West 59th Street, New York, NY

Conversation with actors
and playwrights
immediately following.



To Register: <http://jjaycuny.thankyou4caring.org/events/SeeingRape>

Any questions: email Shonna Trinch at stinch@jjay.cuny.edu



OCDV POLICY & TRAINING INSTITUTE

OCDV's Policy and Training Institute (the Institute) provides trainings to City agencies and community-based organizations on intimate partner violence and related topics. The Institute can identify needs for initial staff training, create work plans for the implementation of ongoing advanced staff trainings, and assist in the review and development of organization policies and protocols around domestic violence. The Institute also includes the NYC Healthy Relationship Training Academy (the Academy), which offers educational and skills-building training for adolescents, parents, and organizations that provide services to young people.

[Request a Training](#)



Host a workshop on teen dating violence and healthy relationships with OCDV's NYC Healthy Relationship Training Academy. Submit your request through our online [workshop request form](#) or call the Academy at 212-788-2516.



OCDV has updated the [New York City Resource Directory of Domestic Violence Services](#), which provides information regarding assistance available for survivors of intimate partner violence, sexual assault, sex trafficking and elder abuse. Your input and participation are important to ensure that the Directory is comprehensive, identifies culturally competent programs and reflects the variety of services for individuals, families and children in need.

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| <p style="text-align: center;">FOR EMPLOYERS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">If your employee is a survivor of DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING –</p> <p style="text-align: center;">You can support your employee by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to and believing the employee who is experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. You can tell them that it is not their fault and that you are worried about their safety. • Asking your employee about their safety concerns and what can be done in the workplace to make everyone safer. • Educating yourself and your employees about domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and on how to seek help at www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence. • Creating a workplace policy to support survivors and ensure safety and productivity in your business. View a model policy at www.workplacesrespond.org/learn/model-policy. • Cooperating in securing unemployment insurance for your employee if they left work because of the violence. • Calling the NYC Commission on Human Rights for information on workplace protection laws at 311 or 718-722-3131, or visit www.nyc.gov/humanrights. <p style="text-align: center;">The law requires that you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permit your employee time off to speak to a District Attorney or seek an Order of Protection. • Make "reasonable accommodations" when requested (if you employ four or more people) as long as they are not an "undue burden" to your business. • Do not discriminate against a survivor in hiring, promotion, or other considerations in the workplace due to their status as a survivor. • Keep confidential any information about the employee's situation, requests for time off, or accommodations. | <p style="text-align: center;">FOR EMPLOYEES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">If you are a survivor of DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, OR STALKING –</p> <p style="text-align: center;">You have the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take time off to speak with a District Attorney or seek an Order of Protection. • Ask your employer for "reasonable accommodations," like changing your worksite, schedule, or phone number. • File for unemployment insurance if you lost or left your job because of the violence – even if you quit, were fired, or relocated due to the violence. • Have any personal information shared with your employer remain confidential. <p style="text-align: center;">You cannot be fired or penalized because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are a victim or survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. • Your abusive partner harasses or makes threats to you or others at your workplace. <p style="text-align: center;">You may have to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell your employer about the abuse in order to get reasonable accommodations, and your employer may ask for proof – like a letter from a service provider, police report, District Attorney's Office, or court staff. <p style="text-align: center;">For more information or to ask for help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call the NYC 24-Hour Domestic Violence Hotline at 311 or (800) 621-4673. • Visit www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence. • Call the NYC Commission on Human Rights to report an employer violation at 311 or 718-722-3131 or visit www.nyc.gov/humanrights. |
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OCDV and NYC Small Business Services want you to know that New York State and New York City Laws extend protections to survivors, or those perceived to be survivors, of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking. In October, OCDV partnered with NYC Small Business Services to produce a brochure for employers and employees to outline those protections and how survivors can access services. The brochure was also distributed at an exciting panel discussion hosted by the Brooklyn Family Justice Center at St. Francis College.

Upcoming OCDV Events & Trainings

***Please note that Family Justice Center trainings are geared toward service providers and professionals.**

BRONX:

Intimate Partner Violence Dialogue

Facilitated by OCDV Staff

Monday, March 20th, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx

198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor

To register, please [click here](#).

Risk Assessment & Safety Planning

Facilitated by Safe Horizon

Monday, March 20th, 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx
198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor
To register, please [click here](#).

Engaging Trauma Survivors

Facilitated by OCDV Staff
Tuesday, March 21st, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx
198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor
To register, please [click here](#).

Criminal Justice Responses to Domestic Violence

Facilitated by Bronx County District Attorney's Office & NYPD
Tuesday, March 21st, 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx
198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor
To register, please [click here](#).

Introduction to Sex Trafficking

Facilitated by Day One
Wednesday, March 22nd, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx
198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor
To register, please [click here](#).

Introduction to Family & Matrimonial Law

Facilitated by Sanctuary for Families
Thursday, March 23rd, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx
198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor
To register, please [click here](#).

Introduction to Immigration Law

Facilitated by New York Legal Assistance Group
Thursday, March 23rd, 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx
198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor
To register, please [click here](#).

Cultural Conversations: Tools for Supportive Practice

Facilitated by OCDV Staff & NYC Anti-Violence Project
Friday, March 24th, 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx
198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor
To register, please [click here](#).

Introduction to Elder Abuse

Facilitated by Neighborhood SHOPP & Weinberg Center for Elder Abuse

Monday, March 27th, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx

198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor

To register, please [click here](#).

Housing Options for Intimate Partner Violence Survivors

Facilitated by Bronx Legal Services & Sanctuary for Families

Tuesday, March 28th, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx

198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor

To register, please [click here](#).

Shelter Options for Intimate Partner Violence Survivors

Facilitated by Legal Aid Society & Safe Horizon

Tuesday, March 28th, 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx

198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor

To register, please [click here](#).

Economic Empowerment for Intimate Partner Violence Survivors

Facilitated by OCDV Staff

Wednesday, March 29th, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx

198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor

To register, please [click here](#).

Immigrant Eligibility for Public Benefits

Facilitated by OCDV Staff & Planned Parenthood NYC

Wednesday, March 29th, 2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Bronx

198 E. 161st Street, 2nd Floor

To register, please [click here](#).

MANHATTAN:

Mental Health First Aid Training

Facilitated by OCDV Staff

Tuesday, March 14th, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Manhattan

80 Centre Street, 5th Floor

To register, please [click here](#).

QUEENS:

Housing & Shelter Options for Intimate Partner Violence Survivors

Facilitated by Safe Horizon

Thursday, March 30th, 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Queens

126-02 82nd Avenue

To register, please email marissab@fjcnyc.org.

Mental Health First Aid Training

Facilitated by OCDV Staff

Friday, March 31st, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

NYC Family Justice Center, Queens

126-02 82nd Avenue

To register, please [click here](#).

Below is the monthly schedule for upcoming FJC Core trainings. A full listing of the month's trainings will be provided in the corresponding monthly e-bulletin.

April – Queens FJC

May – Staten Island FJC

June – Manhattan FJC

Top News Stories from February

Trump's Immigration Crackdown Could Endanger Domestic Violence Victims

Afraid. Alone. Anxious. That's the current mood among many undocumented victims of domestic violence across the country who fear they'll unwittingly become targets for deportation if they reach out for help, according to advocates interviewed by The Huffington Post. Under President Donald Trump's new immigration policies, federal immigration agents are free to detain and deport anyone who is in the country without papers. That's a stark departure from the policies of the Obama administration, which directed agents to prioritize certain categories of people, namely those who had been convicted of serious crimes. Now, undocumented domestic violence victims may feel they face a difficult choice: Ask for help and risk "outing" themselves to authorities, or suffer the abuse in silence.

[Read More](#)

Queens Lawmakers Looks to Protect Immigrant Victims of Crime, Domestic Abuse

Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas, a Democrat, plans to introduce legislation that would make it a felony for anyone to report the immigration status of a crime victim or applicant for an order of protection to prevent them from coming forward.

> [Read More](#)

ICE Arrests Domestic Violence Victim at Texas Courthouse

An undocumented immigrant was arrested at a courthouse in El Paso, Texas, just after she was granted a protective order for domestic abuse. KZIA reports that the alleged abuser called Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents to let them know his ex would be at the court

> [Read More](#)

The Isolation of Transgender, Undocumented Victims of Domestic Violence

“Illegal Alien pervert Arrested.” That was the alternate headline suggested in an anonymous posted comment to a CBS News article. The article detailed the story of Ms. Gonzalez, a transgender woman who was arrested last week by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents for being an undocumented immigrant. The arrest was reportedly made at the El Paso County Courthouse in Texas, only moments after the woman – a victim of domestic violence – received a protective order against her batterer. According to County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal, ICE agents had received a tip that Ms. Gonzalez would be at the court that day. Bernal suspects that the tip was made by Ms. Gonzalez’s alleged abuser, who had also been detained earlier by ICE. Appearing in the comments section of the CBS News article, the aforementioned post was one of dozens ranging from expressions of disregard to outright disgust for the domestic violence victim – not only because of Ms. Gonzalez’s undocumented status but particularly because she is transgender.

> [Read More](#)

Here’s the Chilling Effect When ICE Targets Domestic Violence Victims

Domestic violence cuts across all kinds of factors, but power operates differently depending on the context, and the threat of deportation—and aggressive enforcement measures like raids—can be powerful weapons against undocumented women. In one survey conducted by the National Domestic Violence Hotline, 35% of Latina survivors reported experiencing increased fear as a result of the political climate around immigration enforcement.

> [Read More](#)

NYPD Launches Crackdown on Sex Trafficking

The NYPD is making new efforts to go after "pimps and johns" responsible for sex trafficking, Police Commissioner James O'Neill and First Lady Chirlane McCray announced. The department is adding 25 detectives to the

Child Sex Trafficking: LGBTQ+ Youth Among Most Vulnerable

Last year, 7,572 trafficking cases were reported to the country's National Human Trafficking Hotline. More than 50 percent of the 5,550 people who were sex trafficked in 2016 were below 18 when targeted,

Vice squad, specifically to investigate sex trafficking, and has launched a 24-hour hotline staffed by specially trained Special Victims Division investigators, where people can call to anonymously report trafficking.

> [Read More](#)

according to Polaris, a charity which runs the hotline. But experts say the real figure of trafficked children and adults in the United States is in the hundreds of thousands. Children who have run away from home or are homeless, Native Americans and Alaska Natives, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex youth are most vulnerable.

> [Read More](#)

NYC's Fight Against Elder Abuse

Concerns about elder abuse in New York City are rising along with the number of senior citizens. According to a 2011 state government report, an estimated quarter of a million senior citizens in the Empire State were victims of some form of elder abuse (financial, physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect). But there is a large gap between the abuse that is reported to authorities and what people report on surveys. As part of Aging Week on BK Live, City Limits discussed what elder abuse is and what the City can do about it – with Bobbie Sackman, associate executive director of public policy at LiveOn-NY; Cheryl Lee, Brooklyn project director of the Elder Abuse Program at JASA; and Ayana Robertson, an attorney with the foreclosure prevention project at Brooklyn Legal Services.

> [Read More](#)

This Bill to Protect Domestic Violence Victim's Pets Could Save Women's Lives

Domestic abusers often extend their behavior to their victims' pets, threatening and harming them as a means of control over their owner. That, coupled with the fact that only 3 percent of domestic-violence shelters accommodate pets, makes it difficult for women to leave an abusive situation for fear of what will happen to their pets. Some women delay leaving, some return to abusive situations, while others have reported resorting to living out of their cars so that they can keep both themselves and their pets safe. The Pet and Women Safety (PAWS) Act, reintroduced in Congress in early February, aims "to protect victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence from emotional and psychological trauma caused by acts of violence or threats of violence against their pets."

> [Read More](#)

Tech Can Do More to Help Survivors of Abuse. Here's Where to Start.

For people dealing with abuse from an intimate partner, technology can be both an empowering tool and a potential source of risk. But a team of Google researchers hopes to spur the tech community to make their products easier to use for survivors—and build more potentially life-saving tools into their products. The challenge of using technology in a secure and private way can make an already traumatic situation even more stressful for abuse survivors. To study this dynamic, a team at Google collaborated with organizations like Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse (CORA) to gather data about survivors' technology use, create a framework to describe this digital engagement, and draw some conclusions about how developers can build or improve their technologies with survivors of intimate partner abuse in mind.

> [Read More](#)

Russia's Putin Signs New Law Easing Penalty for Domestic Violence

Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a new law easing some penalties for domestic violence, a move which has alarmed women's rights campaigners who fear it will encourage abuse. The law reduces battery of a relative to a civil offence instead of a criminal one in first instances, when the victim suffered no serious harm. Critics say the move is a step backwards which will exonerate "tyrants in the home" and discourage victims from reporting abuse. Each year, about 14,000 women die in Russia at the hands of husbands or other relatives, according to a 2010 United Nations report.

> [Read More](#)

Disclaimer: Opinions expressed in the content of this email and in linked articles do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of the NYC Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence.

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