

Wayne County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team

Annual Report 2016

This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-TA-AX-K072 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

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Overview

The Wayne County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team presents its first summary report with a commitment to establish improvements in our county and state's response to domestic violence. Authorized by the Domestic Violence Act, 1978 PA 389, specifically, MCL 400.1511, the Team is charged with reviewing homicides and near fatal incidents which resulted from intimate partner violence in Wayne County. The Team was established in 2015 with technical support from the National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative and financial support from the Office on Violence against Women.

The Team has agreed upon the operational definition of "domestic violence" as a pattern of coercive control, including the use or threatened use of physical or sexual force, accompanied by other abusive acts such as intimidation, emotional/psychological abuse, isolation, and the like, by one person against a current or former intimate partner. Intimate partners can consist of spouses, former spouses, live-together partners, partners who share a child in common, individuals in a dating relationship or former dating relationship.

The purpose of this report is to describe the Team's review process, summarize trends identified through the first two reviews and lay out recommendations for effective intervention and prevention strategies concerning domestic violence.

The review process requires case-specific sharing of records and confidentiality is inherent in many of the involved reports.

Therefore, there are clear measures taken to protect confidentiality during the review process. This report shall not contain information identifying any victim of domestic violence, that person's family members, an alleged or suspected perpetrator of abuse upon a victim, or the involvement of any agency with a victim or victim's family.

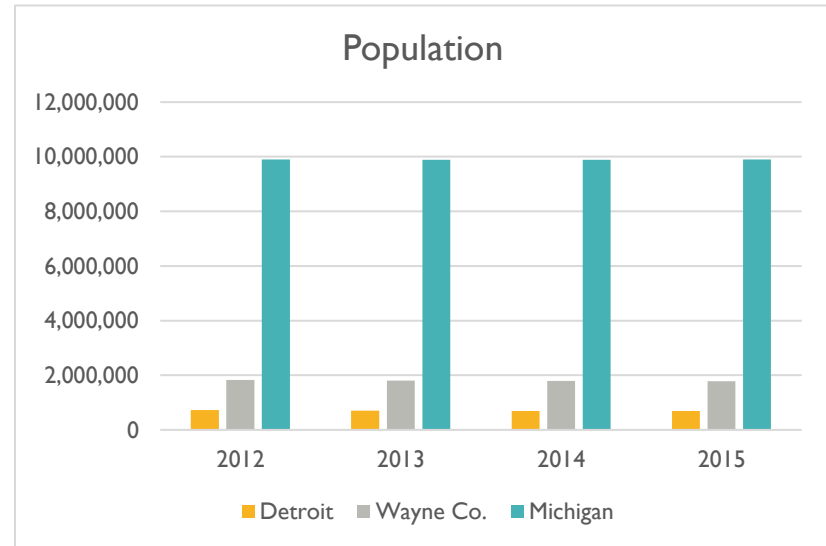
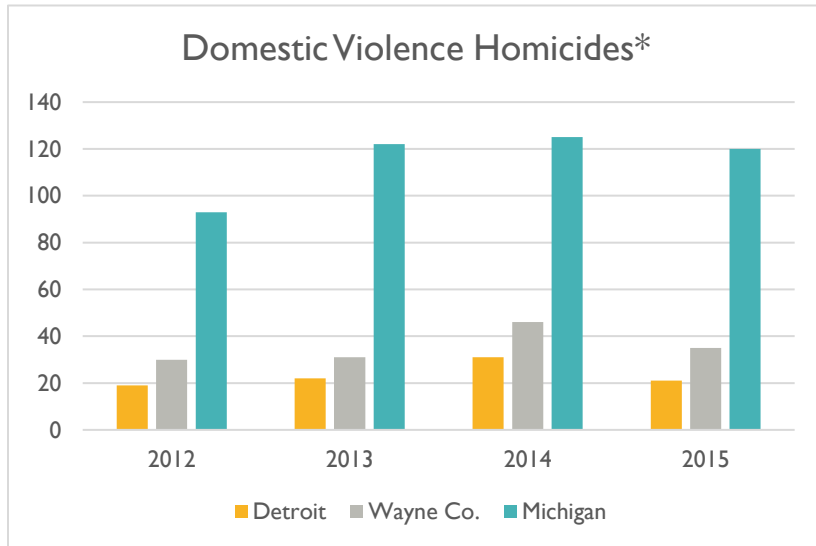
Mission

The mission of the Team is to prevent future domestic violence cases from escalating into murder or suicide by creating system change recommendation through examining the circumstances of each death.

Objectives

- Promote cooperation, communication, and coordination among agencies involved in responding to domestic violence-related fatalities;
- Assure the accurate inventory of domestic violence fatalities by age, location, cause, manner, and circumstances;
- Support domestic violence-related death investigation and certification;
- Establish investigative guidelines and recommendations for domestic fatalities;
- Enhance the general awareness of domestic violence deaths through the understanding of how and why domestic violence-related deaths occur;
- Identify system-based contributors to domestic violence-related deaths, that when removed will ultimately reduce the number of preventable domestic violence related deaths; and
- Initiate local prevention efforts to reduce the number of preventable domestic violence-related deaths as indicated by team findings.

Domestic Violence Homicide Trends



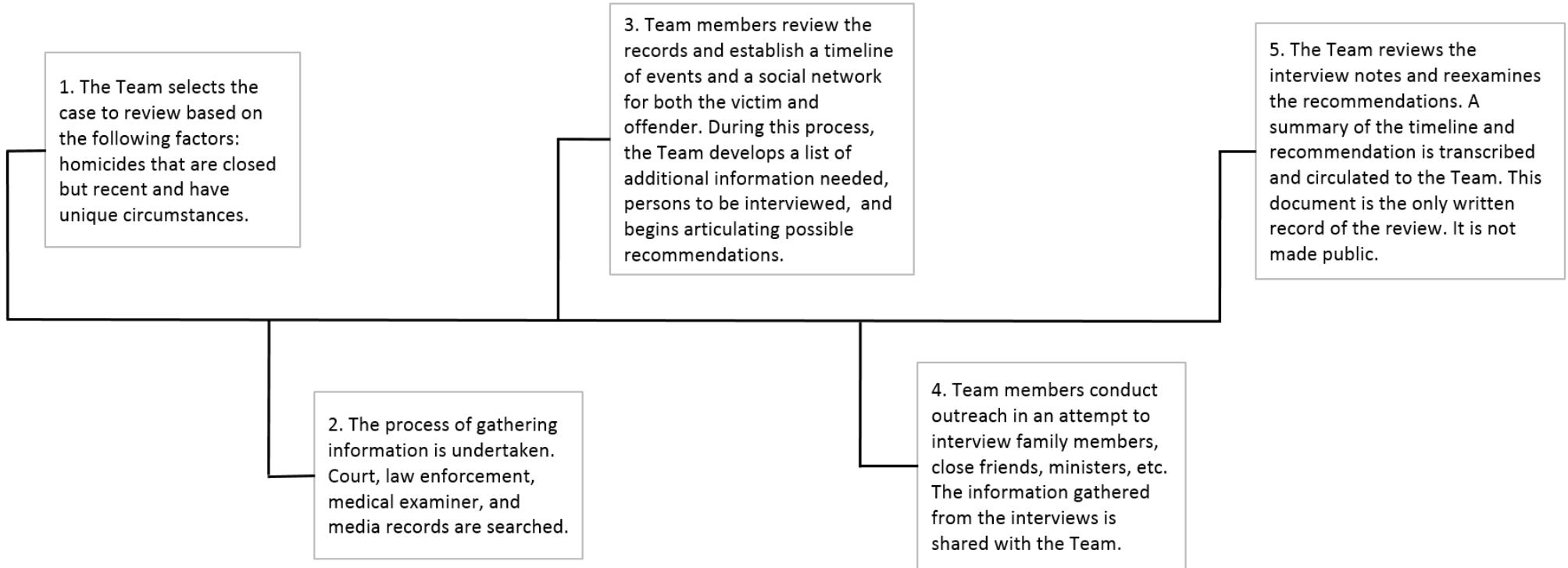
- In 2014, there was an uptick in the number of domestic violence homicides at the city, county, and state level.
- In Wayne County, 66% of domestic violence homicides occurred in Detroit.

*These statistics were prepared using the Michigan Incident Crime Reporting Unit data, which represents domestic violence as incidents where the victim to offender relationship are one of the following: spouse, common-law spouse, parent, sibling, child, grandparent, grandchild, in-law, step-parent, step-child, other family member, child in common, dating, child of boyfriend/girlfriend, same sex relationship, ex-spouse, former dating, resident, or former resident. These incidents include homicides that were not intimate partner and thus do not accurately reflect the trends of cases that the Team is addressing.

Wayne County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team Members

Name	Position	Organization
Julie Black	Team Facilitator	Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority
Paula Callen	Building the Safety Net Project Director	Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence
Jeffrie Cape	Therapist	Batterer Intervention Services Coalition of Michigan
Jerry Dorsey IV	Chief of Trials	Wayne County Prosecutor's Office
Rodney Cox	Captain of the Special Victims Unit	Detroit Police Department
Matt Dudus	Probation Supervisor	Michigan Department of Corrections
Trish Gerard	Principal Attorney Domestic Violence Unit and Elder Abuse Unit	Wayne County Prosecutor's Office
Richard Halloran	Judge	3rd Judicial Circuit Court
Franklin Hayes	Lieutenant	Detroit Police Department
Desiree Herrick	Associate Director	First Step
Serena Johnson	Director of Victim Services	Equality Michigan
Michael Kwarcinski	Personal Protection Order Docket Supervising Attorney	3rd Circuit Judicial Court
Gena Lewis	Passport to Self-Sufficiency Mobility Coach	Coalition on Temporary Shelter (COTS)
Alesia McGlocton	Residential Case Manager	YWCA Interim House
David Moons	Assistant Medical Examiner	Wayne County Medical Examiner
Karen Porter	Director of Quality Assurance	Michigan Domestic & Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board
Lore Rogers	Staff Attorney	Michigan Domestic & Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board
Mary Rubio	Assistant Prosecuting Attorney	Wayne County Prosecutor's Office
Sara Thornton	Team Coordinator	Wayne State University
Crystal Weaver	Founder	Lost and Found Christian Association
Kyla Williams	Sergeant	Detroit Police Department

Wayne County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Process



Summary of Case Reviews

The deaths reviewed for this report occurred in 2014. All fatalities involved a firearm as the murder weapon. The homes where the victims and offenders resided contained multiple firearms. In both cases, the perpetrators were male. All of the deceased were African American. The cases were ruled homicide-suicides by law enforcement. There was an indication that both victims had separated or began the process of separation at some point prior to the homicide. These fatalities left several adult children and at least one minor child without one or both of their parents.

According to the Detroit Police Department records, none of the parties had known prior police reports involving domestic violence nor had they been convicted of any crimes that could be identified.

The purpose of a fatality review is not to identify an individual or agency as responsible for the fatalities. These are complex cases, involving a number of professionals and variables. No one action or inaction, rather it was the totality of circumstances, resulted in the tragedies.

At the same time, none of the individuals involved with the victims would consider the deaths an acceptable conclusion. By reviewing the homicides, the Team seeks to identify gaps and inadequacies in the response to domestic violence, both at the county, state and community level. The goal is to prevent future domestic violence cases from escalating into murder or suicide by examining the events leading up to each death. The attachments to this report are specific, concrete steps to prevent intimate partner violence.

The Team undertakes two reviews per year. This allows for in-depth work. A goal of the Team is to identify gaps in current systems and propose solutions that will result in fewer lives lost. Over the next year, we look forward to ongoing work with all those committed to reducing intimate partner violence in Wayne County and the State of Michigan.

Team Recommendations

All cases in which a person has killed their current or former intimate partner and then committed suicide or was killed by law enforcement responding to the homicide should be investigated by expanding the due diligence for the totality of the circumstances. Doing so will provide information that can inform recommendations to prevent future domestic violence homicides. In cases of intimate partner violence murder-suicide, typically the investigation is limited, since there will be no prosecution of the killer. However, in other murders where the suspect(s) is/are killed, investigation often goes well beyond that. For example, in mass murders such as school shootings and terrorism, investigation goes beyond interviewing just the witnesses to the criminal act. It includes interviewing witnesses and looking for evidence leading up to the crime to determine the motivation for and the means by which the suspect committed the murder, and other information from which systems learn how to prevent this kind of violence being perpetrated by others. These are important outcomes of a school shooting or terrorism investigation, even when there will be no prosecution of the deceased suspect, and these outcomes are no less important in domestic violence homicide-suicide cases.

In 2014, there were 31 intimate partner homicides committed in the City of Detroit and 125 committed statewide in Michigan. It is essential to learn how to prevent this kind of perpetrator violence. In the cases reviewed by the Team, its members were unable to locate or reach some of the friends, co-workers, neighbors or family who may have had the most knowledge about the suspect's past behavior, or about resources needed by the victim but which were unavailable or unknown. These people with knowledge of the victim and suspect had not been interviewed by law enforcement because they were not witnesses to the actual murder-suicide. Because there was no interview report, and because the Team was unable to make contact with several of these people, the information they knew that could have informed these recommendations is lost.

The Team recognizes that law enforcement has finite resources and cannot always investigate a domestic violence homicide-suicide with the same intensity as it would in a case where a suspect will be prosecuted and evidence will be needed for prosecution. However, the Team encourages law enforcement to expand investigation of these murder-suicide cases.

There is a need for increased resources to enhance the distribution of information to the public and community businesses about the dynamics of intimate partner violence and resources available to assist those against whom it is perpetrated. Several friend and family members, as well as other parties, observed or were informed about different acts of intimidation, violence, or stalking in these cases but did not have sufficient information to

recognize the significance of what they were seeing or hearing. They did not have information that would allow them to refer victims to available help. Examples of target audiences to whom more information could be distributed include, but are not limited to:

- Fitness studios/gyms
- Credit counselors and financial institutions
- Bankruptcy court
- Religious organizations
- Schools
- Hair salons
- Laundromats
- Restaurants/bars/nightclubs

Law enforcement policies and procedures should include distributing victim notice of rights information when officers respond to calls for “civil standby” involving current or former intimate partners. Law enforcement officers are already required by state law (MCL 764.15c) to distribute this information after investigating or intervening in a domestic violence incident. Civil standbys are typically requested of law enforcement due to fear of harm and intimidation when leaving one’s residence. Requiring law enforcement to distribute victim’s rights information could provide victims of domestic violence with needed information and supportive resources to help ensure safety after leaving.

Create a policy that requires law enforcement to make a report for any intimate partner police runs to ensure that all calls for service are documented. The increasing severity and risk of violence can be made more visible, and invite a more effective response, if these runs – such as civil standbys – are documented in law enforcement reports. This additional information can make the use of lethality assessment tools more informed and effective. See attachment for more information on the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) developed by Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) and currently being used by three Wayne county police departments (Canton, Dearborn and Taylor) and domestic violence advocacy organization, First Step. The LAP program is an evidence-based model that is part of a training and technical assistance project grant with the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) that is currently being utilized in over 600 law enforcement jurisdictions nationwide.

Continuing Questions to Explore

During the review process, the Team identified questions about the system response or the potential for additional intervention going forward. These questions serve as a direction point for future case reviews.

How are secondary victims of homicide notified? Is there a critical incident debriefing model in place?

How do we address the intersection of guns and intimate partner violence?

Is it feasible for Family Court to conduct a screening or outreach before allowing a dismissal for divorce?

“One thing I think should happen, is more public education and awareness, I think that more people need to know about the resources available and what DV is and what they are living with – it’s not just a women’s issue.”

–Mother of Victim

Appendix A

The Wayne County Domestic Fatality Review Team Interagency and Individual Agreement to Maintain Confidentiality

As a member of the Wayne County Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team, here after referred to as WC DVFRT, I acknowledge that the effectiveness of the fatality review process is dependent on the quality of trust and honesty team members bring to it. Thus, I agree that I will not use any material or information obtained during the WC DVFRT meeting for any reason other than that for which it was intended.

As a member of the WC DVFRT, I will not make copies of, or otherwise document/record, material disclosed during team meetings and reviews, including electronic files. I will return all copies of material shared by others at the end of each meeting. I will retrieve all copies of material shared by me at the end of each meeting. Pursuant to Michigan statute, MCL 400.1511, the WC DVFRT meetings are closed to the public. Information identifying a victim of domestic violence, whose case is being reviewed, or that person's family members, or an alleged suspected perpetrator of abuse upon the victim, or regarding the involvement of any agency with the victim or that person's family, shall not be disclosed in any report that is available to the public

I understand and acknowledge that the unauthorized disclosure of confidential records, reports, investigation materials, and information may result in civil or criminal liability as well as removal from the WC DVFRT. A person who violates the confidentiality provisions of section 400.1511 is guilty of a misdemeanor. However, while any information provided by a WC FRT member provides to a fatality review team shall be kept confidential by the fatality review team, that information is subject to possible disclosure to the prosecuting attorney, a law enforcement agency, or the family independence agency as provided in subsection (6) of MCL 440.1511.

Appendix B: Victims of Crime Rights Notification Card

If you have questions about your case or want to obtain a copy of the police report you may contact the Detroit Police Department Domestic Violence Unit or Victim Assistance Program at the numbers listed below. When requesting a copy of the report or asking questions, please reference the responding officer(s) badge number(s) and incident number as noted on this card.

Law Enforcement Information

Responding Officer	Badge #
Responding Officer	Badge #
Incident #	
Police Precinct Phone #	

Wayne County Prosecuting Attorney's Office
1441 St. Antoine, Detroit, Michigan 48226
313-224-5777

Wayne County Clerk for Personal Protection Orders
2 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48226
313-224-6292

Crime Victim's Services Commission
www.michigan.gov/crimevictims
PO Box 30026, Lansing, Michigan 48909
517-373-7373

Community Resources

Staff at these local community resource offices are ready and available to listen, discuss options and support you in every way. Services offered include counseling, advocacy, emergency shelter and information about your legal rights. Please call. They care.

Sexual Assault Resources

Wayne County Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner's Program
(Wayne County SAFE): 313-430-8000 crisis pager
313-964-9701 business line

Sexual Assault Services for Holistic Healing and Awareness
(SASHA Center): 888-865-7055
National Sexual Assault Hotline: 800-656-HOPE (4673)

Domestic Violence Resources

YWCA Interim House: 313-861-5300
First Step: 888-453-5900

Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services
(ACCESS): 313-216-2240

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-SAFE (7233)

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) Resources

Equality Michigan: 866-962-1147 or 313-537-7000

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VICTIMS OF CRIMES RIGHTS AND RESOURCES

Detroit Police Department
1301 Third Street
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Domestic Violence Unit
313-237-2579

Sex Crimes Unit
313-596-1950

Victim Assistance Program
313-833-1660



Information for All Crime Victims

1. You may be eligible for crime victim's compensation benefits. To apply, fill out an application available from the Crime Victim Services Commission at 517-373-7373.
2. If you would like to be notified of an arrest in your case or the release of the person arrested or both, you should call the Detroit Police Department's Detention Center at 313-596-2242 and inform them.
3. If you are not notified of an arrest in your case, you may call the Domestic Violence Unit or precinct of occurrence for the status of your case.
4. You can contact the Wayne County Prosecuting Attorney's Office at 313-244-5777 to obtain information about victims' rights.

Information for Victims of Domestic Violence

1. You may obtain a copy of the police report for your case by contacting the Domestic Violence Unit or Victim Assistance Program.
2. Your legal rights include the right to go to court and file a petition requesting a personal protection order (PPO) to protect you or other members of your household from domestic abuse, which could include restraining or enjoining the abuser from:

- Entering onto premises.
 - Assaulting, attacking, beating, molesting or wounding you.
 - Removing minor children from you, except as otherwise authorized by a custody or parenting time order issued by a court of competent jurisdiction.
 - Engaging in stalking behavior.
 - Purchasing or possessing a firearm.
 - Interfering with your efforts to remove your children or personal property from premises that are solely owned or leased by the abuser.
 - Engaging in any other specific act or conduct that imposes upon or interferes with your personal liberty or that causes a reasonable apprehension of violence.
 - Having access to information in records concerning any minor child you have with the abuser that would inform the abuser about your address or telephone number, the child's address or telephone number or your employment address.
3. Your legal rights also include the right to go to court and file a motion for an order to show cause and request a hearing if the abuser or perpetrator is violating the PPO and has not been arrested.

Information for Victims of Sexual Assault

1. You can have a sexual assault medical forensic examination and have evidence collected using a sexual assault evidence kit even if you do not want to participate in the criminal justice system or cooperate with law enforcement.

2. You cannot be billed for the cost of administering the sexual assault evidence kit. If you receive a bill for these services, contact the Michigan Crime Victim Services Commission at 517-373-7373.
3. You have the right to ask the investigating law enforcement agency for the contact information of the detective or investigating officer assigned to the case, the current status of the case, whether the case has been submitted to the prosecuting attorney for review, and whether the case has been closed and the documented reason for closure.
4. If you had a sexual assault evidence kit collected and released to law enforcement, you have a right to ask the investigating law enforcement agency for the following information: When the sexual assault evidence kit was sent to a forensic laboratory for testing; whether a DNA profile was obtained from the sexual assault evidence kit; whether a DNA profile was entered into Combined DNA Index System (CODIS); and whether a DNA profile resulted in a CODIS hit.
5. Your legal rights include the right to go to court and file a petition requesting a PPO to protect you from your perpetrator. The PPO could order the perpetrator not to have contact with you and include other specific conditions.

Appendix C: Lethality Assessment Program in Wayne County

In 2016 three local law enforcement agencies and an advocacy organization in Wayne County received a training and technical assistance grant from the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) to bring the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) to Wayne County. All of the initial training and planning was completed by May of 2016 and the Canton Police Department began implementing the program in their community in June, with the Dearborn Police Department following in August and the Taylor Police Department starting in September. The ultimate goal is to eventually expand the program to be county-wide by expanding to new sites as resources permit.

The LAP is an easy and effective method that identifies victims of domestic violence who are at risk of being seriously injured or killed by their intimate partners and immediately connects them to the domestic violence service provider in their area. LAP is implemented by law enforcement officers who respond to intimate partner domestic violence calls after their initial investigation is complete utilizing an 11-question lethality screening tool with victims in a safe location on scene. The questions asked will help officers identify how lethal the situation is and what the likelihood is that the victim will be injured or killed should the situation escalate. The accompanying response and referral protocol links high risk victims immediately to the local domestic violence helpline worker. If the victim declines to speak with the helpline worker at this time the worker still completes basic safety planning with the officer who then relays that information back to the victim. These intervention services have been implemented to prevent cases from escalation, hold batterers accountable for their actions and to surround victims with the support, services and options they need to keep themselves and their families safe. The lethality and safety information gathered on the scene will also be given to prosecutors and judges to help survivors stay safe in the arraignment process.

Lethality Assessment Program (Maryland Model) Reporting Template: Wayne County Sites 2016

Jurisdiction	County	Population	Lethality Screens	# Days	Screens/Day	Screens/Pop.	High Danger	% High Danger	Non-High Danger	% Non-High Danger	DNA (Did Not Answer)	% DNA	Spoke to Hotline Worker	% Spoke to Hotline Worker
Canton	Wayne	90,000	158	214	0.74	570	77	49%	63	40%	18	11%	64	83%
Dearborn	Wayne	96,000	85	153	0.56	1,129	53	62%	32	38%	0	0%	36	86%
Taylor	Wayne	62,000	111	122	0.91	559	73	66%	18	16%	20	18%	53	73%
TOTAL		248,000	354	489	0.72	701	203	57%	113	32%	38	11%	153	75%

For more information on the LAP please go to www.mnadv.org