



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

**CONSUMER &  
BUSINESS AFFAIRS**

**CENTER FOR FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT**



# CFE COVID Conversations

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RESPONDING TO THE FINANCIAL NEEDS OF  
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE SURVIVORS

MAY 6, 2020, 2PM PST



LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
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# Optimize your webinar experience:

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- KEEP THE CHATBOX OPEN (  ICON AT BOTTOM OF YOUR SCREEN)
  - USE THE CHAT BOX AT ANY TIME TO ASK QUESTIONS
- QUESTIONS WILL BE ANSWERED THROUGHOUT THE WEBINAR AS APPROPRIATE, OR TOWARDS THE END FOR Q&A



# Los Angeles Domestic Violence Resources During COVID-19

Eve Sheedy, Executive Director  
Los Angeles County Domestic Violence Council  
Department of Public Health  
May 6, 2020  
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## DV/IPV Services for Safety and Support

DV Shelter Based Agencies

DV Non-Shelter Based Agencies

Law Enforcement/Courts

## DV/IPV Shelters = Housing + Services

- **Housing:** Emergency, Transitional, Off-site safe housing
- **Drop-In Center**
- Hotline -24/7 (Confidential)
- Counseling – Adult/Child
- Legal Services
- Access to Medical Services
- Help to Access Housing
- Community Outreach

DV/IPV SHELTER  
BASED AGENCIES

## DV/IPV NON-SHELTER BASED AGENCIES - SERVICES

### DV/IPV NON-SHELTER BASED AGENCIES

- Hotline (Not all) 24/7/Confidential
- Counseling – Adult/Child
- Legal Services
- Hotline -24/7 (Confidential)
- Financial Empowerment
- Access to Medical Services
- Help to Access Housing
- Community Outreach
- e.g. FreeFrom

## LAW ENFORCEMENT/COURT

- 911 – Call or Text
- Emergency Protective Orders
  - Up to 30 days (COVID)
- Gun Violence Restraining Orders
- Criminal Cases
- Domestic Violence Restraining Orders
- LAPD – DART Response

LAW ENFORCEMENT/  
COURT

## Accessing Resources\*

*Domestic Violence Council:* Hotline 800-978-3600  
*Website:* [publichealth.lacounty.gov](http://publichealth.lacounty.gov)  
*Booklet:* Reaching Out (Multiple Languages/Website)

*National DV Hotline:* 1-800-799-7233/TTY: 1-800-787-3224  
*Website:* [thehotline.org](http://thehotline.org)  
*Text:* LOVEIS to 22522

\*Don't forget friends, family, colleagues, neighbors and people who may feel that they are becoming violent



# THANK YOU



Eve Sheedy

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323-434-5788

# Responding to the Financial Needs of Survivors during COVID-19

**Amy Durrence**, *She/Her/Hers*, Director of Law and Policy

**Tannia Ventura**, *She/Her/Hers*, Director of Partnerships and Education

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# Our Approach

We envision a world where survivors have **sustaining income, savings and credit with which to build wealth** and the resources to support individual, intergenerational and community healing.

To that end, we are taking **a holistic approach** using technology, peer-to-peer networks, training programs for shelters, policy advocacy, social enterprise models and cross-sector solutions.

**1 in 4** women and **1 in 2** of trans people will experience gender-based violence in their lifetime.

**#1**

reason survivors don't leave and/or return to an abusive situation is financial insecurity

**\$104k**

is the average cost associated with being a female survivor of domestic violence

**99%**

of survivors experience financial abuse as part of the domestic violence

**Experiencing gender-based violence is financially devastating for most people.** Survivors can only secure long-term safety for themselves and their children if they can afford to leave, rebuild and heal.



# What is economic abuse?

- Tactics that control a survivor's ability to acquire, use, and maintain economic resources, thus threatening the survivor's potential for self-sufficiency by creating financial dependence on the harm-doer.
- It's all about **control**.



# What does economic abuse look like?

- **Interfering with employment and / or education:**

Survivors in the U.S. **“lose eight million days of paid work each year, the equivalent of over 32,000 full-time jobs.”** *Deborah A. Widiss, Domestic Violence and the Workplace: The Explosion of State Legislation and the Need for A Comprehensive Strategy, 35 Fla. St. U. L. Rev. 669, 677 (2008).*

- **Controlling access to resources:**

Over **73% of survivors** report their harm-doers **make them ask for money and/or decide how they can spend money.** *Adams, A. E., Greeson, M. R., Littwin, A. K., & Javorka, M. (2019). The revised scale of economic abuse (SEA2): Development and initial psychometric testing of an updated measure of economic abuse in intimate relationships. Psychology of Violence, 1-12.*

- **Exploiting resources:**

**52% of survivors** report having experienced **coerced or fraudulent debt, with 46% reporting damaged credit as a result.** *Adams, A.E., Littwin, A.K., & Javorka, M. (2019). The Frequency, Nature and Effects of Coerced Debt Among a National Sample of Women Seeking Help for Intimate Partner Violence. Violence Against Women.*



## Why does economic abuse matter?

- It's incredibly pervasive: **99% of survivors experience economic abuse.**
- It can financially devastate a survivor.
- Its negative effects reach far beyond a survivor's finances.

# How is COVID-19 impacting survivors?

- Incidences of domestic violence in the U.S. have [skyrocketed](#) as survivors are trapped at home in isolation with their harm-doers.
- Shelters across the country have closed their doors, effectively cutting off access to resources for most survivors.
- The pandemic has made it more difficult than ever for survivors to make and save the money they need to get to safety.



# ||| What can we learn from this moment?

- We must prioritize financial security for survivors.
- We can't rely solely on shelters to provide resources to survivors. Instead, we need a community response.

# FreeFrom's COVID-19 Response Guide



# || Funders

1. Get cash directly to survivors to spend as they need
2. Provide organizations working to end DV with flexible multi-year general operating support
3. Allow current grantees to use funding previously designated for specific programs for general operating support
4. Provide funding for grantees to connect staff with financial and executive coaching and other resources
5. Support social enterprises that hire survivors for a living wage

# ||| Federal Government

1. Reauthorize and expand VAWA to include economic abuse
2. Allocate funds for holistic financial security programs in OVW grants
3. Allocate funds for living wage work in OVW grants
4. Make the one-time stimulus check an ongoing monthly source of relief until all shelter-in-place orders have been lifted
5. Implement a moratorium on rent, mortgage payments, and property taxes

# ||| State & Local Governments

1. Suspend application deadlines for victims of crime compensation
2. Permanently expand State EITC programs to include ITIN filers and unpaid caregivers
3. Ban housing discrimination for people using Section 8 housing vouchers
4. Implement a moratorium on government-owned debt collection
5. Suspend interest accumulation on government-owned debt
6. Prevent predatory debt collection practices

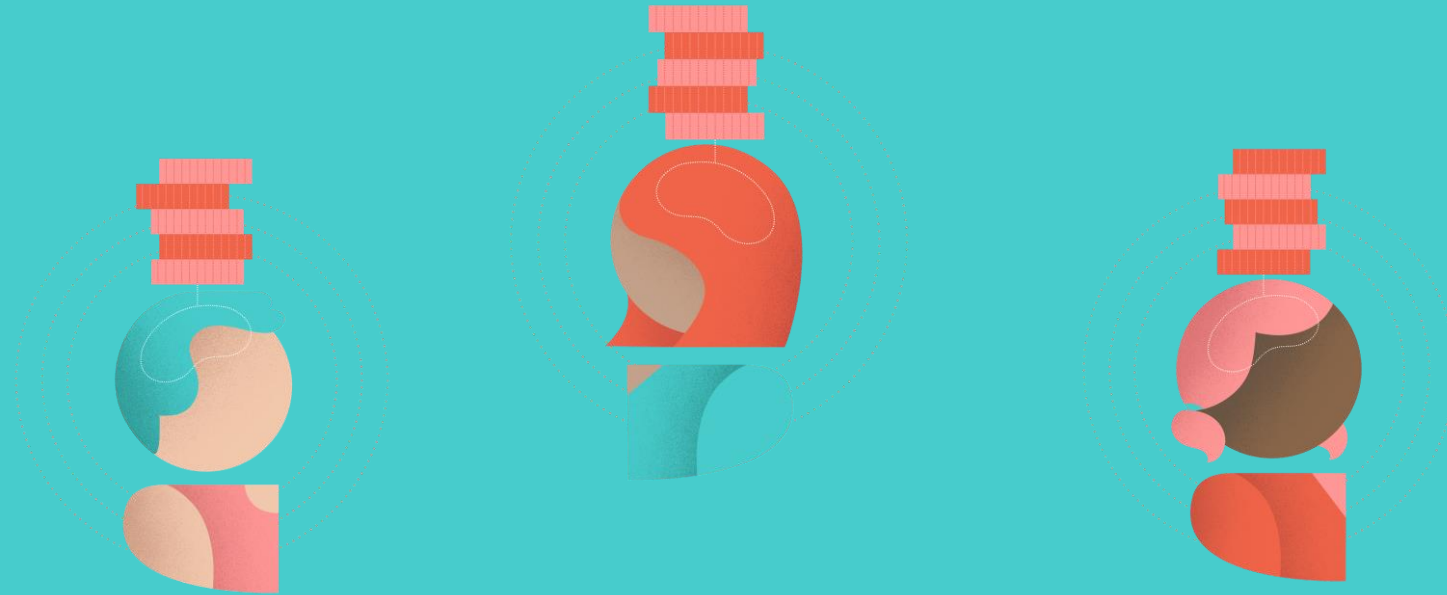
# Coaches and Service Providers

1. Before offering any services directly to survivors, get the education and training necessary to ensure that resources are trauma-informed.
2. Screen for economic abuse and take steps to protect the survivor from further abuse
3. Support Survivors with creating a financial safety plan
4. Connect survivors to resources, scholarships, and financial assistances when needed
5. Make services, consultations, and other resources virtually accessible
6. Try not to make assumptions about safety, its always best to ask the survivor how to help them stay safe

# Survivors

1. Watch out for scams
2. Generate some income through the shared economy, a small business, short-term contract work, or through employment
3. Manage your debt by reaching out to companies that you owe money to and let them know you are financially struggling due to COVID-19
4. Make and execute a financial safety plan
5. Practice self-care and take time to sit with and heal any financial trauma that is being highlighted during this time
6. Find a community of support or a person with whom you feel comfortable talking about finances

# How to Work with FreeFrom



FREE  
FR  M





# Share the Compensation Compass





# Join the Survivor Wealth Policy Group

- **What:** The Survivor Wealth Policy Group brings together diverse organizations and advocates from around the U.S. to advance survivor wealth-centered policies in all 50-states
- **How:** Email Sabrina Hamm at: [sabrina.hamm@freefrom.org](mailto:sabrina.hamm@freefrom.org)



# Partner with FreeFrom to pass Survivor Wealth Policies in your state

- **What:** Partner with FreeFrom to pass survivor wealth-centered policies in your state. We'll provide the subject matter expertise, advocacy materials, and help with strategy!
- **How:** Email Sabrina Hamm at: [sabrina.hamm@freefrom.org](mailto:sabrina.hamm@freefrom.org)



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# Survivor Wealth and Wellness Certification

## ABOUT THIS CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Our Survivor Wealth and Wellness Certification program works to integrate financial capacity building services into the gender-based violence movement by investing in your staff. We believe that in order for service providers to be in a position to do financial capacity building work with their clients, they need to feel confident in their own financial position. Additionally, service providers are often survivors themselves, experiencing similar challenges to the people they serve. Our intention is to provide service providers with the tools, space, and support needed to heal, build wealth, and create safety so that they can better support their clients in doing the same.

## WHO IS THIS FOR?

This program is ideal for organizations working to address gender-based violence or who work with survivors of gender-based violence. The program is tailored for service providers, advocates, managers, directors, and CEOs/Executive Directors. We highly recommend that at least 1 director or c-level staff participate in this training.

# Peer to Peer Financial Support Groups

We know that survivors are their best resource and know exactly what they need to thrive. Keeping that in mind, we are excited to launch survivor-led peer-to-peer financial support groups to reduce isolation, build community power and increase/maintain the financial wellness of survivors in a peer-to-peer setting. These groups are completely community-driven and we are reaching out to survivors around the country to start their own groups in their community.

## How to start a group

- Survivors find 2-8 survivors in their community
- Let FreeFrom staff know how many will be participating and receive their welcome materials, which includes a guidebook with optional group discussions & activities and a resource list
- Pick a location and meeting time

## Interested? Questions?

Contact Em Jackson at [Em.Jackson@freefrom.org](mailto:Em.Jackson@freefrom.org) - Director of Financial Security Initiatives

# || \$250 Emergency Grants for Survivors

FreeFrom believes in the creativity, resourcefulness and power that each survivor has to achieve financial independence, and to build communities that support individual, intergenerational and collective healing. Rapid response in times of crisis is one important and urgent way to ensure survivors can heal and thrive long-term.

- Donate here: [https://www.gofundme.com/f/safety-fund-for-survivors-of-domestic-violence?mc\\_cid=1f09afb949&mc\\_eid=df62562a04](https://www.gofundme.com/f/safety-fund-for-survivors-of-domestic-violence?mc_cid=1f09afb949&mc_eid=df62562a04)
- Survivor Application here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CL7GN88>

# QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU! AND PLEASE STAY CONNECTED

**Website:** [www.freefrom.org](http://www.freefrom.org)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/freefrom](http://www.facebook.com/freefrom)

**Twitter:** [@freefromorg](https://twitter.com/freefromorg)

**Instagram:** [@freefromdotorg](https://www.instagram.com/freefromdotorg)

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# THANK YOU!

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