

The DFSS Family Violence Prevention Initiative funds community-based agencies to provide assistance and advocacy to those who have been victims of domestic violence (physical, sexual, or emotional abuse), including teens who have been victimized in an intimate relationship.

Agencies funded under the **LEGAL SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE** model provide the following services, which include (but are not limited to):

- Individual needs assessment and safety planning, followed by advocacy with possible referral for further services or follow up.
- Explanation of the Illinois Domestic Violence Act, how to obtain an Order of Protection, and how to utilize the legal system to address domestic violence.
- Assistance in civil and/or criminal court to obtain Orders of Protection, accompany clients in court for prosecuting criminal charges relating to domestic violence, and represent clients in family law matters or other legal cases such as VAWA petitions, stalking no contact orders, ESSA, VESSA, etc.
- Client advocacy includes contact by a trained domestic violence worker with a third party on behalf of a client after execution of necessary release of information.