

# the VIRGINIA Sexual & Domestic Violence ACTION ALLIANCE

a graphic guide

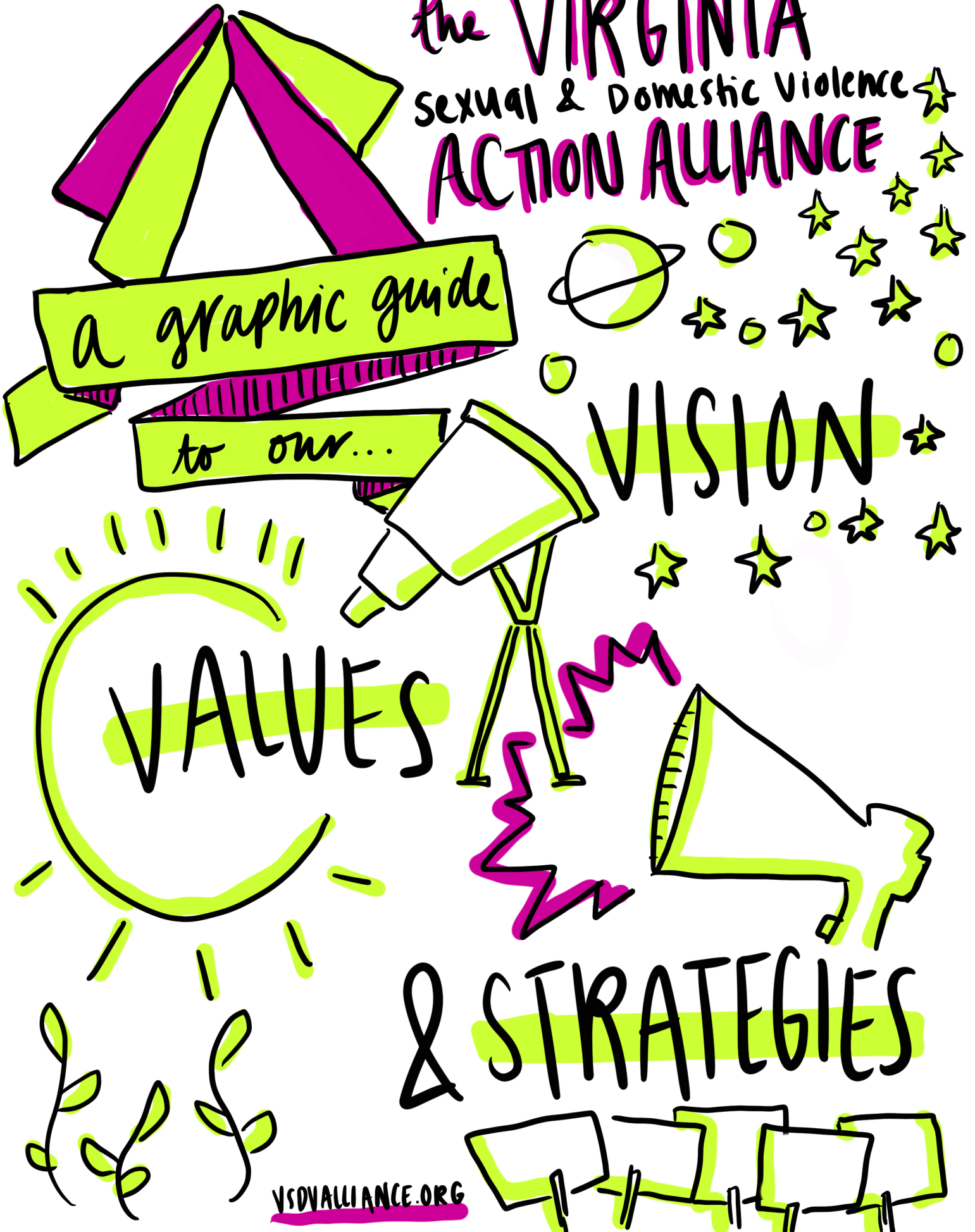
to our...

VISION

VALUES

& STRATEGIES

[VSDVALLIANCE.ORG](http://VSDVALLIANCE.ORG)



## TELLING OUR FUTURE STORY

This document is a culmination of a series of listening, brainstorming, and strategy sessions conducted with the Action Alliance membership over the course of 2 years, collectively called "Telling Our Future Story".

Members were asked to imagine the world we are working toward, 500 years in the future: **what will the future look like when we have achieved our goals?**

We then worked backward from our 500-year vision to strategize what would need to be different in 100 years, 50 years, 12 years, and 5 years in order to reach our 500 year vision. **What work would we need to be focusing on now to create a world in which all of our descendants thrive...500 years in the future?** This led to the vision, values and strategies outlined in this document that now guide our work.



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## VISION

We have a compelling vision for a world where all of us thrive. Violence, harassment, and oppression are all around us, but it doesn't have to be that way. **A better world is within reach.** The time has arrived to make this future happen, and we choose all of us to flourish in this radiant new world.

WE SEEK A

**RADICALLY HOPEFUL FUTURE**

- ▶ People are free and have what they need to reach their full potential;
- ▶ Relationships, families, and communities are healthy, equitable, nourishing, and joyful;
- ▶ Government, institutions, and systems are rooted in equity and justice;
- ▶ All decisions are grounded in whether they will benefit our future descendants, and sustain our beautiful Earth.

**In this future, fear and anger give way to regenerative\*, transformative love; oppression and exploitation give way to liberation and justice.**

### JUSTICE LOOKS LIKE A WORLD WHERE...

- ...communities that are most affected by policies and decisions are at the center of the decision-making and have ample influence and representation to make change happen.
- ...individuals, families and communities are able to determine their own path toward wholeness.
- ...harm is addressed through a survivor-centered focus on accountability and reparations with a goal toward wholeness and restoration.

\*Regeneration: renewal, revival, and/or restoration of a person's spirit; new growth.

### LIBERATION GETS US TO A WORLD WHERE...

- ...all of us are free and supported in reaching our full potential.
- ...the full humanity and dignity of all people are recognized and embraced.
- ...we operate from love and curiosity.
- ...all living things and our ancestors are honored as sacred and interconnected.
- ...communities thrive and are sustained by nourishing human connection.





# VISION

A world where all of us **THRIVE**,  
where **WE CHOOSE ALL OF US**



are **ROOTED**  
in **equity & Justice**

& Where **people have what they need**



people are **FREE**



**DECISIONS**  
are **GROUND**

in what will  
benefit descendants  
& our Earth.

**Relationships,  
families & communities  
are...**

**Equitable**

**Healthy**

**Joyful**



Violence, harassment, &  
oppression are all  
around us, but a  
**BETTER WORLD IS IN REACH!**

# Justice

We are all able to  
**determine our own**

**PATH**

towards **wholeness**

Harm is addressed  
through a **survivor-centered**  
focus on **accountability & reparations**

Those  
most affected  
are **centered**  
in  
policy  
& decision-  
making



# Liberation

Communities thrive &  
are sustained by **connection**

All living things  
& ancestors are  
honored as **sacred**  
& **interconnected**

People's **full**  
**humanity** is  
**recognized & embraced.**



**Nourishing**





# VALUES

We believe **HOW** we go about our daily work is as important as **WHAT** we do.

## COLLECTIVE ACTION

Building relationships to move together in alignment towards a common vision.

## ADVOCACY

Supporting survivors in healing, following their lead & helping them determine their goals.

## EQUITY

Acknowledging that needs differ & working to ensure those needs are met.

## BRAVERY

Taking risks to act boldly in alignment with our values.

## RESPECT

Treating each others' ideas, perspectives, histories & bodies with care & high regard.

## COMMITMENT

Understanding that this work is generational; pledging to both stay on task & rest as needed.

## ABUNDANCE

There is enough time, capacity, & resources to accomplish our priorities.

## RESPONSIBILITY

Being accountable for our successes, failures, harms, & their impact on others, repairing harm, & doing better.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

Working to make our communities & institutions more equitable for all.

## JOY

Taking pleasure in our work together, even through grief & sadness. Making space to connect, nourish, & heal.



# STRATEGIES

## GENDER JUSTICE



Gender Expression is no longer policed  
(How a person expresses their gender identity through clothes, mannerisms, etc.)

comprehensive sexual health education centers

People of All genders are valued & share equitable access to —

**POWER** & **KNOWLEDGE** & **RESOURCES**

in families, communities & the state.



**SURVIVORS** are believed!



## REPARATIONS

for the harms that have been committed against people of color.



Consistent & ongoing work to decolonize mindsets.



Restorative & transformative

Naming, Resisting, & Replacing

systems of white supremacy, anti-blackness, xenophobia, colonialism, & other forms of racial oppression

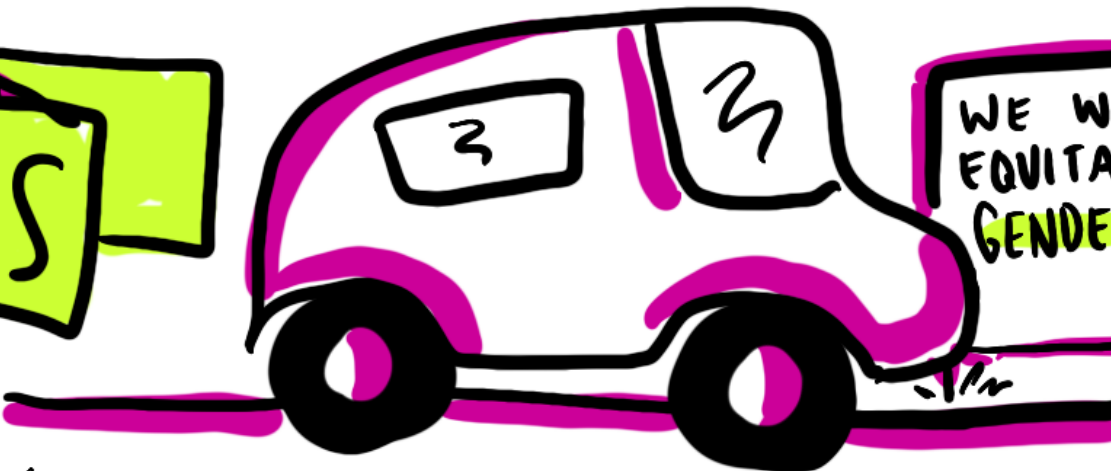
## RACIAL JUSTICE



ACCURATELY teaching histories of racism & colonialism, & resilience & resistance!

JUSTICE

WE WILL BUILD A MORE EQUITABLE WORLD BY CENTERING GENDER, RACIAL, REPRODUCTIVE & ECONOMIC JUSTICE!





# REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

The Right to maintain personal bodily autonomy & to have access to information & resources to maintain that bodily autonomy!

This includes having children, not having children, & parenting children in safe & sustainable communities.

EVERYONE WHO HAS HAD AN ABORTION - NNAF

Fighting legislation that exercises power & control over people's bodies & communities: anti-abortion legislation, mass incarceration, separating families at the border, etc.

Train & support VA's 60+ SV & DV agencies!  
Promote policies to ensure Healthcare access for all!  
Work to end the criminalization of youth of color & youth with disabilities.

The Right for Workers to protect & advance their collective Rights!  
UNIONIZE!

Valuing People over profit.

# ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Universal, accessible, & affordable education.

Universal paid parental leave

Education & resources are available for people to make healthy choices for themselves.





# STRATEGIES

The work to create a world where relationships, families, and communities are healthy, equitable, and joyful requires us to think and work broadly to address the underlying factors that drive oppression and violence. We will work to build a more equitable world by centering\* **gender justice, racial justice, reproductive justice, and economic justice.**

## GENDER JUSTICE

### WHAT WE MEAN BY GENDER JUSTICE

Gender justice means that people of all genders are valued equally and able to share equitably in access to power, knowledge, and resources in families, communities, institutions, and the state. Gender justice includes naming and resisting discrimination, violence, and oppression based on sex designated at birth, gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation.

### HOW GENDER JUSTICE INTERSECTS WITH SEXUAL AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Sexism, transphobia, homophobia, and patriarchy\* drive sexual and intimate partner violence. People who are bisexual, trans, nonbinary and/or queer experience higher rates of sexual and intimate partner violence than people who are cisgender and straight. Misogynist beliefs about the role of perceived femininity influence the behavior of many perpetrators of sexual and intimate partner violence; this shows up in beliefs like women and feminine people should always be available sexually, should serve men, should be passive and agreeable, etc.

### EXAMPLES OF WHAT OUR VISION OF GENDER JUSTICE INCLUDES

- Survivors are believed when harm happens.
- People of all genders, gender expressions, and sexual orientation are able to live and work without fear of harassment.
- Gender norms and gender expressions are no longer policed; all people feel free to dress how they want, love whom they want in consenting relationships.
- Comprehensive sexual health education is prevalent and centers the lives of the people receiving the education.
- Gendered violence has been eliminated in the lives of all people.

### HOW WE'RE CURRENTLY WORKING TOWARD GENDER JUSTICE

- We train and provide professional support to Virginia's 60+ sexual and domestic violence agencies to help them provide the best possible response to survivors.
- We work with legislators to make sure Virginia's sexual and domestic violence agencies have the funding and tools they need to advocate effectively for survivors.
- We create and share prevention strategies aimed at young people to learn the skills of consent.
- We teach preventionists across Virginia how to use creative expression to build resilience among teens.
- We invest in movement work and policy efforts that promote equity for LGBTQ+ communities.
- We fight to make Virginia the 38th and final state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, equal legal rights for all American citizens regardless of sex.

\*Center: bring these issues to the forefront

\*Patriarchy: the belief in the supremacy of maleness, and the systems which support and operationalize this belief.

## RACIAL JUSTICE

### WHAT WE MEAN BY RACIAL JUSTICE:

Racial justice is a proactive creation and reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes for all.<sup>1</sup> Racial justice includes naming, resisting, and replacing systems of white supremacy, anti-Blackness, xenophobia, and other forms of racial oppression.

### HOW RACIAL JUSTICE INTERSECTS WITH SEXUAL AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Racism creates serious barriers to safety for victims of sexual and intimate partner violence. Building racial justice is an essential part of effective victim advocacy on a systems-wide and individual level. Disparities based on race, ethnicity, and national origin often determine access to (or quality of) help, resources, information, and options offered to survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence. These disparities affect how survivors of color and immigrant survivors are responded to by major institutions, including criminal/legal systems, housing and employment resources, educational institutions, financial institutions, healthcare systems, etc., and constrain the ability for survivors of color to achieve equitable health, safety, and security outcomes for themselves and their families.

### EXAMPLES OF WHAT OUR VISION OF RACIAL JUSTICE INCLUDES

- Power and resources are shared equitably.
- Reparations for the harms that have been committed against communities of color, specifically black and indigenous communities, and long-term investments in those communities.<sup>2</sup>
- Celebrating global citizens as an essential part of a thriving society.
- Accurate teaching of history – including racism, violence, colonialism, injustice, as well as resilience and resistance.
- Consistent and ongoing work to decolonize mindsets to practice sharing and equity, rather than domination and exploitation.
- Equal access to fulfilling employment opportunities, safe and affordable housing, fair financial practices, healthcare that heals, comprehensive education, unbiased criminal/legal systems, etc.
- Using restorative and transformative justice measures to respond to harm, rather than operating as though imprisonment is the only option to deliver “justice” for harm done.

### HOW WE'RE CURRENTLY WORKING TOWARD RACIAL JUSTICE

- We partner with policy leaders and preventionists to help end the criminalization of youth of color and youth with disabilities, and dismantle Virginia's “trauma-to-prison pipeline” (a.k.a. “school-to-prison pipeline<sup>3</sup>”);
- We invest in collaborative learning to empower local agencies to build healing-centered responses to sexual and intimate partner violence for communities of color and other underserved populations.
- Our legal advocacy project, Project for Empowerment of Survivors (PES), offers trauma-informed legal services and legal advocacy to callers from Virginia who are experiencing sexual or intimate partner violence, dating violence, human trafficking, hate crimes, and/or immigration-related concerns. We have bilingual, bicultural Spanish-speaking advocates on staff and can provide advocacy in a range of other languages.

<sup>1</sup> Source: [http://www.uprootingracism.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/What%20is%20Racial%20Justice\\_.pdf](http://www.uprootingracism.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/What%20is%20Racial%20Justice_.pdf). Retrieved 1/30/18

<sup>2</sup> See Movement for Black Lives Platform. Source: <https://policy.m4bl.org/platform/>

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.justicepolicy.org/news/8775> Retrieved 3/15/19





# REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

## WHAT WE MEAN BY REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

Reproductive justice is the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, to have access to the information and resources we need to maintain bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable environments and communities.<sup>1</sup>

## HOW REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE INTERSECTS WITH SEXUAL AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Reproduction and sexuality are integral parts of the human experience with physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual dimensions.<sup>2</sup> A person's sexual and reproductive health are directly impacted by experiences of sexual and intimate partner violence. The state exercises power and control over how and when people care for and build families. Demonstrations of these harms include: housing discrimination; destruction of environmental protections; penalization and monitoring of state benefits; inequitable healthcare accessibility; anti-abortion legislation; mass incarceration; separation of families at the border; and police brutality and murder. Because acts of violence serve to remove power and agency from individuals, informed consent for all personal bodily decisions is an essential part of helping survivors find a path to healing, and large-scale systems change is an essential part of survivor advocacy.

## EXAMPLES OF WHAT OUR VISION INCLUDES

- Families and communities are able to welcome children with joy and abundance. Communities know that all children will have the opportunity to reach their full potential and will have access to safe neighborhoods, meaningful education, safe water and food, etc. Every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential, to the last child.
- Coercion, harassment, intimidation, colonization, or violation of bodies no longer exists.
- We interact with our planet in way that helps it survive and thrive so that our future descendants may also survive and thrive.
- Everyone has the resources and education they need to make healthy choices for themselves and their families.
- Universal paid parental leave.

## HOW WE'RE CURRENTLY WORKING TOWARD REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

- We work to erase disparities in maternal mortality rates among Black mothers<sup>3</sup>;
- We promote policies to ensure:
  - o healthcare access for all people living in Virginia.
  - o full access to non-judgmental, safe, legal, affordable options about reproductive choices, including contraceptives and abortion, and clear, medically accurate information to help make choices based on informed consent.
  - o full access to prevention education and services that promote sexual and reproductive health and wellness across the lifespan.
  - o universal quality healthcare, childcare, and paid sick leave.
  - o gender-affirming and culturally relevant support services, including counseling and/or trauma-informed advocacy services, centered-in and provided by individuals at the intersection of multiple marginalized identities and experiences.

<sup>1</sup> From SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective. Retrieved from <http://sistersong.net/reproductive-justice/>

<sup>2</sup> Perry, B. 2011. "Healthy Sexuality for Sexual Violence Prevention: A report on promising curriculum-based approaches". Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance.

<sup>3</sup> See [https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/magazine/magazine\\_article/america-is-failing-its-black-mothers/](https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/magazine/magazine_article/america-is-failing-its-black-mothers/) or <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/11/magazine/black-mothers-babies-death-maternal-mortality.html> Retrieved 3/15/19

# ECONOMIC JUSTICE

## WHAT WE MEAN BY ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Economic justice is the human right to earn a living wage<sup>1</sup> in a safe work environment, the right to be paid and receive benefits equitably, and the right to choose work that is fulfilling. We believe in the opportunity for everyone to achieve financial self-sufficiency and build economically stable lives for themselves and their families.

## HOW ECONOMIC JUSTICE INTERSECTS WITH SEXUAL AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Sexual and intimate partner violence create economic hardships and vulnerabilities that impact safety and financial security of survivors. Financial impacts of surviving violence may include: time away from work, healthcare costs, legal fees, housing costs, and childcare costs. Sexism, racism, heterosexism, and other oppressions are linked to economic vulnerabilities that increase risk for exploitation and violence. Because personal safety and economic security are inextricably linked, economic justice is a key component of ensuring a comprehensive and effective response to survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence.

## EXAMPLES OF WHAT OUR VISION OF ECONOMIC JUSTICE INCLUDES

- Valuing people over profit.
- Equal pay for equal work.
- Access to robust safety nets like TANF, SNAP, and SSDI for individuals and families in need.
- Universal access to affordable quality education at all levels (from preschool through vocational or graduate school) and to job training and retraining plus support in achieving a career path.<sup>2</sup>
- The right for workers to protect and advance their collective rights.
- Robust and effectively enforced non-discrimination policies in workplaces.
- Environmentally sustainable economic practices and policies, such as renewable energy.<sup>3</sup>
- Trauma-informed and restorative responses when exploitation and violence happen in the workplace.

## HOW WE'RE CURRENTLY WORKING TOWARD OUR VISION OF ECONOMIC JUSTICE

- We offer parental leave and pay a living wage and full healthcare premiums for full-time staff and contribute to retirement for staff starting their third year of employment. We encourage all other Sexual & Domestic Violence Agencies in Virginia to do the same.
- We promote policies to ensure a living wage for everyone working in Virginia, equal and fair access to affordable and safe housing<sup>4</sup>, and access to affordable, quality childcare.
- We seek to decriminalize poverty by working with movement leaders and policy advocates to end the system of cash bail which requires people to pay money to gain freedom while awaiting a court date.

<sup>1</sup> A living wage is the hourly rate that an individual must earn to support their family, if they are the sole provider and are working full-time. Source: <http://livingwage.mit.edu/>

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> See Unitarian Universalist Association 2017 Statement of Conscience: Escalating Economic Inequity. <https://www.uua.org/action/statements/escalating-economic-inequity>

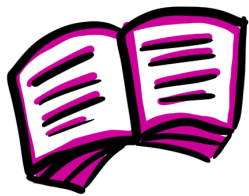




# CHANGE IS COMING

What do we  
need to imagine...  
as we prepare for it?

- adrienne marce brown



Emergent Strategy

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