

PUT VICTIMS FIRST VIRGINIA

FUNDING CAMPAIGN **2024**

An all-encompassing and integrative statewide fund that ensures all victims of crime can access the services they need.



A CRISIS IS BREWING IN VIRGINIA...

An unprecedented increase
in pleas for services from victims...

...coupled with deep funding cuts for
victim service providers...



The number of requests for emergency shelter when space was unavailable **increased by 173% in 2022.**



Virginia State Police report that violent crime has **increased by 30% since 2020.**



The length of **stay in emergency shelter continues to increase.** While domestic violence is still the most common reason for entering shelter, **homelessness due to sexual violence increased by 41% in 2022.**



Lethality has increased throughout the pandemic, with **1 in 6 victims reporting strangulation attempts** by their perpetrator in 2022.



Calls to the statewide hotline have risen dramatically. There has been **a net increase of 18,719 calls, or 31%, from 2017 to 2022.**



Reports of child abuse **increased by 15% since 2020,** while Child Advocacy Center (CAC) referrals **increased by 25%.**

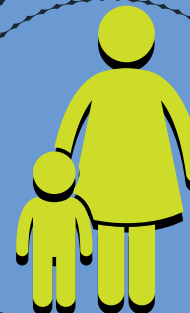
Our shelter is full and we no longer have funds for hotels. Is there a family member or friend you can call?

Our satellite office closed. You'll have to travel 90 mins for a forensic interview for your child.

We don't have a sexual assault counselor available. The wait list is 2-months right now.

There isn't a Victim/Witness Advocate available to help you prepare for court. Here's a brochure that might help.

Our crisis hotline is no longer 24/7; new hours are 8am-5pm. You'll have to call 911 outside of that window.





VICTIM SERVICE PROVIDERS ARE BEING STRETCHED TO THEIR LIMITS

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We currently have **54 children and 19 adults on the wait list for services**. Cuts have included **2 therapists, 1 victim advocate, and closure of a satellite office**. To go out into the community knowing that whoever reaches out may be put on a wait list is disheartening.

“

We had to consolidate positions, resulting in **reduced services to rural counties** and limited availability to respond to those who call law enforcement in need of emergency services.

“

We've lost **8 positions** and for the first time in our **45 year history, we've had to institute wait lists for services**. Staff are exhausted and the partner agencies we've relied upon for layered approach are struggling with the same issues.

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Families in our **emergency shelter** have increased by **130%**....as ARPA funding decreases, **we anticipate significant cuts in shelter and other services in the upcoming year**.

“

Staff and scattered site shelter beds have been cut. We're concerned that **for the first time ever**, we may have to turn a victim away who is in severe danger.

“

Our shelter has been consistently full. In 2022, we were able to shelter an additional **60 families** in scattered sites across the community using ARPA funds. **But these funds will be eliminated next year, leaving victims unhoused.**



WHY IS THIS HAPPENING? A PERFECT STORM

Drastic cuts in Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) dollars, that are only expected to worsen.

By July 2024, VOCA will be cut by a whopping 47.5% in just a 5-year period.

An unprecedented increase in victims needing services.

The rise in volume and complexity of victim service requests have strained local resources...forcing agencies to set waiting lists and layoff crucial staff.

Decades of inadequate state funding for these services.

We have over-relied on federal funding to keep lights on, services running, etc.

Pandemic-era relief funding filled critical gaps for victims' services and is coming to an end.

In recent years, the funding crisis has only been offset by emergency ARPA appropriations from the General Assembly.

If policy leaders don't act now, victims of human trafficking, child sexual assault, domestic violence, and other violent crimes will suffer.

ALL VICTIMS SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO THE SAFETY, SUPPORT, AND HEALING THAT THEY SO DESPERATELY DESERVE.



A FINANCIAL CLIFF FOR VICTIM SERVICES

That's only expected to worsen...

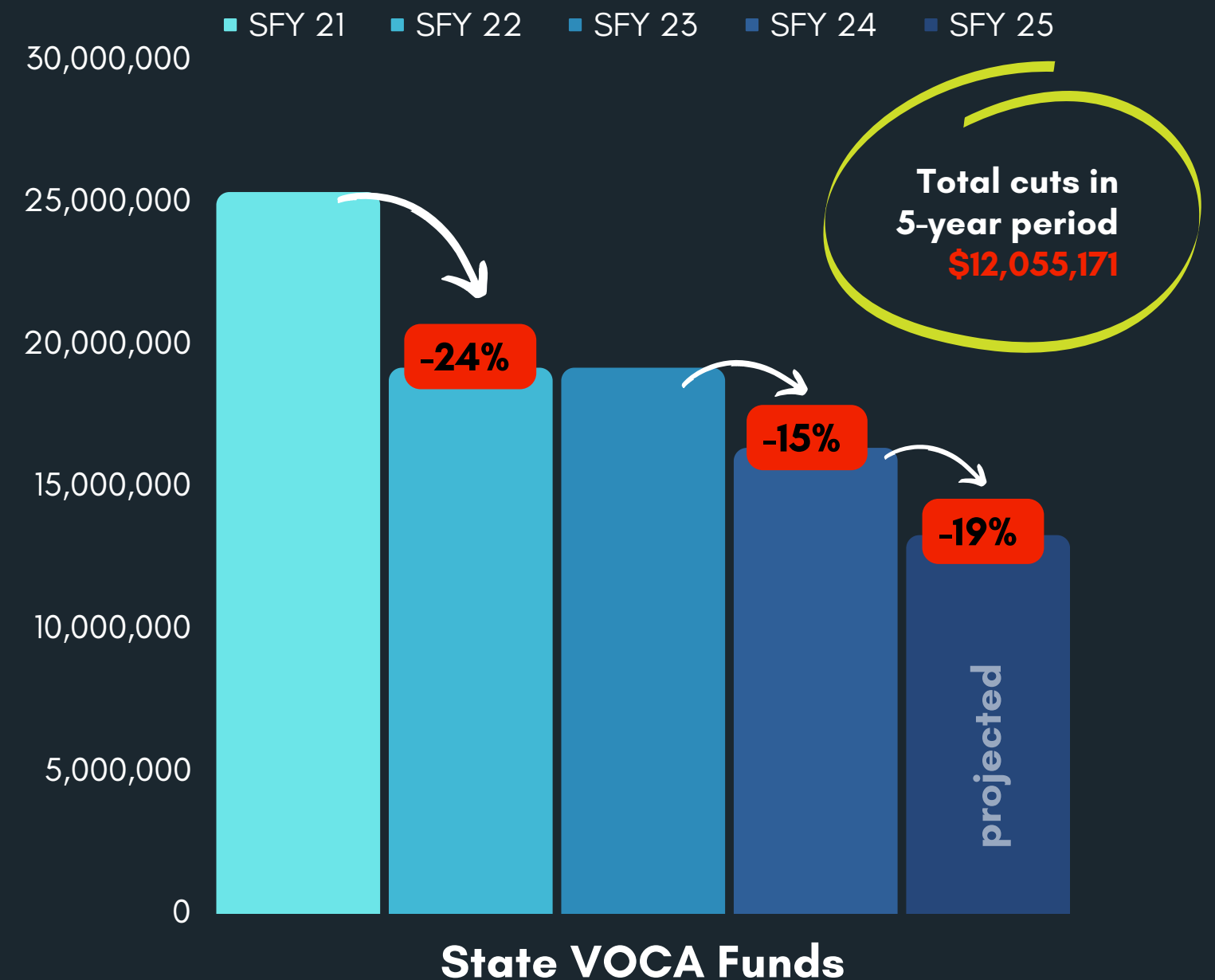
Since 2016, payments from the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) fund have steadily increased...

TANF has been used to fill gaps for essential services like domestic violence shelters, child advocacy centers, and home visiting programs.

These funds are projected to be **fully depleted by FY25...**

Creating a **deficit of \$56.9M** and deep cuts to life-saving victims services.

In only 5 years, Virginia's victim service agencies have suffered a **47.5% overall cut to VOCA**.



VICTIMS DESERVE BETTER

What would a sustainable, robust, and effective response for victims look like?



24/7/365 Hotline
for calls, texts, and chats



Victim/Witness Advocate
in every prosecutor's office



**A fully staffed
Sexual & Domestic
Violence Agency**



**A fully staffed
Child Advocacy Center**



24/7/365 Hotline that responds to calls, texts, chats helping victims safety plan, access emergency shelter, find medical and legal help, provide referrals to community-based resources, and more.



Victim/Witness advocate who can work with victims to collect impact statements, prepare for testimony and/or court, support legal and systems-based remedies, and refer to life-saving resources in the community.



Sexual and Domestic Violence Agency where victims can receive confidential and safe access to services, including emergency shelter and transitional housing, hospital and court accompaniment, trauma counseling, child and family advocacy, violence prevention programming, etc.



Child Advocacy Center where child abuse and trafficking victims can receive trauma-informed and family-focused services including forensic exams, criminal and legal systems navigation, medical advocacy, and ongoing counseling for children and families.

The community safety-net is rapidly eroding.

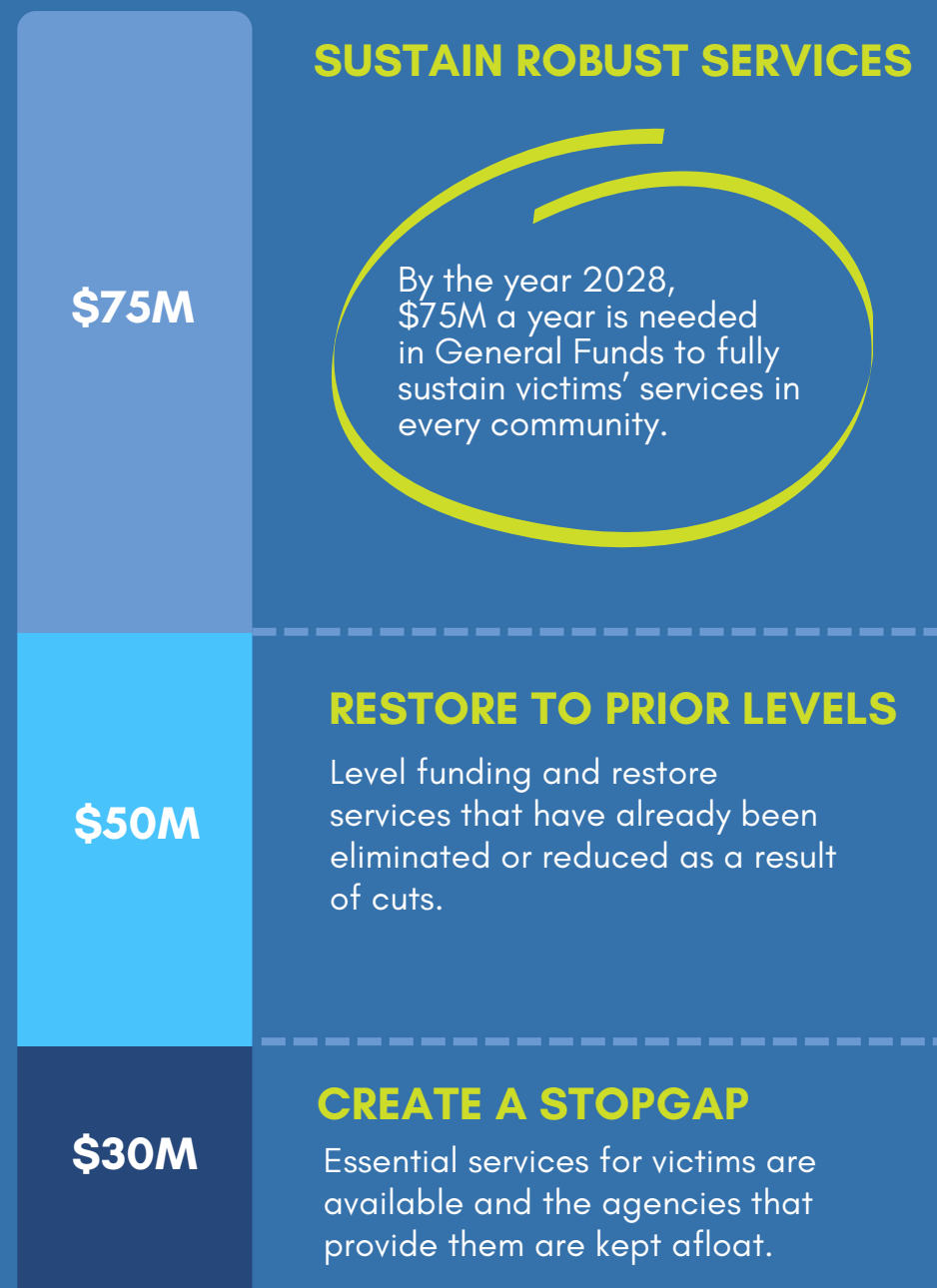
BUT WE CAN TURN THIS AROUND.

IT'S TIME TO PUT VICTIMS FIRST VIRGINIA.

VIRGINIA MUST PUT VICTIMS FIRST.

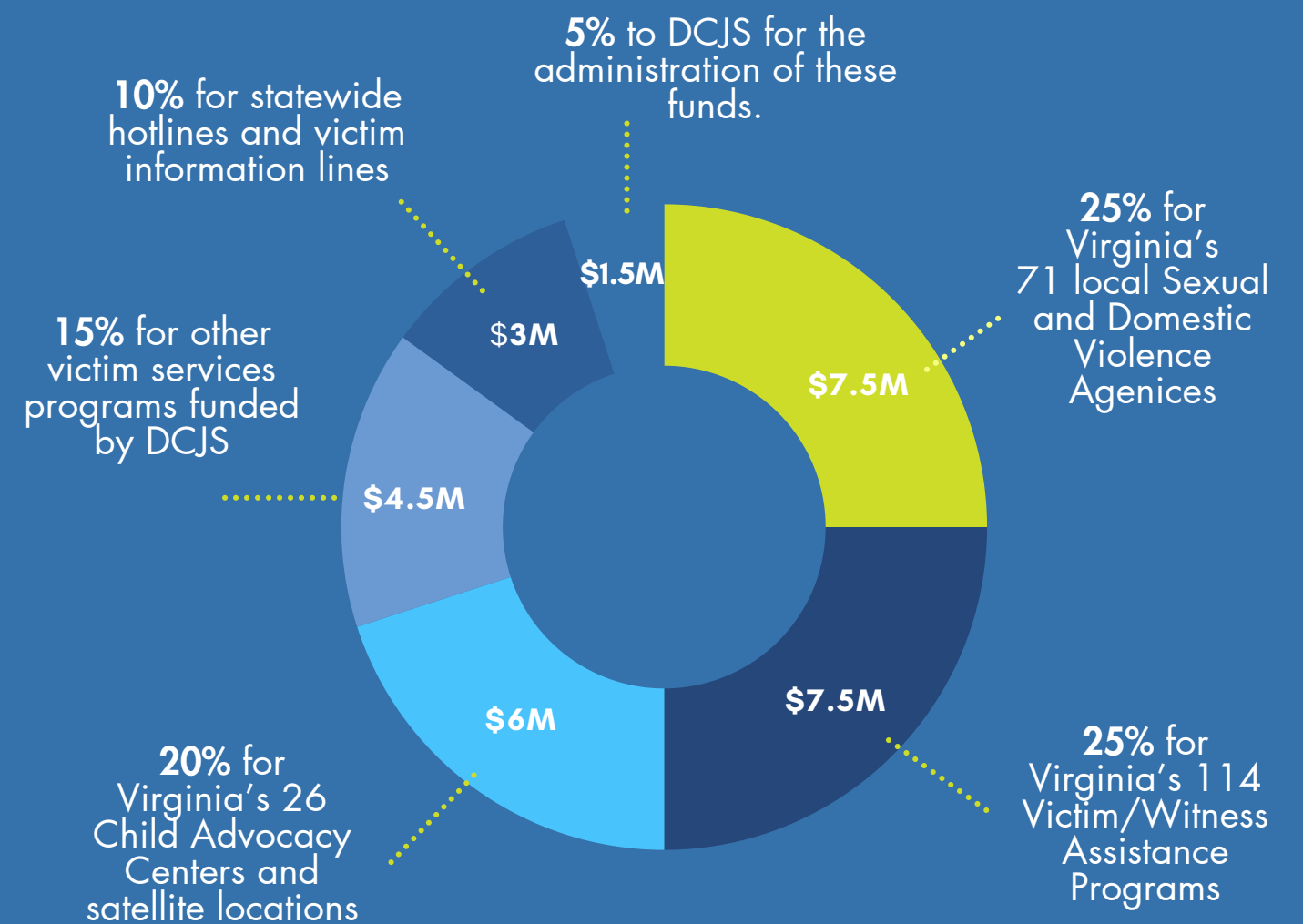
Victims deserve an integrative statewide fund that prioritizes their needs.

WHAT DO WE URGENTLY NEED?



HOW WOULD THESE FUNDS BE USED?

The funds would go to the Department of Criminal Justice Services and be dispersed to Virginia's victim service providers using this formula



An all-encompassing and integrative statewide fund that ensures all victims of crime can access the services they need.

THE PUT VICTIMS FIRST CAMPAIGN PARTNERS



VIRGINIA SEXUAL & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACTION ALLIANCE

advocating for the needs of survivors of sexual and domestic violence and Virginia's 70+ Sexual & Domestic Violence Agencies that serve over 100,000 people annually.



VIRGINIA VICTIM ASSISTANCE NETWORK

advocating for the needs of crime victims and victim assistance professionals who serve over 75,000 victims of crime annually.



CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTERS OF VIRGINIA

helping local communities respond to child maltreatment in ways that are effective and efficient and ensuring that the child victim's needs are met.

Find us on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram for more.