



June 15, 2023: New Report Released by Advocacy Groups Identifies Aspects of MPD Response that Often Puts Domestic Violence Survivors at Risk

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MINNEAPOLIS--A new report capturing the voices of Minneapolis domestic violence survivors demonstrates that calling the local police doesn't always keep them safer. The report, [*An Institutional Analysis of the Minneapolis Police Response to Domestic Violence*](#), and a [*Project Brief*](#) has been released by advocacy group Global Rights for Women in collaboration with members of the Domestic Violence Working Group,* identifies the gaps between the policies and practices governing police response, and the actual experience of domestic violence survivors, especially marginalized survivors.

In the first 5 months of 2023, 12 people died in domestic violence incidents in Minnesota.

The report's findings echo similar results from a report conducted by the Minneapolis Police Conduct Oversight Commission that GRW contributed to in 2017 and a reform effort in 2005.

Melissa Scaia, Global Rights for Women's Director of International Training and co-author of the report, said, "Global Rights for Women is partnering with local advocacy

organizations and survivors to improve the response to domestic violence in Minneapolis. Safety of survivors can be increased when the Minneapolis police culture changes and efforts are made to advance the recommendations included in the report. We know this because we have seen it happen in other cities globally and locally. Our role is to continue to support survivors in our home city and the advocates who work with them everyday.”

“I’m hopeful that this report will serve as a call to action by the MPD to develop enhanced strategies that address critical gaps in policies or practice that impact victim safety. We are looking forward to collaboratively working together to prioritize this work and improve the systems response on behalf of all survivors,” said Meg Schnabel, Executive Director of Cornerstone.

Heather Petri, Communications Manager from Tubman, added, “We thank Global Rights for Women and the entire Domestic Violence Workgroup for their exceptional and comprehensive work on this report, and encourage the Minneapolis Police Department’s commitment toward closing the identified gaps to ensure the safety of survivors. Implementing these recommendations will remove some of the barriers and obstacles that survivors routinely experience, helping them move from fear to freedom.”

The report has been presented to the Minneapolis Police Department for review. Global Rights for Women and the Domestic Violence Working Group intends to consult with the department to recommend a plan of action that addresses survivor concerns.

Deputy Chief Kathy Waite of the Minneapolis Police Department Investigations Bureau said, "We are committed to continued collaboration with the amazing work conducted by advocacy and outreach organizations, [Cornerstone, DAP, Tubman] and Global Rights for Women, as they all continue to examine best practices across the country and how we at MPD can have impact over these crimes. I am impressed with the report that was completed and the examination of the gaps. I look forward to our continued partnership."

While the report identifies 7 gaps in the Minneapolis Police Department response that endangered survivor safety and increased the risk of further violence, the most serious and repetitive risks to victim safety were:

- When abusers fled the scene before police arrived, officers and follow-up investigators often did not attempt to locate them, leaving victims vulnerable to future violence.

- If abusers who violated no-contact orders were not at the scene of the incident when victims made such complaints to police, there often was no follow-up action, emboldening abusers to continue violating orders.
- Current risk assessment practices do not utilize risk data to prioritize the deployment of criminal justice resources toward the most dangerous offenders.

The report was based on interviews with survivors and victim advocates, an analysis of domestic violence call and police report records, a review of existing regulations and police procedures, interviews with representatives of local criminal justice agencies, ridealongs with patrolling officers, and a review of training materials. The research was conducted in 2021 and 2022; the call and police report records were from 2018 – 2020.

***Minneapolis Domestic Violence Workgroup (DV Workgroup):** Representatives of government and community agencies, who contributed many hours to meet, learn, analyze, and lend their unique expertise and insights:

Cornerstone, Domestic Abuse Project, Domestic Abuse Service Center, Global Rights for Women, Hennepin County Attorney's Office, Hennepin County Dept. of Community Corrections & Rehabilitation, Hennepin County District Court, Minneapolis City Attorney's Office, Minneapolis Police Department, Office of Police Conduct Review, and Tubman.

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For those who may feel unsafe at home, contact Minnesota's Day One Hotline at 866-223-1111. The National Domestic Violence Hotline is 800-799-7233, and the Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network (RAINN) is at 800-656-4673 or rainn.org.

[Global Rights for Women](#) (GRW) is a Minnesota-based organization that collaborates with partners around the world to promote women's human rights to equality and freedom from violence. The GRW team, with decades of experience in legal and systemic reform initiatives to end gender-based violence, offers assessments of inter-agency responses to violence against women, research, review of laws, and training of advocates, law enforcement, legal professionals, governments and NGOs. Each project is customized to both the local and global context of violence against women. The work is grounded in research and tested strategies from around the world.