


The main title of the document, "Support to Women's Shelters", displayed in white text on a dark blue background. A thin white vertical line is positioned to the left of the text.

# Domestic Violence - Background

- A systematic pattern of abusive behaviours within a relationship that is characterized by intimacy, dependency and/or trust. The abusive behaviours exist within a context where their purpose is to gain power, control and induce fear
- Statistics:
  - 79% of victims are women
  - Indigenous women are 3.5 times more likely to experience DV than non-Indigenous women
  - In Canada, a woman is killed by her intimate partner approximately every 2.5 days
- Abuse can take many forms including: physical, emotional, financial & sexual
- Crosses all socioeconomic boundaries and intersects with many other social issues (i.e housing, poverty, addictions, mental health)
- Increases during times of crisis - most recently during COVID-19
- Less than one in five domestic violence victims report abuse to police

# COVID-19 Impacts

## Increased Calls For Service to EPS

8155 (2019)  9378 (2020)

### Trends

- 15% increase in calls to EPS
- 10% increase in Emergency Protection Orders
- A rise in 3rd party callers looking for supports for their friend or family member
- Perpetrators being released with very few conditions and released very quickly

### Gaps

- Lack of affordable / subsidized housing options
- Challenges with access to shelter
- Increased need for supports for women
  - Financial, mental health and addictions, technology, cultural supports

# Use of Community Supports

Most female domestic violence victims (**80%**) used their **informal networks** (friends and family) for support.

When victims do access formal supports, **the most frequently used supports are:**

- Use of a counsellor, Psychologist, Social Worker
- Crisis Centers or Phone Lines
- Victim Services / Witness Assistance
- Support Groups
- Halfway House / Shelter

Accommodation post departure of women's shelter stay:

- **21%** returned to a residence where their abuser continued to live.
- **36%** of women did not know where they were going upon departure
- **18%** reported they would be living with friends or relatives.
- **11%** noted they would be entering another residential facility for victims of abuse

# The Role of Governments - Provincial

## Provincial Government

- Physical, mental health care and administration of justice are within the purview of provincial governments.
- Government of Alberta has a multi-ministry response to domestic violence
  - Providing awareness raising and education
  - Funding of direct programs and services including operating funding for women's shelters
  - Funding to community networks and initiative who support a coordinated community response and prevention models for Alberta

# The Role of Government - City of Edmonton

- Advances the Corporate Goal of Healthy City
- City Plan:
  - **“Promote opportunity, equality, and personal safety for women, girls and gender minorities in Edmonton”**
- Long history of working collaboratively with community partners, including the Edmonton Police Service, to address domestic violence through the Family Violence Prevention Team and the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) program
- Working across the Social Development Branch and the Corporation to provide an integrated approach.
- Member City with the UN Women's Safe Cities and Public Spaces program

# Family Violence Prevention Team

Mission: To inspire Edmontonians to create equitable gender relations by shifting norms and attitudes through education, programs, services, advocacy and policy change.

- 11 FTEs
- Includes: Domestic Abuse High Risk Team, Senior Protection Partnership, Community Development/Engaging Boys & Men and Edmonton Safe Cities
- Key Areas of Action:
  - Research and Best Practise
  - Individual Supports and Crisis Response for Citizens
  - Education and Awareness
  - Partnerships, Community Mobilization
  - Systems Change

## Conclusion

- Calls for service / supports for domestic violence are up
- Edmonton has many community service agencies who address this issue both directly and indirectly
- Gaps remain and have been amplified during COVID-19, especially related to access to shelters and supports and affordable housing options
- The City continues to work with the sector to advance a coordinated community response and advance change in social norms and attitudes that support violence



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# Thank you

Contact information  
Name, Address, Telephone  
edmonton.ca/**webpage**

The logo for the City of Edmonton, featuring the word "Edmonton" in a white, sans-serif font on a dark blue square background.

Edmonton