

Our Mission Statement

The mission of Domestic Violence Services of Benton and Franklin Counties, a non-profit agency, is to advocate for and empower domestic violence victims by providing free, safe and confidential shelter and support services.



About us:

As a member of the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Domestic Violence Services of Benton & Franklin Counties (DVS) is dedicated to providing a wide array of services to victims of domestic violence in our communities. DVS is available 24-hours a day to assist anyone who has questions or concerns about domestic violence.

If you have questions or need help please contact DVS:

24-Hour Crisis Line & Shelter

509.582.9841
800.648.1277

Domestic Violence Services of Benton and Franklin Counties offers:

- Emergency Housing
- 24-hour Crisis Line
- Advocacy Counseling
- Legal Advocacy
- Resources & Referrals
- Outreach Education
- Children's Program
- Emergency Food & Clothing

DVS services are free of charge and confidential.

WHAT LANDLORDS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



Administrative Office:
3311 W. Clearwater Ave., Ste. C-140
Kennewick, WA 99336
509.735.1295
fax: 509.736.0649
info@dvsbf.org

Understanding Domestic Violence

- Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior by an abuser that repeatedly punishes or victimizes the other partner. It is a destructive behavior which occurs between family members or between people involved in a intimate relationship.
- Domestic violence is not caused by the victim's behavior, but by the abuser's overwhelming need to control.
- Domestic violence does not always include physical violence.
- Domestic violence causes its victims physical, psychological and emotional pain, loss of self-esteem, feelings of isolation, shame and depression.
- Nothing a victim has done makes it alright for another person to abuse them in any way.
- Domestic violence usually gets worse unless there is intervention.

The Law:

According to the Residential Landlord-Tenant Act:

- “A landlord may not terminate a tenancy, fail to renew a tenancy, or refuse to enter into a rental agreement based on the tenant's or applicant's or a household member's status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or based on the tenant or applicant having terminated a rental agreement under RCW 59.18.575. A landlord who refuses to enter into a rental agreement in violation of this section may be liable to the tenant or applicant in a civil action for damages sustained by the tenant or applicant.” (RCW 59.18.580)
- “When a copy of a valid order for protection or a written record of a report signed by a qualified third party is made available to the landlord, the tenant may terminate the rental agreement and quit the premises without further obligation under the rental agreement or under chapter 59.12 RCW.” (RCW 59.18.575)
- “A tenant who has obtained a court order from a court of competent jurisdiction granting him or her possession of a dwelling unit to the exclusion of one or more cotenants may request that a lock be replaced or configured for a new key at the tenant's expense. The landlord shall, if provided a copy of the order, comply with the request and shall not provide copies of the new keys to the tenant restrained or excluded by the court's order.” (RCW 59.18.585)

**For complete text visit:
www.leg.wa.gov**

Creating Policy:

National and local statistics show that 90-95% of victims of domestic violence are women. When a housing provider has a policy of denying tenancy to or evicting anyone who is involved in a domestic violence incident, the housing provider's neutral policy could have a "disparate impact" on women.

Because women are far more likely to be the victims of domestic violence and not the perpetrators, domestic violence policies such as these negatively affect women far more than men, and are likely to be a violation of fair housing laws.

Housing providers may establish policies and procedures to screen prospective tenants and to evict tenants; however, if those policies that appear neutral in fact have a disproportionately negative impact on a protected class of tenants, then the policy could be discriminatory.

*(From “Domestic Violence and Fair Housing Laws”
by Karen Peirolo)*

**For more information on
creating non-discriminatory policy please
contact our agency at 735.1295
or the Northwest Fair Housing Alliance
at 509.325.2665
or the Human Right Commission
at 800.233.3247**