

DC BUDGET ACTION ALERT TOOLKIT

Help Protect Access to Justice & Victim Services in DC's FY27 Budget

Mayor Bowser's proposed FY27 budget includes drastic cuts to two of DC's most critical funding sources. The proposed budget would slash Access to Justice Initiative funding – currently at \$31.785M – **and reduce Victim Services below the \$59.6M** level needed to sustain current services. These cuts will devastate core components of the public safety infrastructure that DC relies on to respond to violence and maintain stability. Fewer shelter beds, reduced legal support, and longer waitlists will mean more people are turned away when they need help most.

Volunteer Legal Advocates serves more than 3,000 local survivors and children annually, and relies on these funds to facilitate the majority of our vital work. The projected cuts would decimate all three of our program areas, impacting thousands of survivors of domestic violence, immigrant survivors of gender-based violence, and vulnerable children.

We need your voice!

If you live or work in DC, please take a moment to contact your councilmember. Use our toolkit below for ready-to-send emails, social posts, and graphics. Together, we can urge our leaders to restore this essential funding and keep our communities safe.

What We're Asking the DC Council to Do

- **Restore Access to Justice Initiative funding to FY26 levels of \$31.785M** as a top Council-wide FY27 budget priority
- **Fund Victim Services at \$59.6M**
- **Protect the full OVSJG Portfolio**

Email Your Councilmember

Use the sample email below to send a message to your Ward Councilmember and At-Large members. Personalize it if you can! Find DC Council contact information at the [DC Council website](#).

Subject: Protect Access to Justice & Victim Services in the FY27 Budget

Dear Councilmember [Last Name],

I am writing as a DC resident to urge you to restore full funding for the Access to Justice Initiative and the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants (OVSJG) in the FY27 budget. These programs are essential to keeping our communities safe and ensuring survivors of violence and vulnerable children have access to legal support.

The proposed FY27 budget would devastate organizations like Volunteer Legal Advocates, which serves over 3,000 DC residents each year. Cuts to ATJ and victim services funding would mean fewer shelter beds, reduced legal support, longer waitlists, and approximately 1,500 District residents losing access to critical services. The ramifications of these cuts will be felt for generations.

I urge you to:

- Restore Access to Justice Initiative funding to FY26 levels of \$31.785M
- Fund Victim Services at \$59.6M
- Protect the full OVSJG Portfolio

Please make Access to Justice and Victim Services a top priority.

Thank you for your leadership and for ensuring that every member of our community feels safe and protected.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Ward or Neighborhood]

[Your Organizational Affiliation, if desired]

Post on Social Media

Use and personalize these sample posts and graphics to raise awareness and encourage others to act.

Tag your councilmembers and use hashtags: #FundJusticeDC #AccessToJustice #DCBudget #dcciviljustice #restoreATJfunding #theInitiativeworks #VolunteerLegalAdvocates

Consider tagging: DC Council (@councilofdc); Commission (@DCATJComm); DC Bar Foundation (@DCBarFoundation); Councilmembers: @chmnmendelson @anitabondsdcc @CM_McDuffie @robertwhite_dc @CMCHenderson @CMNadeauOffice @CMBrookePinto @CMFrumin @CMLewisGeorgeW4 @CMZParker5 @charlesallen @CMWendellFelder

X (formerly Twitter)

DC's FY27 budget threatens devastating cuts to Access to Justice & Victim Services. These programs keep survivors safe and give vulnerable children a voice. @councilofdc – restore funding NOW. #FundJusticeDC #AccessToJustice #DCBudget #dcciviljustice #restoreATJfunding #theInitiativeworks

Facebook

The proposed DC FY27 budget includes cuts to legal services that help survivors of domestic violence and vulnerable children, with 1,500 District residents at risk of losing access to critical services. We must protect funding for Access to Justice and Victim Services. Contact your councilmember today and urge them to #FundJusticeDC.

Join me and @VolunteerLegalAdvocates in urging the DC Council to restore this critical funding.

#FundJusticeDC #AccessToJustice #DCBudget #dcciviljustice #restoreATJfunding #theInitiativeworks

LinkedIn

Access to legal services is essential to the safety and stability of thousands of DC residents. The proposed DC FY27 budget threatens to slash Access to Justice Initiative funding below the critical \$31.785M level – and cut Victim Services below the \$59.6M needed. These are not line items; they are lifelines.

Volunteer Legal Advocates serves over 3,000 DC residents annually. These cuts could directly impact approximately 1,500 of them. Join me in urging the DC Council to restore this funding.

#FundJusticeDC #AccessToJustice #DCBudget #dcciviljustice #restoreATJfunding #theInitiativeworks

Instagram

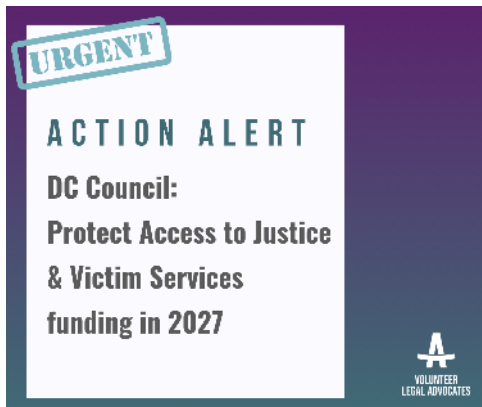
DC's FY27 budget threatens devastating cuts to Access to Justice & Victim Services. These programs keep survivors safe and give vulnerable children a voice. @councilofdc – restore funding NOW. #FundJusticeDC #AccessToJustice #DCBudget #dcciviljustice #restoreATJfunding #theInitiativeworks

Without ATJ and OVSJG funding, Volunteer Legal Advocates programs would be slashed across the board, and approximately 1,500 District residents would lose access to critical legal services.

Social Media Graphics

Use these or create your own. [Download them here!](#)

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LinkedIn



Instagram

