



# THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON VICTIM SERVING AGENCIES ACROSS INDIANA



This report was created by the Indiana Criminal Justice  
Institute, Research Division.

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The report analyzes survey data collected from nearly 200 victim serving agencies across the State of Indiana to understand the impact of COVID-19 on these agencies and their ability to effectively serve victims.



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Guided by a Board of Trustees representing all components of Indiana's criminal and juvenile justice systems, the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI) serves as the state's planning agency for criminal justice, juvenile justice, traffic safety, and victim services. The Institute develops long-range strategies for the effective administration of Indiana's criminal and juvenile justice systems and administers federal and state funds to carry out these strategies.

The Indiana Criminal Justice Institute serves as Indiana's Statistical Analysis Center (SAC). The SAC's primary mission is compiling, analyzing, and disseminating data on a variety of criminal justice and public safety-related topics. The information produced by the SAC serves a vital role in effectively managing, planning, and creating policy for Indiana's many public service endeavors.

### **Acknowledgments**

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## Executive Summary

The Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI) distributed a survey to subgrantees of the Victim Services Division to gauge the impact of COVID-19 on their organizational capacity and ability to serve clients. The clients of these subgrantees are victims of several different types of crimes, but the majority of subgrantees serve victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or child abuse. The survey had a 90% response rate with responses from 176 subgrantee agencies.

The data gathered from the survey was closely aligned with emerging reports from other states and entities regarding the organizational impacts of COVID-19. Though many of the responses were divided, particularly on the number of clients served and level of funding available, several consistent themes emerged across all agencies.

Nearly every group expressed concern for the influx of clients as the state begins re-opening – questioning their organizational capacity to handle the anticipated volume of need. Many agencies have seen their reserve funds depleted to fulfill unexpected and unbudgeted expenses, such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), technology licenses and equipment, and changes to their physical spaces to remain in compliance with social distancing protocols. Social distancing protocols produced a unique challenge for shelters, many of which had to utilize alternative options such as hotels for housing victims in order to adhere to spacing and capacity guidelines. Court closures and access restrictions also resulted in challenges, with many agencies finding themselves without physical space to safely work with their clients.

Expenses such as staff salaries and overhead costs are often partially covered by donations through regular giving and/or annual fundraisers – both of which have been heavily impacted by COVID-19 – leaving agencies wondering how they will cover both current and upcoming operating expenses. The ability to meet match grant requirements after suffering lost revenue through pre-planned events and donations was a concern for many. Even though many agencies expressed fear and concern about paying staff salaries, every group also expressed a need and desire to pay their staff more, be it through raises, hazard pay, bonuses, and/or overtime pay.

Two other consistent themes offer explanations for each group emphasizing staff pay, with those themes being the workload and mental health of staff. Many agencies saw substantial losses of volunteers, which most agencies heavily depend on for day to day operations. With sudden drops in volunteers and insufficient funds to hire new employees, the extra workload has fallen on existing staff. Some agencies reported that the increased workload and stress has been a challenge for employee retention. Though other agencies have reported that they have been able to successfully manage the increased workload, one respondent stressed that “this level of work and response is not sustainable for months to come without support from partners and capacity development” – a sentiment echoed by most.

Regarding mental health, agencies raised concerns for the mental health of not only the clients they serve and victims of crime, but for their staff. Numerous responses outlined the mental and emotional strain that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused in both the personal and professional lives of their staff, with one respondent stressing that “everyone’s mental health is at a breaking point.”

Technology presented a challenge for agencies across the board. The financial strain placed by the purchase of new technology software, licenses, and equipment or the lack of funding to do so, was a challenge mentioned by nearly every agency surveyed. Most agencies were forced to adapt their service models to be conducive to virtual delivery. The switch to virtual programming has presented hurdles in both staff comfortability and client accessibility. Staff had little time and resources to be adequately trained on the various platforms, software, and devices. Clients faced the same learning curve as staff, often with the additional hurdle of lacking access to the equipment and wireless connection necessary to receive those virtual services.

Outside of the impact of COVID-19 directly on agencies, the respondents shared in concerns for victims trapped with abusers with hindered access for reporting abuse. Victims of domestic violence are under stay-at-home orders with their abusers. Skyrocketing unemployment rates result in many couples spending more time together, presenting more opportunities for abuse, and fewer opportunities for the victim to escape and/or report. The same issues with partner abuse exist with child abuse. With most schools being closed, virtual, and/or operating under restricted hours, children are home more. This change presents more opportunities for abuse and fewer opportunities for self-reporting to school personnel or for mandated reporters to spot signs of abuse.

Each of the 176 victim serving agencies responding to this survey are unique. They serve different areas and different populations, consist of varying staff sizes, have different financial statuses, and have different models of service. Given the nuances between agencies, it is not unusual that there would be divided reports of the volume of clients, financial security, organizational capacity, etc., as these survey results and other national data show. However, across all victim serving agencies, several consistent themes emerged, showing that even though each organization is unique, some impacts have proven to be universal.

## Background

In March 2020, cities and states around the country began issuing unprecedented closures and stay-at-home orders in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Countries across the globe have seen devastating impacts from the virus, and the United States has not been immune to those impacts. As of October 2020, the United States has witnessed over 7.7 million cases of COVID-19 and over 214,000 deaths, as reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). According to the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), just over 138,000 cases and around 3,600 deaths have been reported in Indiana alone.

The effects of COVID-19 have been far-reaching, impacting virtually every industry and every facet of American life. Organizations have been forced to adjust, adapt, and restructure the way they do business and provide services. This pandemic has had a multifaceted impact on victims of crime and the agencies that serve them. The combination of heightened unemployment, increased financial strain, and stay-at-home orders across the country have created a home environment conducive for fostering issues of domestic violence, child abuse, and other family-centric crimes. Furthermore, with individuals being forced to stay home, schools being closed, and many no longer having a job to report to or a physical office, avenues and opportunities for reporting abuse have been dramatically restricted. These unprecedented challenges have forced victim serving organizations to adapt and re-imagine their service delivery models to continue reaching victims while abiding by social distancing and safety protocols all while meeting a new array of accessibility issues facing victims.

Serving as the State Administering Agency (SAA) for Indiana, the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI) sought to gain insight into the impact of COVID-19 on victim serving organizations across the state. The ICJI was particularly interested in the needs of its subgrantees that are funded through multiple state and federal funding streams such as the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA), Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment (DVPT) grant, Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), the Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) grant, and the Services, Training, Officers, and Prosecutors (STOP) formula grant. To gather this insight, the Research Division of the ICJI, which also serves as the State Statistical Analysis Center (SAC), created a survey and distributed it to all the ICJI Victim Services subgrantee agencies.



## Data & Methods

Surveys were distributed directly to subgrantee organizations via email the last week of May 2020. The email outlined the project goals and included a link to complete the survey through SurveyMonkey. Subgrantees were given three weeks to complete the survey, and reminder emails were sent each week. In total, the collection period was between the last week of May to mid-June of 2020. Therefore, the “during COVID-19” period in each results section is based upon impacts from the beginning of the pandemic up until the point of the close of the survey (January – June). Subgrantees could identify as one of the following ten organization types: Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Child Advocacy Centers (CAC), Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE), Prosecutors, Law Enforcement, Legal Services, Coalitions, Human Trafficking, and Other.

The first question of the survey asked respondents to self-select which group their organization belonged in. After selecting the applicable group, the respondent was then directed to the survey questions relevant to that group. Considering that each group is slightly different, the questions across each group varied slightly. The same general themes were addressed in each group and the same questions were asked, when applicable. Subgrantees are referenced as organizations and/or agencies throughout the remainder of the report.

### *Limitations*

The survey results represent a substantial number of victim serving organizations across the state, but they are all organizations that are receiving state and/or federal funding administered via the ICJI. The responses in this survey should not be taken as representative of victim-serving organizations across the state. These survey questions were created to address impacts particularly relevant to funding and therefore may have missed other issue areas. An open-ended survey question was included at the end of each survey to capture any missed impacts; however, open-ended questions have notoriously low response rates, so it is possible that impacts not directly asked about were missed.

Agencies could self-select their agency type, resulting in nine agencies choosing a classification that did not directly correspond to their actual agency type. Six agencies identified as “other” when an existing category fit their organization and three identified as “Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)” when they are technically classified as Child Advocacy Centers (CAC). These selections resulted in these nine organizations receiving survey questions that may not have fully aligned with the scope of their agency.

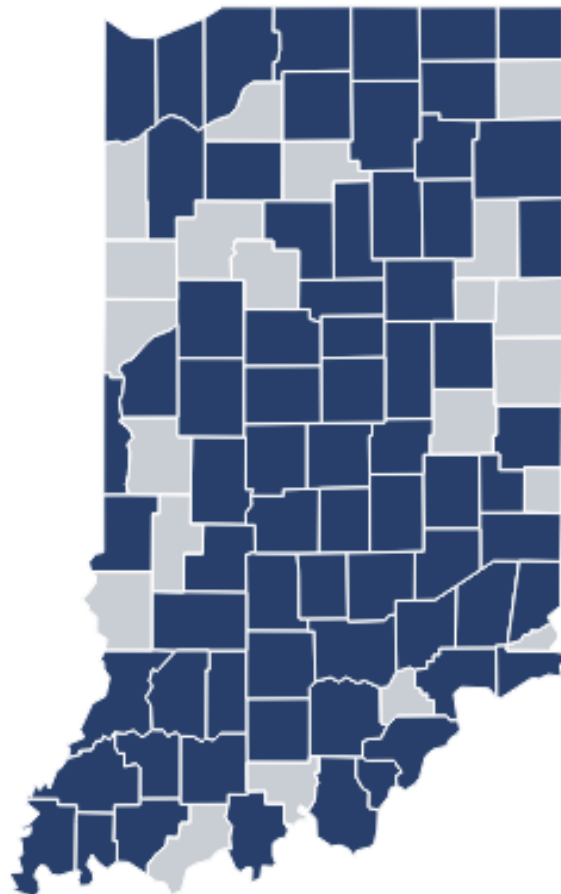
Furthermore, there are a few instances in which the data reflect more than one response from the same agency. These instances are the result of a combination of some agencies simultaneously receiving two or more grants from the ICJI and of input error. These instances account for fewer than five cases, and the agency was still only counted once in the response rate and the count of agencies responding.

# SURVEY RESULTS

## Agency Demographics

The 176 agencies who responded to the survey collectively serve all 92 counties, with physical locations in 71 counties. Under the rural-urban county classifications provided by the United States Census Bureau, of those physical locations, 45 are located in mostly rural counties, 154 are in mostly urban counties, and 8 are in completely rural counties.<sup>1</sup> The map to the right reflects the counties in which survey respondents have physical locations.

- Physical Location
- No Physical Location



<sup>1</sup> The number of physical locations totals more than the number of agencies completing the survey as many agencies have more than one location.



As outlined in the “Data & Methods” section above, agencies could self-select which organization type their agency identified as. The table below reflects the breakdown of agency type represented in the survey results, as reported by the respondents.

Agency Type	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Total Respondents
Domestic Violence	50	28%
Prosecutors	45	26%
Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)	22	13%
Child Advocacy Centers (CAC)	15	9%
Law Enforcement	13	7%
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE)	10	6%
Other	8	5%
Legal Services	7	4%
Coalitions	4	2%
Human Trafficking	2	1%

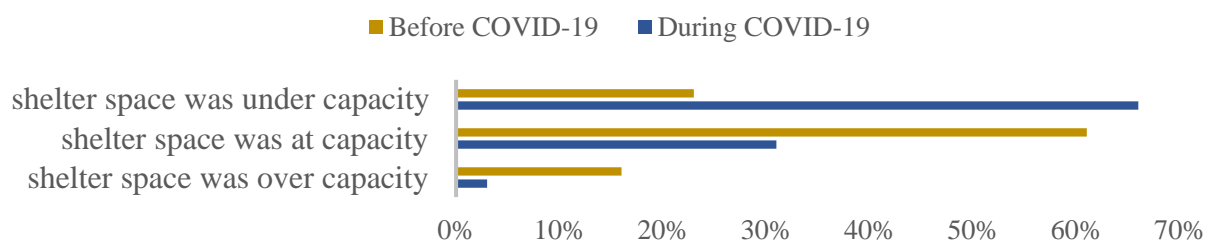
### Aggregated Survey Results

The survey saw a response rate of 90% with 176 total respondents. The data described within this section have been aggregated to reflect the responses of all respondents that were presented with and answered the question being analyzed. Not all agencies were given all the same questions, so responses will vary in the number of respondents per question. Questions with fifteen or fewer respondents have not been included in the aggregated response analysis; however, these questions are included in the group analyses following this section. A complete list of survey questions, responses, and the number of respondents is available upon request.

#### *Before versus During COVID-19*

Of those agencies that indicated they operated a shelter, 61% reported their shelter being at capacity before COVID-19. That number dropped by nearly 30% during COVID-19. There was a 43% increase in shelters that reported being under capacity. These numbers show that overall, shelters are at a lower capacity during COVID-19 than before. As indicated in the open-ended responses throughout this survey, the increase in shelter space being under capacity is likely attributed to a combination of social distancing protocols and victim accessibility to services.

#### BEFORE VERSUS AFTER COVID-19: SHELTER SPACE



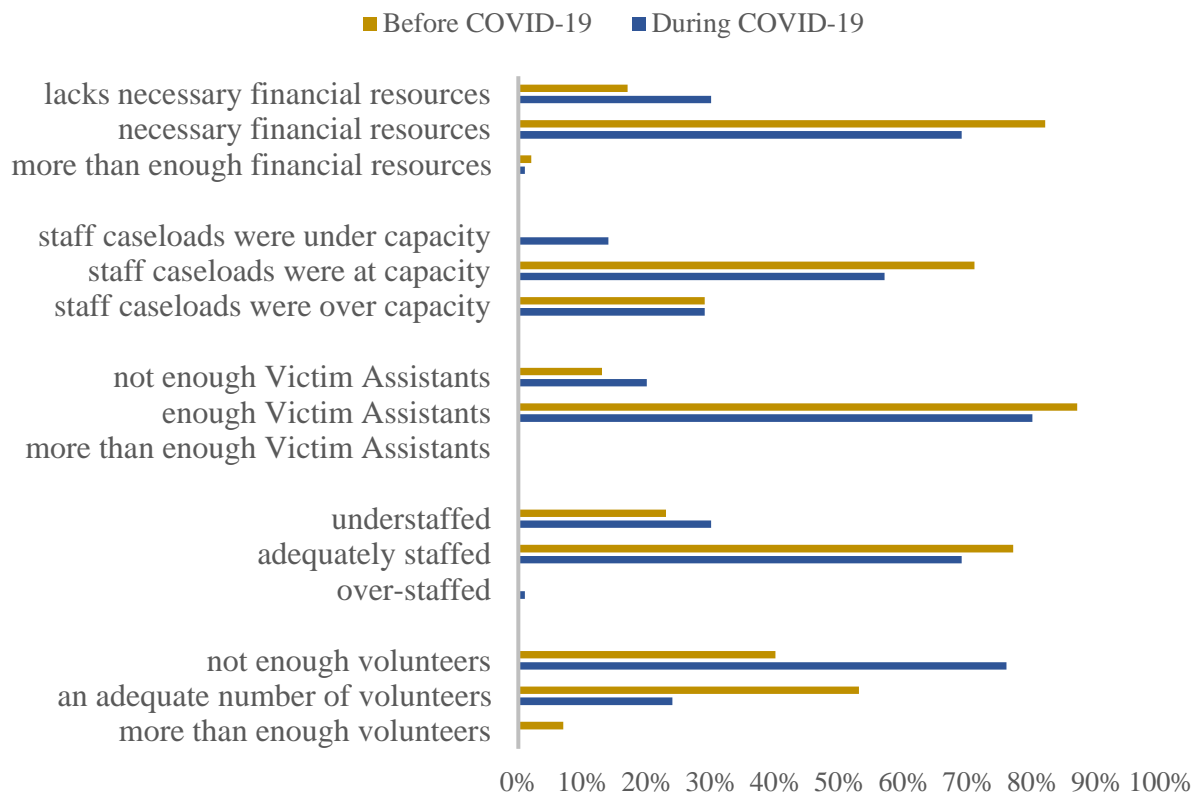
More than three-fourths (77%) of agencies reported being adequately staffed before COVID-19 and 69.5% reported being adequately staffed during COVID-19. Those reporting that their agencies were understaffed before COVID-19, saw roughly a 7% increase during COVID-19, with 23% prior and ~30% during.

Volunteer shortages were evident through both the qualitative and quantitative components of this study. In fact, 76.5% of agencies reported not having enough volunteers during COVID-19 – more than a 36% increase as reported before COVID-19. Prior to COVID-19, just under 53% of agencies reported having an adequate number of volunteers. That percentage dropped by nearly 30% to 23.5% of agencies during COVID-19.

There was a 7% drop in agencies who reported they had enough Victim Assistants during COVID-19 and a 7% increase in agencies reporting that they did not have enough Victim Assistants during COVID-19. Staff caseloads reported as over-capacity remained relatively consistent both before and during COVID-19 but reports of caseloads being under capacity increased over 14% during COVID-19.

Before COVID-19, roughly 82% of agencies reported having the necessary financial resources to effectively serve clients. During COVID-19, only 69% of agencies reported having the necessary financial resources to effectively serve clients, dropping 13%. Just under 31% of agencies reported that they lacked the necessary financial resources to effectively serve clients, up 13.6% from reports before COVID-19.

## BEFORE VERSUS AFTER COVID-19



### *During COVID-19*

Aligned with many other statewide and national reports regarding COVID-19’s impact on victim serving organizations, the responses of this survey do not often indicate a clear and definitive impact that is consistent across agencies. Regarding clients served during COVID-19, 30% of agencies reported around the same number of clients, 36% reported a decrease in clients, and 34% reported an increase in clients. Exactly half of the agencies indicated an increase in clients on the waitlist, while 41% indicated they had around the same number of clients on the waitlist, with only 9% reporting a decrease in clients on the waitlist. Precisely, 57% reported having around the same number of referrals for service, with 23% reporting an increase and 21% reporting a decrease. Of those agencies for which it was applicable, 44% reported an increase in crisis hotline calls, and the remaining 56% of agencies were evenly split between a decrease in calls and around the same number of calls, with 28% respectively.

In addition, 26% of agencies reported having to turn away clients during COVID-19 due to a lack of organizational capacity. Roughly half of the respondents indicated that COVID-19 has impaired their ability to effectively provide services while the other half reported that COVID-19 has not impaired their ability to effectively provide services.

The top reported agency need during COVID-19 was direct and/or non-direct service salaries and/or FICA, retirement, health insurance, etc., followed closely by the need for technology/software upgrades.

Agency Needs	Number of Agencies
Direct/Non-Direct Service Salaries and/or FICA, Retirement, Health Insurance, etc.	62
Technology/software upgrades	56
Operating fees (utilities/building maintenance/rent/etc.)	44
Emergency Victim Needs	42
Supplies (PPE, printing, office, shelter & program supplies, etc.)	41
Equipment	34
More Staff	32
Staff Training	26
More Volunteers	25
More Physical Space	23
Other (please specify)	21
Client Transportation (bus fare/tokens, cab/taxi service, gas-only cards, etc.)	16
Professional Service Fees (audit, IT Management, contract employees, etc.)	15
Emergency Housing/Shelter Nights	8
Interpretation Services	8
Food/Client Meals	6
Overtime/Hazard Pay	4
Travel (staff mileage) fees	3

The top reported agency challenge during COVID-19 was the mental health issues of clients. Financial issues of clients and technology/equipment needs were the second and third most reported challenge. “Other” challenges were indicated by 33 agencies. When asked to explain those “other” challenges, the responses covered an array of topics. Two of the most frequently noted challenges were technology and fundraising concerns which could both be reclassified into existing categories. Additional notable responses included challenges with court closures and delays, client accessibility to services/reporting, physical and mental well-being of staff and clients, increased workload on staff, and capacity issues.

Agency Challenges	Number of Agencies
Mental Health Issues of Clients	60
Financial Issues of Clients	45
Technology/Equipment Needs	43
Other (please specify)	33
Lack of Community Resources	31
Lack of Affordable/Safe Housing in Community	29
Lack of Funding	29
Community Awareness	28
Substance Abuse of Clients	28
Lack of Staff	21
Lack of Volunteers	19
Lack of Services for Children and Youth	14
Lack of Capacity	11
Transportation	10
Lack of Legal Support/Advocacy	9
Returning Clients	8
Culture/Language Barriers	7
Qualified Staff	7
Client’s Leaving before Services are Received	5
Lack of Community Support	5
Staff Retention	5
Education Level of Staff	3
Lack of DV Trained Law Enforcement	3
Physical Challenges of Clients	3
Lack of Appropriately Trained Law Enforcement	2
Victims Leaving before Services are Received	1

Agencies were asked what they would spend unrestricted emergency funds on to address the challenges incurred by COVID-19 if given the opportunity. The responses were centered on technology and staffing needs, PPE and cleaning supplies/services, operational expenses, and the financial needs of clients.

At the close of the survey, agencies could include any additional comments they saw fit. Agencies expressed concerns for client access to services. Accessibility was expected to be hindered by increased time with an abuser and/or lessened access to public spaces (including work), resulting in fewer opportunities to report. Technology was expressed to be a hurdle for both staff and clients. Concerns surrounding staff pay, retention, workload, and mental health were expressed. The mental health of victims was also raised as a concern. Agencies feared the influx of clients expected as restrictions begin lifting and questioned their capacity to address the influx. Lost revenue through canceled fundraisers, donor dollars, and/or program revenue was noted as an additional challenge faced.





# SURVEY RESULTS BY AGENCY TYPE

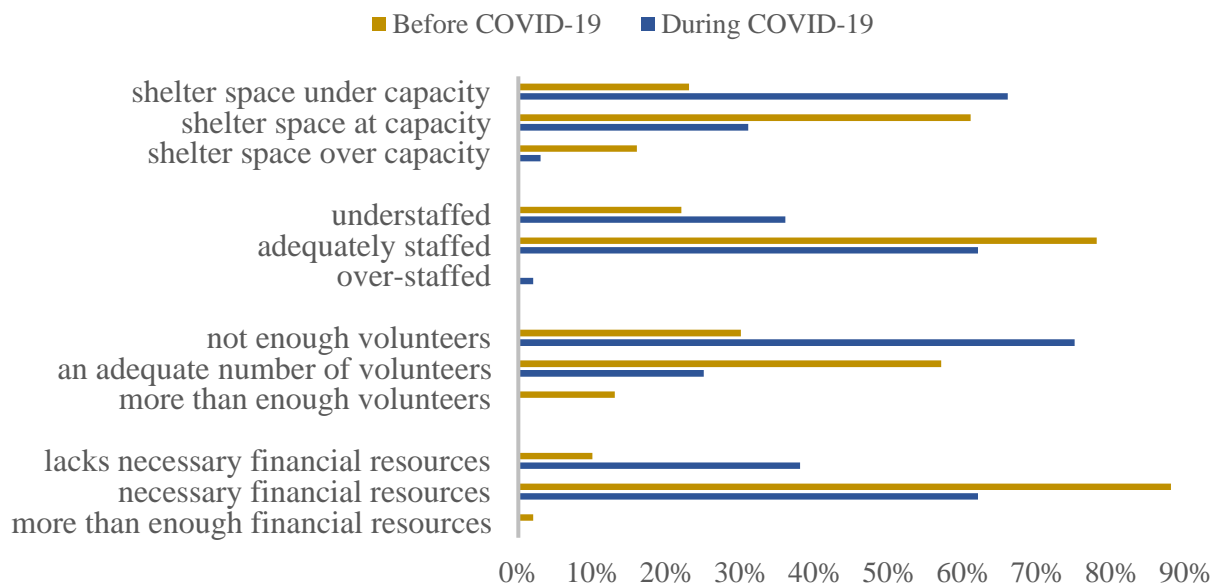
## Domestic Violence Organizations

Of domestic violence organizations contacted, 89% participated in the ICJI's survey. The responses below reflect only that of domestic violence organizations.

### *Before versus During COVID-19*

Of domestic violence organizations that operate domestic violence shelters, 66% indicated they were under capacity during COVID-19 as opposed to 23% reporting they were under capacity before COVID-19. Prior to COVID-19, 22% of agencies reported being understaffed. During COVID-19, 36% reported being understaffed. 75% of organizations reported not having enough volunteers during COVID-19. Organizations reported that pre-COVID, 88% had adequate financial resources. That number dropped to 62% during COVID, with 38% of respondents indicating that they did not have adequate resources to effectively serve clients during COVID.

## BEFORE VERSUS DURING COVID-19



### *During COVID-19*

52% of organizations have seen a decrease in clients, while 22% have seen an increase in clients<sup>2</sup>. 44% have seen an increase in crisis hotline calls. 32% of organizations reported that they have had to turn away clients due to a lack of organizational capacity during COVID-19.

The top five reported domestic violence agency needs during COVID-19 are:

1. Operating Fees (utilities, phone service, building maintenance, rent, etc.)
2. Technology/Software Upgrades
3. Direct/Non-Direct Service Salaries and/or FICA, Retirement, Health Insurance, etc.
4. Emergency Victim Needs
5. Equipment

The top five challenges for domestic violence agencies during COVID-19 are:

1. Lack of Affordable/Safe Housing in Community
2. Mental Health Issues of Clients
3. Financial Issues of Clients
4. Technology/Equipment Needs
5. Community Awareness

When agencies were asked what they would spend unrestricted funds on, ten general themes emerged. The most frequently cited use of funding was for technology needs, including software, hardware, and IT support. The use of funding for technology needs was followed by financial assistance for clients, COVID-19 prevention/protocol, staffing, other overhead costs, remote services/programming, shelter nights, replacing lost funding, and continued programming/partnerships. There were three uses for funding that did not fit within any existing categories and were thereby placed in the miscellaneous category. These uses included advocacy for legislative change, the creation of a mandatory DV perpetrator registry, and interpretation services.

At the end of the survey, agencies had the opportunity to provide any additional information they wished to share with the ICJI. Four themes emerged in the agency responses: Staff concerns for victims/clients, organizational financial strain, challenges of social distancing and cleaning guidelines and protocols, and concern for staff mental health and morale. Three responses did not fit into any of the above categories: lack of volunteers, technology needs, and underserved populations.

## **Prosecutors**

Of prosecutors asked to participate in the survey, 83% responded. The results below are only those from prosecutors.

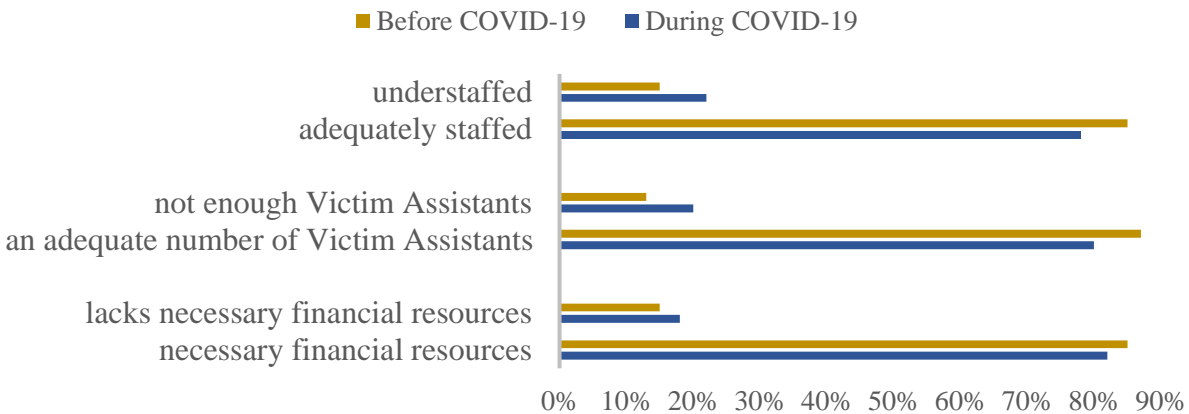
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<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that domestic violence agencies participating in this survey have differing service delivery models, with some agencies utilizing residential programs, and others utilizing non-residential programs.

### *Before versus During COVID-19*

Prosecutors reported being 15% understaffed before COVID-19 and nearly 22% during COVID-19. There was a 6% increase in reports of not enough Victim Assistants from before COVID-19 to during. There was only around a 2% decrease in possessing necessary financial resources before and during COVID-19.

## BEFORE VERSUS DURING COVID-19



### *During COVID-19*

30.4% of prosecutors saw an increase in clients while 28.3% saw a decrease in clients. Around 41% reported around the same number of clients. 21.7% of prosecutors indicated a decrease in referrals for service, while 17.4% indicated an increase in referrals. Like other group data, the responses were relatively evenly split when asked if their ability to effectively provide services to clients had been impaired, with nearly 49% indicating their ability had been impaired and 51% indicated their ability had not been impaired.

The top five reported agency needs during COVID-19 are:

1. Direct/Non-Direct Service Salaries and/or FICA, Retirement, Health Insurance, etc.
2. Emergency Victim Needs
3. Supplies (PPE, printing, office, shelter & program supplies, etc.)
4. Staff Training
5. Equipment

The top five challenges for agencies during COVID-19 are:

1. Mental Health Issues of Clients
2. Other
3. Financial Issues of Clients
4. Lack of Community Resources
5. Technology/Equipment Needs

The “other” challenges reported were courthouse and county building closures, accessibility issues, and an influx of drug and theft cases.

When asked what agencies would spend unrestricted funding on if given the opportunity, agencies reported they would spend the funding predominately on staff salaries and benefits, PPE and cleaning supplies, technology, and emergency victim services and needs.

At the end of the survey, respondents could provide additional comments as they saw fit. The most frequently mentioned issue was victim accessibility regarding both victims accessing services and reporting, and staff attempting to access victims.

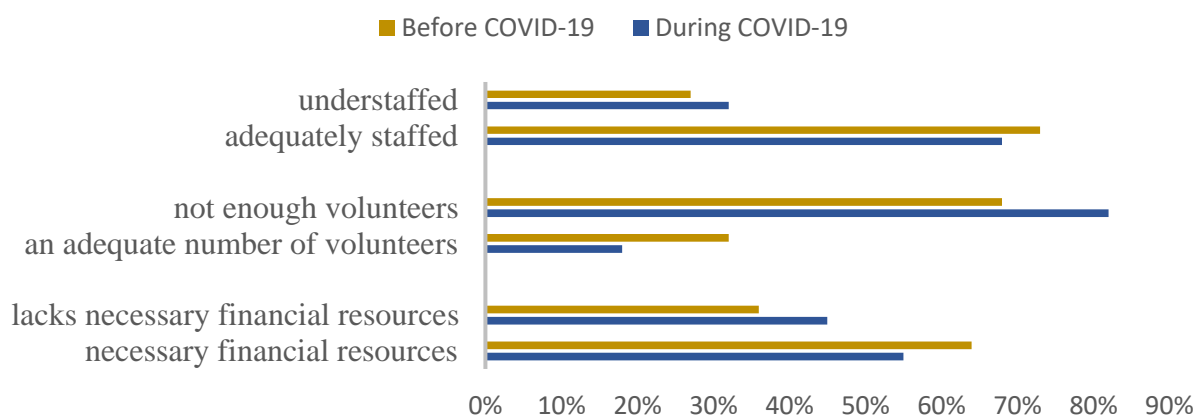
### Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

There was a 95% response rate for Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) agencies. The following results represent the responses of CASA agencies only.

#### *Before versus During COVID-19*

Nearly 73% of agencies reported being adequately staffed before COVID-19, with that number dropping around 5% during COVID-19. There was a 4.6% increase in agencies reporting being understaffed before COVID versus during COVID-19. Approximately 82% of agencies reported that they did not have enough volunteers during COVID-19, a 13.6% increase from the percentage reported before COVID-19. Before COVID-19, 63.6% reported having the necessary financial resources to effectively serve clients. That number dropped to 54.6% during COVID-19. Over 45% of agencies indicated they lacked the necessary financial resources to effectively serve clients during COVID-19, representing a 9% increase from figures reported before COVID-19.

### BEFORE VERSUS AFTER COVID-19



#### *During COVID-19*

59% of agencies reported an increase in clients during COVID-19. Just under 32% reported around the same number of clients and 9% reported a decrease in clients. 50% indicated an increase in clients on the waitlist while roughly 41% indicated around the same number of clients on the waitlist. Only 9% of agencies reported a decrease in clients on the waitlist. Approximately

67% of CASA agencies reported that during COVID-19, their ability to effectively provide services to clients had been impaired.

The top five reported CASA agency needs during COVID-19 are:

1. More Volunteers
2. Technology/Software Upgrades
3. Direct/Non-Direct Service Salaries and/or FICA, Retirement, Health Insurance, etc.
4. Supplies (PPE, printing, office, shelter & program supplies, etc.)
5. More Staff

The top challenges for CASA agencies during COVID-19 are:

1. Substance Abuse of Clients
2. Lack of Volunteers
3. Mental Health Issues of Clients
3. Technology/Equipment Needs
3. Lack of Funding
3. Lack of Services for Children and Youth<sup>3</sup>

Volunteer recruitment and training was the most frequently cited use of funding when agencies were asked what agencies would spend unrestricted funding on if given the opportunity. Technology upgrades were also a heavily cited use of funding, followed by funding for staff and operational costs.

When given the opportunity to provide any additional comments at the close of the survey, agencies reported concerns regarding a lack of volunteers, lost revenue, and staff salaries, retention, and shortages. Mental health concerns of clients, staff, and volunteers were expressed by numerous agencies. Like several other agencies, these agencies expressed concern for an influx of clients as restrictions begin lifting.

## **Children’s Advocacy Centers (CAC)**

Children’s Advocacy Centers (CAC) saw a 100% response rate, with responses from all agencies that were asked to participate. The results in this section only represent Children’s Advocacy Centers.

### *Before versus During COVID-19*

The survey results for CAC’s are the only results that show increased stability in staffing and financial resources during COVID-19. Agencies reported that before COVID-19, 73.3% were adequately staffed, yet 86.7% were adequately staffed during COVID-19. Similarly, 26.7% of agencies reported being understaffed before COVID-19, with only 6.7% of agencies reporting being understaffed during COVID-19. Additionally, over 93% of agencies reported having the

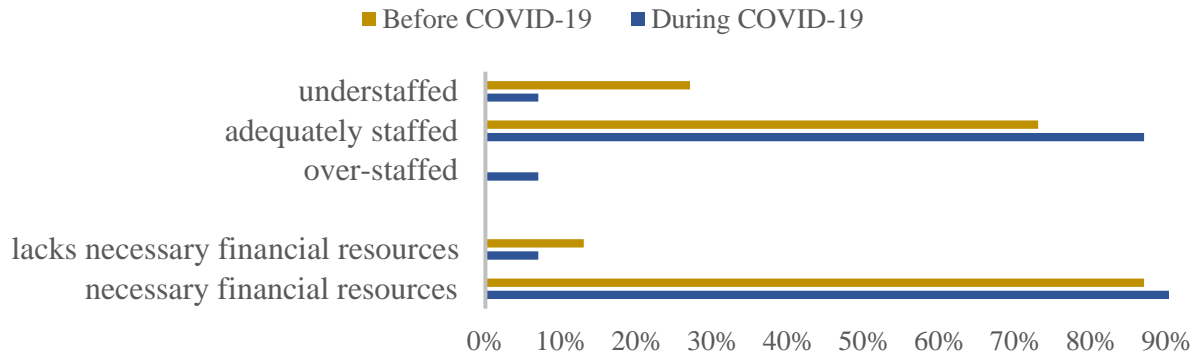
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<sup>3</sup> The four challenges immediately following “Lack of Volunteers” each had the same number of respondents.



necessary financial resources to effectively serve clients during COVID-19, up 6.6% from the number of agencies reporting necessary resources before COVID-19.

## BEFORE VERSUS DURING COVID-19



### *During COVID-19*

The reported increased stability in staffing and financial resources can likely be attributed to the decrease in clients during COVID-19, as reported by 73% of agencies and a 60% decrease in the number of referrals for forensic interviews. Agencies stressed that a decrease in their referrals is correlated with a decrease in the hotline calls and referrals to the Department of Child Services. 100% of agencies reported that they did not have to turn away clients due to a lack of organizational capacity and 66.7% indicated that their ability to effectively provide services to clients has not been impaired. One agency noted in the open-ended responses that they were adequately staffed given their current workload, but that they were not adequately staffed in comparison with national best practices or in order to meet the forthcoming needs of the agency. This sentiment was echoed in other CAC agency responses.

The top five reported CAC agency needs during COVID-19 are:

1. Operating Fees (utilities, phone service, building maintenance, rent, etc.)
2. Direct/Non-Direct Service Salaries and/or FICA, Retirement, Health Insurance, etc.
3. Technology/Software Upgrades
4. Supplies (PPE, printing, office, shelter & program supplies, etc.)
5. More Physical Space

The top five challenges for CAC agencies during COVID-19 are:

1. Community Awareness
2. Lack of Community Resources
3. Lack of Funding
4. Mental Health Issues of Clients
5. Other

The “Other” challenges reported were victim accessibility to report, long-term ability to raise unrestricted funds, and client fears of COVID-19 impacting service delivery.

When asked what agencies would spend unrestricted funding on if given the opportunity, agencies reported responses that were grouped into eleven categories/themes. The top five themes were: PPE, Cleaning Supplies & Social Distancing Protocol Related Expenses; Staff Salaries; Operational Costs; Lost Revenue; and Equipment & Supplies.

At the end of the survey, respondents could provide any additional comments as they saw fit. One of the most frequently mentioned themes was the concern for children forced to shelter in place with abusers. The agencies noted that they felt the trends in impact on their agency were closely aligned with the trends happening across the state. Concerns for the future were expressed about both an anticipated influx of children once the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) begins re-entering homes and with general concerns of future financial security within the agency.

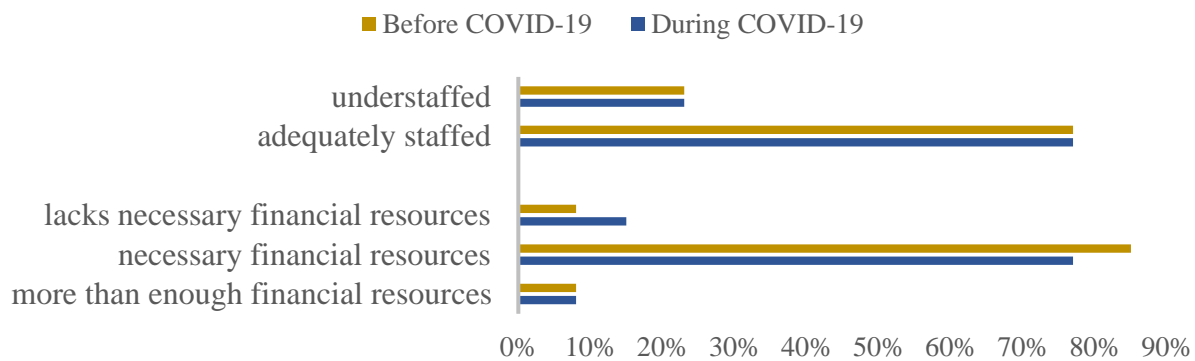
### Law Enforcement Agencies

94% of law enforcement agencies given the survey responded. The following responses only reflect those of law enforcement agencies.

#### *Before versus During COVID-19*

Law enforcement agencies reported no change in the adequacy of staffing before and during COVID-19, with just under 77% indicating they were adequately staffed both before and during, and 23% reported they were understaffed in both as well. There was a slight change in reports of financial resources with around 8% more of the agencies reporting that they lacked the necessary financial resources to effectively serve victims of crime during COVID-19, than those that reported before.

### BEFORE VERSUS DURING COVID-19



#### *During COVID-19*

Agencies were split in their responses to changing crime levels during COVID-19, with 38% of agencies reporting they had seen an increase in crime, and 38% reporting they had seen a decrease. 23% of agencies reported that they had seen around the same level of crime. Similarly, 38% reported a decrease in demand for an on-scene response for victims of crime, while another 38% indicated they had seen around the same demand. 23% reported an increase in demand for an on-scene response for victims of crime.

In line with other agency responses in this survey, around 46% of law enforcement agencies reported that their ability to effectively provide services to clients had been impaired, with the remaining 54% reporting that their ability had not been impaired.

The top five reported law enforcement agency needs during COVID-19 are:

1. Emergency Victim Needs
2. Supplies (PPE, printing, office, shelter & program supplies, etc.)
3. Technology/Software Upgrades
4. Equipment
5. More Staff

The top challenges for law enforcement agencies during COVID-19 are (Note: Two challenges tied for third):

1. Mental Health Issues of Clients
2. Lack of Community Resources
3. Financial Issues of Clients
4. Technology/Equipment Needs

Law enforcement agencies indicated that if given unrestricted funding, they would spend that funding across areas including mental health and substance abuse treatment, technology and virtual programming, emergency victim needs, PPE, staffing and salary needs, and community awareness.

When asked to provide any additional feedback at the close of the survey, agencies responded with concerns for the effectiveness of virtual consultations and victim advocacy and stressed the issues that have arisen with filing protection orders due to court closures. They expressed concerns for underserved and marginalized populations such as individuals experiencing homelessness. Like many other agencies, law enforcement agencies expressed need and concern for victim transportation to receive crucial services and participate in legal proceedings. Finally, the need for overtime funding for staff was mentioned, as some are working longer hours than normal to account for staff shortages and increased workloads.

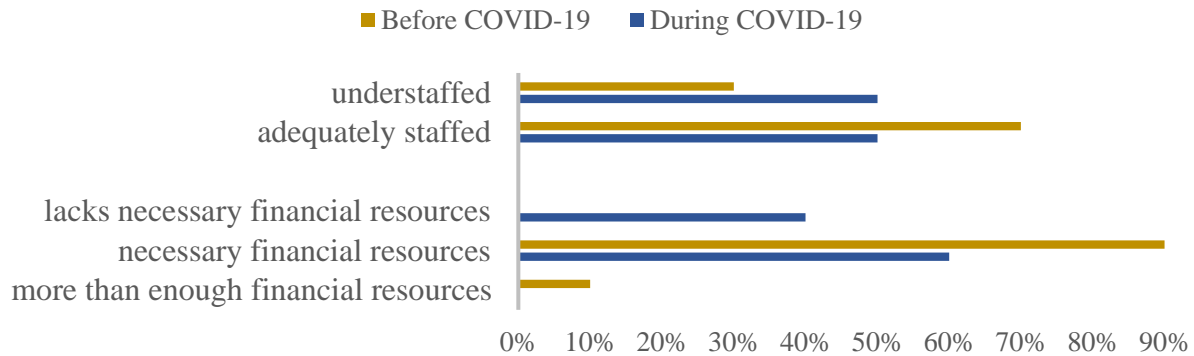
### **Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE)**

Of the SANE agencies asked to participate in this survey, 92% responded. The results below only indicate responses for SANEs.

#### *Before versus During COVID-19*

20% more SANEs reported being understaffed during COVID-19 than before. 40% indicated that they lacked the necessary financial resources to effectively serve clients during COVID-19, as opposed to 0% reporting a lack of resources before COVID-19.

## BEFORE VERSUS DURING COVID-19



### *During COVID-19*

30% of SANEs indicated an increase in clients during COVID-19. 30% reported around the same number of clients and 40% reported a decrease in clients. 33.3% of SANEs reported an increase in demand for “on-call” time. Only 20% of SANEs reported that they had to turn away clients due to a lack of organizational capacity. 80% reported that the ability for staff/nurses to receive adequate training has been impaired. 30% indicated that their ability to effectively provide services to clients has been impaired.

The top five reported SANE agency needs during COVID-19 are:

1. Staff Training
2. More Staff
3. Emergency Victim Needs
4. Other
5. More Physical Space

The responses indicated in the “other” field were predominately centered on the difficulty for SANE nurses to complete clinical hours.

The top challenges for SANE agencies during COVID-19 are:

1. Lack of Funding
2. Community Awareness
3. Lack of Community Resources
4. Lack of Staff

When asked what agencies would spend unrestricted funding on if given the opportunity, agencies reported that they would spend the funding on staffing and salaries; continued education for nurses; and emergency shelter for victims. At the end of the survey, respondents could provide additional comments as they saw fit. The most frequently mentioned issue was the concern for victim accessibility to services.

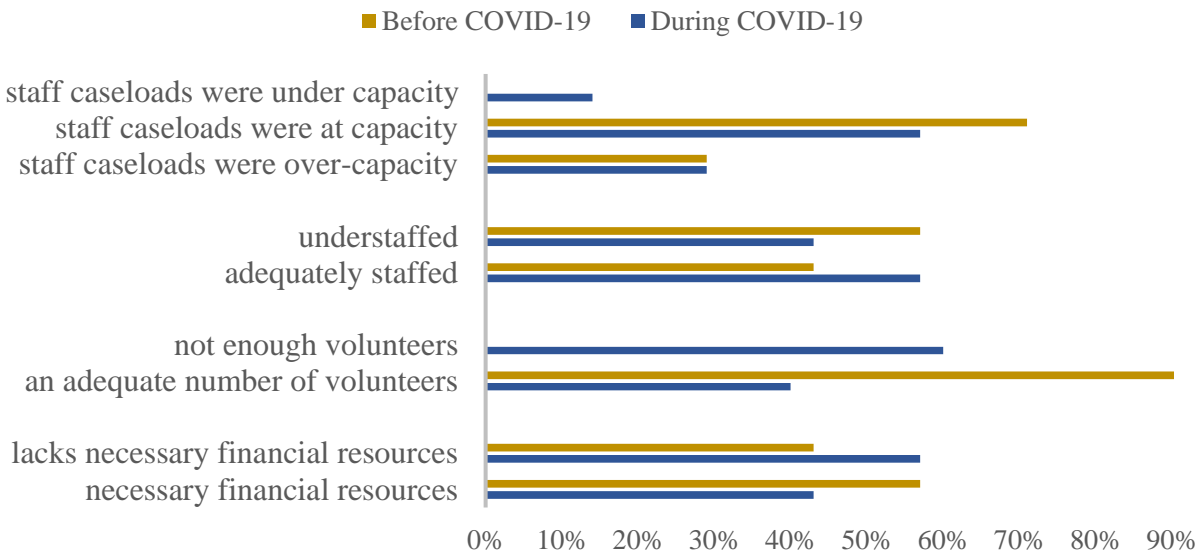
## Legal Services

Those agencies classified as legal services had a 100% response rate. The responses below are reflective of legal services agencies.

### *Before versus During COVID-19*

Roughly 15% more agencies reported being understaffed during COVID-19 than before, for a total of just under 43%. A slight drop in staff caseloads was reported, with around 14% of agencies moving from caseloads at capacity before COVID-19 to under capacity during COVID-19. 28.57% of agencies reported staff caseloads being over-capacity before COVID-19, which did not change during COVID-19. Those agencies that utilize volunteers reported a substantial shift in having an adequate number of volunteers, with 60% of agencies reporting they did not have enough volunteers during COVID-19 – a 60% increase from before COVID-19. An additional 14% of agencies reported lacking the necessary financial resources to effectively serve clients during COVID-19 compared to before, for a total of 57% reporting a lack of necessary resources.

## BEFORE VERSUS DURING COVID-19



### *During COVID-19*

57% of agencies reported an increase in clients and an increase in referrals for service. Just under 29% reported a decrease in clients and 14% reported a decrease in referrals for service. 43% of agencies reported both that they had to turn away clients due to a lack of organizational capacity and that their ability to effectively provide services to clients had been impaired.

The top five reported legal services agency needs during COVID-19 are:

1. Direct/Non-Direct Service Salaries and/or FICA, Retirement, Health Insurance, etc.
2. Technology/Software Upgrades
3. Operating fees (utilities, phone service, building maintenance, rent, etc.)
4. More Staff



## 5. Interpretation Services

The top challenges for legal services agencies during COVID-19 are:

1. Lack of Community Support
2. Lack of Funding
3. Lack of Staff

When asked what agencies would spend unrestricted funding on if given the opportunity, the three most reported uses of funding were hiring additional staff, technology-related expenses, and operational and program costs. At the close of the survey, agencies were given an opportunity to provide any additional comments they wanted to share with ICJI about the impact of COVID-19 on their agency. The most prevalent theme across agency responses was a concern for an anticipated influx of clients as the state began re-opening. Two other themes with equal representation in responses were technology issues and increased workload and time responsibility on staff. Agencies' emphasized how they have been forced to change and adapt their service models through virtual delivery and changing staff roles. Consistent with themes from other groups, concerns surrounding the lack of volunteers, court closures, and funding were mentioned.

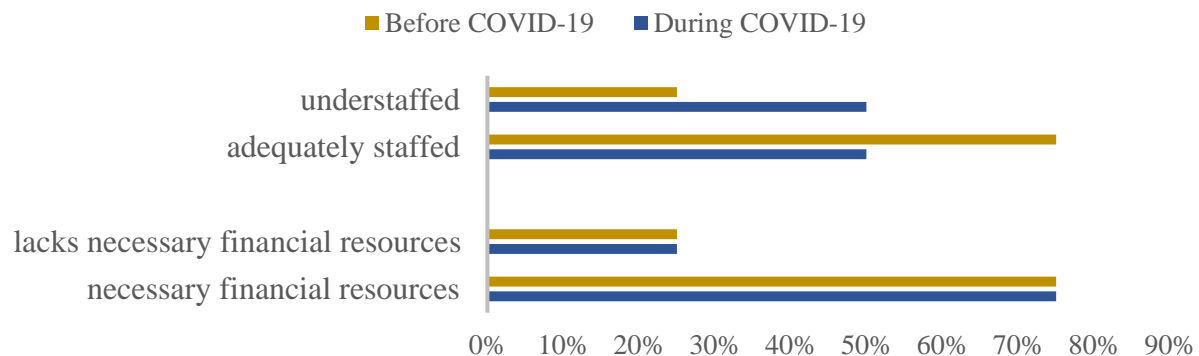
## Coalitions

Coalitions had a 100% response rate. The results below represent the responses of agencies classified as coalitions.

### *Before versus During COVID-19*

Prior to COVID-19, 25% of agencies reported being understaffed. This figure increased to 50% during COVID-19. Coalitions reported no change in their access to necessary financial resources before or during COVID-19.

## BEFORE VERSUS DURING COVID-19



### *During COVID-19*

25% of coalitions reported an increase in demand for services, with another 25% reporting a decrease in demand for services. The remaining 50% of coalitions reported around the same demand for services. 50% of coalitions reported an increase in demand for collaboration as well

as a 50% increased difficulty in obtaining services for organizations. 33% of respondents indicated that their ability to effectively serve organizations and/or clients has been impaired during COVID-19.

The top reported coalition needs during COVID-19 are:

1. Technology/Software Upgrades
2. Professional Service Fees (audit, IT management, contract employees, etc.)

The top challenges for coalitions during COVID-19 are:

1. Financial Issues of Clients
2. Agency Technology/Equipment Needs

Coalitions indicated that if given unrestricted funding, they would spend it on technology equipment, operational expenses, and financial assistance for clients/victims. When asked to provide any additional commentary relevant to the impact of COVID-19, agencies mentioned that technology has not only been a hurdle for the agency but the clients as well. One respondent also specified that though they have seen a decrease in the demand, there is not a decrease in the need.

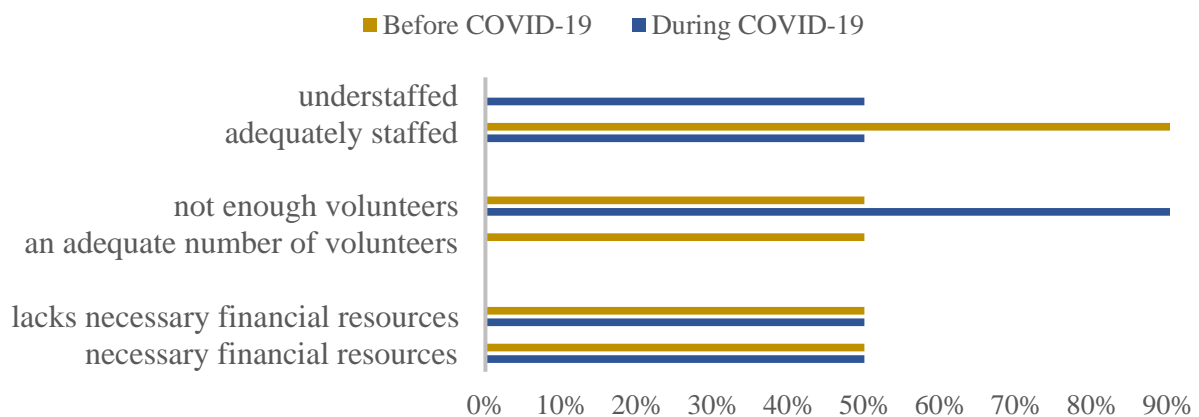
## Human Trafficking Organizations

The ICJI has two subgrantees classified solely as human trafficking organizations. Both agencies responded to the survey, resulting in a 100% response rate.

### *Before versus During COVID-19*

Both agencies indicated that they were adequately staffed before COVID-19, but during COVID-19, only one agency indicated it was adequately staffed with the remaining agency reporting it was understaffed. Only one organization utilized volunteers. Prior to COVID-19 that agency had an adequate number of volunteers, but during COVID-19 that agency did not have an adequate number of volunteers. There was no reported change in access to necessary financial resources before and during COVID-19.

## BEFORE VERSUS DURING COVID-19



### *During COVID-19*

One agency reported an increase in clients, while the other reported around the same number of clients. Aligned with that increase, one agency reported having to turn away clients due to a lack of organizational capacity and one agency reported that their ability to effectively provide services to clients had been impaired. The top reported agency need was emergency victim needs.

The top challenges for human trafficking agencies during COVID-19 are:

1. Mental Health Issues of Clients
2. Financial Issues of Clients
3. Lack of Services for Children and Youth

Human trafficking organizations noted that if given unrestricted funding, it would be spent on raising community awareness and increasing victim services. Additional comments regarding the impact of COVID-19 centered on the strain caused by the lack of interns.

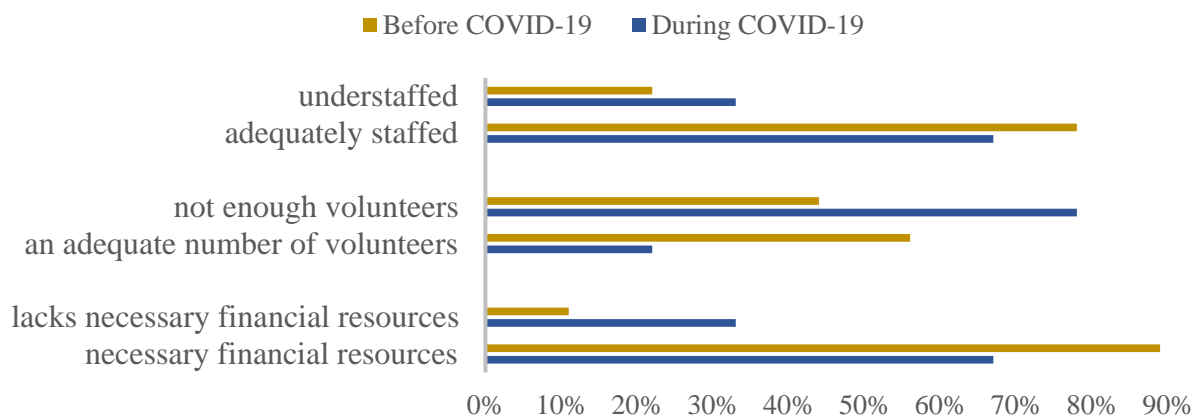
### **Other Organizations**

The responses in this section only reflect those agencies that did not fit into any of the above agency classifications.

### *Before versus During COVID-19*

33% of agencies reported being understaffed during COVID-19, an 11% increase from before COVID-19. More than three-fourths (77%) of agencies reported not having enough volunteers during COVID-19, resulting in a 33% increase in a lack of volunteers from the period before and during COVID-19. The data show a 22% increase in agencies reporting a lack of necessary financial resources to effectively serve clients during COVID-19, compared to before COVID-19.

### **BEFORE VERSUS DURING COVID-19**



### *During COVID-19*

Approximately 67% of agencies reported an increase in clients during COVID-19 and 78% reported that their agencies' ability to effectively provide services to clients had been impaired. However, only 22% reported having to turn away clients due to a lack of organizational capacity.

The top reported organizational needs during COVID-19 are:

1. Direct/Non-Direct Service Salaries and/or FICA, Retirement, Health Insurance, etc.
2. More Staff
3. More Volunteers

The top challenges for organizations during COVID-19 are:

1. Mental Health Issues of Clients
2. Technology/Equipment Needs
3. Financial Issues of Clients

This group of agencies reported that if given unrestricted funding, they would spend those dollars first and foremost on staffing, salaries, and technology equipment. Recouping expenses, accounting for lost revenue, community awareness and outreach, PPE, operational costs, client transportation needs, and workshops and training were among the other reported uses of funding.

The need for additional staff and volunteer training, difficulties with remote work, and the mental health of victims were all mentioned as additional comments on the impacts of COVID-19. Similarly to other agencies, this group also mentioned concern for an influx of victims as the state re-opened, difficulties resulting from court closures, and the uncertainty of future funding.



## Conclusion

Though agencies have each been impacted by COVID-19 in their own way, some impacts have been universal. PPE and cleaning supplies/services were an unexpected but necessary expense that no agency had budgeted for. To remain in compliance with social distancing orders, agencies were forced to reduce capacity in their shelters and offices, limiting the number of clients they could house and/or serve in-person and restricting access to staff personnel and services. Mandated closures and restrictions in city and state buildings left many with no physical place in which they could meet with clients. Issues with technology and the lack of necessary technological equipment were brought to the forefront as agencies attempted to address these issues by moving to virtual programming and remote work.

Volunteer shortages coupled with shifting service delivery models resulted in increased workloads on staff, exacerbating the already prevalent issues surrounding staff pay for many organizations. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on both the personal and professional lives of staff resulted in concerns surrounding staff retention, mental health, and overall well-being. As agencies worked to address the issues at hand, they are doing what they can to prepare for the anticipated influx of clients as restrictions are lifted. These challenges and impacts were felt by victim serving organizations of every type and in every region. The effects of COVID-19 on victims, victim serving organizations, and society as a whole will ripple for years to come.

Prior to the distribution of this survey, the ICJI released a request for proposal (RFP) for supplemental FVPSA funding via the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. This one-time supplemental funding provided flexibility in the use of funding to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency as needs evolve within the community. Funding was available to support a wide range of in-scope activities including counseling, mobile advocacy, telehealth, peer support, shelter and temporary housing, rental assistance and nominal relocation expenses, supplies, and equipment and software to assist in carrying out remote services. The ICJI awarded a total of over \$650,000 to 32 victim serving organizations.

Upon the completion of this survey, the ICJI released a second grant application for emergency COVID-19 aid and relief via VOCA funding. A total of over 1.7 million dollars was awarded, spanning 29 agencies across the state. All agencies that applied for the grant were awarded the full or partial amount of funding requested. In alignment with the responses of the Impact Survey, funds were requested for needs such as PPE, technology and equipment, staff salaries and hazard pay, and emergency funding for victims (including hotel stays). A gap remains in supplemental funding for mental health support and services for staff.

Victim serving agencies are crucial to the fabric of our society. Many of these agencies are nonprofits that exist to fill a gap in federal, state, and local services. Government entities, especially those involved in direct service, rely heavily on the work of nonprofits. Agencies of all types continuously work together to ensure that victims are receiving sufficient services. It is vital that all of these organizations are effectively supported, especially in times of crisis. The first step in supporting these agencies is understanding their needs – motivating the distribution

of the survey behind this report. The ICJI hopes to continually better understand the needs and challenges of victim serving agencies across the state, including its subgrantees, to best serve these agencies and thereby, the Hoosiers they serve.

