

29,000 Chicago domestic violence help line calls in 2010 draws lawmaker "alarm"

[David Ormsby](#), Springfield Political Buzz Examiner
August 11, 2011

(Chicago, IL) - August 11, 2011. The City of Chicago today reported that the 2010 call volume to the City's domestic violence help line totaled more than 29,000 calls, of which 97% were from women, drawing concern from a local state lawmaker.

According to the City of Chicago [Domestic Violence Help Line Report](#), 29,641 calls were received in 2010, down 7% from 2009.

"Though the calls to the Help Line and to the Chicago Police Department have declined slightly, local law enforcement are still receiving an average of 541 domestic-related calls for assistance each day," said **Jennifer Welch**, deputy commissioner, Division on Domestic Violence, Chicago Department of Family and Support Services.

Similarly, domestic-related calls to the Chicago Police Department were also down slightly by 1.3% in 2010 from 2009.

Despite the dip in the call volume, the sheer bulk of the domestic violence calls, the vast majority coming from women, flowing daily into city's help line drew concern from a top Illinois House Democrat.

"While I'm heartened to see a dip in domestic violence calls in Chicago, there are way too many women in this city who are being threatened and who are under siege" said State Rep. **Sara Feigenholtz** (D-Chicago). "I see this as alarming news."

The 24-hour, multilingual, toll-free telephone service connects residents to domestic violence services including shelter, counseling, legal advocacy, legal representation, children services and abuser resources.

The 2010 report states most callers were referred by law enforcement and the majority of victims experienced multiple forms of abuse. The highest volume of victim service calls took place during the months of August and September.

The report also states that victim service callers identified their abuser as either an intimate partner (90% of calls) or a household member (10% of calls).

Other key findings include:

- Callers requested between one and six services. Shelter (39%) and legal support (24%) were the most frequent requests.
- Victim service callers were mostly female (93%). Victims' ages ranged between 1 and 97 years old and averaged 34 years old.
- More than half of the victims were Black (51%), followed by White (25%) and Hispanic (21%).
- 22% of victims had a minor child, ages newborn to five years old; 47% had a child under the age of 18.
- Six percent of the victims were pregnant.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel Administration's announced no new initiatives to address domestic violence in Chicago. The Help Line was established in 1998.

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