



# Oregon Alliance to End Violence Against Women

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## SB 503

### Close the Gap in Emergency Assistance for Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Survivors

#### Current Law:

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The Temporary Assistance for Domestic Violence Survivors program (TA-DVS), established in Oregon in 1996, provides critical one-time emergency assistance of up to \$1200 to low-income survivors of domestic violence seeking safety for themselves and their children. The program can pay for emergency transportation, motel vouchers, security locks, lock changes, clothing for a family who had to flee abuse, and other emergency expenses. Payments are made to third party vendors, for safety-related emergency services for the survivor. The program saves lives by making it possible for victims with children to escape immediate danger.

#### What are the Gaps?

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- **Survivors of sexual assault are not eligible for this life-saving assistance, but should be.**
  - Victims of sexual assault suffer similar safety risks and have similar emergency needs as victims of domestic violence.
  - 1 in 6 Oregon women has been a victim of forcible rape in her lifetime.
  - Emergency assistance otherwise available to a domestic violence survivor should not be denied a low-income sexual assault victim just because her attacker was not a family member.
- **The amount of allowable assistance now covers fewer emergency needs.**
  - When the TA-DVS program was first established, in 1996, emergency payments of up to \$1,200 were authorized.
  - At that time, this amount was sufficient to pay for moving costs and first month's rent for a survivor who needed to flee the home because of safety threats. This is no longer the case.
  - Increasing the allowable assistance amount to \$2,000 would better allow the program to fulfill its purpose of helping survivors with children achieve safety.

#### What is the Proposal?

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- **Allow sexual assault survivors to access the TA-DVS program.**
- **Increase the one-time emergency assistance limit from \$1,200 to \$2,000, to better allow the program to fulfill its safety purpose.**

### SB 503 Closes the Gap in Emergency Assistance for Survivors