



THE WOMEN CENTER, INC.  
OF COLUMBIA AND  
MONTOUR COUNTIES

FY 2023-2028

# STRATEGIC PLAN

SERVING ALL VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF  
DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE





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## INTRODUCTION

The Women's Center is a nonprofit charitable organization providing comprehensive safety and support services to victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence in Columbia and Montour County.

In March of 2021, The Women's Center (TWC) kicked off an effort to develop a 5-Year Strategic Plan that would ensure the alignment of goals, objectives, and priorities and define a clear destination for the future. The plan aims to improve services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence, enhance collaboration and communication with partners and the community, increase fiscal sustainability and organizational capacity, and reinforce our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

The goals laid out in this plan will guide TWC in furthering its mission of meeting the needs of survivors, driving positive change, and engaging community aimed at ending domestic and sexual violence.



## ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

The Women's Center, Inc. (TWC) is a private, nonprofit, tax-exempt organization that was formed in 1974 and incorporated in January of 1976. The agency was founded by local volunteers concerned by the prevalence of domestic and sexual violence in the community and the lack of services available to assist victims. The Organization is one of the first programs in Pennsylvania to provide free support services to victims of domestic and sexual violence. The Women's Center, Inc. serves Columbia and Montour County. Throughout its history, the organization has evolved to meet the needs of victims in an ever-changing environment.

### **Philosophy:**

The Women's Center strives to treat all individuals equally and acknowledge diversity while fostering a socially just community free from violence.



## **MISSION AND VALUES**

### **Mission:**

The Women's Center, Inc. of Columbia/Montour provides direct services for all victims & survivors of domestic violence and sexual abuse, education & prevention activities, advocacy, and leadership in partnership with the community in their efforts aimed at eradicating domestic violence and sexual assault both individually and systemically.

### **Values:**

TWC has a set of values that guide the culture of the organization, aid in achieving a common understanding of how the organization works with survivors, the community, and each other.

Those values are:

- Empowerment & Autonomy
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Social Justice
- Community Collaboration
- Dignity and Self-worth
- Respect
- Trauma Informed & Culturally Responsive

### **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI):**

We are committed to the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion in all we do at TWC. We are interested in cultivating a diverse employee workforce, board of directors, and volunteer pool. We strive to create an environment where everyone feels able to bring their best selves to the organization each day. To accomplish this we are in the process of identifying and implementing diversity recruiting best practices to help create a more inclusive workplace.

We will continue to solidify our commitment to DEI at all levels of the organization with the goal of clarifying and cultivating a deep understanding as to why we are engaging in this work together and why equity is central to TWC and our clients' success.

Strengthening diversity, equity, and inclusion is an ongoing process, therefore, our work in these areas continues to evolve and grow into new areas. We plan to commit to actions which infuse diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout our agency as highlighted in Strategic Initiative One.



## WHO WE SERVE

TWC is committed to serving all survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking, as well as their children and non-offending family members. Domestic Violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking affect people of all backgrounds. TWC prioritizes meeting the needs of every survivor regardless of race, creed, religion, ethnic group, education level, sexual orientation, marital status, gender, gender identity, age, color, or differences in physical and mental ability. We continually work to identify and overcome barriers to service, focusing on being available to those populations that struggle the most with access to services.





## **PRIMARY SERVICES**

### **CRISIS SERVICES**

- 24-hour hotline
- Emergency shelter
- Assistance with Emergency Protection from Abuse Orders (EPFA)
- Medical Advocacy – emergency response to hospital

### **LEGAL SERVICES**

- Assistance with Temporary Protection from Abuse Orders (TPFA)
- Legal Representation at Protection from Abuse Hearings (PFA)
- Accompaniment to PFA hearings
- Accompaniment to criminal hearings and/or trials

### **EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

- Systems
- Awareness events
- Educational programming to youth

### **COUNSELING**

- Victims and survivors
- Children, including children who witness abuse
- Family members and significant others of victims

### **MEDICAL ADVOCACY**

- Training and education aimed at enhancing the health care response to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Provide support, information, resources, and referrals to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in the health care setting.

### **SYSTEMS ADVOCACY**

- Develop relationships with community partners to effect policy or procedural change.
- Improve a system's response to victims/survivors of domestic and sexual violence.





## PLANNING PARTICIPANTS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021-2022

Rona Anderson (President)  
Eric Beishline  
Renee Fawess  
Christina Francis (Secretary)  
Alison Haberstroh  
Joan McDonald (Treasurer)  
Jet Mboga  
Katherine Raker  
Gretchen Schappert  
Megan Shalongo  
Danielle Spaid

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022-2023

Rona Anderson (President)  
Laura Davis (Treasurer)  
Tina Entzminger  
Christina Francis (Secretary)  
Alison Haberstroh (Vice-President)  
Jung Kim  
Ernesto Perez  
Meghan Pontz  
Gretchen Schappert

## STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Sonia Ammar  
Paula Hopeck  
Joan McDonald  
Jet Mboga  
Christy Roberson (Executive Director)



# **THE WOMEN'S CENTER STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Women's Center, Inc. Strategic Plan is a tool the agency will use in establishing priorities and allocating resources over the next five years. TWC's vision will be accomplished through the execution of the defined strategies outlined in this document.

## **DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS USED**

This strategic plan represents a culmination of nearly two and a half years of organizational analysis, extensive feedback from clients, volunteers, staff, leadership, and the board of directors. We gathered input from community partners and stakeholders via surveys and reviewed best practices. We analyzed data to identify the most impactful actions we can take in the next five years to support survivors and their non-offending family members. We placed diversity, equity and inclusion in the forefront of our planning process to inform our approach for how we can better serve the survivors that need us most. Collectively, we decided our path forward.

The creation of the 2023-2028 strategic plan has provided an opportunity to assess what we have learned throughout recent years. The process used to develop this strategic plan included:

- A review of grants and contracts and funding prior to adoption of this strategic plan, including an assessment of the impact of contract and grant funding and service area priorities
- Third party feedback from education institutions, community partners, funders, and other external stakeholders
- Analysis of changes in the nonprofit and social services sector over the last five years
- Analysis of population and demographics, economic, public policy, political environment, and nonprofit/social service trends
- Analysis of TWC's core services and programs and policies and procedures
- Analysis of TWC's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges
- Review of staff and board recommendations from strategic planning discussion meetings

# STRATEGIC ANALYSIS DATA

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Dedicated and Passionate Staff</p> <p>Fiscally Sound Procedures and Practices</p> <p>Strong Community Partnerships</p> <p>Member of State Coalitions</p> <p>In Compliance With Funders</p> <p>Solid Professional Reputation</p>	<p>Lack of Diversity in Staffing/Board</p> <p>Lack of Staff/Overburdened Staff</p> <p>Limited/Stagnant Resources/Funding</p> <p>Stagnant Fundraising</p> <p>Lack of Adequate Technology to Keep Up with Trends</p> <p>Inadequate Staff Wage</p>
Opportunities	Challenges
<p>Expand Existing Education/Outreach to Include Web Based Activity (Social Media, PR)</p> <p>Strengthen Volunteer Program (Marketing, Training, Appreciation)</p> <p>Strengthen Donor Relations (Solicitation Strategy, Appreciation Strategy, Stewardship Plan)</p> <p>Create and Implement Fund Development Plan</p> <p>Re-establish Connections/Collaborative Efforts with Commonwealth University Bloomsburg</p> <p>Increase Collaboration with other DV/SA Centers</p> <p>Increase Staff Skill Development</p> <p>Increase Partnerships with Culturally Specific Programs</p> <p>Continue work to increase staff wages to a thriving wage</p>	<p>Hostile Competitor</p> <p>Future Funding Constraints/reductions</p> <p>Changes Within Coalition(s) Structure</p> <p>Increased Funder Mandates</p> <p>Staff Turnover/Burnout Vicarious Trauma</p> <p>Maintaining Staff Development Opportunities</p> <p>Outreach and Advocacy to Underserved Populations</p> <p>Increased Demand on Resources</p> <p>Increased Need for New Technology and Skills</p> <p>Staff/Board Diversity</p>



## STAKEHOLDERS

- Victims and Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Assault
- Donors and Funders
- Community for Service Access Outreach
- Community for Prevention Outreach
- Community Partners

## SYSTEM PARTNERS

- County Offices  
(District Attorney's Office, Victim/Witness Coordinator, Department of Human Services, Prothonotary, Sheriff's Office, etc.)
- Courts
- Law Enforcement
- Healthcare Providers
- Housing Providers
- Mental Health Providers
- Substance Use Providers
- Other Social Service Agencies
- School Districts



# **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES**

## **Strategic Initiative One:**

Infuse diversity, equity, and inclusion into the organization and programs in a meaningful way.

### **Goals:**

1. Enhance services for historically marginalized populations, increasing the diversity of clients and all programs and services.
2. Transform workforce in knowledge base, skill set, diversity, and trauma informed service provision.
3. Infuse DEI initiatives into the organization.

### **Strategies:**

1. Create and enhance partnerships with community organizations that serve marginalized/culturally specific populations.
2. Increase accessibility of services and resources for marginalized populations.
3. Increase staff knowledge and skills for working with diverse populations.
4. Continue and expand DEI initiatives.

## **Strategic Initiative Two:**

Diversify the funding sources of the organization.

### **Goals:**

1. To achieve funding diversity amongst the organization's funding sources.
2. Create a way of assessing the funding diversity of the organization that can be utilized in the future.

### **Strategies:**

1. Determine the organization's current funding diversity.
2. Set a goal for funding diversity.
3. Create a fund development plan to achieve the desired fund diversity level.
4. Implement the plan to achieve fund diversity.
5. Monitor fund development plan and update as necessary.

## **Strategic Initiative Three:**

Build organizational capacity (human resources, technology, organizational structure, organizational culture, etc.).

### **Goals:**

1. Increase staffing levels to meet the needs of the community and clients we serve.
2. Increase staff pay to a thriving wage to attract and retain talented staff.
3. Build the volunteer program to help meet the needs of the community and clients we serve.
4. Sustain and enhance teamwork through ongoing strong inter-departmental communication.
5. Upgrading technology to meet the needs of the community and clients we serve.

### **Strategies:**

1. Increase staff pay to a thriving wage.
2. Review and update recruitment and hiring practices, and review employee benefit and compensation policies.
3. Foster an organizational culture of shared purpose and accountability that is professionally and personally rewarding to, and values, its employees.
4. Ensure staff have access to the technology necessary to perform the work efficiently and effectively.
5. Ensure staff have the skills and knowledge to utilize the organization's technology effectively.

## **Strategic Initiative Four:**

Establish Board governance and development.

### **Goals:**

1. Create a Composition Analysis and Diversification standard.
2. Establish a Board Performance Review.
3. Update Board Training Procedures and create Board Accountability Standards.
4. Engage in ongoing Strategic Planning.

### **Strategies:**

1. Ensure Board diversity.
2. Increase Board performance.
3. Ensure Board members are adequately trained as per the standards.
4. Increase Board accountability.
5. Implement, monitor, and re-evaluate strategic plan.

## **Strategic Initiative Five:**

Communicate the impact of TWC to the Broader Community

### **Goals:**

1. Enhance connections with key stakeholders in the community.
2. Increase awareness and leverage within our community to proactively address and respond to issues related to domestic and sexual violence.
3. Increase TWC's visibility in the community.
4. Create a consistent and effective brand identity and messaging.

### **Strategies:**

1. Establish/enhance community partnerships that will help meet the needs of survivors.
2. Enhance partnerships to increase the overall awareness and effectiveness of programs and services, particularly focusing on non-Geisinger related healthcare, businesses, and other social service organizations.
3. Foster organization-wide community engagement efforts that deepen TWC's presence throughout the community.
4. Develop and distribute outreach and prevention materials.
5. Utilize marketing communications to support long-term advancement of the mission.

## **Strategic Initiative Six:**

Evaluate and improve services to ensure the needs of survivors are met.

### **Goals:**

1. Improve program quality by creating a meaningful evaluation plan for all programs.
2. Ensure programs/services are trauma informed and culturally responsive.
3. Ensure that programs/services meet the needs of clients.

### **Strategies:**

1. Review and update existing tools in place to ensure they are trauma informed, client centered, and culturally responsive (shelter request, goal plan packet, safety plan packet, etc.).
2. Research, select or create the tool most appropriate to evaluate existing services.
3. Develop an implementation plan for improvement of services using evaluation feedback.
4. Establish and implement an evaluation schedule.
5. Evaluate Community Partnerships.
6. Increase advocacy efforts.



# **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

## **How will we Measure Success?**

- Decline in the number of domestic-violence related fatalities
- Maintain or improve client's assessment and satisfaction with services
- Improved employee satisfaction
- Increased collaboration with Culturally Specific programs
- Increased collaboration with and referrals from healthcare providers in Columbia and Montour County
- Increased collaboration with educational institutions in Columbia and Montour County
- Increased number of requests for primary prevention/education awareness training
- Increase in community commitment to housing survivors
- Increased and more diversified funding to sustain services
- Expanded donor base