

Introduced by Legislators Hahn, Lindsay, Calarco and Muratore

RESOLUTION NO. 175 -2015, TO EDUCATE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS ABOUT THEIR RISK OF REPEATED VIOLENCE

WHEREAS, the County of Suffolk seeks to protect the health and safety of intimate and non-intimate domestic violence victims; and

WHEREAS, domestic violence is a serious problem that negatively impacts individuals, families and communities; and

WHEREAS, the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence says that 1 in 4 women will experience domestic violence in their lifetime; and

WHEREAS, 7,533 domestic violence victims (4,003 intimate partner and 3,530 other family victims) were reported by Suffolk County law enforcement agencies to the New York State Division of Criminal Justice in 2013; and

WHEREAS, according to the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, the total number of homicides decreased statewide between 2012 and 2013, however, the number of intimate partner homicides increased by 16%; and

WHEREAS, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, domestic violence accounted for 21% of all violent victimizations during the period from 2012 to 2013; and

WHEREAS, every year 3-4 million women in the U.S. are abused and 1,500-1,600 are killed by their abusers; and

WHEREAS, approximately half of victims (54% of actual intimate partner femicides; 45% of attempted) did not accurately perceive their risk – that a perpetrator was capable of killing her and/or would kill her; and

WHEREAS, approximately 83% of cases of actual or attempted femicide were seen in one of our systems; almost two-thirds had contact with the police and only 4% had been to or called a shelter; and

WHEREAS, the Suffolk County Police Department has evaluated the use of various enforcement domestic violence assessment tools and determined that the Portland Police Bureau's Risk Assessment for Intimate Partner Violence Model can be effectively implemented in Suffolk County using objective methods to assess cases and place higher priority on higher-risk cases; and

WHEREAS, women also need help in accurately perceiving their risk when they are being abused and providing domestic violence victims educational tools may encourage them to contact domestic violence support services agencies to understand the risk of their circumstances, and their potential for repeated violence; and

WHEREAS, the challenge for those who encounter abused women is to identify those with the highest level of danger and for 25 years, the Jacquelyn Campbell Danger

Assessment Instrument has been used by law enforcement, healthcare professionals, and domestic violence advocates; and

WHEREAS, Jacquelyn Campbell, PhD, RN is an expert in the area of violence against women and, since 1980 has been conducting advocacy policy work and research in the area of violence against women and women's health and was the original developer of the Danger Assessment, an instrument that helps to determine the level of danger an abused woman has of being killed by her intimate partner; and

WHEREAS, the Danger Assessment is best used to its fullest extent by a person certified to administer the assessment and interpret the scoring system, which has been updated and validated; and

WHEREAS, the Danger Assessment webinar or online training provides instructions on how to score and interpret the tool, gives background information about the development of the tool and its importance to anyone interacting with abused women and, gives recommendations for follow-up for the different score levels. It also explains the weighted scoring of the tool, which is vital to accurately determining the level of danger for the woman. A certification is provided after successful completion of a post-test; and

WHEREAS, in the absence of intervention, domestic violence can and does escalate resulting in physical injury, psychological trauma and in severe cases, death; now, therefore be it

1st RESOLVED, the Suffolk County Police Department shall establish procedures to implement the Portland Police Bureau's Risk Assessment for Intimate Partner Violence model to evaluate level of risk, and investigate cases of domestic violence that are deemed to be at the highest level of risk; be it further

2nd RESOLVED, the Suffolk County Police Department shall distribute to domestic violence victims the Danger Assessment Instrument developed by Jacquelyn Campbell, the accompanying calendar, the 20-item scoring instrument and a cover sheet providing an explanation of the tool, and in bold print referrals to those domestic violence victim services agencies currently identified on the Suffolk County Police Department, Family Offense Assistance and Court Procedures handout. Such form shall be available in English and Spanish; and be it further

3rd RESOLVED, that advocates providing services to domestic violence victims in domestic violence support services agencies which receive County funding and are identified in the Family Offense Assistance and Court Procedures handout, shall become trained to use the Danger Assessment; and be it further

4th RESOLVED, the Crime Victims Center Program at Parents for Megan's Law shall coordinate an annual Danger Assessment live webinar training for domestic violence victim services agencies identified in the Suffolk County Police Department, Family Offense Assistance and Court Procedures handout: the \$1500.00 cost of the webinar training shall be paid by the Crime Victims Center from their existing budget; and be it further

5th RESOLVED, that this Legislature, being the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) lead agency, hereby finds and determines that this resolution constitutes a Type II action pursuant to Section 617.5(c)(20), (21) and (27) of Title 6 of the NEW YORK CODE OF

RULES AND REGULATIONS (6 NYCRR) and within the meaning of Section 8-0109(2) of the NEW YORK ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION LAW as a promulgation of regulations, rules, policies, procedures, and legislative decisions in connection with continuing agency administration, management and information collection, and the Suffolk County Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is hereby directed to circulate any appropriate SEQRA notices of determination of non-applicability or non-significance in accordance with this resolution.

DATED: March 24, 2015

APPROVED BY:

/s/ Steven Bellone
County Executive of Suffolk County

Date: April 8, 2015