

Study reveals billion-dollar toll of domestic violence in California

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A comprehensive new study by Tulane University's [Newcomb Institute](#) and University of California San Diego School of [Global Policy and Strategy](#) has quantified the staggering economic impact of intimate partner violence in California, revealing billions in costs that deeply affect survivors, communities and taxpayers across the state.

The report, [“The Costs of Intimate Partner Violence in California,”](#) reveals a cost of \$73.7 billion to the state in health care, lost productivity and income, and criminal justice and response program spending for domestic violence cases in 2022 alone. This is about 2% of the gross domestic product for California.

“Too often, states do not recognize the economic as well as social and health costs resulting from intimate partner violence for survivors, families of victims and the state as a whole,” said Anita Raj, executive director of Newcomb Institute and lead author of the report. “These costs show the economic case for increased investment in prevention programs and reforms to effectively respond to domestic violence.”

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The report, which draws on data from the [2023 California Violence Experiences Survey \(CalVEX\)](#), led by the Newcomb Institute at Tulane and UCSD School of Global Policy and Strategy, found the fiscal impact of intimate partner violence amounts to almost a quarter of the state’s annual budget.

Costs are in part due to the pervasiveness of this violence against women in the state. More than half of California women experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime, according to the CalVEX survey released last fall. One in 30 women – more than 460,000 in California – experienced physical and/or sexual violence from a partner in just the past year, and those reporting these abuses in the past year faced greater health and social risks.

“Women who experienced intimate partner violence in the past year are more likely to be contending with depression, anxiety, and suicidality, and they are also more

likely to have faced recent eviction,” said [Jakana Thomas](#), a professor of political science at the School of Global Policy and Strategy and co-author on the report. “Preventing this violence has to be prioritized if we are going to address the mental health and homelessness crises in this state.”

California is one of only two states to tally the economic toll of domestic violence. Newcomb Institute and Brookings Institute released a report earlier this year, titled ["The Costs of Intimate Partner Violence in Louisiana,"](#) which found that domestic violence cost Louisiana \$10.1 billion in 2022 alone. The monetary costs per survivor amounted to approximately \$105,602 annually, or 2.5 times more than the average wage earned by women in Louisiana.

The new analysis for Louisiana and California draws attention to the underreporting of intimate partner violence to the authorities, which is a common challenge across the country and around the world that is often attributed to women’s fear of consequences from reporting and lack of trust in the criminal justice system.

The authors of both studies point out that statewide prosecution and conviction rates for domestic violence are not available. To fully understand the scope of the problem, they said more and better data are needed.