

Town of Richmond

Request for Special Appropriations

Request for Fiscal Year: 2023

Organization's Name: **Steps to End Domestic Violence**

Address: **PO Box 1535**

City, State, Zip: **Burlington Vermont 05402**

Website address **www.stepsvt.org**

**A. GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. Program Name: **Emergency Housing as well as other support services described herein**
2. Contact Person/Title: **Nicole Kubon, MSW / Executive Director**

Telephone Number: **(802) 658-3131 extension 1062**

E-mail address: **nicolek@stepsvt.org**

3. Total number of individuals served in the last complete fiscal year by this program:

**Our emergency housing program housed 196 adults and 101 children last year. Our housing program is part of the continuum of services we provide, from initial intake through our hotline, to emergency shelter, transitional housing and finally to help finding permanent housing. Steps' hotline services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

**We received 4328 calls and messages last year, and an average of more than 2 new callers every day. Our transitional housing program, which includes supportive services, offers rental assistance for between 6 to 24 months and served 20 adults last year. During this time, our clients work on career development and educational opportunities, child care, self-care, personal finances and legal matters. Advocates work with survivors to help them regain confidence in their personal finances and build employment readiness.**

**Our legal advocates provide education and support to service users in family court, including help obtaining relief from abuse orders and navigating divorce, parentage, child custody and child support cases. Last year the Legal Advocacy program provided services to 757 adults, including assisting 264 adults with relief from abuse orders. The new shelter also offered the opportunity for Steps to connect to more children from affected families and provide trauma-informed support to some of the youngest who have been impacted by domestic violence.**

**Steps provided advocacy, parenting support, and resources to 131 adults and 380 children through the Children's Program.**

**Finally, but equally important, our education and prevention programs raise public awareness about the effects of domestic violence on individuals, their families, and their communities, and teaches youth about healthy relationships. Domestic violence doesn't just affect families; its impact is felt in the community and in the workplace.**

4. Total number of the above individuals who are Town residents:  
**11 adults and 22 children.**

Please, attach any documentation that supports this number.  
**Our Annual Report attached in the email with this application.**

Percent of people served who are Town residents: **1.1%**

5. Amount of Request: **\$1,200-**  
6. Total Program Budget: **\$1,591,656**  
7. Percent of total program budget you are requesting from the Town of Richmond:

**0.075%.**

**Note: our goal to raise 3% of our annual budget from Chittenden County municipalities in proportion to each town's population.**

8. Please state or attach the mission of your agency:

**Our mission is to assist in the transition to a safe, independent life for all those who have been affected physically, sexually, emotionally, or economically by domestic abuse and to promote a culture that fosters justice, equity and safety.**

9. Funding will be used to:  
Y Maintain an existing program  
Y Expand an Existing Program  
Start a new program

10. Has your organization received funds from the Town in the past for this or a similar program? **Yes**

If yes, please answer the following:

- a. Does the amount of your request represent an increase over your previous appropriation? If yes, explain the reason(s) for the increase.  
**Last year's request (\$1,000) was based on a smaller annual budget.**
- b. Were any conditions or restrictions placed on the funds by the Selectboard? **NO**  
If yes, describe how those conditions or restrictions have been met.

## **B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

1. Statement of Need: Identify the issue or need that the program will address (use statistical data to justify the need for the program). To what extent does this need, or problem exist in the Town of Richmond?

**Domestic violence is a very old and ubiquitous problem. The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence reports (<https://ncadv.org/STATISTICS> ) that 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have experienced some form of physical violence by an intimate partner. Historically in Vermont, half of all homicides were related to domestic violence. Only one third of people who are injured by intimate partners receive medical care for their injuries. Domestic violence manifests itself well beyond physical abuse: people in abusive relationships can suffer substantial psychological and economic abuse, and childhood trauma in households experiencing abuse is common. Furthermore, lost productivity in the workplace is common. Steps meets our mission, stated above, by providing trauma-informed, culturally competent services to survivors, helping them restore their personal agency and allowing them to transition to financial and emotional independence. We have been serving the residents of Chittenden County since 1974, including residents of Richmond. Since so much domestic violence is still unspoken, there is a growing need for the kind of support Steps provides.**

**We invite you to review our current (attached with this letter) and historical Annual Reports: <https://www.stepsvt.org/what-we-do> .**

**2. Program Summary:**

- a. Identify the target/recipients of program services. Specify the number of Town residents your program will serve during the fiscal year and explain the basis upon which this number is calculated. Indicate any eligibility requirements your program has with respect to age, gender, income or residence.

**In FY'21, Steps to End Domestic Violence directly served thirty-three (33) individuals, adults and children, who identified as residing in Richmond through our shelter and housing programs. This number is alarming in itself, but does not reflect the number of those who have contacted our agency's hotline or who have chosen not to identify themselves or their place of residence. We anticipate that the demand for our services in FY'23 from Richmond and other communities will not abate but rather rise during these uncertain and volatile times. It is important to remember that the things that made this past year difficult for all of us were particularly burdensome for those affected by domestic violence – the isolation from support systems; the challenges of leaving one's home and loss of privacy; the level of stress in the home. Steps' primary eligibility requirements for accessing resources are that the individual or family resides in Chittenden County and is fleeing intimate partner violence.**

- b. Identify what is to be accomplished or what change will occur from participating in the program. How will people be better off as a result of participating in the program? Describe the steps you take to make the project known to the public, and make the program accessible and inclusive?

**Our records show that a vast majority of our program participants, including Richmond residents, are low-income. Steps directly reflects the needs of extremely vulnerable citizens and their families.**

- 1. Steps provides a 24/7 hotline that includes safety planning, emotional support, assessment for eligibility for emergency housing, educational information, referrals to other services available and follow up support.**

- 2. Our Shelter and Housing Program provides immediate and safe emergency housing through our shelter sites for victims fleeing domestic violence.**
- 3. Steps' Transitional Housing program includes supportive services and offers temporary rental assistance. During this time, survivors work towards goals such as focusing on career and educational opportunities, childcare, self care, legal matters and tenant/landlord issues.**
- 4. Our Economic Justice Program works with survivors to help regain confidence in personal finance, build employment readiness and secure transitional and permanent housing.**
- 5. Our Legal Advocacy efforts support survivors in district and family courts including relief through abuse orders, divorce, child custody and child support needs.**
- 6. Our Education and Prevention programs raises public awareness about the complex effects of domestic violence on individuals, children and communities and we achieve this through a highly effective social media network, ongoing fundraising efforts throughout the year and our relationships with community leaders and organizations. Our staff and volunteers speak at local schools, community groups and in houses of worship. We also provide brochures, resources and other materials to educate the community, such as placing these in waiting rooms at medical offices, high school classrooms, offices of clergy, corporation offices and resource tables at community organizations and events.**

### **3. Program Funding:**

- a. Identify how Town funds, specifically, will be used (i.e., funds will provide "X" amount of units of service.)

**Richmond's financial contribution supports services available to the residents of Richmond. This includes immediate access to all of our programs as described above to every resident of Richmond, regardless of whether he/she directly seeks our assistance. Our staff and volunteers will be able to expand our outreach efforts in the Richmond community, including school/classroom educational sessions. Please also see the financial component of our Annual Report.**

- b. List the other agencies to whom you are submitting a request for funds for this program and the amount requested. How would this program be modified should revenues be lost?

**We request and receive funding from town councils and select boards throughout Chittenden County. These requests are based on the number of residents in each Town, our projected expenditures, and, where we are notified, the Towns' own budget forecasts and resources. Should this revenue be lost, the residents of Chittenden County would be less served in their times of immediate needs and individual towns would see an increased burden on their town budgets' public health and safety budgets.**

**In addition, we receive funding from the following federal agencies:**

- **Housing and Urban Development's Continuum of Care Rapid Rehousing (HUD CoC RRH)**
- **Department of Justice Transitional Housing**
- **Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA)**
- **Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)**
- **STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program (STOP)**

**We receive funding from the following State agencies:**

- **Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services (VCCVS)**
- **Vermont Housing Opportunity Program's Emergency Services Grant Program (HOP ESG)**
- **Vermont HOP Coord Housing Navigation**
- **VCCVS Omnibus Act 174 and HOP 10% Administration.**

### **C. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY**

1. Describe your agency's capability to provide the program including its history, previous experience providing this service, management structure and staff expertise.\_\_\_\_

**Steps to End Domestic Violence is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in good standing with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The organization includes the formal agency led by an Executive Director who oversees a staff and volunteers and who is supported by a dedicated and well-informed board of directors. A complete list and our bios can be found at <https://www.stepsvt.org/who-we-are> .**

**We formed in 1974, as Women's House of Refuge, by a group of volunteers working together to provide safety and support to those who experienced domestic violence. Providing shelter and answering crisis calls in their own homes, these incredible women laid the foundation for what would become Steps to End Domestic Violence. You might have known us as Women Helping Battered Women, which we became in 1980.**

**In 2016, we changed our name to Steps to End Domestic Violence. This was done to better reflect the services we provide and the diversity of domestic violence - anyone can be affected, and abuse is much more than a physical act. To this point, 106 male-identified adults were served in FY'20.**

**Our ED, Nicole Kubon, has led Steps throughout the Pandemic Emergency. She led Steps' efforts, working with Champlain Housing Trust and through CARES Act funding, to acquire, renovate, and open a new emergency shelter which can serve 3 times as many folks escaping domestic violence as our previous shelter. Under her leadership Steps has developed virtual tools to reach out to the community through times of isolation and is growing our ability to serve the County.**

**Prior to her becoming Executive Director, Nicole most recently served as Director of Program Services at Steps, where she oversaw direct service delivery across the organization; hired and supervised direct service staff; and developed and monitored program budgets. Nicole gained experience working with households experiencing homelessness or housing instability as the Housing Resource Center Coordinator at the Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS) in Burlington, Vermont, working with families, single adults, veteran populations, and residents of the agency's transitional and permanent housing programs. There she supported the development of the agency's strategic planning, translating appropriate goals into operational plans and models. In that position, she gained experience developing collaborative relationships with community partners, state funders, landlords, school liaisons, and other COTS programs.**

**Her social justice background includes a stint as Program Director at Queens Community House in Queens, New York, where she supervised an after-school drop-in program for LGBTQ youth ages 13-19 and created a social justice youth training program. Her anti-violence background includes working in volunteer management and development for a domestic violence agency serving primarily Asian survivors in New York City as well as sexual assault advocacy in Detroit, Michigan, supporting the planning and implementation of a federal project created to audit the backlog of unsubmitted/unprocessed rape kits in Detroit; provided counseling and case management for sexual assault survivors; and provided legal, housing, education, and medical advocacy. Nicole holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Michigan, where she majored in women's studies and sociology; and a Master of Social Work from the University of Michigan School of Social Work, with concentrations in interpersonal practice and mental health.**

**All programming at Steps is supported and informed by the background and expertise of the Executive Director as well as program directors and coordinators trained and experienced in providing trauma-informed care and support to survivors of intimate partner violence.**

2. How will you assess whether/how program participants are better off? Describe how you will assess program outcomes. Your description should include: what (what kind of data), how (method/tool for collecting the data), from whom (source of data) and when (timing of data collection).

**Our empowerment model allows clients to establish their own goals within the framework of our services, so outcomes are highly individual. That being said, we collect and analyze data as part of a robust program planning and development effort. We also measure whether our clients become more self-sufficient as a result of our services using a self-sufficiency matrix or SSM. The SSM includes a list of domains (shelter/housing; employment; income; food, etc) and five levels running from in-crisis to empowered. The results consistently demonstrate statistically significant self-reported progress on self-sufficiency.**

3. Summarize or attach program and or service assessments conducted in the past two years. Please see above and our Annual Report, attached in the email with this application.
4. Does your organization have a strategic plan and a strategic planning process in place? **YES:** <https://www.stepsvt.org/what-we-do> . - If yes, please attach your plan.

The strategic plan should include a mission statement, goals, steps to achieve the goals, and measures that assess the accomplishments of the goals.

5. What is the authorized size of your board of directors? **Our bylaws state there can be no fewer than 5 board members. We currently have 10 members.**

How many meetings were held by the board last year? **12**

I, the undersigned, confirm the information contained herein is accurate and can be verified as such. I understand and agree that if the requested funds are approved, the disbursement of funds are subject to all conditions established by the Richmond Selectboard.

Signature of Applicant  Date 10/1/2021

**Nicole Kubon, MSW Executive Director**  
Print Name of Applicant and Title



STEPS  
TO END  
DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE

# ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Chair** Cady Goudreau

**Vice Chair** Ana Burke

**Treasurer** Gail Beck

**Secretary** Mariah Ogden

Susan Gordon

Erica Dean

Keiga Matsumoto

Agnes Cook

Jonathan Chapple-Sokol

Dear Friends,

As I reflect back on the year behind us, I am amazed by what we have been able to accomplish during a time full of hardship for so many communities, including our own.

In the face of COVID-19 and social unrest, we have been able to bring our community together in the spirit of love, support and solidarity to hold survivors close and warm hands and hearts through it all.

Emergency supplies, resources, meals and more continued to come in from donors, funders and partner organizations as we embarked on our biggest project yet – our new shelter.

The first half of the year was spent in partnership, purchasing, renovating and preparing to open the doors to a 21-room shelter and office space. Our new home. We poured over the details, from the



most important pieces, like safety and security, to the most minor, like flooring and wall colors.

And as I've come to know well in my first year as Executive Director, our community did not disappoint in helping us open our doors and create the warm welcome survivors needed in those first cold December days. Everyone lent a hand – from the contractors that managed our project to so many small businesses, community groups and individuals that donated their time, resources and supplies.

The rest of our year was all about adapting. We adapted to our new space and all of the comforts and challenges of living under one roof – especially during a pandemic. We adapted to meet new and different needs of residents, to building community in a shelter full of separate units and we continue to adapt to the increasing shortage of resources survivors need to build lives free from violence.

As we continue to navigate uncertainties, we also sit warmly in the arms of caring community and the brighter days that vaccines will bring. We stay steadfast in our commitment to social change and feel grateful for all that the love and support of those around us makes possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicole Kubon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nicole" and last name "Kubon" clearly distinguishable.

Nicole Kubon, MSW  
Executive Director

# A NEW HOME



Moving to a space that better suited our needs was a long time coming. In partnership with Champlain Housing Trust, we secured CARES Act funding through Vermont Housing & Conservation Board to move quickly and convert this former extended-stay motel into 21 individual suites, that's over 60 adults and children – with separate kitchens, bathrooms and living spaces – to ensure increased access to safe, emergency housing.



The new children's space offers a safe place to play, share and learn.

Having our entire agency under one roof has been a benefit to staff and service users alike.

We are able to provide case management, advocacy, child care, workshops and more – all just steps away from our residents' living space.

Our Director of Housing Services, Ciara Kilburn, said: "Moving into our new space means hope that there is a better tomorrow. We had one resident say that they had been to multiple shelters that had shared living spaces and they always found themselves going back to their abuser. They said that by having their own bathroom, bedroom, kitchen, and privacy they know now that they will be able to start building their life free from abuse."

# WHO WE SERVED

## **HOTLINE**

We received 4,328 calls, emails and web chats through our 24-hour hotline services with an average of 71 new callers each month. We were able to assist 1,296 people with emergency services, support and referrals.

## **EMERGENCY SHELTER**

We provided emergency shelter to 196 adults and 101 children for a total of 28,451 bednights.

## **HOUSING & ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

We provided economic advocacy and support to 247 adults and 135 children for a total of 1,200 hours. We were able to provide rental assistance

to 20 adults and 23 children as well as other emergency short-term financial assistance to an additional 60 adults and 38 children.

## **LEGAL ADVOCACY**

The Legal Advocacy program provided services to 493 adults seeking support with divorce, custody/parentage, immigration and criminal justice. We assisted 264 adults with filing for relief from abuse orders.

## **CHILDREN'S PROGRAM**

The Children and Youth Services program spent 1,505 hours providing advocacy, parenting support, and resources to 131 adults and 380 children.

## SERVICE USERS BY LOCATION



	<b>Adults</b>	<b>Children</b>
Bolton	5	6
Burlington	530	613
Charlotte	6	4
Colchester	112	122
Essex	58	51
Essex Junction	50	77
Hinesburg	13	28
Huntington	4	2
Jericho	7	14
Milton	46	56
Richmond	11	22
Shelburne	43	66
South Burlington	114	120
St. George	2	6
Underhill	5	8
Westford	2	2
Williston	25	38
Winooski	70	97
Outside Chittenden County	160	93

Many served opted not to disclose their town of residence because they felt unsafe doing so. It should be assumed that the numbers for each town are under-reported.

Last year's reinvented fundraiser, Steps for Social Change, was created as a way to persevere during the pandemic and stay true to the spirit of its predecessors – the Run for Empowerment and Take Steps in Their Shoes.

The new, month-long event focused on self-care as it relates to physical wellness, healing from trauma, avoiding burnout and more – caring for ourselves while caring for our community.

Individuals and teams made personal wellness goals, local businesses hosted workshops and virtual classes and, in the end, an incredible \$42,700 was raised! We can't wait to do it again – stay tuned for details!



**Move your body, make a difference**



# THANKS FOR MAKING IT POSSIBLE

While the COVID-19 pandemic made in-person volunteering virtually impossible this year, it did not stop people from supporting those who have experienced domestic violence. We are grateful for individuals and businesses who donated much-needed items to make our transition into a new facility a smooth one.

You helped us by providing:

- Bedding, linens, pots and pans, dishes, toiletries
- Cookies for residents who loved the sweet treats
- Back-to-school supplies galore
- Toys, stuffed animals and other gifts during the annual Holiday Giving Program
- Raised beds, soil, vegetables and flowers all set up and planted on site by volunteers
- Funds to help us outfit and upgrade our new space including grants from the Mary Kay Foundation and St. Michael's College Fix It With Five





## CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

This year Steps to End Domestic Violence said “so long” to one of its most beloved, longest-serving staff members. Ikey Spear, who dedicated 23 years to helping children and families impacted by domestic violence, retired as 2020 drew to a close.

From her amazing sense of humor to her genuine care for all with whom she worked, Ikey has left a lasting impression on our organization and our community.

Ikey was honored by Sen. Kesha Ram, top right, and Rep. Ann Pugh, with a resolution recognizing her incredible career and community contributions.

Sophia Thurau-Gray, who learned from the best while interning with Ikey, has taken the reigns as Youth Advocate and will see that the program continues to provide the best service to participants.

The Children's Program now has a full-time Advocate and includes more groups, emotional support to moms and kids, and help with childcare.

“With the shift to a larger shelter we have increased both the number of families we can serve and the size of families we can serve. As the Youth Advocate I have the pleasure of creating a fun and open space for kids to be kids and have fun,” Sophia said.



# FINANCES

## Revenue

Federal Grants	\$	514,332.25
State Grants	\$	395,579.95
Foundation Grants	\$	281,118.55
United Way	\$	6,897.57
Municipal Contributions	\$	5,384.38
General Contributions	\$	147,111.58
Fundraising Income	\$	108,772.53
Investment Income	\$	58,822.68

<b>Subtotal-support and revenue</b>	\$	1,518,019.49
Other revenue	\$	1,912.17

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Total \$ 1,519,931.66

## Expenses

### Program services

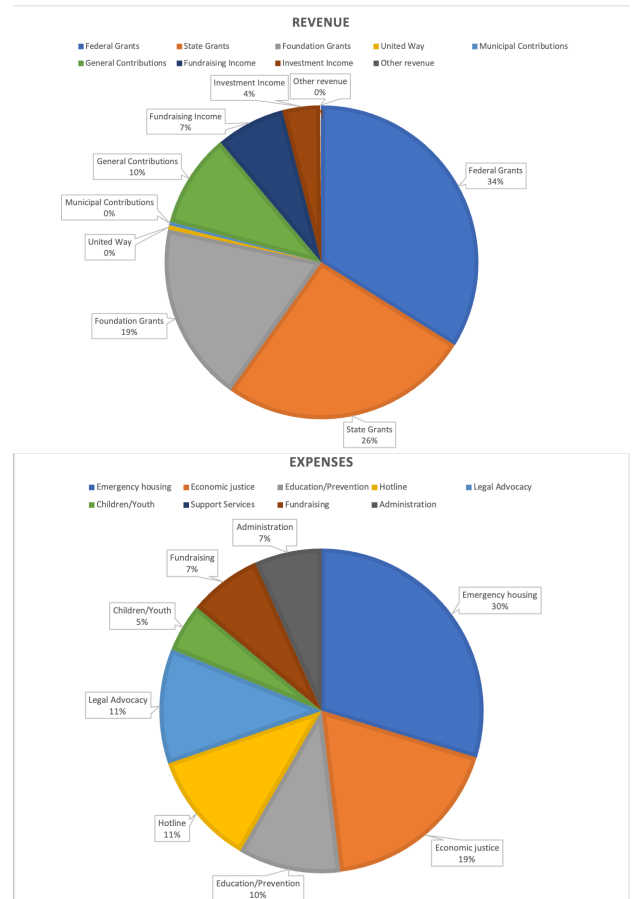
Emergency housing	\$	402,662.62
Economic justice	\$	250,524.64
Education/Prevention	\$	138,620.99
Hotline	\$	154,467.48
Legal Advocacy	\$	154,970.20
Children/Youth	\$	65,707.60

### Support Services

Fundraising	\$	98,544.63
Administration	\$	91,134.45

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Total \$ 1,356,632.61





Steps to End Domestic Violence  
PO Box 1535, Burlington, VT, 05402