



Calvert Safe
Housing Network



Calvert Safe Housing Network

Housing Resource Guide

for Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence

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Introduction

The mission of the Calvert Safe Housing Network (CSHN) is to ensure safe and supportive housing for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Our vision is to help individuals and families rebuild their lives through stable housing, healing, and hope. A safe home is a right for everyone.

Leaving an abusive relationship takes incredible courage—but without a safe place to go, it can feel like an impossible choice between homelessness and staying in harm's way. That's why CSHN created this housing resource guide: to equip survivors with clear, accessible information on available housing programs, including how to apply and who qualifies. Our goal is to help survivors feel more informed, empowered, and supported in their search for safe, stable housing.

If you're in immediate danger, call 911. If you're planning to leave an abusive situation, keep this guide in a secure place. A safety plan is included at the back—it's a tool to help you think through how to protect yourself both while living with abuse and when preparing to leave. You can also contact any of the domestic or sexual violence programs listed in this guide for support, guidance, and connection to resources.

What You Will Find in This Guide:

- Information on domestic and sexual violence resources, including emergency and transitional housing programs in Calvert County, as well as select programs in nearby counties and statewide services.
- Resources for housing programs not exclusively for domestic or sexual violence survivors, but that can still offer safe and supportive housing options for individuals and families seeking safety.
- Key details for each housing program so survivors can know exactly what services are offered, eligibility requirements, disability accessibility, and how to apply. Survivors and advocates can call Calvert Safe Housing Network (443-432-5732) for housing counseling and support. More housing resources are available on our website at <https://calvertsafehousingnetwork.org>.

How to Use This Guide

For Survivors

If you're unsure whether a program is a good fit for your situation, don't hesitate to call and ask. For example, some domestic violence (DV) programs also support survivors of sexual assault, elder abuse, LGBTQ+ survivors, or those escaping trafficking. Program requirements can vary—some may serve only those in immediate danger, while others (especially transitional housing programs) may support anyone who has experienced abuse within the past five years.

Be sure to ask whether services and referrals offered by a program are optional or required as part of your participation in the program. Some programs may expect residents to attend support groups, counseling sessions, or follow up on referrals. If participation is mandatory, ask if there's any flexibility, especially if you work nights or have scheduling conflicts that could make attendance difficult.

Consider asking if you'll be connected with a caseworker or advocate to help you access resources. If so, find out how often you'll be meeting with them and what kind of support they can provide.

It's a good idea to ask if the program allows flexibility with time limits—many offer extensions if you haven't yet secured permanent housing.

Many housing programs in this guide require a referral from a case manager as part of the application process. If you're a survivor of domestic and/or sexual violence and don't currently have a case manager or advocate, you can contact CSHN at (443) 432-5732[1]. An advocate can help you with referrals and provide housing counseling support.



For Advocates

This guide is written for survivors of domestic and sexual violence, offering practical information to help them navigate options for emergency, transitional, and permanent housing. At the same time, it can also serve as a resource for advocates and service providers who are supporting survivors. Advocates can use this guide to better understand housing pathways, identify available resources, and strengthen the support they provide to their clients.

For help in identifying additional resources, please reach out for case-specific support by emailing CSHN at info@calvertsafehousing.org or calling (443) 432-5732.

Programs and services often change, so if you come across outdated information or know of a new resource that should be included, please let us know by emailing info@calvertsafehousing.org.

Tips for Staying Safe and Protecting Your Privacy When Looking for Housing

Finding safe housing can be an important step toward your safety, healing, and stability. We know that this process may sometimes feel overwhelming, especially when you're asked to share personal information. You have rights that protect your privacy. Laws like the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) limit how your information can be shared. Programs and providers who support survivors should always put your confidentiality first, take your safety seriously, and work to reduce risks along the way.

For survivors, your safety and privacy matter most. Here are some reminders to help you as you search for housing and support:

1. Stay safe when communicating

- Try not to use shared or monitored devices when looking up housing or reaching out for help. Safer options can include computers at a library, shelter, or community center.
- Be mindful of what gets left behind—like browsing history or emails—that someone else might see. Tools like private browsing or VPNs can help.
- Make a plan with people you trust about the safest ways to contact you. Some survivors use a code word for extra protection.

2. Know your rights to privacy

- Laws like the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) are designed to protect survivors' confidentiality.
- Ask housing programs or service providers about how they keep your information safe.
- Share only what feels comfortable to you—you are in control of your story.
- Don't hesitate to ask how your information is being recorded and stored.

3. Use housing and emergency services that support survivors

- Coordinated Entry systems can help connect you to housing based on your needs, and some have special options for survivors.
- In an emergency, you may be able to access services quickly without going through a full assessment.
- For immediate support, you can reach the Calvert Safe Housing Network at [X] or the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233).

4. Make sure the housing program feels safe

- Notice whether private spaces are available when you first meet with staff.
- Ask about safety measures, like security protocols, that are important for survivors.
- Learn about the program's emergency transfer policy in case you ever need to move for your safety.

5. Build your circle of support

- Connect with victim service providers and advocates who understand housing options for survivors.
- Lean on trusted friends, family, or allies who can offer emotional support and help you along the way.

By taking steps to protect your confidentiality and safety, you can connect with the housing resources you need to rebuild, heal, and move forward in a safe and stable home.

 Additional Resources: [Safety Net Project Survivor Toolkit \(link\)](#)

Immediate Safety & Crisis Resources

24/7 Domestic Violence Hotlines (Local and National)

If you are experiencing abuse or worried about your safety, you are not alone. Local and national hotlines are available 24/7 to offer confidential support whenever you need it. Trained advocates are there to listen without judgment, help you make a safety plan, and connect you with resources like shelters, legal help, and other support services. You can reach out by calling, texting, or chatting online—whatever feels safest for you.

Emergency Shelter Options

If you need to leave an unsafe situation, domestic violence shelters can provide a safe and confidential place for you and your family right away. These shelters not only give you a secure place to stay, but also offer support like safety planning, counseling, and help with everyday needs. Many shelters can also guide you toward more stable, long-term housing. To get started, you can call your local domestic violence hotline or shelter, where an advocate will listen to your situation and help connect you with available space and services.

Safety Planning Support

Safety planning is an important way to protect yourself and support your healing. It means thinking through steps you can take to stay safe right now, in a crisis, or when making choices about leaving or reaching out for help.

- If you're experiencing domestic violence, a safety plan might include ways to protect yourself and your children, keep important documents secure, and find safe ways to communicate.
- If you're a survivor of sexual assault, your plan might focus on identifying safe people and places, preparing for possible triggers, and caring for both your physical and emotional safety.

Every survivor's situation is different. You don't have to do this alone—advocates at

domestic and sexual violence programs can work with you to create a plan that feels right for you.

Legal Protection (e.g., Restraining Orders, Police Assistance)

You have legal options that can help protect your safety. Restraining orders—sometimes called protection or no-contact orders—can limit an abuser’s ability to contact you or come near you. If you ever feel unsafe, you can also ask the police for immediate help or to enforce an order that’s already in place. These protections are available through local courts, and you don’t have to go through the process alone.

Victim advocates and legal aid organizations can stand beside you and guide you each step of the way. To learn more or get started, reach out to your local domestic or sexual violence program, legal aid office, or your courthouse.

Resources:

- National Domestic Violence Hotline is available at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or via [thehotline.org](https://www.thehotline.org).
- National Sexual Assault Hotline (RAINN) – 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or [rainn.org](https://www.rainn.org).
- Maryland Coalition Against Domestic Violence – list of statewide DV programs ([link](#))
- Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault – list of statewide crisis centers ([link](#))
- Calvert Crisis Response Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Hotline available 24/7: 1-877-467-5628
- Calvert Safe Housing Network ([link](#))
- Calvert County Family Law Assistance ([link](#))
- Calvert County Courthouse ([link](#))



Types of Housing Assistance

Emergency Domestic Violence Housing

If you are in crisis, emergency domestic violence (DV) housing programs can give you and your children a safe and supportive place to stay. These programs are designed with your safety, comfort, and healing in mind, and often look and feel different than traditional shelters. For everyone's protection, the locations are often kept confidential. This means residents are usually asked not to share the address – even with loved ones.

Emergency DV housing programs are often set in home-like environments that offer comfort and a sense of safety during a difficult time. Sometimes residents are asked to help with shared responsibilities like cleaning and preparing meals, which helps create a sense of community and mutual support. Length of stays can vary; however, programs may be flexible and will work with you based on your needs and when you're able to move to alternative housing.

Emergency DV housing programs have advocates on staff to support survivors and their families as they work toward safety, stability, and healing. Advocates help connect residents with the resources they need, including:

- Filing for protection orders or getting legal support
- Securing important documents like birth certificates, Social Security cards, or IDs
- Applying for public benefits or housing assistance
- Connecting to counseling, support groups, or mental health and substance use services
- Enrolling children in school and accessing resources for families

To expand your options, you may want to explore DV emergency housing programs not only locally but also across the wider region, including Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia. The next section highlights available programs in Maryland and nearby areas.

Resources:

Angel Watch Shelter – Charles County

11670 Doolittle Drive Waldorf, MD 20602

Phone: (301) 274-0680

Web: <https://www.catholiccharitiesdc.org/program/angels-watch-shelter/>

Population Served: Women and their children fleeing domestic violence or homelessness in southern Maryland

Services Provided: The family shelter provides up to 45 days of emergency housing along with case management and referrals to needed services.

Admission Process: Angel's Watch Shelter accepts referrals from Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's counties (Department of Social Services); Charles County Sheriff Department; Center for Abused Persons; and Walden Sierra.

Eligibility: Must be fleeing domestic violence or experiencing homelessness.

Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Documents Required: Call for information.

Safe Harbor Domestic Violence Shelter for Women & Children

P.O. Box 980, Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Hotline: 1-877-467-5628

Phone: (410) 535-5400 x384

Website: <https://safe-harbor.ueniweb.com>

Population Served: Women and children who are victims/survivors of domestic violence, child abuse, and sexual assault in Calvert County.

Services Provided: Residential shelter, crisis intervention, advocacy, case management, and referrals for mental health or substance use treatment.

Admission Process: Contact Calvert Center for Change for more information on Safe Harbor Shelter at (410) 535-5400, x384.

Eligibility: Survivors of domestic or sexual violence needing safe housing.

Hours: 24 hours/day, 7 days/week.

Documents required: Call for information.



Resources:

Lifestyles of Maryland

Case managers are available in the Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's offices to discuss the client's needs and connect them with available resources

Calvert County Office: 301 Steeplechase Drive, Suite 104, Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Phone: (301) 609-9900 ext 601

Charles County Office: 101 Catalpa Dr. Suite 103, La Plata, MD 20646

Phone: (301) 609-9900

St. Mary's County Office: 21795-F N. Shangri-La Dr., Lexington Park, MD 20653

Phone: (240) 237-8236

Toll-Free: 1-866-293-0623

Website: <https://lifestylesofmd.org>

Population Served: Women and children fleeing domestic violence—in Charles and St. Mary Counties.

Services Provided: Emergency safe housing, case management, transportation, counseling referrals, and other resources.

Admission Process: Call or email HousingAndHomelessServices@lifestylesofmd.org for information.

Eligibility: Must be experiencing homelessness and, upon entry, have no open warrants, be sober, and not be a registered sex offender.

Hours: Mon - Fri, 9:30 am - 5 pm

Documents Required: Call for information.

Accessible Services & Accommodations: ADA-accessible shelter available; call to confirm.

Emergency Housing (Not Specifically for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survivors)

If a domestic violence (DV) emergency housing program is full, you still have options. Some survivors find safety by turning to emergency housing programs for women and families who are homeless. While these programs may not offer the same DV-specific services or confidential locations, they can still provide a safe place in a crisis. Many also have caring caseworkers who can help connect you to DV-specific resources and work with you on finding more stable, long-term housing.

The following section lists some of the emergency housing options for women available locally, as well as programs across the state.

Resources:

Project Echo - Calvert County

484 Main St., Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Phone: (410) 535-0044

Website: <https://projectecho.net/>

Population Served: Individuals and families experiencing homelessness—men, women, and families—in Calvert County.

Services Provided: Emergency shelter, supportive housing, case management, and referrals for employment, education, and health/wellness services.

Admission Process: Walk-in clinic on Wednesdays between 12 pm and 4 pm at 484 Main St. Prince Frederick, MD.

Eligibility: Must be experiencing homelessness and, upon entry, have no open warrants, be sober, and not be a registered sex offender.

Hours: Mon - Fri, 10 am – 6 pm

Documents Required: Bring a photo id.

Three Oaks Center-Lexington Park

46905 Lei Dr Lexington Park, MD 20653

Phone: (301) 863-9535

Website: <https://threeoakscenter.org/>

Population Served: Individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Southern Maryland (men, women, children, veterans).

Services Provided: Emergency shelter; financial assistance, counseling, and other supports to prevent eviction or homelessness; rapid rehousing; permanent supportive housing; outreach; and case management.

Admission Process: Call Three Oaks for phone or coordinated entry intake; case managers assess eligibility and place individuals into programs, some of which require documentation or a referral.

Eligibility: Individuals 18 years and older experiencing homelessness from Calvert, Charles or St. Mary's Counties.

Hours: Mon - Fri, 8 am - 4 pm

Documents Required: Call for information.

Resources:

Temporary Shelter / Seasonal Shelter

Safe Nights of Calvert County

484 Main St., Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Phone: (410) 535-0044

Website: <https://www.safenightsofcalvert.com/>

Population Served: Individuals and families seeking temporary shelter from extreme cold weather.

Services Provided: Cold weather shelter, run by volunteers that typically operates from late fall to late winter.

Host churches provide a warm cot and three nutritious meals (dinner, breakfast, and a bag lunch) within a safe environment.

Admission Process: Interested individuals can apply by calling the Safe Nights Intake Line at (410) 535-0044 between 10 am and 5 pm during the seasonal shelter period.

Eligibility: Safe Nights serves adults and families experiencing homelessness from Calvert County who can provide ID, pass a background check, are drug- and alcohol-free, can care for themselves, and agree to follow shelter guidelines. Individuals must be 18 or older unless accompanied by a parent

Hours: Shelters operate from 7 pm to 7 am daily during the winter months. Exact dates may vary year to year. Contact Safe Nights for details.

Documents Required: Identification

Domestic Violence Transitional Housing Programs

Domestic violence transitional housing programs give you and your children a safe, longer-term place to begin rebuilding your life after abuse. These programs provide a higher level of safety and stability while helping you work toward permanent housing.

While you're there, you'll have the support of advocates who can help you as you work on your goals—whether that's finding a job, addressing legal issues, or building financial independence. Many programs also provide support for healing from the emotional and physical effects of abuse, such as chronic health challenges, depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) -- a common response to experiencing trauma, like domestic violence that can cause ongoing feelings of fear, anxiety, or being "on edge," as well as nightmares, flashbacks, or avoiding reminders of the abuse.

In most programs, families have their own apartments and can stay for one to two years, depending on what you need and what the program allows. This gives you the chance to focus on safety, healing, and creating a stable future for you and your family.

Resources:

Lifestyles of Maryland

Case managers are available in the Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's offices to discuss the client's needs and connect them with available resources

Calvert County Office: 301 Steeplechase Drive, Suite 104, Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Phone: (301) 609-9900 ext 601

Charles County Office: 101 Catalpa Dr. Suite 103, La Plata, MD 20646

Phone: (301) 609-9900

St. Mary's County Office: 21795-F N. Shangri-La Dr., Lexington Park, MD 20653

Phone: (240) 237-8236

Toll-Free: 1-866-293-0623

Website: <https://lifestylesofmd.org>

Population Served: Women and children fleeing domestic violence—in Charles and St. Mary Counties.

Services Provided: Provides short-term housing (up to 24 months) plus career and life skills training for individuals and families fleeing DV in Southern Maryland.

Admission Process: Call or email HousingAndHomelessServices@lifestylesofmd.org for information.

Eligibility: Survivors fleeing DV, participation in case management, rent determined by verified income (contact to confirm details)

Hours: Mon - Fri, 9:30 am - 5 pm

Documents Required: Call for information.

Accessible Services & Accommodations: Contact to confirm.

Transitional Housing Programs (Not Specifically for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survivors)

If you are experiencing homelessness because of domestic or sexual violence, transitional housing (not specifically for domestic and/or sexual violence survivors) may be another option when DV-specific programs are full or unavailable. The application process can look a little different from DV transitional housing.

- If you are a single woman, you may need a referral from an advocate at one of the emergency housing programs listed earlier in this guide, or from another service provider in the community.
- If you are a woman with children, many programs will ask for a “declaration of homelessness” letter. This letter can be provided by:
 - a domestic violence or sexual assault advocate
 - an outreach worker
 - a staff member at a community meal program
 - a caseworker at the Calvert Center for Change

Advocates and service providers are there to guide you, answer questions, and make sure you have the support you need to take the next step.

Resources:

Lifestyles of Maryland

Case managers are available in the Charles, Calvert and St. Mary’s offices to discuss the client’s needs and connect them with available resources

Calvert County Office: 301 Steeplechase Drive, Suite 104, Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Phone: (301) 609-9900 ext 601

Charles County Office: 101 Catalpa Dr. Suite 103, La Plata, MD 20646

Phone: (301) 609-9900

St. Mary's County Office: 21795-F N. Shangri-La Dr., Lexington Park, MD 20653

Phone: (240) 237-8236

Toll-Free: 1-866-293-0623

Website: <https://lifestylesofmd.org>

Population Served: Individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Southern Maryland.

Services Provided: Provides short-term housing (up to 24 months) plus career and life skills training.

Admission Process: Call or email HousingAndHomelessServices@lifestylesofmd.org for information.

Eligibility: Individuals and families from the Tri-County area experiencing or at risk of homelessness, participation in case management, rent determined by verified income (contact to confirm details).

Hours: Mon - Fri, 9:30 am - 5 pm

Documents Required: Call for information.

Rapid Rehousing

Rapid Rehousing can help you and your family quickly move into safe, stable housing if you're experiencing homelessness because of domestic or sexual violence. This program is short- to medium-term and usually offers rental assistance for 3 to 24 months, along with help finding permanent housing and ongoing support.

With Rapid Rehousing, you can get connected to case managers and advocates who can link you to community resources. The goal is to shorten the time you spend without a home and support your long-term stability.

You can access Rapid Rehousing through your local domestic violence or sexual assault program, as well as homeless service providers in your area.

The next section highlights rapid rehousing options available in the Tri-County Area—Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties—and across the region. To help you find the best fit, programs are grouped by those specifically for survivors and those open to anyone in need of support.

DV Specific Resources:

Lifestyles of Maryland

Case managers are available in the Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's offices to discuss the client's needs and connect them with available resources

Calvert County Office: 301 Steeplechase Drive, Suite 104, Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Phone: (301) 609-9900 ext 601

Charles County Office: 101 Catalpa Dr. Suite 103, La Plata, MD 20646

Phone: (301) 609-9900

St. Mary's County Office: 21795-F N. Shangri-La Dr., Lexington Park, MD 20653

Phone: (240) 237-8236

Toll-Free: 1-866-293-0623

Website: <https://lifestylesofmd.org>

Population Served: Women and children fleeing domestic violence—in Charles and St. Mary Counties.

Services Provided: Rapid Rehousing rental assistance, case management, plus career and life skills training.

Admission Process: Call or email HousingAndHomelessServices@lifestylesofmd.org for information.

Eligibility: Individuals and families from the Tri-County area experiencing or at risk of homelessness, participation in case management, rent determined by verified income (contact to confirm details).

Hours: Mon - Fri, 9:30 am - 5 pm

Documents Required: Call for information

Resources (Not Specifically for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survivors) :

Three Oaks Center-Lexington Park

46905 Lei Dr Lexington Park, MD 20653

Phone: (301) 863-9535

Website: <https://threeoakscenter.org/>

Population Served: Individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Southern Maryland (men, women, children, veterans).

Services Provided: Rapid rehousing rental assistance; financial assistance, counseling, and other supports to prevent eviction or homelessness; rapid rehousing; permanent supportive housing; outreach; and case management.

Admission Process: Call Three Oaks for phone or coordinated entry intake; case managers assess eligibility and place individuals into programs, some of which require documentation or a referral.

Eligibility: Individuals 18 years and older experiencing homelessness from Calvert, Charles or St. Mary's Counties.

Hours: Mon -Fri, 8 am - 4 pm

Documents Required: Call for information.



Permanent Supportive Housing

Permanent Supportive Housing gives individuals and families with disabilities a safe, affordable home for the long term, along with voluntary support services to support healing and stability. To qualify, at least one household member must have a documented disability. With PSH, you'll sign a lease like any other tenant and typically pay no more than 30% of your income toward rent and utilities.

It was originally created for people with complex needs—like serious health conditions, mental illness, or a history of substance use—but it now serves many groups, including families, young people aging out of foster care, and individuals living with HIV/AIDS.

As a resident, you'll have access to voluntary services such as case management, counseling, and other supports offered by nonprofits or government agencies. These services are there to help you maintain housing, focus on your goals, and create a stable future.

The following section lists permanent supportive housing options for women and families in the Tri-County Area, including Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's counties, and across the region.

Resources:

Three Oaks Center-Lexington Park

46905 Lei Dr Lexington Park, MD 20653

Phone: (301) 863-9535

Website: <https://threeoakscenter.org/>

Population Served: Individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Southern Maryland (men, women, children, veterans).

Services Provided: Permanent supportive housing and case management; financial assistance, counseling, and other supports to prevent eviction or homelessness.

Admission Process: Call Three Oaks for phone or coordinated entry intake; case managers assess eligibility and place individuals into programs, some of which require documentation or a referral.

Eligibility: Individuals 18 years and older experiencing homelessness from Calvert, Charles or St. Mary's Counties.

Hours: Mon - Fri, 8 am - 4 pm

Documents Required: Call for information.

Rental Assistance & Financial Support

Local Housing Vouchers

Housing vouchers can help make rent more affordable so you and your family can have a safe, stable place to live. With a voucher, you pay about 30% of your income toward rent, and the rest is covered through your local public housing agency. This support can ease the burden of housing costs and give you more freedom to focus on your healing, family, and future.

Below is a summary of housing voucher options that may be available to survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence.

Voucher Type	Who Provides It	Key Features	Target Population
Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV)	HUD via PHAs	Short-term rental help for DV survivors; includes housing search services	Survivors fleeing DV, SA, stalking, or trafficking
Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8)	HUD via PHAs	Long-term rental help; VAWA protections for survivors	Low-income families; survivors can transfer under VAWA
State/Local DV Housing Vouchers	State or Local Housing Authorities	Flexible rental help or relocation support; varies by location	DV survivors; eligibility depends on local policy
HUD-VASH (for Veterans)	HUD & VA	For eligible veterans fleeing DV; includes case management	Veterans experiencing or fleeing DV
Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly	HUD via nonprofit organizations	Provides affordable housing with supportive services for very low-income elderly individuals; includes rent subsidies and service coordination	Elderly individuals (age 62+) with very low income, including those who may be survivors of domestic violence

To access housing vouchers, you may need a referral from a domestic violence or sexual assault program, or from a homeless service provider who can help guide you through the process. Below is a list of Housing Authorities serving the Tri-County Area—Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary’s counties—as well as other agencies across the region.

Resources:

Housing Authority of Calvert County

480 Main Street, Prince Frederick,
MD 20678

Phone: (410) 535-5010

Email: Use Online Form ([link to form](#))

Website: www.calverthousing.org

Hours: Mon - Fri, 9 am - 3 pm, *By Appointment*

Charles County Housing Authority

8190 Port Tobacco Rd.
Port Tobacco, MD 20677

Phone: (301) 934-9305 or (301) 870-3388

Website: www.charlescountymd.gov/services/health-and-human-services/housing-services/housing-authority

Hours: Mon – Fri, 8 am - 4:30 pm

Housing Authority of St. Mary’s County

21155 Lexwood Drive, Suite C,
Lexington Park, MD 20653

Email: mail@stmaryshousing.org

Phone: (301) 880-7074

Website: www.stmaryshousing.org

Hours: Mon – Thu: 8 am – 4 pm, Fri: 8 am – 3 pm

Short-term Financial Assistance (Rent, Deposits, Utilities)

If you’re facing urgent housing costs, short-term financial assistance can help cover expenses like rent, security deposits, or utility bills. This support is meant to prevent homelessness, help you make a safe transition, or stabilize your housing. You can usually access this kind of help through domestic violence programs, housing agencies, or local nonprofits. The following section lists select resources for financial support for women and families in the Tri-County Area, including Calvert, Charles and St. Mary’s counties

Resources:

Calvert Family Advocates

P.O. Box 1861, Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Email: calfamadv@gmail.com

Phone: *Calvert County Dept. of Social Services:* (443) 550-6969

Website: <https://www.calfam.org/>

About: Calvert Family Advocates is the Social Services Advisory Board for Calvert County, which provides us unique insight into the current challenges faced by local families.

Services: We provide financial assistance only to individuals referred to us by the Calvert County Department of Social Services (DSS) or the Calvert County Public Schools.

Emergency Assistance to Families with Children, Calvert County Department of Social Services

200 Duke Street, Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Phone: 443-550-6900

Email: calvert.dss@maryland.gov

Website: <https://dhs.maryland.gov/weathering-tough-times/emergency-assistance>

Emergency Assistance to Families with Children (EAFC) provides emergency cash assistance to families who need emergency help paying rent or utilities or for other emergencies. These funds are available through the local department once every two years when funds are available.

Eligibility:

- Families must have one or more children under 21 living with them.

- Families must present proof that they have an emergency that was not caused by a family member quitting a job.
- Families must present an eviction notice from utility company that services have been/will be cut off or other proof of an emergency.

Apply at your local Department of Social Services in person. You may also file an application by mail, fax or other electronic means or someone may drop an application off for you.

Apply online: Go to <https://MarylandBenefits.gov/home/#/>

For additional requirements, see their website.

Financial Assistance, Lifestyles of Maryland Foundation

Calvert County Office: 301 Steeplechase Drive, Suite 104, Prince Frederick, MD 20678
Phone: (301) 609-9900, ext 601

St. Mary's County Office: 21795-F North Shangri-La Drive, Lexington Park, MD, 20653
Phone: (240) 237-8236

Website: <https://lifestylesofmd.org/financial-assistance/>

Eligibility: Residents of Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's County 18 years and older who meet income qualifications.

Hours: Mon - Fri, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 pm

Resources:

Services: Provides financial assistance for those in need, including: Rent or utility assistance, includes past-due and future rent payments and Rapid re-housing funding.

For financial assistance, complete online form at <https://lifestylesofmd.org/financial-assistance/>.

Note: The link also contains a list of required documents needed to complete the form.

Neighbors Eager to Serve

7300 Indian's Head Highway, Bryans Road, MD 20616

Phone: 301-375-8576

Email: netseagertoserve@verizon.net

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NETSSoMD/>

Services: Financial assistance for food, clothing, and rental assistance.

Eligibility: Residents of Western Charles County.

Hours: Wed 10 am - 1pm

New Hope Community Outreach Services

4196 Old Washington Road, Waldorf, MD 20602

Phone: (301) 843.3887 ext 802

Email: info@nhcosinc.org

Web: <https://www.nhcos.org>

About: NHCOS is a community outreach organization that provides food, clothing, and career development programs to individuals and families in Charles County, Maryland.

Services: Provides food, clothing, and resources to individuals and families in

need in Charles County, MD, and its surrounding communities six (6) days a week; Offers employment development, computer training, and job counseling services; Housing support and workforce.

To request assistance, complete online form via their website.

Office of Home Energy Program, Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee

8371 Old Leonardtown Road, 3rd Floor, Hughesville, MD 20637

Phone: 301-274-0637

Email: OHEP@smtccac.org

Website: <https://www.smtccac.org/office-of-home-energy-program.aspx>

About: Assists households with utilities that are at risk of being shut off.

Services: Utility Assistance

Eligibility: Residents in Calvert County, Charles County, and St. Mary's County; Eligibility is determined based on the size of your household and how much money you made in the last 30 days.

Requests for assistance can be made in-person, by mail, online or by phone. To find out more information, see the [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Hours: Mon-Fri 8 am - 5 pm

Flexible Funding Programs for Survivors

Flexible funding is a type of short-term financial assistance created specifically for survivors of domestic or sexual violence. It's designed to put you in control by giving you support you can use for what matters most to your safety and stability—like rent, moving costs, childcare, transportation, or replacing essential items. These programs are meant to reduce barriers and give you the freedom to make the choices that work best for your unique situation. You can usually find flexible funding through domestic violence programs or community-based organizations. The following section lists select local, state, and national resources for financial support for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Resources:

FreeFrom is a national organization that helps survivors of abuse build financial security and long-term stability. One of their programs, the Survivor Safety Fund, offers unrestricted cash grants of up to \$500 that you can use for basic needs. To learn more or apply, visit freefrom.org/survivors.

Calvert Safe Housing Network, a local nonprofit, offers emergency housing for victims of domestic and sexual violence, including flexible financial assistance. Contact them at (443) 432-5732 or info@calvertysafehousing.org to learn more.



TANF, SNAP, and Other Public Assistance

Public benefits can help ease some of the financial stress you may face as you work toward safety and stability. These programs are designed to meet basic needs and support you and your family:

- SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program): Helps you buy groceries.
- TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families): Provides monthly cash assistance for families with children.
- WIC (Women, Infants, and Children): Offers nutrition support for pregnant people, new parents, and children under age 5.
- Medicaid: Provides free or low-cost health insurance.
- Childcare Subsidies: Help cover childcare costs so you can work or go to school.

You can apply for these programs online or through your local Department of Social Services. Advocates from domestic violence or sexual assault programs can often walk with you through the process and provide documentation or referrals if needed. These resources exist to support your safety, reduce financial pressure, and help you move toward independence.

Below is a list of resources to help access public benefits in the Tri-County Area—Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary’s counties—as well as additional agencies serving the broader region.

Resources:

Department of Social Services

Calvert County

200 Duke Street
Prince Frederick, Maryland 20678
Phone: (443) 550-6900
Email: calvert.dss@maryland.gov
Hours: 8 am – 4:30 pm

Charles County

200 Kent Avenue
LaPlata, Maryland 20646
Phone: (301) 392-6400
Email: charles.codss@maryland.gov
Hours: 8 am – 4:30 pm

St. Mary’s County – 2 locations

23110 Leonard Hall Dr
Leonardtown, MD 20650

20331 Point Lookout Road
Suite C, Great Mills. MD 20634

Phone: (240) 895-7000
Hours: 8:30 am – 4 pm

Maryland Benefits

Maryland Benefits ([Your paragraph text](#)) is a mobile-friendly, one-stop online portal designed to make getting help simpler and more accessible. Created by the state of Maryland, it allows residents to apply for multiple programs—such as [Medicaid, SNAP, WIC, and TANF](#)—all in one place, without having to navigate separate applications. With a clear, user-friendly design, Maryland Benefits helps connect individuals and families to the food, financial, and health supports they need, when they need them most.

- To check eligibility and apply, go to <https://benefits.maryland.gov/home/#/>.

SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery)

The SOAR program helps people with serious health conditions apply for disability benefits like SSI and SSDI. If you are a survivor of domestic or sexual violence, SOAR can be an important step toward healing and independence.

Many survivors face long-term health challenges—physical, emotional, or mental—that can make it hard to work or keep stable housing. Through SOAR, you can apply for benefits that provide steady income and health coverage, giving you more security as you rebuild your life free from abuse.

A SOAR representative can walk with you through the application process, offering one-on-one support to help you get the resources you need for safety and stability.

Resources:



CALVERT County SOAR

Kimberly Suarez

Calvert County, MD

Email: kimberly.suarez@maryland.gov

Phone: (443) 295-8570

Navigating the Housing Process

Understanding Tenant Rights and Fair Housing Protections: What Survivors Need to Know

Tenant laws in Calvert County are governed by Maryland's Landlord-Tenant Law, which outlines your rights and responsibilities as a renter. If you're a survivor of domestic or sexual violence, understanding these protections can help you make informed decisions about your housing and safety.

Key Things to Know:

- **Leases:** Landlords must provide written leases (especially for properties with 5 or more units), outlining responsibilities for repairs and utilities. Your rental unit must be in a safe and habitable condition.
- **Security Deposits:** When your lease ends, landlords must return your security deposit (minus any allowable deductions) within 45 days, along with interest and a written explanation of any charges.
- **Rent & Eviction:** Landlords can file for eviction for non-payment of rent or lease violations, but they must follow legal procedures, including proper notice and obtaining a court order. In Calvert County, a valid rental license is required to initiate eviction. Landlords cannot use "self-help" methods like lockouts or utility shutoffs.
- **Habitability:** You have the right to live in a safe, sanitary, and health-supporting home. Landlords are responsible for addressing issues that compromise your health or safety.
- Landlords may enter your unit for valid reasons, such as repairs, but must provide reasonable advance notice.
- **Your Rights:** You have the right to quiet enjoyment of your home, to be free from discrimination, and to live without harassment or retaliation.

What Does “Habitability” Mean?

When you rent a home, you have the right to live in a space that is safe, clean, and suitable for living. This is called the right to habitability, and it means your landlord must keep the property in good condition and make sure it meets basic health and safety standards.

A habitable home should have:

- Working heat, electricity, and plumbing
- Clean running water and a working toilet and sink
- Doors and windows that lock to help keep you safe
- Smoke detectors and, in some cases, carbon monoxide detectors
- No serious issues like mold, pests, sewage problems, or broken stairs



For survivors of domestic and sexual violence, having a habitable home is not just about comfort—it’s about safety, stability, and healing. If your living conditions are unsafe or unhealthy, your landlord is required to make repairs. You do not have to stay in a home that puts your health or safety at risk.

If your landlord refuses to fix serious problems, you may have legal options. A local advocate or legal aid organization can help you understand your rights and what steps to take next.

Calvert Safe Housing Network

Phone: (443) 432-5732

Email: info@calvertsafehousing.org

Website: <https://calvertsafehousingnetwork.org/>

Family Law Assistance - Calvert County Circuit Court

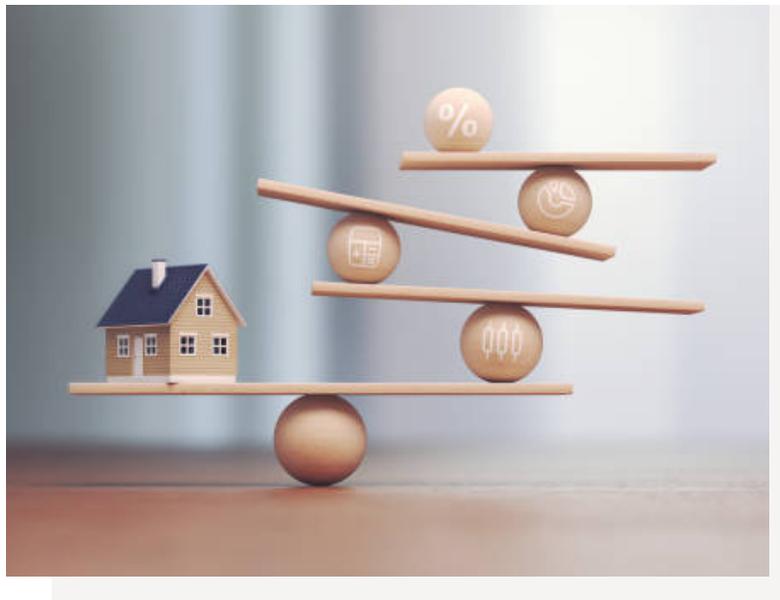
Phone: (410) 535-1600, ext. 2516

Website: www.mdcourts.gov/clerks/calvert/familyservices

Additional Protections for Survivors of Domestic Violence:

Under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking who live in federally subsidized housing have important rights, including:

- **Protection from Eviction or Housing Denial:** You cannot be denied housing, evicted, or lose rental assistance solely because you are a survivor of domestic violence.
- **Emergency Lease Termination:** You may be able to terminate your lease early without penalty to escape abuse, if certain documentation is provided.
- **Requesting a Lock Change or Emergency Transfer:** You may request a lock change or emergency housing transfer for safety reasons. Federally funded housing providers must have policies in place to support these requests.
- **Confidentiality:** Any information you share about the abuse must be kept confidential by your housing provider.



If you're unsure whether your housing is protected under VAWA or need help accessing these protections, contact CSHN at (443) 432-5732 or the Family Law Assistance Center at (410) 535-1600, ext. 2516. They can help you understand your rights and guide you through your next steps.

Landlord Engagement and What You Need to Know

Landlords have a right to certain information to manage their properties, but there are important limits on what they can ask or require when it comes to tenants experiencing domestic violence. The information below explains what landlords are allowed—and not allowed—to know and do.

What Landlords Have a Right to Know:

- Basic rental qualifications: Landlords can still require applicants to meet general rental criteria such as income requirements, references, and ability to pay rent.
- Request for documentation (in limited cases): If a tenant is asking for protections under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)—such as help with an emergency transfer or a lease change due to safety concerns—landlords may ask for documentation to support the request. Acceptable forms include:
 - A self-certification form ([HUD Form 5382](#))
 - A police report or court record (e.g., protection order)
 - A statement from a victim services provider, medical professional, or attorney

Note: Landlords must give survivors at least 14 business days to provide this documentation.

What Landlords Cannot Do:

- They cannot ask about abuse unless it's relevant to a housing protection request. Tenants are not required to disclose abuse unless they're seeking protections or accommodations under VAWA or another policy.
- They cannot deny housing based on someone's status as a survivor. This includes denials based on calls to police, damage caused by an abuser, or past evictions related to domestic violence.

-
- They cannot share or discuss any information related to a survivor’s status without written permission. Confidentiality is protected under VAWA and other state/federal laws.
 - They cannot evict or penalize a survivor for the actions of the abuser. Survivors are protected from being punished for incidents of violence they did not cause.

Landlords have a right to manage their properties fairly, but survivors of domestic and sexual violence have strong legal protections that limit what landlords can ask, share, or act upon. If a survivor requests a VAWA protection, landlords may ask for documentation—but they must keep that information private and use it only for the purpose of supporting the request.

As outlined above, it is against the law for subsidized housing providers covered by VAWA to deny housing to someone simply because they have experienced domestic violence or sexual assault. Unfortunately, some survivors are still wrongfully turned away. If this happens to you, know that you have rights—and support. The Family Violence Appellate Project (FVAP) has created a helpful template letter^[1] you can use to ask the housing provider to reconsider your application, and it is located in the appendices of this guide.

VAWA protections apply to several types of subsidized housing. These include Public Housing, Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, Project-based Section 8, Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly, Section 811 Supportive Housing for People with Disabilities, and others. If you believe you’ve been denied housing unfairly, don’t hesitate to reach out for help. You deserve safe, stable housing—and there are tools and advocates available to stand with you.

Tips for Survivors with Poor Credit, Evictions, or Criminal Records

Survivors of domestic and sexual violence often face housing barriers like damaged credit, past evictions, or criminal records—many of which are directly linked to the abuse they experienced. While these challenges can feel overwhelming, there are steps you can take to strengthen your housing application and advocate for yourself.

-
- Be honest and prepared. If you feel safe doing so, briefly explain how the abuse contributed to your credit or rental history. Many landlords are more understanding when they know the context.
 - Work with an advocate. A domestic violence or sexual assault advocate can help you write a support letter, provide documentation, or even speak to a landlord on your behalf.
 - Gather references. Letters from employers, case managers, or previous landlords (if safe) can help show that you're a responsible tenant.
 - Know your rights. Laws like the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) protect survivors from housing discrimination and can offer added support in your application process.
 - Look for flexible housing programs. Some programs are designed specifically for survivors and may not base eligibility on credit or past evictions.

You are not alone—there are people and programs ready to help you find a safe, stable place to call home.

Resources:

Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee

8371 Old Leonardtown Road, 3rd Floor, Hughesville, MD 20637

Phone: (301) 274-0637

Email: housingcounseling@smtccac.org

Website: www.smtccac.org/housing-counseling-services.aspx

Services: Financial / credit counseling and housing counseling

Eligibility: Residents in Calvert County, Charles County, and St. Mary's County

Hours: Mon-Fri 8 am - 5 pm, by appointment



Understanding Lease Agreements

A lease is more than just a rental agreement—it’s a document that outlines your rights, responsibilities, and protections as a tenant. For survivors of domestic and sexual violence, understanding your lease can be an important step toward creating a safe and stable home.

Take time to look over your lease and notice details like how long the lease lasts, how to request repairs, who’s listed as a resident, and what it says about ending the lease early. If you ever need to leave your home for safety reasons, you may have the right to break your lease without penalty, request a lock change, or ask to have an abusive partner removed from the lease, especially if you live in subsidized housing. Laws like the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and Maryland tenant protections are here to support you.

Legal & Advocacy Support

Legal Aid for Housing, Custody, and Immigration

As a survivor of domestic and/or sexual violence, you may face legal challenges that go beyond safety—like staying housed, protecting their children, or resolving immigration issues. Legal aid services can give you free or low-cost support to help you navigate these complex situations with guidance and care.

Whether you need help fighting an eviction, securing custody of your children, or applying for immigration relief (like a U visa or VAWA self-petition), legal aid can be a powerful resource. The attorneys who provide the support understand the unique needs of survivors and can advocate for your rights in a way that prioritizes your safety and well-being.

Resources:

Family Law Assistance - Calvert County Circuit Court

Phone: (410) 535-1600, ext. 2516

Website: www.mdcourts.gov/clerks/calvert/familyservices

Tenant Advocacy Organizations

Tenant advocacy organizations are here to protect your rights as a renter and help you access safe, stable housing. As a survivor of domestic or sexual violence, these groups can be strong allies—offering support if you face housing discrimination, wrongful eviction, lease problems, or need help understanding protections under laws like the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

Advocates can also provide support letters, connect you with resources or legal referrals, and in some cases, even help communicate with your landlord on your behalf. Their goal is to stand beside you and make sure your housing rights are respected.

There are several organizations in Maryland that advocate for tenant rights.

Resources:

Calvert County Family Law Assistance Center: The Family Law Assistance Center provides resources and information for individuals navigating family law matters. The Center is part of the Maryland Courts Self-Help Center and offers support for various issues such as divorce, custody, and domestic violence.

- Phone: (410) 535-1600, ext. 2516
- Website: www.mdcourts.gov/clerks/calvert/familyservices

Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Services: MVLS offers free legal assistance to eligible Marylanders, including tenants facing eviction or other legal problems related to their lease.

- Phone: 410-547-6537 or 800-510-0050
- Website: <https://mvlslaw.org/>

Public Justice Center: This organization focuses on human rights and public justice issues including housing rights. They offer resources and advocacy for tenants facing eviction, unsafe living conditions, or other landlord-tenant issues.

- Phone: (410) 625-9409
- Website: <https://www.publicjustice.org/en/>

Maryland Courts Self-Help Center: This center provides free, limited legal assistance to individuals representing themselves in court. They offer services like live chat and in-person assistance for those with civil legal programs, including landlord-tenant disputes.

- Phone: 410-260-1392
- Website: <https://www.mdcourts.gov/helpcenter>

Services that Support Housing Stability

Case Management and Housing Navigation

Case management and housing navigation give you one-on-one support to help you find and keep safe, stable housing and other needed services. A case manager will work with you to understand your needs, create a housing plan, and connect you with resources like rental assistance, legal help, or counseling.

Housing navigators can walk with you through the housing search—helping you find available options, complete applications, and even speak with landlords on your behalf. This support is here to make the process less overwhelming and give you the guidance you need to move forward with confidence.

Resources:

Family Law Assistance - Calvert County Circuit Court

Phone: (410) 535-1600, ext. 2516

Website: www.mdcourts.gov/clerks/calvert/familyservices

Employment and Job Training Resources

Employment and job training programs can support you in rebuilding independence and stability after abuse. These programs can help with resumes, job searches, interview practice, and training to build new skills—all tailored to your goals and experience. Whether you're going back to work or starting something new, there are resources to walk with you on your journey toward financial strength and a fresh start.

Resources:



Childcare Assistance

If you're a parent, childcare assistance can help cover the cost of safe, reliable care while you work, go to school, or focus on rebuilding stability. These programs ease financial stress and give you peace of mind knowing your children are cared for as you take steps toward healing and independence.

Maryland Child Care Scholarship Program: Calvert County residents seeking childcare assistance can apply for the Maryland Child Care Scholarship Program through the [Child Care Scholarship Family Portal](#). This program provides financial assistance to eligible families to help them afford quality childcare. Families can determine their potential eligibility and apply online through the portal.

- Phone: 1-877-227-0125
- Website: <https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/child-care-scholarship-program>

Maryland Child Care Resource Network: This network provides information and resources for finding regulated childcare programs in Calvert County and the surrounding area.

- Phone: (410) 659.7701
- Website: <https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/for-providers/find-your-child-care-resource-center>

211 Maryland: 211 is a statewide service that connects families to community resources including child related needs (e.g., baby furniture, car seats, clothing for babies, children, and school, diapers and baby supplies, formula / baby food, and school supplies). A quick call to 2-1-1 can help you find the support your family needs, close to home.

- Phone: 2-1-1
- Website: <https://211md.org/>

Food Assistance

Access to nutritious food is essential, especially during times of crisis. If you need help, you can turn to food banks, pantries, and emergency food programs for immediate support. Many domestic violence shelters and community organizations can also connect you with local resources, including prepared meals, groceries, and ongoing food assistance – so you don’t have to go without.

- 2-1-1 Maryland: <https://211md.org>
- Our Calvert.org: <https://www.calvertcountymd.gov/3799/Services>
- Charles County Resource Guide: <https://lifestylesofmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Homelessness-Resource-Broc.pdf>
- St. Mary’s County Food Pantry Resources: <https://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/pio/docs/Foodpantries.pdf>

Faith-Based Community Resources and Support

Local churches and community organizations can be valuable sources of support if you are a survivor of domestic and/or sexual violence. Many offer help with emergency shelter, food, clothing, spiritual support, and connection to local services. These community spaces often provide a welcoming environment where you can begin to heal and find the support you need.

Mental Health and Trauma Recovery Services

Experiencing domestic violence or sexual assault can deeply affect your emotional well-being. Mental health and recovery services give you a safe, supportive space to start healing. These services may include one-on-one counseling, support groups, or trauma-informed therapy to help with challenges like anxiety, depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD is a common response to trauma that may cause feelings of fear, anxiety, nightmares, flashbacks, or wanting to avoid reminders of the abuse.

No matter where you are in your healing journey, mental health support can help you reclaim your safety, rebuild your strength, and reconnect with yourself.

- Calvert County Behavioral Health: <https://www.calverthealth.org/personalhealth/substanceabuse/index.htm>
- Hope for Calvert: <https://hope4calvert.org/resources>
- Center for Children: <https://www.center-for-children.org/>

Substance Use Support

For many survivors, using drugs or alcohol becomes a way to cope with the pain, fear, or stress of abuse. You are not alone—this response is more common than you may realize. Compassionate, trauma-informed programs are available that understand the connection between substance use and surviving domestic or sexual violence. These services are here to support your healing—emotionally and physically—without judgment and at a pace that feels right for you.

- Calvert Substance Use Services: https://www.calverthealth.org/personalhealth/substanceabuse/subuse.htm?utm_source=chatgpt.com
- Calvert Alliance Against Substance Abuse: <https://www.calvertcountymd.gov/90/Calvert-Alliance-Against-Substance-Abuse>
- Hope for Calvert: <https://hope4calvert.org/resources>

Transportation Resources

Safe, dependable transportation can make all the difference—whether you need to get to a shelter, court, medical care, work, or school. Many communities offer special transportation support for survivors, such as ride services, bus passes, or help from advocacy organizations. Help is available to get you where you need to go—safely and with support.

- Calvert County Public Transportation: www.calvertcountymd.gov/130/Public-Transportation
- Transportation Assistance Program (TAP): dhs.maryland.gov/weathering-tough-times/transportation-assistance-program-tap



Pet Assistance

Leaving an unsafe situation shouldn't mean leaving a beloved pet behind. Some programs offer temporary care or boarding for pets so survivors can enter shelter safely, knowing their animals are protected. Support may include short-term foster care, pet boarding, or help finding pet-friendly housing.

RedRover Relief: The Safe Escape grant program at RedRover Relief helps survivors and their pets find safety together. This grant can help cover the cost of up to 45 days of pet boarding while you are staying in a domestic violence shelter. In some cases, related costs like vaccinations may also be covered. Please note that the grant usually does not cover pet boarding once you move into transitional housing. Applications must be submitted by a domestic violence advocate on your behalf, and RedRover will respond within one business day. Funding is confirmed only after your application has been received and an advocate has spoken with their team.

For more information, visit [RedRover Relief](#).

Safe Havens for Pets: As a survivor, you don't have to hear your pets behind. The Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) has created a searchable database to help individuals experiencing domestic and/or sexual violence or homelessness find safe, temporary care for their pets. To explore available options near you, [visit their website](#) and search the directory.

Appendices

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Appendix B: Resources

- Sample Safety Plan
- Checklist for Moving into New Housing



Glossary of Terms Used in this Guide

Below are definitions for the categories we used to organize the housing program information included in this guide. These terms are meant to help you better understand the types of services and support available.

Population: This section explains who the program is designed to serve. Domestic violence[1] programs often focus specifically on women survivors, while other housing programs for women may also support those experiencing homelessness, recovering from substance use, or living with mental illness. Some programs serve both single women and women with children, while others are limited to one group. It's also important to note that some programs do not allow boys over the age of 12, though others may have more flexible policies.

Services: This section outlines the types of support offered by each housing program. Domestic violence and sexual assault programs often provide counseling, support groups, and trauma-informed services for both survivors and their children. Many programs also have case managers or advocates who help with accessing public benefits, connecting to job training, food assistance, mental health services, and other essential resources. These services are designed to support survivors as they work toward healing, stability, and independence.

Admission Process: This section outlines the steps required to apply for and enter the program. For domestic violence and sexual assault programs, survivors are often asked to call a 24-hour crisis hotline and speak with an advocate, who will complete a phone-based intake interview. Some programs may have a more detailed process, requiring additional information from a case manager or a referral from a domestic or sexual violence advocate or homelessness service provider. Each program is different, so it's helpful to understand the specific steps needed to access support. For sexual violence programs, do we add additional language in this section? This definition was pulled from the DASH guide.

Eligibility Requirements: This section explains what is required to apply and be considered for the program. Requirements vary by program and may include things like being drug and alcohol free, currently employed, having proof of homelessness, or agreeing to participate in certain program activities—such as a mandatory savings plan. Understanding these expectations can help you find the best fit for your needs and goals.

Residency Requirements: This section explains whether the program accepts applicants from Calvert County and outlines any specific conditions or limitations for eligibility based on location.

Accessibility and Accommodation Services: This section outlines the types of accommodation services the program provides to ensure services are accessible to individuals with disabilities. This may include physical accessibility (such as wheelchair access), communication support, or other modifications to meet diverse needs.

Language Access Services: This section outlines if language access services, including American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation and translation support for non-English speakers are available.

Safety Plan

If you are preparing to leave an abusive situation, it's important to think about how to do so as safely as possible. One helpful tool is creating a safety plan—a personalized plan that outlines steps you can take to protect yourself in different environments and circumstances.

The safety plan provided below can be completed for your own use or to support someone you know. Keep it in a secure place where your partner will not be able to find it—ideally with you, or, if that is not safe, with a trusted friend, family member, or in another discreet location.

Remember to review and update your safety plan regularly so it reflects your current situation. If you would like help thinking through your options or tailoring your plan, advocates at the [Calvert Safe Housing Network](#) are available to support you.

Contact:

(443) 432-5732

info@calvertsafehousing.org

www.calvertsafehousingnetwork.org

SAFETY PLAN



Personalized Safety Plan

WHILE IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP...

I can tell _____ and _____ about the violence and ask them to call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my home.

If I leave my home, I can go (list four places):

I can leave extra money, car keys, clothes, and copies of documents with _____.

If I decide to leave, I will bring the items, or copies of these items, listed below.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Identification | <input type="checkbox"/> Birth certificates for me and my children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security cards | <input type="checkbox"/> School and medical records |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Money, bankbooks, credit cards | <input type="checkbox"/> Keys - house/car/office |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driver's license and registration | <input type="checkbox"/> Medications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Change of clothes | <input type="checkbox"/> Passport(s), Green Card(s), work permits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce papers | <input type="checkbox"/> Lease/rental agreement, house deed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mortgage payment book, current unpaid bills | <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance papers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pictures, jewelry, items of sentimental value | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's favorite toys and/or blankets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Address book | |

To ensure safety and independence, I can:

- Keep change for phone calls with me at all times
- Open my own savings account
- Rehearse my escape route with a support person

I can use computers at a friend's house or in a public location so that my abuser cannot view my search habits.

I will check with my cell phone provider to see if there is an online account and who has access to it. If my abuser has access to the account and can therefore see my call history, I will try to get a new cell phone and keep the number restricted.

I will find out what features are on my cell phone, computer or automobile that may allow my abuser to track my whereabouts.

SAFETY PLAN



AFTER LEAVING AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP..

I can change the locks; install steel/metal doors, a security system, smoke detectors and an outside lighting system or I can look for these elements when relocating to a new apartment/house.

I will inform _____ and _____ that my partner no longer lives with me and ask them to call the police if s/he is observed near my home or my children.

I will tell people who take care of my children the names of those who have permission to pick them up. The people who have permission are:

I can tell _____ at work about my situation and ask _____ to screen my calls.

I can avoid stores, banks, and _____ that I used when living with my abusive partner.

I can obtain a protective order from _____. I can keep it on or near me at all times as well as leave a copy with _____.

If I feel down and ready to return to a potentially abusive situation, I can call _____ for support or attend workshops and support groups at _____ and _____ to gain support and strengthen my relationships with other people.

I will have my car inspected to check for any devices that may allow my abuser to track my whereabouts. If I share accounts with my abuser I will begin removing my name from those accounts and/or creating new ones.

I will have important phone numbers accessible to my children and myself such as:

Police _____	Hotline _____
Friends _____	Family _____
Shelter _____	Other _____

I will review this plan each time there is a change in my situation, which might include: moving to a new location, the serving of legal papers on my abuser, the arrest of my abuser, the release of my abuser, or any other significant change or event which could impact the safety of myself and/or my children.

Review date: _____

Moving into a new home after surviving abuse is more than a move—it's a step toward stability, healing, and reclaiming independence. Take things one step at a time, and lean on support when needed.

1. Safety & Security

- Change locks immediately (if permitted by landlord/lease).
- Install a peephole or security camera (doorbell cam if possible).
- Add window locks, rods, or alarms (especially on ground floors).
- Check outdoor lighting—replace bulbs or add motion-sensor lights.
- Identify safe exits in case of emergency (front door, back door, windows).
- Share your new address only with trusted people.
- Update your protective order with your new address (if applicable).
- Create a safety plan for your new home (where to go, who to call, emergency bag location).

2. Essential Utilities & Services

- Set up utilities (electric, gas, water, trash).
- Transfer or set up internet/phone services.
- Check smoke detectors & carbon monoxide detectors (replace batteries).
- Locate water shut-off, breaker box, and emergency contacts.
- Arrange renters' insurance (if affordable/possible).

3. Household Basics

- First night box: bedding, towels, change of clothes, toiletries, phone charger.
- Basic kitchen supplies: pots, utensils, plates, cups, food essentials.
- Cleaning supplies: broom, mop, disinfectant, trash bags, laundry soap.
- Personal items: important documents, medications, comfort items.
- Child or pet supplies (diapers, formula, school supplies, pet food, leashes).

4. Documentation & Financials

- Keep important papers in a safe place: ID, birth certificates, SS cards, protective orders, medical records.
- Update mailing address with post office, banks, schools, employers, benefits offices.
- Check eligibility for housing supports (rental assistance, utility programs, food assistance).
- Budget for move-in expenses (rent, deposit, utilities, groceries).

5. Support & Connection

- Share your new address with your advocate or case manager.
- Identify nearby supports: crisis center, health clinic, trusted neighbor, faith community.
- Explore local transportation options (bus routes, safe rides).
- Connect with community resources (food banks, childcare, survivor groups).
- Build a support network—a few safe people who know how to reach you.

6. Emotional & Wellness

- Set up a calming space (favorite blanket, photos, candles, music).
- Plan self-care routines (journaling, exercise, meditation, therapy).
- Mark small victories—celebrate progress in your new home.
- Talk with children (if any) about safety, new routines, and reassurance.
- Reach out for counseling or support groups if feelings of fear or uncertainty resurface.



*Calvert Safe
Housing Network*

Calvert Safe Housing Network

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