



Non-Profit of Excellence:

Iris Domestic Violence Center

Baton Rouge

The mission of Iris Domestic Violence Center is to protect and empower survivors, prevent relationship violence, and promote justice for victims of domestic violence and dating violence, their children, and our communities.

Iris Domestic Violence Center fields approximately 7,000 24-hour crisis line calls annually. Approximately 4,800 victims of domestic violence receive services annually. Approximately, 1,300 domestic violence survivors receive emergency shelter services and 3,000 receive legal and non-residential services. Iris also assists with securing approximately 4,000 protective orders for victims of domestic violence and their children. For more than 35 years, Iris has provided professional, compassionate and empowering support to battered women and their children in the Capital Area. Iris is the oldest and one of the largest non-profit domestic violence organization in Louisiana serving seven parishes, (East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, Iberville, Ascension, Pointe Coupee, East Feliciana and West Feliciana), serving a total population of 663,255.

In 1978, following a year-long study of family violence in the Baton Rouge area, Baton Rouge Mayor-President Woody Dumas' Commission on the Needs of Women began a limited domestic violence project using federal, state, and local funding. In 1981, a non-profit Domestic Violence Corporation was formed to purchase and renovate a facility in Baton Rouge for the purpose of operating an Emergency Shelter for Battered Women Capital Area Family Violence Intervention Center (CAFVIC), Incorporated. CAFVIC, was then incorporated as a non-profit charitable organization. In 1982, a 24-Hour 7 day/week crisis hotline became operational and support groups were started as well as child care and transportation services. In 1986 the agency began a weekly support group at the

Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women (LCIW) in St. Gabriel that operates to this day.

In 1988, the agency renovated its current 17,545 square feet, two-story emergency shelter facility, with a 25-bed capacity. In 1990 bed space was increased to 36. The emergency shelter now has a bed capacity to accommodate 50 women and children. In 1995 the program opened its first full-time outreach office in Gonzales to serve residents of Ascension Parish.

In 2013, CAFVIC began doing business as (d/b/a), Iris Domestic Violence Center. The new name is based on the hardy flowers that grow in gardens, swamps, and fields across Louisiana. The Iris is native to Louisiana, and it's purple in color which is also the domestic violence awareness color. However, what the Iris is really known for is being tough and resilient, continuing to bloom year after year. So the Iris is clearly an appropriate metaphor for Survivors of DV served by the Center.

Today, Iris employs 22 full-time staff and three contract attorneys. The organization has over 200 active volunteers and volunteer organizations. Iris operates a 24-hour Crisis Hotline, a residential emergency shelter as well as a wide range of support services to survivors of domestic violence and their children including adult advocacy, legal advocacy, legal assistance, child support services, outreach, education and training. In addition, Iris operates four domestic violence outreach offices in Baton Rouge, Gonzales, Plaquemine and Port Allen to free of charge.