

Illinois Domestic Violence Fatality Review Committee: 2026 Biennial Report

A report to the Governor and the General Assembly

Prepared by:

Vincent Sarna, Task Force Coordinator and Report Writer, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority

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Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
60 E. Van Buren St., Suite 650
Chicago, IL 60605
312-793-8550
www.icjia.illinois.gov

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Introduction

The Ad Hoc Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Committee (DVFRC) was created in 2021, pursuant to the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Act (750 ILCS 62/1). A key DVFRC responsibility is to establish and implement domestic violence fatality regional review teams in judicial circuits across Illinois (750 ILCS 62/40(a)). Regional review teams are tasked with conducting reviews of domestic violence fatalities and near-fatalities in their judicial circuits and submitting biennial reports in even-numbered years to the DVFRC (750 ILCS 62/65(a)). These reports detail legislative, systemic, and policy recommendations informed by those reviews.

The DVFRC biennial report, submitted to the Governor's Office and the General Assembly in odd-numbered years, compiles and synthesizes recommendations from the regional review teams' biennial reports.

This biennial report reflects reviews conducted between January 2023 and December 2024 and the current status of the DVFRC and regional review teams. During that period, the initiative's first cohort of five regional review teams were engaged primarily in team formation and case selection, and one case review was completed. This report documents the DVFRC's progress in establishing and implementing regional review teams during the initial phase of statewide implementation.

All first cohort regional review teams are on track to complete two case reviews per year as required by statute (750 ILCS 62/65(a)) for the next reporting cycle (2025-2026). The DVFRC anticipates submitting statewide recommendations in the 2028 biennial report.

Status

The DVFRC and regional review teams made substantive progress in conducting the case reviews. These reviews will directly inform future legislative, systemic, and policy recommendations.

The DVFRC initiative's six active regional review teams include:

- 3rd Judicial Circuit (Madison and Bond counties).
- 10th Judicial Circuit (Peoria, Marshall, Putnam, Stark, and Tazewell counties).
- 12th Judicial Circuit (Will County).
- 17th Judicial Circuit (Winnebago and Boone counties).
- 19th Judicial Circuit (Lake County).

- 21st Judicial Circuit (Kankakee County).

The 10th Judicial Circuit team was formed in the second half of 2025; as a result, the team did not conduct any case reviews that year. The team will conduct its first review in Spring 2026. The other five teams, the DVFRC's first regional team cohort, were established in 2023.

In 2025, the first cohort completed 10 case reviews. Teams completed a post-case review survey for five of these cases, reporting demographic and offense characteristics and prior system involvement.

Those five cases included: domestic violence homicides, cases in which the individual who perpetrated domestic violence¹ later died by suicide, cases involving attempted suicide by the individual who perpetrated domestic violence, and the homicide of a third-party victim.

All five victims were identified as female, and the individuals who perpetrated the domestic violence were recorded as male. In all five cases, survey responses indicated substance use by the individual who perpetrated domestic violence, and that an order of protection had been issued.

Four cases included prior 911 calls related to domestic violence, and three cases involved prior arrests or convictions related to domestic violence. Each regional review team identified one or more risk factors associated with the individuals who perpetrated domestic violence prior to the fatality or near-fatality, including a history of domestic violence, prior non-domestic violent behavior, weapon-related threats or assaults, or threats of suicide or suicidal ideation.

These findings will inform regional team recommendations. Through this process, regional review teams have identified gaps and barriers in responses to domestic violence and are strategizing about how to address them at the local level.

The DVFRC has also undertaken efforts related to team recruitment, promotion of the initiative, and legislative fixes to improve access to records needed for case review. Additional information on these efforts is included in the DVFRC 2025 Annual Report.

¹ In narrative and analytical sections, this report uses person-first language (for example, "individual who used domestic violence") rather than statutory terms such as "offender." This approach is consistent with ICJIA policy. Sex classifications referenced in this report reflect information recorded in administrative data reviewed as part of the case review process.

Conclusion

During this reporting period, the DVFRC focused on establishing regional review teams, supporting early implementation efforts, and laying the foundation for effective case reviews. More information on this can be found in the [2023](#) and [2024](#) DVFRC annual reports. Regional review teams will continue to review domestic violence fatalities and near-fatalities within their judicial circuits. Following each case review, teams will develop initial recommendations. The DVFRC will then synthesize regional recommendations for inclusion in the DVFRC biennial report in 2028.