



State of New York
Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

David A. Paterson
Governor

Amy Barasch, Esq.
Executive Director

September 11, 2009

Dear Commissioner,

**October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month
Help Us Raise Awareness and Turn the State Purple!**

Each year in New York State, our police receive over 400,000 calls to help victims of domestic violence, over 16,000 individuals stay in our emergency shelters each year – most of them children -- and in 2007, 43% percent of the adult female homicide victims in New York State were killed by their intimate partners. Governor David A. Paterson has consistently spoken out against domestic violence. Now, we're inviting you to join us and the rest of the state to "Shine the Light on Domestic Violence" in two principle ways:



- 1) **Go purple.** We are going to raise awareness by turning the State purple during the month of October. Landmarks such as the Empire State Building, Niagara Falls, the mid-Hudson bridge, and the Alfred E Smith Building will be lit in purple during October. Agency domestic violence liaisons established through the domestic violence and the workplace policy have received information on this initiative and have decided that on **October 14th** state workers will focus their efforts by wearing purple, and setting up informational tables. If your agency manages facilities, monuments, or other public spaces, consider lighting them in purple – we can tell you how at no or low cost.
- 2) **Hold a phone drive to create funds for NYS nonprofits.** We are working with Verizon Wireless and the HopeLine to collect unused cell phones which Verizon will convert into grant-making activity in the State of New York. What a terrific way for us to support our local non-profits and protect the environment at the same time! It's easy: fill box with phones, add provided postage-paid label, mail to Verizon.

Please designate a liaison for the phone drive – perhaps your domestic violence liaison, perhaps someone else. Please send their name, title, address and phone number to opdvpublicinfo@opdv.state.ny.us by next **Friday, September 18**. If we don't hear from you, we'll send the materials for the phone drive to your domestic violence liaison.

New York State efforts for Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Shine the Light: The color purple has come to symbolize the fight against domestic violence. In our second year, this public/private awareness partnership has exploded – major sites around the state will be turning purple. Local communities have interpreted the effort in their own ways – by putting up purple flags at the entrance of their towns, flying purple balloons at fall festivals, and

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distributing flyers. We aim to cover all 62 counties! For inspiration, see some of the [photos](#) from last year.

As part of implementing a domestic violence and the workplace policy, your agency has designated a domestic violence liaison who has been trained by a member of our office. Agencies have done an outstanding job and your employees are safer as a result. Thank you.

We have spoken to those liaisons to encourage them to design strategies for your agency to participate in this effort. Examples of agency participation ideas include:

- Host an Awareness Day (or week)
- Set up an information table in a key location
- Encourage your employees to dress in purple (**October 14 has been identified as the date the NYS Workforce will aim to go purple**).
- Host a cell phone drive – perhaps as part of your information table.
- Print copies of a [flyer explaining the campaign](#) with information about domestic violence and resources and provide them to staff.
- Provide other resource materials, such as those on our website at www.opdv.state.ny.us
- Post the banner listed below, which can be downloaded and posted on your website, that links to the State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, with information for victims, as well as those who want to assist them.



When friends, colleagues, and families of victims of domestic violence see these activities, they'll know that you care about this important issue. They'll know they're not alone. They'll be reminded to support those in trouble, and help them take advantage of the wide range of services available in New York.

For more information, please contact OPDV's public information officer, Suzanne Cecala, at (518) 457-5744 or Suzanne.cecala@opdv.state.ny.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Barasch".

Amy Barasch, Esq.
Executive Director
NYS Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence