

The Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT) program was state mandated in 2000 with the knowledge that victims of domestic violence are often isolated and trapped in the abusive relationship. Studies demonstrate that many victims of domestic violence are three times more likely to return to their abusers if they are provided with little or no support. Police officers provide protection to victims of domestic violence by arresting and processing the batterer, while volunteers help the victim to feel less isolated and alone. DVRT volunteers respond to the police department to provide emotional support, information on domestic violence, community resources and a safety plan.

Teams are composed of trained citizens who respond to the police departments on an “on-call” basis. All volunteers go through a rigorous screening process followed by an intensive 40-hours of training. Upon successful completion of the training, volunteers are able to speak to victims in a confidential nature. Additionally, individual supervision is provided to volunteers within 24-hours of their call-out.

The goals of the Domestic Violence Response Team are to:

- Decrease the emotional trauma experienced by victims—by providing the victim with an opportunity to express her or his emotional response to the crisis and educating her about the dynamics of domestic violence.
- Increase a victim’s ability to make an educated decision about her options—by increasing the victim’s awareness of available community resources and legal options and her understanding of the legal process.
- To increase the victim’s access to community resources—by providing the victims with the necessary information to access available community resources and assisting them in contacting those resources.

DVRTs are operating in most police departments throughout the state, and their assistance has been imperative in strengthening and diversifying victims’ support systems.

If you would like to speak with a DVRT Volunteer, let your local police department know.

If you would like to become a DVRT Volunteer, please contact your county DVRT Coordinator.