

# 2020 Legislative Session Summary

OFFICIAL SESSION CONCLUDED MAY 18, 2020



VIOLENCE FREE  
MINNESOTA



**The regular 2020 legislative session came to a close on May 18th, with a long list of high-profile items that did not get finished. Some (but not all) of the major unresolved legislative priorities include:**

- o A bonding bill (a measure to pay for a package of public construction projects);
- o Changes to tax law related to the likely COVID recession;
- o Additional COVID-response spending/oversight of federal coronavirus relief funds;
- o Housing and rental assistance;
- o Sexual Assault Kit testing/tracking;

Legislators expect to return to the Capitol by June 12, the deadline for Governor Walz to extend a peacetime state of emergency that has allowed him to make decisions to slow the spread of the coronavirus. Under state law, the governor must call legislators back if he renews the emergency.



**Despite the shift in priorities due to COVID-19 and the partisan politics that came with the end of the legislative session, several bills did pass and have been signed by the Governor. Those include:**

- o Stalking/harassment bill;
  - o This bill was drafted as a result of the Minnesota Supreme Court decisions that determined portions of [Minnesota's harassment statute](#) were unconstitutional because they prohibit some speech protected by the First Amendment.
  - o [HF4137](#) makes several changes to remove the court's free speech objections
  - o Violence Free Minnesota testified in support of this bill several times and worked closely with legislators to ensure its passage.
- o More than \$550 million allocated to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Minnesota;
- o \$26.5 million in funding for homeless service programs through the Emergency Services Program (ESP).
- o A [ban on child marriages](#);
- o A bill directing the Department of Corrections to provide "a reasonable number" of free feminine hygiene products, including at a minimum sanitary napkins and tampons, to female inmates housed in state correctional facilities (part of public safety omnibus bill);
- o A bill to address access to affordable insulin for diabetics on both an emergency and long-term basis;
- o Raising the age to 21 to buy tobacco;
- o A bill requiring the Minnesota Peace Officers Standards and Training Board to create a model policy for eyewitness identification;
- o Becoming the first state to ban the use of the industrial solvent TCE for permitted facilities, with narrow exemptions, by June 1, 2022;
- o Acceptance of \$17 million in federal funds to help with election security and administration;
- o Establishment of new financial exploitation protections for older adults and vulnerable adults by expanding authority under the 2018 Safe Seniors Financial Protection Act; and
- o \$30 million to replenish the state's Disaster Assistance Contingency Account.

## THE COALITION TO END RELATIONSHIP ABUSE

Contact Katie Kramer at 651.646.6177 x127 or [kkramer@vfmn.org](mailto:kkramer@vfmn.org) to discuss how you can make Minnesota safer for all.  
60 East Plato Boulevard, Suite 230 • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55107 • Voice: 651.646.6177 • Fax: 651.646.1527 • [www.vfmn.org](http://www.vfmn.org)

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## A handful of other bills have also been passed and sent to the Governor for signature.

Among those are the omnibus higher education, civil law, agriculture, and public safety bills and a bill to addresses school finance formula glitches resulting from the conversion to the distance learning model.

Negotiations will continue to take place in hopes that legislators can find agreement to pass the unresolved bills when they are called back for special session in June.

The state House has created a Select Committee on Minnesota's Pandemic Response and Rebuilding to continue conversations about the COVID-19 pandemic, even after wrapping up its regular legislative session. It will focus on responses to the pandemic and ways to rebuild. It will continue to meet on an "as-needed basis."



## As a reminder, Election Day is Tuesday, November 3rd, 2020!

As advocates and victim-survivors working to end intimate partner violence it is important that we have our voices heard at the polls in the coming election that sets up power and policy priorities in our state.

Check out the [Advocate's Get-Out-The-Vote Guide](#) on the Public Policy portion of Violence Free Minnesota's website.

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**Violence Free Minnesota (formerly MCBW) is an association of over 90 programs that provide critical core public safety and crime victim services in all 87 counties.**

**\*360 Communities/Lewis House**, Dakota, Carver, Goodhue, Hennepin, Ramsey  
**Advocacy Center of Winona**, Winona

**Advocates for Family Peace**, Itasca, Northern St. Louis

**Advocates for Human Rights**, International

**\*Alexandra House**, Anoka

**\*American Indian Community Housing Org.**, St. Louis, Koochiching, Lake, Cook, Itasca

**\*Anna Marie's Alliance**, Sherburne, Benton, Stearns, Mille Lacs, Wright

**\*Asian Women United of MN**, Hennepin, Ramsey

**Battered Women's Justice Project**, National

**Becker County Attorney's Office**, Becker

**Bluff Country Family Resources**, Fillmore, Houston

**Bois Forte Victim Services**, Nett Lake, Koochiching, St. Louis

**Breaking Free**, Ramsey

**\*Casa de Esperanza**, Hennepin, Ramsey

**City of St. Paul Attorney's Office**, Ramsey

**\*Committee Against Domestic Abuse**, Brown, Nicollet, Blue Earth, LeSueur,

Sibley, Waseca, Watonwan, Faribault, Martin

**Community Health Service**, Polk, Norman, Clay, Pennington

**Community University Health Care Center**, Hennepin

**Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicios (CLUES)**, Hennepin, Ramsey

**\*Cornerstone Advocacy Services**, Hennepin

**Crime Victim Resource Center – Mayo Clinic**, Mower

**Crisis Resource Center of Steele Co.**, Steele

**Division of Indian Work**, Hennepin

**Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs**, St. Louis

**Domestic Abuse Project**, Hennepin

**East Side Neighborhood Services**, Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey

**\*Equay Wiigamig**, Red Lake Reservation, Beltrami

**Family Safety Network of Cass County**, Cass, Clearwater, Hubbard

**Freeborn County Crime Victim Crisis Center**, Freeborn

**Friends Against Abuse**, Koochiching, Lake of the Woods

**Gender Violence Institute**, Statewide

**Global Rights for Women**, International

**Hands of Hope Resource Center**, Morrison, Todd

**Hmong American Partnership**, Ramsey

**Healing Opportunity Provided Equally (HOPE)**, Aitkin, Crow Wing

**Hope Center**, Rice

**\*Hope Coalition**, Goodhue, Wabasha

**Indigenous Women's Life Net**, Ramsey, Hennepin

**Isaiah's Domestic Violence Task Force**, Statewide

**Karen Organization of Minnesota**, Statewide

**\*Lakes Crisis & Resource Center**, Becker & surrounding area

**Le Sueur County Victim Witness Program**, LeSueur

**Mahnomen County Victim Services Office**, Mahnomen

**Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless**, Statewide

**Martin County Victim Services**, Martin

**Men and Masculine Folk Network**, Statewide

**Men As Peacemakers**, Statewide

**\*Mid-Minnesota Women's Center**, Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd, Wadena

**Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Family Violence Prevention Program**, Aitkin, Crow

Wing, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Otter Tail, Pine

**Minnesota Elder Justice Center**, Statewide

**Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center**, Hennepin

**McLeod Alliance for Victims of Domestic Violence**, McLeod

**\*Missions, Inc./Home Free**, Hennepin

**New Horizons Crisis Center**, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Redwood

**North Shore Horizons**, Lake

**Nobles County Victim Services**, Nobles

**Norman County Victim Services**, Norman

**\*Northwoods Battered Women's Shelter**, Beltrami, Cass

**Oasis of Love Crisis Intervention**, Hennepin

**OutFront Minnesota**, Statewide

**Pearl Crisis Center**, Mille Lacs

**Phumulani**, Anoka, Hennepin, Ramsey, Washington

**Pillsbury United Communities**, Hennepin

**Praxis International**, National

**Rape & Abuse Crisis Center of Fargo-Moorhead**, Clay, Wilkin

**\*Refuge Network – A Program of Family Pathways**, Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec

**Rivers of Hope**, Wright, Sherburne

**\*Safe Avenues**, Kandiyohi, Swift, Chippewa, Lac Qui Parle, Renville, Meeker,

McLeod

**\*Safe Haven Shelter & Resource Center**, St. Louis, Carlton, Aitkin, Itasca, Lake,

Cook, Koochiching

**SEWA-AIFW (Asian Indian Family Wellness)**, Hennepin, Ramsey

**Sexual Violence Center**, Hennepin, Carver, Scott

**\*Sojourner Project**, Hennepin, Carver, Dakota, Ramsey

**Someplace Safe**, Big Stone, Grant, Pope, Stevens, Douglas, Traverse, Wilkin,

Otter Tail, Wadena

**Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services**, Southern Minnesota

**Southern Valley Alliance for Battered Women**, Carver, Scott

**Southwest Crisis Center**, Noble, Pipestone, Rock, Cottonwood, Jackson

**St. Paul and Ramsey County Intervention Project**, Ramsey

**Standpoint**, Statewide

**Stevens County Victim Witness**, Stevens

**The No. 1 Ladies Advocacy Agency**, Beltrami

**ThinkSelf**, Statewide

**Transforming Generations**, Ramsey, Hennepin, Washington, Dakota

**\*Tubman**, Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Washington

**\*Violence Intervention Project**, Red Lake, Pennington, Marshall, Kittson, Roseau

**Violence Prevention Center**, Cook

**White Earth DOVE Program**, White Earth Reservation, Mahnomen, Becker,

Clearwater

**Winona County Attorney's Office**, Winona

**WISE**, Statewide

**\*Women of Nations**, Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Washington

**\*Women's Advocates**, Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott,

Washington

**Women's Rural Advocacy Programs**, Lincoln, Lyon, Yellow Medicine, Redwood

**\*Women's Shelter & Support Center**, Dodge, Fillmore, Olmsted & surrounding

counties

**Yellow Medicine County Victim Services**, Yellow Medicine

\*Emergency Shelter Program

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