

# executive summary

In 2019, an estimated **8.9 million** people resided in New Jersey (N.J.). Close to the major cities of New York and Philadelphia, N.J. is comprised of 21 counties and 565 municipalities, which range from mid-sized cities such as Jersey City, Newark, and Patterson, to inner and outer ring suburbs, to rural farming communities. The most densely populated State in the country, N.J. is also one of the most racially and ethnically diverse states, one of the highest ranked states for LGBTQ-friendly law and policy, and home to many immigrants, with large populations of both foreign-born residents and residents with limited English proficiency. It is the ancestral land of the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape, the Ramapough Lenape and Powhatan Renape peoples and is today home to their descendants and many people from other tribes.

N.J. is also home to **1.8 million** survivors of contact sexual assault. Survivors reside in each of N.J.'s counties and municipalities and in communities large and small. Sexual violence touches all our lives, and survivors in N.J. are people of all ages, genders, sexual orientations, and abilities. They are members of every racial and ethnic group in the State and are both native and foreign-born. They speak over 155 languages, with various levels of English language proficiency. Sexual violence programs in N.J. must be equipped, both technologically and culturally, to address all survivors who call the State home.

This report, which details the state of sexual violence service provision in N.J. in 2019, was undertaken to assess strengths and gaps in service provision, including the provision of services to underserved and marginalized communities and survivors. The findings reveal that, in 2019, our providers served close to **20,000 New Jerseyans** through 24-hour hotlines, coordinated community crisis response, counseling services, court accompaniments, and outreach and services to marginalized communities.

At the same time, the data reveals that **43 percent of N.J.'s rape crisis centers have a waiting list for services nine out of 12 months of the year**, with wait times ranging from 1-3 weeks (62 percent of providers) to 4-6 weeks (38 percent of providers), tight budgets meant a reliance on volunteers at a rate of three volunteers for one paid staffer, and gaps remain in the provision of services to marginalized communities.

Overall, the report shows that sexual violence programs in N.J. continue to fill a critical need with limited resources. To address this need, the report offers data on the state of service delivery in 2019 and recommendations for both programmatic and policy changes to ensure that every New Jerseyan will benefit from our trauma-informed, survivor-centered, holistic approach to reducing community trauma. The report recommends:

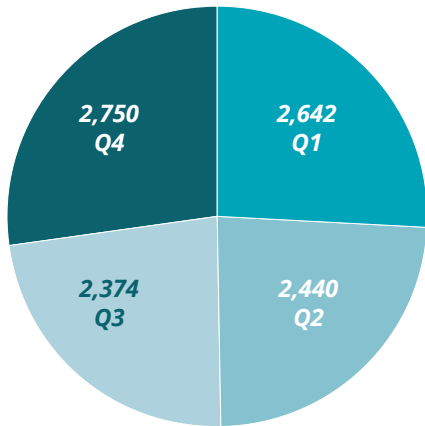
- **Building** capacity for programs to collect data effectively
- **Creating** state-level oversight of SART programs to ensure fidelity to standards
- **Developing** statewide language access plan to improve hotline accessibility
- **Establishing** practice to evaluate quality of services provided at local programs
- **Implementing** practices to recruit and retain staff representing the diverse communities of N.J.
- **Increasing** outreach to communities historically underserved by sexual violence programs
- **Partnering** with communities not represented in data collection methods employed
- **Training** program staff on the barrier oppression presents for survivors from marginalized communities



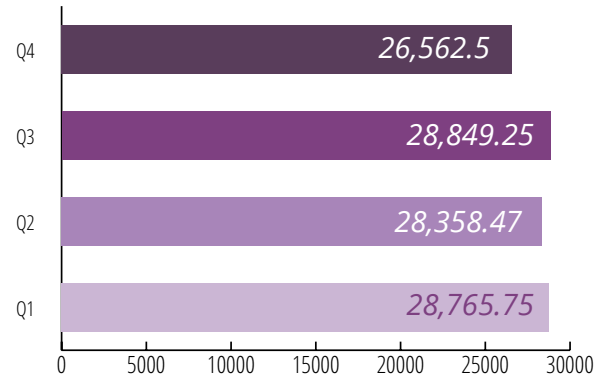
**43% of N.J.'s rape crisis centers have a waiting list for services 9 months out of the year**

# 2019 in review

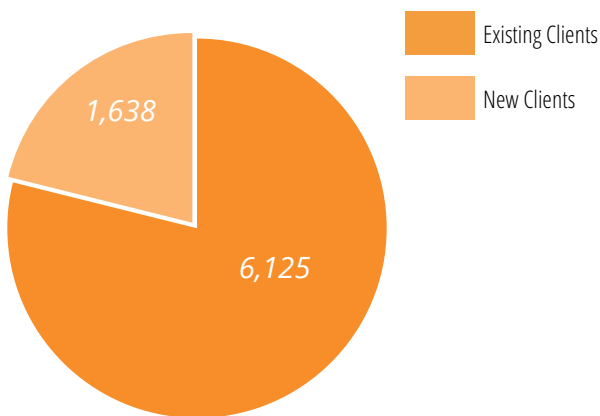
Member programs answered more than **10,000** hotline calls.



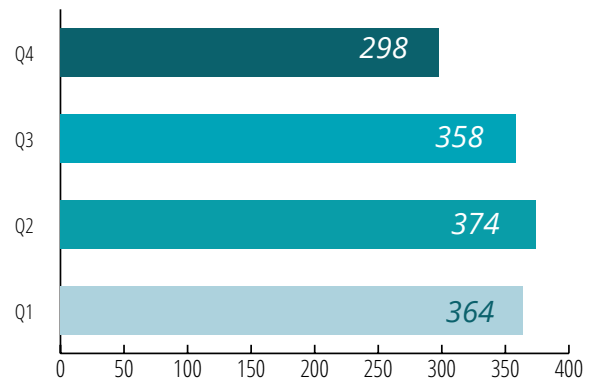
Confidential Sexual Violence Advocates logged more than **100,000** hours.



Programs provided counseling to more than **7,500** survivors and their loved ones, **1,638** of whom were new clients.



Advocates went out on **1,394** Sexual Assault Response Team activations to serve survivors of contact sexual assault.



Yet despite all that we have accomplished, we need a greater investment to reach capacity to serve the **1.8 million** survivors who call N.J. home.

This reality is underscored by the fact that in 2019, **43 percent** of sexual violence programs had a waitlist for counseling services.

