



We Are Here...A Message from Women's Center & Shelter

To our incredible friends, supporters, volunteers and community partners,

As everyone is aware, we are living in unprecedented times. As an essential service, Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh is closely monitoring all communications regarding COVID-19 and taking direction from the CDC, World Health Organization, Allegheny County Health Department, Department of Human Services, and our state domestic violence coalition. At the heart of all of our decisions is a commitment to the safety, health and well-being of those we serve as well as our staff and volunteers.

Domestic violence will not stop during this time. In fact, it will likely increase as more and more people are staying home and stress levels continue to rise. We know that domestic violence isn't caused by stress, but it can certainly be exacerbated by it. **To this end, we remain committed to delivering all of our services for our current (and any new) adult and child clients during and beyond this pandemic.** Some services, such as our Emergency Shelter, 24-Hotline and Children's Program, will continue to operate fully while adding recommended COVID-19 screening and safety measures and additional sheltering options when needed. Since over 7,500 victims each year need our legal, wellness, and all other services, depending on the service, we are either continuing (with screening and safety precautions in place), or we are identifying creative ways to continue services through phone calls and video chatting capabilities. We are able to be here for those who need us most because of all of you, our generous WC&S community.

In addition, just as many other nonprofit organizations have done, we will need to postpone our annual Celebrating Survivors event currently scheduled for April 24th. Please stay tuned for further communication regarding a new date and information for sponsors and attendees. These decisions are not easy ones, but ultimately, we must all do what is best for each other and the safety of the community.

In closing, I want to thank each and every one of you for your kindness and understanding and for your commitment to the WC&S mission during this challenging time. We are so grateful for all of the love and support you have shown us and for the anticipated support in the weeks to come. We have already been contacted by some of you to help – thank you for that! If you are interested, we welcome you to donate to help defray costs of additional supplies and safety measures or assist clients who will financially suffer from temporary layoffs, etc. We will also be accepting *prepared food donations* on a limited basis (ready to serve lunch or dinner using safety guidelines) via drop off for those in our Shelter. If you are interested in helping us in any way, please email Kristin Brown at brownk@wcpittsburgh.org. Since the situation continues to change, we ask for your patience and thank you in advance for your thoughtfulness.

Sincerely,

Nicole
President/CEO