



# CITIZENS SUMMARY

## Findings in the Audit of the Domestic Violence Shelter Funding

Background	Domestic violence shelters exist throughout the state to provide assistance to victims of domestic violence in Missouri. The <i>Supplemental Domestic Violence Incident Report</i> for 2017 compiled by the Missouri State Highway Patrol indicated 45,253 incidents of domestic violence were reported that year. Currently, there are only two shelters to serve every three counties in the state. Domestic violence shelters may receive funding from statutory fees, various state and federal grant programs, state tax credit programs, interest income, local fund raisers, and contributions or donations. The Department of Social Services (DSS) administers the Domestic Violence Shelter Tax Credit as authorized by Section 135.550, RSMo. Funding is limited to \$2 million annually. The audit evaluated local government compliance with various state statutes.
Domestic Violence Shelter Funding Opportunities	Approximately \$698,000 in revenue for domestic violence shelters are forgone annually due to counties and cities electing not to collect all domestic violence fees allowed by state law.
Burdensome Statutes Hinder Distribution of Fees	State statutes regarding the distribution requirements for domestic violence fees collected are burdensome and unclear, resulting in a lack of compliance with requirements, and some county funds going undistributed. State law requires each county and city designated authority responsible for administering domestic violence funding to individually obtain and review domestic violence shelter funding requests, including determining if the shelter is eligible to receive funding. Only 43 of the 106 counties and the City of St. Louis (40 percent) responded that the requirements of Sections 455.215, 455.220 and 455.230, RSMo, were met. State law does not require the designated authorities to distribute funding and has not established a maximum amount that may be retained. Due to the decentralized manner in which domestic violence fees are currently distributed, funds are not being distributed where there is a demand for services.

Due to the nature of this report no rating is provided.