

Executive Summary

Pennsylvania Domestic Violence: A Select Bibliography of Primary & Secondary Sources

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This bibliography identifies the legal framework for and practice guidance on domestic and sexual violence matters in Pennsylvania. Commissioned by PCFJ and authored by Dr. Joel Fishman (Library Faculty Fellow, Duquesne Law), it is divided into two parts: Part I: Family Law, and Part II: Criminal Law. Both Parts feature a robust collection of primary and secondary sources, ranging from statutes and rules of court on domestic relations and human trafficking to bench books, suggested jury instructions, attorney Continuing Legal Education (CLE) courses, and legal periodicals. Collectively, these materials offer a detailed and current snapshot of relevant authorities as they exist in 2026.

Key Resources

The bibliography features a focused library of critical online resources, such as:

- The American Bar Association’s Commission on Domestic & Sexual Violence;
- A listing of all domestic violence programs in Pennsylvania, tailorable by ZIP code; and
- Topic-specific resources and training materials produced by Pennsylvania Coalition to Advance Respect (PCAR) and AEquitas.

It also includes recently published scholarly articles surfacing trauma-informed prosecutorial practices and highlighting findings that demonstrate, among other things, the roadblocks to reporting faced by survivors of abuse residing in both rural and urban parts of the Commonwealth.

Additional Structural Insights

In both Part I and Part II of the bibliography, primary sources appear first, followed by secondary materials, with cover pages demarcating the transition between same. The report is supported by a Preface, which cites authorities such as the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC), Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV), and PCAR to contextualize the importance of a coordinated approach to domestic and sexual violence and the necessary supports for the survivors against whom they are perpetrated.

We extend our sincere thanks to Dr. Fishman for his extensive research and collaborative approach in preparing this essential and landmark report. His scholarship continues to shed light on the status of justice and equity in Pennsylvania family and criminal law.

Purposes and Policy Implications

Aligned with the core mission of the PCFJ, this report supports two key purposes:

1. **Raising Awareness:** In elevating Commonwealth-specific statistics and practices designed to reduce or mitigate survivor trauma, the bibliography illuminates how factors such as race, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, and disability influence Pennsylvanians’ ability to access justice.
2. **Supporting Pennsylvanians Operating Within and Impacted by the Pennsylvania Justice System:** By presenting a holistic accounting of current laws and relevant practices,

the report supports state and local officials, as well as legal professionals and their clients, with the resources and tools necessary to ensure equal access to justice within all communities.

Conclusion

This select bibliography catalogues a wide array of materials designed to enrich its reviewers' understanding of the specific legal jurisprudence and organizations whose primary focus is on family law (civil and criminal). Its compendium of resources makes it a critical jumping-off point for prosecutors, victim advocates and service providers, policymakers, legal practitioners, judges, and others working in this sector.

PCFJ acknowledges that the laws governing violence and abuse change with significant frequency. With the necessary financial supports, PCFJ is well-positioned to update reports such as this periodically so that they provide an updated snapshot reflecting evolving legal developments in the Commonwealth.