



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 3, 2020

Contact: David Rivera

Mobile: 203-841-8494

## **Interval House Helps Victims of Domestic Violence in Face of Pandemic**

HARTFORD – For victims of domestic violence, a pandemic can be devastating. Many of the usual havens for temporary safety are off limits due to measures being taken to slow the spread of COVID-19. Work, schools, friends’ homes—even extended family homes.

But Interval House—the State’s largest domestic violence intervention and prevention organization—remains operational, providing life-saving services to victims and their families.

“This widespread quarantine is a most perilous time for victims of abuse,” said Mary-Jane Foster, Interval House’s President and CEO. “Isolation is often used by abusers to control their victims. With social distancing, it is even easier to keep victims away from the very family, friends and colleagues who might usually be of assistance to them. Undeniably, there is more violence and fear happening behind closed doors right now.”

“But there is a silver lining,” she said. “Interval House is still here. We’re available 24-7 and our services are always free and confidential.”

Foster said it has been challenging to pivot Interval House’s very personal and intense work to virtually all remote communication. However, she said something unexpected and special is emerging.

“This moment in time has created a unique opportunity for our advocates to provide deeper and more specialized attention to each individual victim over the phone,” Foster said. “As a result, Interval House is helping victims to create truly dynamic safety plans for their uncertain and changing situations.”

For the last two weeks, Interval House’s staff and volunteers have been working diligently to keep its client-focused operation fully functioning.

Interval House is still providing the following services:

- The 24-hour hotline (888-774-2900) for victims of domestic violence is fully staffed and taking calls;
- The confidentially-located Safe House is at capacity and essential staff are on site to provide resident families the support they need;
- Advocates are available to existing clients by phone, and Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) advocates continue to work with police departments to ensure new high-risk victims are connected with Interval House;
- Court-based victim advocates are available by phone to their clients and continue to assist with arraignments, continuances, and restraining orders;
- Existing clients who are experiencing financial loss due to layoffs and job loss are receiving help with groceries thanks to Interval House's gift card program made possible by generous donors; and
- Administrative offices are closed and all related staff is working remotely.

The Safe House residents have been asked to avoid unnecessary excursions to limit exposure to the virus. But Interval House is ready for anything, Foster said.

"We are working with other agencies, the City, and the State to ensure we have the resources and supplies needed to support Safe House operations." Foster said. "Plans are also in place to collaborate with those entities for off-site quarantine should one of our residents become ill and test positive for COVID-19."

Members of the community wanting to help the agency during this time may direct donations to [www.intervalhousect.org/donate](http://www.intervalhousect.org/donate) or mail a check or gift cards for clients to P.O. Box 340207, Hartford, CT 06134.

###

### **About Interval House**

*Founded in 1977, Interval House is the largest agency in the state of Connecticut dedicated to preventing and breaking the cycle of domestic violence. Through free and confidential services for victims in 24 towns and cities both East and West of the Connecticut River, Interval House has made a positive difference in the lives of more than 250,000 women and children who have experienced psychological and physical abuse at the hand of a domestic or intimate partner. 24-Hour Hotline: (888) 774-2900. Donations accepted: [www.intervalhousect.org/donate](http://www.intervalhousect.org/donate). All other calls: (860) 246-9149. Website: [intervalhousect.org](http://intervalhousect.org).*