

Challenges for Victims of Violence in Rural or Remote Areas

Individuals living with violence in rural areas share similar experiences with all victims who encounter violence. However, there may be additional challenges to addressing violence specific to living in rural and remote areas.

Violent perpetrators often use isolation to help maintain power and control over their victims. For individuals in rural and remote areas, isolation can become magnified by geography. Other factors can also impact a rural individual's isolation and their chances of reaching safe shelter. An individual who is isolated may have difficulty escaping from violence and fear leaving or calling someone for help.

Consider the following challenges for victims of violence in rural or remote areas:

- Accessing public transportation may be more difficult in rural and remote areas, meaning a victim of violence must use a family vehicle or find other means of transportation to leave a violent situation.
- Persons with disabilities may experience a lack of accessible transportation and lack of knowledge of disability-related supports to support them in escaping violence.
- Police and/or medical teams may take a longer time to respond in large geographic areas.
- People may tend to know each other in smaller communities. A victim of violence may not feel comfortable disclosing to a doctor, police officer or community leader for fear that person may tell others in the community, or that they will not be believed over the perpetrator.
- Rural areas may have fewer resources such as jobs, childcare, housing, health care or shelters. Easy access to these resources may be limited by distance.
- Adverse weather conditions such as fog, snow, and storms may affect life in rural areas and extend periods of isolation with an abuser.
- Poor roads or lack of roads may make transportation difficult.
- Weather conditions may mean irregular access to ferries or planes.
- Seasonal work may mean periods of unemployment and result in a victim of violence being isolated with an abuser.

- Hunting weapons may be used as potential weapons in violent situations.
- Travelling to urban areas and leaving home may be difficult for victims of violence.
- Some areas may not have adequate phone or internet service in order to reach out for help and resources.