



VAdata: Policy on Data Release and Publication of Data

Introduction

The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance manages VAdata, a data collection system that stores data on the adults and children served by Sexual and Domestic Violence Service Agencies. While the Action Alliance manages VAdata, the Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies maintain ownership of the data stored in the system. Data collected and reports generated are intended to enhance the quality of life for survivors of sexual and/or domestic violence in Virginia.

The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance (the Action Alliance) is a recognized leader in Virginia's response to sexual and domestic violence. We are a coalition of people and organizations with a strong history of working to create safe homes and communities in Virginia in the following ways: by ensuring that communities have the resources needed to respond effectively to sexual and domestic violence; by educating individuals, professionals, communities, and legislators on how to stop sexual and domestic violence from happening and on how to help those who have been hurt by violence; and by bringing people together to build networks to make Virginia safer.

VAdata is a data collection system that stores data on the adults and children served by Sexual and Domestic Violence Service Agencies. Since its inception in 2000, 100% of Virginia's state funded Domestic Violence and 93% of Virginia's Sexual Violence Service Agencies have participated in VAdata. One of its unique factors is that VAdata collects information on both sexual and domestic violence, combining information in one system to provide local Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies a data collection and reporting system to generate agency specific reports for local, state, and federal funders. Data collected includes an account of the variety of services received, a description of the violence experienced and the perpetrators of that violence, the effect of the violence, and how the services make a difference in the lives of the people served. Please visit www.vadata.org for more information on VAdata's history, to view current data collection forms, and/or to access annual reports.

The Action Alliance receives public and private funding to support the development, management, and maintenance of VAdata. While the Action Alliance manages VAdata, the Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies maintain ownership of the data stored in the system. The Action Alliance is only permitted to release statewide or regional aggregate data and must seek permission from appropriate local sexual and domestic violence agencies before releasing locality or agency-specific data.

The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance's policy on data release and publication of data reflects the mission of the Action Alliance and the desire to provide access to sexual and domestic violence services data for use by services providers and policymakers without compromising or violating personal privacy rights and/or federal and state confidentiality laws.

Published Data

The Action Alliance publishes a statewide VAdata Report annually. These reports can be accessed at http://www.vadata.org/public_reports.php. Reports are available for calendar years 2000 to present. Prior to completing an application for data, we encourage anyone interested in sexual and/or domestic violence services data to review these publically accessible reports that provide information on data most often requested.

Data Release Policy

All Decisions regarding release of data will be made using the following guiding principles:

1. Data requests and outputs produced are intended to enhance the quality of life for survivors of sexual and/or domestic violence in Virginia.
2. Respecting and preserving the personal privacy rights and confidentiality of persons accessing services from Sexual and Domestic Violence Service agencies.

Step 1: Application for Data:

The Action Alliance has the capacity to provide data in two formats: 1) record-level data; and 2) aggregate reports. Data may be requested for any 12-month time-frame that excludes the most recent 6 months. This time frame allows for information from all of the Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies to be accumulated in VAdata. Requests for data must be made in writing to the Action Alliance. The request should provide information about the people requesting the data, the institutions they represent, the scope of the data request (statewide, regional, locality-specific) and expected use of the data. Any interested party, including the Action Alliance, local Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies, funders, other public agencies, researchers, and policy makers, must [submit an application](#) to receive data.

There is a **\$25 application fee** for everyone except the following:

- Data owners (Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies),
- Units of state and federal agencies that have a current contract for programs and services with the Action Alliance,
- State and federal level elected officials of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Step 2: Contracting Process:

All applications for data will be reviewed by the Action Alliance staff and/or the VAdata Advisory Committee as applicable. The Action Alliance will make a decision regarding access to the data **within 90 days** of the date the request is submitted. The Action Alliance is only permitted to release statewide or regional aggregate data; therefore, access to locality or agency-specific data will require seeking permission from the appropriate local sexual and domestic violence agencies. To be eligible for use of the data, the requestor must intend to use the data in a manner that is intended to enhance the quality of life for survivors of sexual and/or domestic violence in Virginia.

Upon approval, applicants will receive written guidance regarding publication and authorship stipulations, confidentiality requirements, data access, and any additional fees that will be charged for customized reports. Applicants may then contract with the Action Alliance to retrieve and use the data under agreed upon terms.

All contracts will include a description of any additional fees that will be charged for compiling data, obtaining appropriate consents, and customizing reports. Fees will be based on the complexity of the request and staff time, resources, and programming needed to fulfill the request.

NOTE: The VAdata Advisory Committee will be responsible for reviewing applications submitted by the Action Alliance staff and subsequent decisions regarding data usage and publication.