

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



**Project**  
**Safeguard**  
*Justice and Safety*

# FROM OUR LEADERSHIP



Dear Project Safeguard Supporters,

We are excited to share with you the impact we made on survivors of gender-based violence in 2023. On the following pages, you'll find organizational highlights from 2023 as well as data and stories of impact.

2023 marked our 39th year in existence as an organization. As we head toward our 40th anniversary in 2024, we are struck by how much has changed in the past 40 years - and how much has stayed the same.

Over our 40-year history, the ways in which we pursue justice for survivors has changed significantly. While our original model of non-attorney victim advocacy is still a cornerstone of our programming, we have added several other ways for survivors to access the justice they deserve. Over the past few decades, we have added divorce and custody clinics, staff attorney support, and piloted a Lawyers for Victims program in 2015 to pair contract attorneys with survivors needing more extensive legal support. The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to adapt our ways of working, and we now regularly provide services in person or remotely, depending on the unique needs and preference of our clients.

While the ways in which we pursue justice for survivors has changed, our commitment to justice for survivors has not. The public understanding of gender-based violence has shifted significantly in the past few decades, but people in our communities are still experiencing gender-based violence daily. Survivors continue to rely on our legal advocacy programs to help them secure justice and safety for themselves and their families, and we are grateful for the opportunity to support them.

As we conclude our 39th year, we also mark a transition in leadership. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Jennifer Eyl for her remarkable five years as Executive Director, during which she has made significant contributions to both Project Safeguard and the broader field of victim services. As we move into 2024, we are excited to welcome Jody Curl as our new Executive Director. With 34 years of experience in nonprofit management and a deep passion for our mission, Jody is well-equipped to lead us into this new chapter.

Amid these transitions, your support has been invaluable. Whether through financial contributions, volunteer work, or advocating for our cause within your own community, your involvement plays a crucial role in advancing our work. We are profoundly grateful for your dedication and partnership.

In service,



## MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

**Project Safeguard's Mission** is to empower and partner with people who have experienced gender-based violence, helping them navigate a course of survivor-driven justice through expert, trauma-informed legal advocacy and representation.

**Project Safeguard's Vision** is a community where survivor-driven justice is accessible to all people who have experienced gender-based violence.

### **Project Safeguard's Core Values**

We believe that justice is only possible when:

- Gender-based violence is understood
- The people helping understand the impact of trauma
- We hold systems accountable
- It is defined by the survivor
- We take anti-racist action and pursue social justice
- We show respect



# NON-LEGAL ADVOCACY PROGRAM

**The Legal Advocacy Program provides a foundation from which our clients can begin their journey to safety. For many of the folks we serve, our non-attorney services sufficiently meet their needs, but those with more complex legal needs benefit greatly from access to and support from a licensed attorney.**

PSG provides **legal advocacy services** in the following ways:

**Legal advocacy:** Non-attorney legal advocates provide safety planning, accurate information about the legal system, referrals to other resources, and support clients at court hearings, help them prepare for court, and coordinate Divorce and Custody clinics in both English and Spanish where clients receive important information and assistance.

**Systems change:** Leadership and staff engage in policy advocacy, coordinate with local courts to ensure survivors rights and needs are considered, and provide training and education for the legal community and allied service providers.

**Collaboration and coordination with other services providers:** Leadership and staff participate in multidisciplinary committees and task forces to ensure the needs and interests of the folks we serve are represented in the victim services community. They also learn from and share information with community partners through guest presentations and cross-trainings.

Project Safeguard's model of pairing wraparound civil legal advocacy with multi-issue legal representation for people impacted by gender-based violence is unique in our service area.



# ATTORNEY SERVICES PROGRAM

**Project Safeguard's legal services program employ in-house staff and contracted attorneys to provide expert, trauma-informed, legal advice and representation through case consultations, hearing preparation, ghostwriting, and paperwork assistance.**

Project Safeguard provides **attorney services** in the following ways:

**Divorce and Custody Clinics:** Clients interested in filing for Dissolution of Marriage and/or Allocation of Parental Responsibilities as a result of their victimization can access pro-bono attorney assistance through a monthly clinic staffed by PSG's roster of volunteer attorneys. Additionally, at least one clinic per month is conducted in Spanish.

**Lawyers for Victims (LFV):** In this innovative program, PSG contracts directly with experienced and trauma-informed attorneys for a flat-fee rate to represent some clients at their Permanent Civil Protection Order hearing. This program has been temporarily on hold during 2023, but is resuming in July 2024.

**In-house staff attorneys:** Staff attorneys provide legal advice and support to PSG clients, primarily in domestic relations and complex CPO matters. Services provided include consultations, case strategy sessions, hearing preparation sessions, limited representation, and full representation.



**Project Safeguard's model of pairing wraparound civil legal advocacy with multi-issue legal representation for people impacted by gender-based violence is unique in our service area.**

# DENVER COLFAX MARATHON

PRESENTED BY  Cigna.



City Park hosted the Denver Colfax Marathon on May 20th and 21st. In total, 79 people signed up to participate in support of Project Safeguard! Through almost 40 peer-to-peer fundraising campaigns, corporate sponsorships, and a Bonfire t-shirt campaign organized by Team Katie runners, **we raised almost \$45,000!**

Team Katie alone recruited 53 participants who participated in memory of Kate Rafferty Petrocco, a survivor of domestic violence who left this world far too soon in July 2019. Team Katie raised more than \$35,000 for on behalf of Project Safeguard through 30 fundraising pages, and they raised awareness about domestic violence in their networks and communities across the country! We are honored to have been selected as the beneficiary of their efforts and are so grateful for their work.

We also had a staff relay team and several local friends and community partners showed up to support us. Not only was this a successful fundraising effort, but it was an incredible opportunity for us to connect with community, and one we won't soon forget.



**Thank you to everyone who participated in the races, made a donation, asked for donations, raised awareness, helped staff our booth, and stopped by to say hello! We couldn't have done this without you!**

# 2023

## HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### CAIA and Aspen Award

During the first week of June, PSG staff attended the Colorado Advocacy in Action conference. Project Safeguard was honored with the **Aspen Award for Organizational Excellence** by Violence Free Colorado, and our Executive Director, Jennifer Eyl, presented a session on Domestic Violence Offender Treatment Options in Protection Order and Family Law Cases.



Thanks to Violence Free Colorado for honoring us with the Aspen Award!



### 2023 Family Law Institute Panel

On August 11, PSG's Legal Director, Amy Pohl, was part of a panel on the Impact of Domestic Violence on Family Law Cases at the 2023 Family Law Institute in Vail, CO. More than 100 attorneys, child and family investigators, judges, and court personnel attended the panel presentation.





# 2023

## HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Domestic Violence Awareness Walk

For the second year in a row, PSG staff members participated in a Domestic Violence Awareness walk in Denver on October 19, which is nationally recognized as Purple Thursday.



### Working Group Against Gender Violence hosted by the Consulado General de México en Denver

PSG staff participated in the quarterly meeting of the Working Group Against Gender Violence. The multi-disciplinary group of community agencies brainstormed and shared ideas on how to assist victims of gender-based violence.



# 2023

## HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### 2023 Family Justice Center Conference

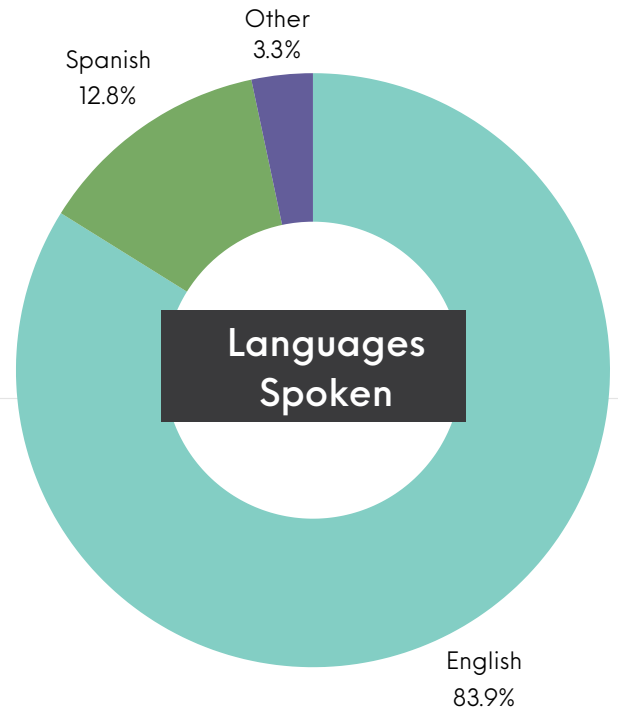
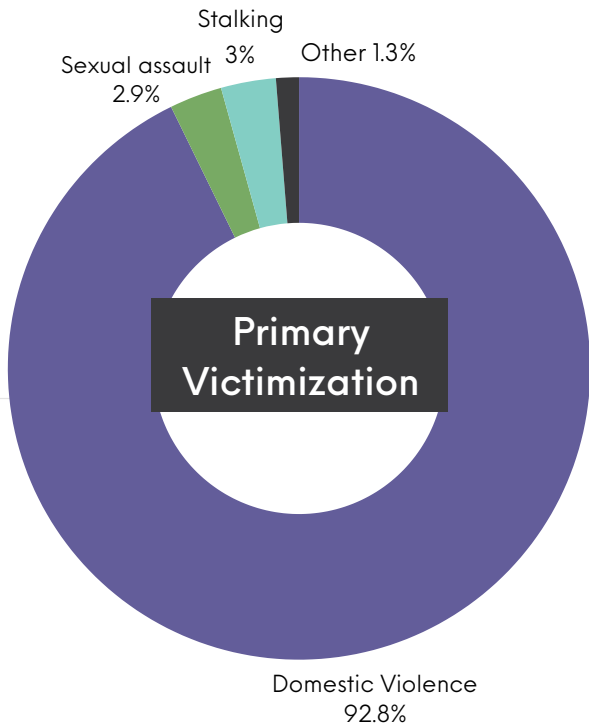
In May, our Executive Director, Legal Director, and Legal Advocacy Program Director presented at the 2023 Family Justice Center Conference in San Diego. Their presentation, Cross Agency Approach to Preparing/Staffing Clients for Protection Order Hearings, focused on how our Legal Advocacy and Attorney Services programs work together to provide wraparound services to clients needing support in the Civil Protection Order process.

#### PSG staff presented at the 2023 Family Justice Center Conference in San Diego



# PROGRAM IMPACT DATA

In 2023, PSG provided legal advocacy and/or attorney services to **787 victims/survivors of gender-based violence** through approximately **350 in-person** and more than **3000 phone and email contacts**.



Of the total clients served, **212 received consultation or representation from a PSG staff attorney**.

Approximately **13% of services were provided in Spanish** and services were provided **in a total of 17 languages**. In addition to English and Spanish, clients were served in ASL, Arabic, French, Indonesian, Mandarin, Nepali, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Uzbek, and Vietnamese

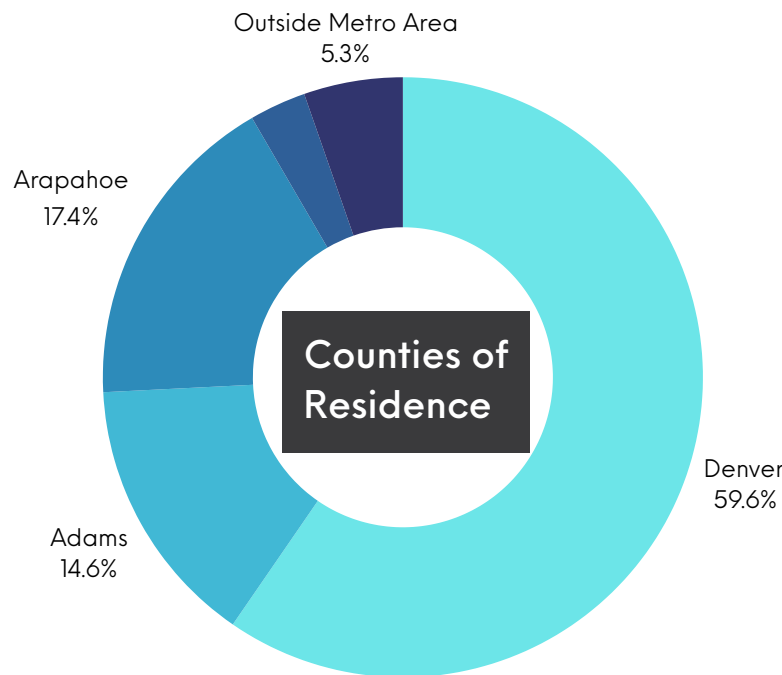
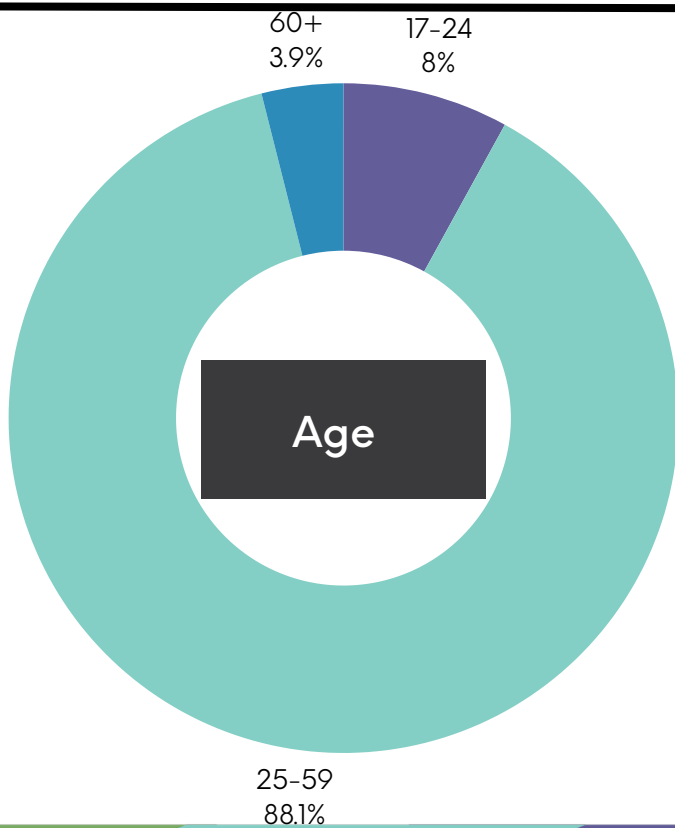
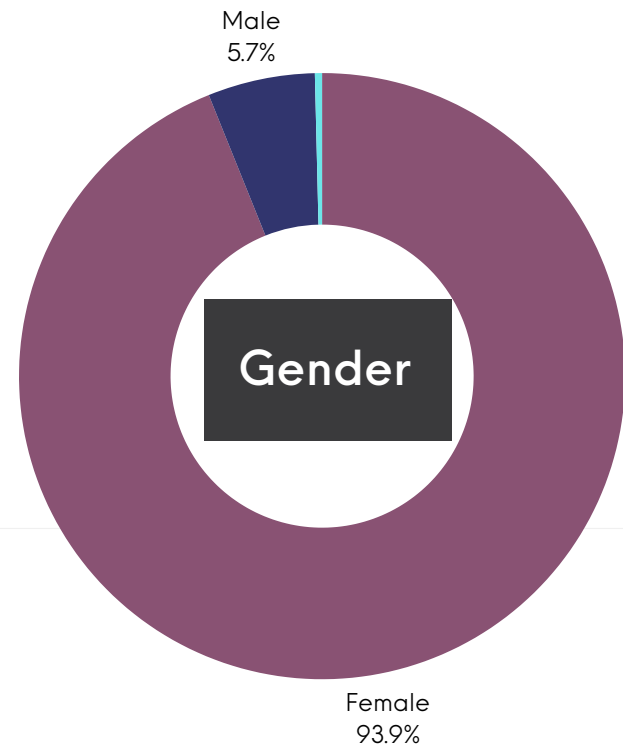
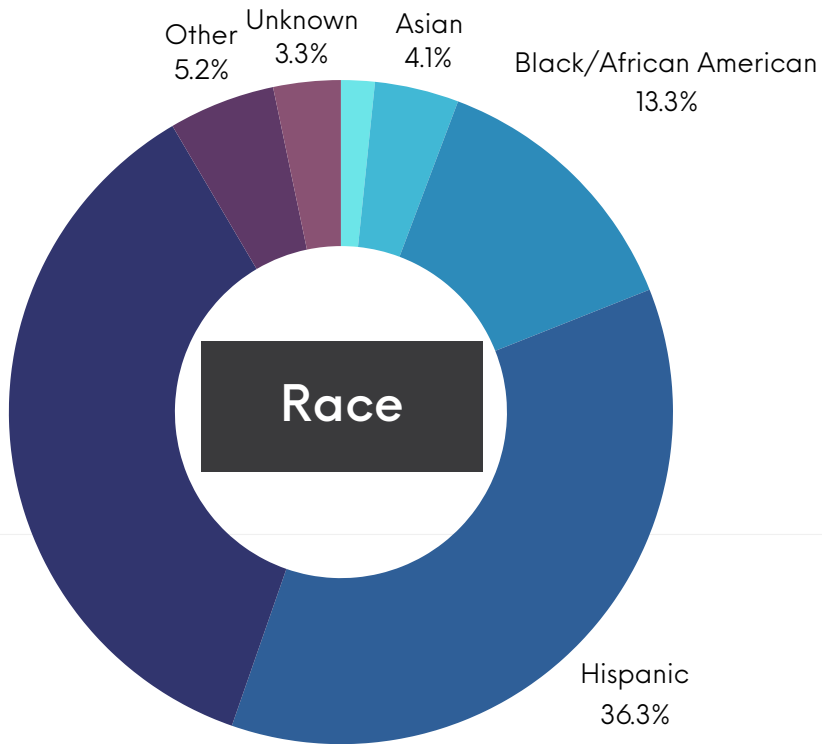
## COMMUNITY TRAININGS

PSG staff reached more than 700 community members through 26 awareness raising events and trainings. Topics included PSG services, civil protection orders, safety planning, DV and civil cases involving children, mandatory reporting, how DV intersects with domestic relations cases, survivors' legal rights and options, and providing trauma-informed and survivor-centered services.





# CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS



# WHO WE SERVE & OUTCOMES

## **Who we serve:**

Support with filing for a civil protection order is most often what brings people to Project Safeguard, but once they have connected with an advocate, we help people understand all of the ways the civil legal system can support them on their journey to safety.

While we serve folks from all gender, socioeconomic, and ethnic backgrounds, the majority of our clients are women, more than 60% of those we serve are considered “low income” by federal standards, and 15-20% of our clients have limited English proficiency.

Project Safeguard prides itself on not having income eligibility requirements for our services, but many of the folks we serve are experiencing financial hardship and do not have the means to hire an attorney for support navigating the complexities of the civil legal system. Free legal services reduce barriers to accessing civil legal protections that can increase survivors safety.

## **Outcomes for the survivors PSG serves:**

### **Short-Term**

- Survivors increase their ability to plan for their safety, enabling them move out of “survival mode” so they can rebuild their lives and move toward self-sufficiency
- Survivors have more knowledge about community resources and legal processes
- Survivors receive free information and legal advice so they can make informed decisions about how to move forward
- Survivors may receive more desirable outcomes in divorce and custody cases, which can help them become more financially stable

### **Long-Term**

- Laws and policies that are survivor-centered and make legal systems more accessible and effective for survivors
- Survivors who have benefited from advocacy and legal support want to give back and go on to become changemakers in their community
- Survivors move along a continuum of healing, working through trauma and toward a life free from abuse



# WHY OUR WORK IS NEEDED

The legal system is complex and confusing for anyone to navigate, and it is even more difficult for folks who have been impacted by trauma and are living in survival mode. A needs assessment conducted by the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ) found the provision of civil legal services for victims of Crime to be a major gap in services in the state.

Colorado Crime Statistics from 2022 show that there were more than 12,000 reports of crimes related to gender-based violence in Metro Denver.

According to the Department of Justice's 2013 Vision 21 report, "the majority of crime victims in the United States never contact law enforcement or step across the threshold of a courtroom", so we know that the need is greater than the data can demonstrate.

**PSG works to level the playing field and create more equitable access to the civil legal system for survivors by working alongside them to make the process less daunting.**



# CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

“

“We felt like such a burden was lifted from our shoulders. Our advocate made me feel heard and helped get a referral for an attorney. We are beyond grateful for Project Safeguard. We had all but given up and with the help of our attorney referral we had a successful outcome at court.”

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"My advocate showed up at the court to watch the temporary protection order for me and my attorney took her time to speak with me and went over details and understood how to use the sign language interpreter at the first consultation. I appreciated their presence! Having them there made me feel calm."

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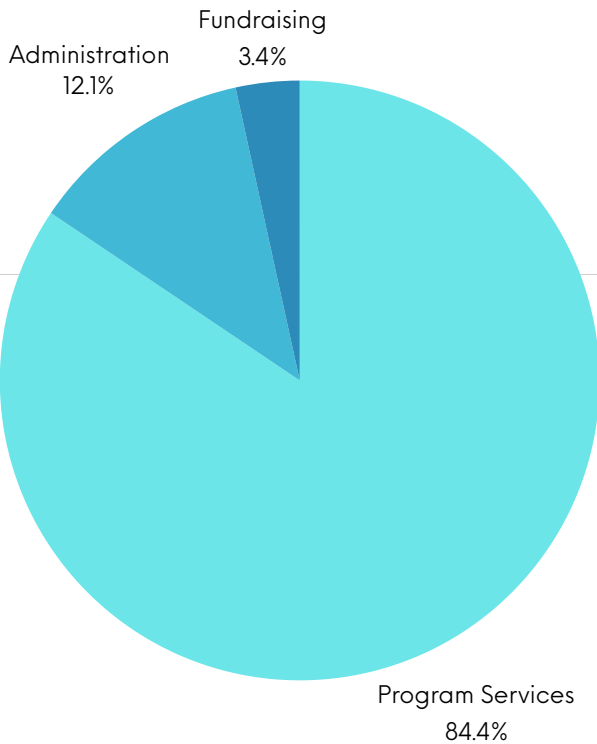
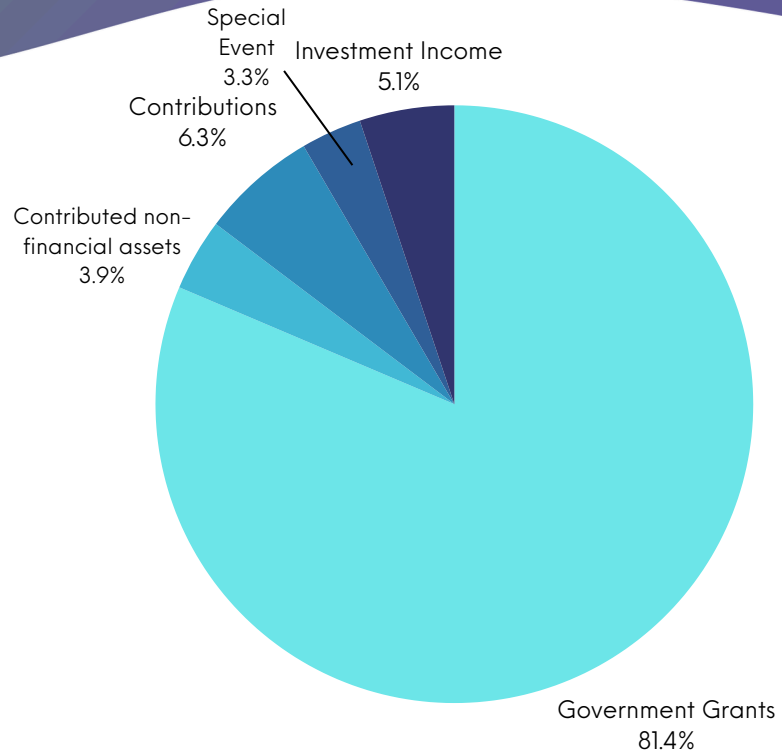
"I am thankful for this amazing and wonderful team. For their encouragement, guidance, and support means the world to me. It helps me feel not alone so thank you all."

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# FINANCIALS

## Income / Revenue

- Government Grants: \$1,040,489
- Contributed nonfinancial assets: \$49,928
- Contributions: \$80,382
- Special event net: \$42,043
- Investment income: \$65,492
- **Total Income/Revenue: \$1,278,334**



## Income / Revenue

- Program Services: \$1,091,766
- Administration: \$156,925
- Fundraising: \$44,422
- **Total Expenses: \$1,293,113**





## LEADERSHIP AND BOARD

Project Safeguard staff provide services in four locations throughout metro Denver. Because of the nature of our work, the safety of our staff is of utmost importance, and we chose not to publish the names of all staff in this report. We appreciate each and every member of the staff for their important role in helping PSG achieve its mission! Below are the names of staff who were in leadership positions in 2023, along with our 2023 Board Members:

### LEADERSHIP STAFF

- **Jennifer Eyl**, Executive Director
- **Amy Pohl**, Legal Director
- **Jenn Doe**, Development Director
- **Jenny Garnica**, Legal Advocacy Program Director
- **BethAnne O'Keefe**, Finance Director

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Laura Johnson-Morris**, Board President
- **Taylor Rosty**, Board Vice Chair
- **Katie Ziegler**, Board Secretary
- **Anne Wintemute**, Board Treasurer
- **Heather Strack**, Board Member
- **Jordan Smith**, Board Member
- **Rosi Gasca**, Board Member
- **Sheryl Storey**, Board member
- **Alexis Freet**, Board Member





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Scan the QR code below or visit [www.PSGhelps.org](http://www.PSGhelps.org) to learn more about Project Safeguard and how you can stay connected with us.



**Save the Date and Give Where You Live!**

For 24 hours on December 10th, Colorado will come together to raise funds for local nonprofits, and we're excited to be part of the day! Early giving begins November 1 and donations can be made to Project Safeguard year-round at <https://www.coloradogives.org/donate/psghelps>