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Fear and Silence: New Insights from Survey of 170+ Advocates for Immigrant Survivors of Violence

FALLS CHURCH - Attorneys and advocates for survivors of violence have noted a troubling trend in the first months of 2025: immigrant crime victims are even more afraid to seek help from the police and courts. **That is the clear finding of a [new survey](#) by the Alliance for Immigrant Survivors (AIS), titled “Fear and Silence: 2025 Insights from Advocates for Immigrant Survivors.”**

- Download [high-level findings](#) from the survey, released June 18, 2025

The Tahirih Justice Center is a co-chair of AIS, a national network working to defend and enhance protections and safety for immigrant survivors of gender-based violence. AIS and the Tahirih Justice Center work to ensure that survivors can live free from abuse — and free from fear of deportation for coming forward and seeking help. But right now, survivors are being trapped in silence.

Said **Adilene Nunez Huang, Director of Client Experience at Tahirih Justice Center**, “While the survey results are deeply saddening, I am not surprised that a huge majority of immigrant survivors are hesitant to reach out to the police or go to court for protection. It reflects what our service providers at Tahirih encounter every day. Immigrant survivors are justifiably afraid of detention, deportation, and separation from their family and children in this environment, and it’s driving them to choose to stay in dangerous situations.”

Nearly 76% of advocates who work with immigrant survivors of violent crime said their clients report fear of interacting with the police. In fact, one advocate said, “Most of the immigrant survivors that I currently work with are fearful to leave their homes, drive or be in public spaces as these are all ways that they could be picked up by [Immigration and Customs Enforcement].”

Morgan Weibel, Director of Client Advocacy, Legal Services at Tahirih added, “Established federal law, such as the Violence Against Women Act, has long recognized that perpetrators may exploit a survivor’s lack of immigration status to keep them trapped in an abusive situation. We must uphold laws and policies that protect all survivors so that they may exit dangerous relationships and obtain the safety to which every human being is entitled.”



“Abusers often use the threat of deportation against immigrant survivors as a tool to maintain power and control,” said **Miriam Camero, Tahirih’s Director of Client Advocacy, Social Services.** “When survivors are afraid that reaching out to services and institutions like local police will lead to their deportation or separation from their families, this makes all of us less safe and strengthens the hand of abusers. If we are serious about addressing domestic and sexual violence in this country, we must ensure that immigrant survivors have safe pathways to come forward and receive help.”

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The Tahirih Justice Center is a national, nonprofit organization that serves women, girls, and all immigrant survivors of gender-based violence. By amplifying the experiences of survivors, our mission is to create a world in which all people share equal rights and live in safety and with dignity.