

The Dallas Morning News

Online resource for domestic violence survivors grew out of Dallas initiative

DVBeds connects survivors with available shelter beds in real time.

By Dallas Morning News Editorial

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DVBeds Free, Real-Time Shelter Bed Visibility



A Family Place Innovation

When shelters are at capacity, advocates and support staff often spend significant time trying to locate alternative emergency housing—sometimes across regions or even state lines—to help survivors reach safety. In those critical moments, survivors may be in extreme danger and have only a brief window of time to locate a safe place to stay. Without real-time access to shelter bed availability at other programs, the process often means multiple calls, delays, and added stress for both advocates and

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DVBeds is an online platform that connects survivors of domestic violence to shelters with available beds.

The Family Place

The holidays can be a time of joy and gathering with loved ones, but for people with an abusive partner, holidays like Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's can exacerbate dangerous situations. Domestic violence incidents often spike during the holidays, as stress, alcohol and family dynamics increase tensions.

That's why DVBed, an online system that connects survivors of domestic violence with available beds at shelters in their area, is so important.

The idea began with **The Family Place** in Dallas in 2017 and in the years since has expanded beyond North Texas to 19 states. In October, the platform was acquired by the National Domestic Violence Hotline.

The system includes shelters and other partners like hospitals and law enforcement, making it a true network of support. By weaving together these resources, the platform ensures that people fleeing domestic violence are swept up in a coordinated and responsive safety net.

Tiffany Tate, CEO of the Family Place, explained that in the past, shelters that were full would provide people fleeing dangerous situations with a list of phone numbers for other shelters in the area. The problem was that survivors didn't know whether the shelter had space until they called or showed up.

DVBeds aims to make it easier and faster to connect survivors with bed availability by showing real-time openings.

When a survivor reaches out, the platform identifies shelters that meet their needs and filters by available beds. In some cases, survivors are guided to a safe meeting location and provided transportation through partners like Families to Freedom, ensuring they can reach the shelter safely and without being tracked.

Too often, people in danger are left to figure out a plan by themselves. Deciding to leave an abusive relationship or an unsafe home environment is already an emotional decision. Asking survivors to navigate a maze of uncertainty on top of that makes an already overwhelming decision even harder. DVBeds removes some of that guesswork.

Tate explained that one reason people might stay with an abusive partner is that they don't want to leave behind their pet. DVBeds helps solve that by matching people with shelters that can accommodate pets.

When survivors know they can follow a clear plan and have a place to go, they may be more likely to leave an abusive partner or relative. Programs like DVBeds aren't just helpful; they're lifelines that give people real options when every minute counts.