



LEGISLATIVE MEETING TIPS

Welcome to CFJN Advocacy Day 2024!

Advocacy Day is a time to share our vision and amplify the voices of survivors of violence served by Family Justice Centers throughout California. Today, our advocacy seems more important than ever as we bear witness to the tragic consequences of the current rise in violence for families, children, and our communities.

This packet includes tips and suggestions for making the most of your team's visits with legislators. Please feel free to adapt them as you wish to help shine a light on the need for increased support for victims of interpersonal violence.

We appreciate your leadership and investment of time in this year's Advocacy Day!

OUR ADVOCACY AGENDA

1. Address the VOCA funding shortfall
2. Ensure Justice for Victims
3. Protect Children

During your Advocacy Day legislative visits, you can help to educate legislators about the life-saving impact of the work carried out by your Family Justice Center and the network of FJCs serving victims of violence throughout California.

We ask that you:

1. **Share some brief information about your FJC**, focusing on the benefits of the FJC model for victims and their families, including children.
2. **Thank legislators for past FJC grant funding** which provides crucial state support for Family Justice Centers statewide (three grants of \$10 million each in 2018, 2020, and 2023).

3. **Share specific examples (and stories!)** of how the FJC Grant funding made a difference for victims of violence and your ability to serve their needs.
4. **Ask for state budget support** (retain the \$103 Million in the legislature’s budget proposal) for services that would be affected by VOCA funding cuts and two key pieces of legislation: [AB 1956](#) (Reyes) and [AB 2432](#) (Gabriel) for a long-term solution.
5. **Highlight four additional bills we are supporting:** [SB 989](#) (Ashby) Justice for Victims Act, [SB 1000](#) (Ashby) covering victim device protection, [AB 3072](#) (Petrie-Norris) ensuring child protections, and [AB 2924](#) (Petrie-Norris) to end child marriage.

BEFORE YOUR MEETING

- **Research your legislators**, including committee assignments, policy interests, and their past record on issues related to our work. Knowing your members and their staff is key to a successful meeting (see list of California Legislators [here](#)).
- **Check in with your Team Lead (your FJC Director)** in advance and work together to divide up the main points, stories, and asks among your team. Your meeting will go more smoothly if you identify in advance who will speak on specific issues.
- **Plan for about a 20-minute meeting, although some meetings may be only 15 minutes.**
- **Follow the lead of your Team Leader.** They will make introductions and facilitate the meeting.
- **Identify 1-2 impact stories to share and decide who will tell them.** Share stories that portray the urgency and life-changing impact of supporting survivors and their families with the FJC model and that demonstrate the negative impact of the VOCA cuts.
- **ENJOY!** Advocacy Day is a wonderful opportunity to invite more understanding of the needs of victims of violence statewide. Thank you for your leadership in building our network advocacy. We hope you have a meaningful and inspired Advocacy Day!

GETTING TO YOUR MEETING

Most meetings are in the Capitol Annex (known as the “Swing Space”) building located at 1021 O Street. Please allow time for passing through security and possible elevator waits.

Please arrive as a team at the Legislator’s office for your meeting 7-10 minutes prior to the scheduled meeting time. If you are running behind, please text or call Nancy Fisher at (916) 502-5588 so that she can notify the legislative office.

DURING YOUR MEETING

1. **Refer to the talking points** we have prepared for you.
2. **Share your story.** Elected officials are moved by people's stories, especially those who live in their districts. You can share yours as a way to personalize the need for policy change and requests. Use these tips to help think about sharing your story:
 - How are you connected to the experience of domestic and interpersonal violence, either through your own experience or through your FJC work?
 - Your story will have the most impact when it is personal and specific.
 - Don't be afraid to be emotional about how challenging it is for victims to receive services under the traditional model and to heal from trauma.
 - You can end your story with a positive example of how the FJC model is working in your area and a vision of what you'd like to see going forward.
3. **Ask the legislator and/or staff support if we can count on their support,** especially to ensure that victims' services continue in the face of VOCA cuts and for their support for increased justice for victims.
4. **Thank the legislator** and/or staff person for their time and support. Ask them for their card.
5. **Leave documents** with them ("Public Priorities" and "About CFJN").
6. **Invite the legislator and their staff members to TODAY's CFJN Advocacy Day reception with music, hors d'oeuvres and ice cream from 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm** (tent on the southwest corner of the Capitol lawn). Please give them the reception invitation found in your packet.

AFTER THE MEETING

- **Ask for a photo with the legislator or staff member.**
- **Fill out your Legislative Meeting Form** (drop off in the Meeting Report basket at the CFJN Advocacy Day tent).
- **Share highlights on social media and tag your legislator** using their social handle.
- **Team Leader and participants send personal written thank-yous** and follow-up meeting requests to the legislator and/or member of their staff.