

LEGISLATIVE MEETING TIPS

Welcome to CFJN Advocacy Day 2023! 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 on families, children, and our communities.

This packet includes some tips and suggestions to make the most of your team's virtual 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!

CFJN Advocacy Day 2023 Theme

This year's Advocacy Day Program will focus on trauma-informed response necessary for breaking the cycle of violence, particularly for children. Survivors' voices will be a center piece of the program, including highlights from trauma-informed programs that are developed from survivors' voices and experience. We are honored to have a very special keynote address - "Putting Children First: From Healing to Hope" - with Rebecca Bailey, PhD and Jaycee Lee Dugard from Sonoma County. They will speak to a specific model of healing work with children victims of violence that they have developed in Sonoma County. District Attorneys from across the state will speak about the FJC model as critical to helping individuals, families and communities move "from violence to healing." Finally, a round-table discussion with FJC leaders will leave us with some thoughts and ideas for furthering the work of advancing healing and hope with children and youth.

OUR ADVOCACY AGENDA

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 26 FJCs serving victims of violence throughout California.

We ask that you:

- 1. Share some brief information about your FJC**, with a focus this year on your trauma-informed work with victims, particularly children and youth.
- 2. Inform legislators about past FJC grant funding** and thank them for the crucial state support (\$10 million for a two year period in 2018-19 and \$11 million in 2020 for another two year period. Funding ends March 2024).
- 3. Share specific examples** of how the funding made a difference for victims of violence and your ability to serve their needs.
- 4. Ask for support for a \$25 million budget allocation** and for their signature on a letter to Assembly/Senate leadership and the Governor.
- 5. If there is time, you can add support for current budget items or bills that you want to bring up** with your legislator to support domestic violence victims and services. Please note that the Network is not taking a formal position on bills this year. We are however, providing a short list for your background information of some of the bills that are circulating through the legislative process.

2023 Virtual ADVOCACY DAY

California Family Justice Network

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 a list of [Assembly Members here](#), and a [list of Senators here](#)).
- **Check in with your Team Lead (your FJC Director)** in advance and work together to divide up the main points, stories, and asks amongst your team. Your meeting will go more smoothly if you identify in advance who is going to speak on specific issues. *Note: There will be time during the Advocacy Day lunch break from 12:00 – 1:00 pm to check in and prepare for your meetings.*
- **Plan for about a 20 minute meeting, although some meetings may be only 15 minutes.**
- **Follow your Team Lead's Lead.** 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.
- **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 2023.

STARTING YOUR MEETING

All of your meetings will be accessed through this zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85985493172>

- **Please arrive 7-10 minutes prior to your meeting time**
- **When you enter the meeting:**
 - You will see two intro slides which show you are in the right place
 - Please rename yourself to include First & Last Name and your FJC
 - Enable your favorite Advocacy Day virtual background (add link here)
 - **Legislative meetings are taking place in breakout rooms**
 - > Click on the breakout room icon at the bottom of your screen
 - > Select your legislative meeting from the list (named by Legislator and in alphabetically order) and click “assign” next to the legislator’s name for the meeting you wish to attend.

- > When ready to move to the next meeting, click the breakout room icon and again select which legislator you want to meet with next and “assign” yourself to that meeting.
- > When you are ready to leave the room and return to the main room, click the “Leave” button on bottom right.
- > If you need any assistance, there will be tech support available to help get you to your meeting.

DURING YOUR 20-30 MINUTE MEETING

- **Team Leader convenes the meeting**, makes introductions, and thanks the Legislator for their time and commitment to serving the needs of victims of interpersonal violence (3-5 minutes)
- **Team Leader or designee highlights where/ how the legislator has been supportive in the past.** For example, “Thank you for your support of _____.”
Team participant presents an OVERVIEW of CFJN, FJCs, and what is happening directly in the legislator’s district to support victims (3 minutes)

Our FJC is located _____ and serves _____ victims of violence every year. Our numbers are rising, especially since the onset of the pandemic. We provide _____ services in your district with the following impact for victims of violence and their children.

Our state network of FJCs, the CA Family Justice Network, has coordinated this Advocacy Day – together we represent 26 FJCs statewide (and four more in development) servicing more than 70,000 victims of violence a year, including large numbers of children. Our FJCs are on the front-lines of violence response in CA, providing victims with a welcoming, safe haven and access to coordinated services that increase safety, reduce trauma, and help survivors to rebuild their lives. There is a growing need for this model throughout the state. We hope to ensure that each county in CA has an FJC in the near future.

- **Team participant THANKS the legislator for the past state funding received.** If the legislator does not know about the funding, explain that the FJ Grant funding was in two one-time budget items through OES. Share that the funding has had a significant impact on your FJCs ability to serve victims throughout the crisis and especially now, as violence is on the rise. Examples of the impact include: _____ (3 minutes)
- **Participants hear from the legislator** about his/her priorities and questions.
- **ASK the legislator if they will support adding funding for FJCs in FY 2023-2024 and to sign onto the letter of support to Leadership and the Governor.** If not, is there more information that they would like in order to learn more about the critical role of FJCs?
- **Team Leader thanks the legislator or staff.** If the legislator is signing onto the letter, ask for staff person’s contact information for follow-up.

During Your 10-15 Minute Meeting – Get to the Point!

- **Team lead introduces** themselves and participants.
- **Mention your FJC** and touch briefly upon the work you do and how many victims you serve.
- **Thank the member** or staff person for taking time to meet.

We wanted to take this opportunity today to thank you for past state funding for CA's Family Justice Center Program – a grant program through OES – which has been critical to our ability to stay open and serving victims of inter-personal violence in our community and across the state. Our unique victim-centered model for victim's support has transformed violence crisis response for victims and children across the state. FJCs are now considered a best practice model and more FJCs are wanted in counties that don't yet have them. We need your support today to ensure that our FJC and the 25 others in CA remain open and can meet the demands of this moment. Would you please sign onto these two letters in support of a \$25 million budget allocation for the Family Justice Program for FY 2023-2024?

If yes: Thank you for your support! We will circle back with you to follow-up regarding your signature.

If no: Is there any other information we can provide you with about our FJC or the CA Family Justice Network?

- **Team Leader thanks the legislator or staff.** If the legislator is signing onto the letter, ask for ask for staff person's contact information for follow-up. If not, ask if you may follow up with more information and get contact information.

AFTER THE MEETING

- **Share highlights on social media and tag your member**, using their [social handle](#).
- **Team Leader writes meeting highlights** on the "CFJN Legislator Visit Meeting Notes" form and returns the form to Brenda Solario, brenda@cocofamilyjustice.org.
- **Team Leader and participants send personal written thank-you's** and follow-up meeting requests to the legislator and/or member of their staff.



Helpful Reminders for a Virtual Meeting

Virtual Setting

Choose a place with a neutral background or select an appropriate virtual background.

Background Noise

Please do your best to take the meeting in a space free from background noise.

Internet Connection

Take the meeting where your internet connection is strongest. If you have a slow connection, you may take yourself off video to improve the sound quality.

Mute Yourself

Please mute yourself unless you are speaking to limit background noise and feedback.

Headphones

Headphones are optional but may allow for better sound quality.

Camera and Lighting

Ensure that your camera is positioned at eye level and try to fill the screen. Ideally, the screen should capture a little below your shoulders and a little space above your head.

Minimize back-lighting, or windows behind you, to avoid wash out; use front lighting to ensure your face is well lit.

Meeting Time

Be mindful of your meeting time, especially the meeting start and stop times.

Chat Function

Refrain from using the chat function. If you need to speak to your group, send a text, if possible.

Professionalism

Keep conversations professional while waiting for your Legislative Member or Staff to join. Assume that you can always be heard.

Questions? Contact:

Legislative Visit Scheduling and Technical Support with Zoom:

Nancy Fisher, nancyfisher2018@gmail.com
(916) 584-0806