

POLICY PRIORITIES



Prioritize Survivors in the State Budget

California is experiencing a historic surge in domestic violence severity. According to the Public Policy Institute of California, aggravated domestic assaults have reached a 20-year high. As families continue to face mounting economic stress and societal pressures, domestic violence incidents are projected to increase. Without sustained investment in community-based support systems, both the number of victims and the risks to survivors will continue to grow.

Family Justice Centers (FJC) are addressing this growing crisis through their unique model of collaborative, community-based care.

Family Justice Centers: A Proven Solution

- **Integrated Services Under One Roof:** Survivors can access legal aid, law enforcement, mental health counseling, housing assistance, healthcare, and job support - all in one location. They choose which partners to work with, ensuring a survivor-centered approach.
- **Evidence-Based Impact:** This model has been proven to reduce trauma, increase safety, and improve long-term outcomes for both survivors and their children.
- **Collaborative Approach:** FJCs coordinate and leverage existing community services, creating a seamless network of support that maximizes resources and avoids duplication.
- **Legally Recognized Best Practice:** Since 2014, California law (CA Penal Code §13750(a)) has recognized Family Justice Centers as a best-practice model for coordinated victim care.
- **Widespread Reach:** 27 operational and 6 emerging FJCs in California; 150 nationally; 150 in 25 countries.

Why It Matters: Building Safer Communities

Rising Violence

50% ↑

Aggravated domestic assaults are rising significantly in California, accounting for 50% of domestic violence reports in 2023 – up from 35% in 2019.

High Prevalence

1 in 16 ↑

1 in 16 Californians experienced intimate partner violence last year. Over half of women report lifetime exposure.

Economic Burden

\$73.7B ↑

Interpersonal violence costs the state \$73.7 billion annually—roughly 2% of California's GDP.

Housing Crisis

1 in 5 ↑

1 in 5 homeless women cite domestic violence as the cause of their homelessness. Despite legislative efforts, survivors still face limited shelter and service access due to a shortage of resources.

Firearm Risk

42% ↑

Firearms were involved in 42% of DV-related homicides in 2021. Nearly 70% of mass shootings are linked to domestic violence.

Policy Priority 1: Sustaining California's Family Justice Centers

Budget Request: \$10 million for the CA Family Justice Center (FJ) Program, FY 2025–26



Issue

California's 27 Family Justice Centers (FJs) are facing a surge in demand while grappling with severe funding cuts. Federal and philanthropic funding has declined by 70–80%, putting essential services at risk. Since 2018, the California FJ Program has provided crucial support to these centers, helping them deliver collaborative, community-based, and survivor-centered services that are proven to work. Without continued state investment, many FJs face the prospect of reducing services, laying off staff, or shutting down entirely.

At the same time, the demand for these services continues to grow—six new centers are currently emerging, and interest is expanding in additional jurisdictions across the state. The FJ Program is also vital in supporting these new developing centers. Due to budget constraints, this year's budget request is aligned with past allocations of \$10 million for two years, despite recent expansion of FJs statewide.

Real Need: \$25 million

Request: \$10 million to keep doors open



Solution

FJs offer a proven, cost-effective, trauma-informed response to violence. With strategic investments and strong policy support, California can sustain this effective community collaborative response model to protect more lives and help survivors rebuild.

Provide \$10 million in ongoing operational support for the California Family Justice Center (FJ) Program. This request matches the original 2018 investment and will sustain statewide operations in a tight budget year.

Why It Matters:

Supporting victims is about more than individual recovery—it's about breaking cycles of violence, reducing economic harm, healing trauma, and building safer communities.

FJs result in:

- Safe spaces for survivors and their families
- Increased hope, emotional well-being, and goal attainment
- Improved coordination across law enforcement, courts, and community partners
- Crime and trauma reduction

Policy Priority 2: Addressing the VOCA Funding Crisis

Emergency Request: \$260 Million (One-time)



Issue

The federal VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) Fund is facing major reductions, threatening crisis counseling, housing, legal aid, and emergency response services. California's VOCA-funded programs have seen a 44.7% cut, endangering support for over 800,000 survivors statewide.

AB 2432: A Step Forward, But Not A Fix Yet

While AB 2432 (Gabriel, 2024) establishes a new long-term revenue stream by holding corporations accountable, the funding won't materialize soon enough. Without immediate action, the organizations that serve as the backbone of California's crime victim response will be forced to lay off staff or shut down.



Solution

Provide \$260 million in one-time state funding to stabilize core services while long-term solutions are implemented.

Policy Priority 3: Protecting Survivors – SB 841 (Rubio)



Issue

Historically, domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, and similar locations were considered sensitive locations exempt from immigration enforcement. This policy was rescinded in January 2025, creating fear and deterring victims—particularly immigrants—from seeking help. Additionally, perpetrators often threaten to report survivors to immigration authorities, using status as a tool of abuse.



Solution

SB 841 would prohibit immigration enforcement at private domestic violence service locations, including: rape crisis centers, domestic violence shelters, family justice centers, human trafficking shelters, and homeless shelters.

The bill ensures that survivors can access safe spaces without fear of deportation or harassment.



“Every community needs to have schools, hospitals, churches, and Family Justice Centers.”

–San Diego County District Attorney Summer Stephan, President, National District Attorneys Association

Domestic and interpersonal violence devastate lives, drive trauma, and increase homicide and homelessness. The urgent need for coordinated, survivor-centered support has never been greater. California police receive roughly 18 domestic violence reports every hour (*PPIC 2025*).

Intimate partner violence is a major factor in mass shootings, child trauma, and officer fatalities, further underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive solutions.

Family Justice Centers and the California Family Justice Network provide a trauma-informed, collaborative response to this crisis. Sustained investment in these services is critical.

We Urge You to:

Approve **\$10 million in ongoing funding** for California’s Family Justice Centers

Provide **\$260 million in one-time funding** to offset the VOCA shortfall

Support **SB 841 (Rubio)** to ensure access to safe spaces and protection

These investments are essential to ensure no survivor is left without support in a moment of crisis.



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