



## Legislative Meeting Guide

Advocacy Day is a powerful opportunity to amplify survivor voices and champion the life-saving work of Family Justice Centers (FJCs) across California. As interpersonal violence continues to rise, our collective mission—to support survivors, prevent violence, and strengthen families—has never been more urgent.

### KEY GOALS

1. **Educate** lawmakers on the essential role FJCs play in communities statewide.
2. **Thank** legislators for past support of the Family Justice Program and VOCA-related funding.
3. **Advocate** for continued and increased investment in:
  - The Family Justice Center (FJ) Program (\$10M Budget Request)
  - Solutions to address the VOCA funding shortfall
  - SB 841 (Safety for Domestic Violence Victims)

### MESSAGING TIPS

- ❖ **Use this guide as a flexible outline** to personalize your message
- ❖ **Speak authentically**—your stories and experiences are the strongest advocacy tools.

### MEETING STRUCTURE

#### 1. Introductions (4 mins)

- ❖ **Introduce the California Family Justice Network (CFJN)**  
*“CFJN is the statewide coalition supporting 27 Family Justice Centers and six emerging centers in 20 counties. We provide wrap-around, trauma-informed services to over 70,000 survivors each year, including victims of domestic violence, sexual assault,*



*child abuse, elder abuse, and human trafficking. Our mission includes a strong focus on children and breaking generational cycles of violence. CFJN also ensures implementation of the provisions and intent of [California Penal Code 13750](#), which defines FJCs.”*

❖ **Introduce your group**

*“I’m [Your Name], representing [Your FJC/Organization] in [City/County]. We serve approximately [#] survivors annually, including [#] children.”*

**2. Purpose of the Visit (3 min)**

❖ **Thank the legislator/staff for their time• Explain the reason for your visit**

*“We’re here to share our budget and policy priorities that are critical to protecting survivors, maintaining essential services, and breaking cycles of violence across California.”*

❖ **Emphasize the urgency of continued support**

*“In particular the Family Justice Center Program established in 2018 and federal VOCA dollars are critical to maintaining FJC programs and services. Without continued funding, many centers—including ours—are at risk of service cuts or closure.”*

**3. Recognize Past Legislative Support (2 min)**

- ❖ **Thank the member** for their prior support of legislation related to domestic violence
- ❖ **Express gratitude** for the state’s support of the Family Justice Center (FJ) Program since 2018 and last year’s action to address VOCA shortfalls.

**4. Why Family Justice Centers Matter (3 min)**

❖ **Share local impact**

*“Last year, our FJC served [#] survivors, including [#] children. We collaborate closely with =[DA, law enforcement, schools, nonprofits].”*

❖ **Highlight positive outcomes**

- Survivors experience fewer repeat incidents.
- Improved long-term recovery and housing stability.
- Reduced strain on emergency services.

❖ **Include a brief survivor story** or personal testimony to illustrate impact.

**5. Budget & Policy Requests (4 min)**

❖ **Sustain the Family Justice Center Program – \$10M Budget Request**

- Funds two-year grants to sustain services statewide.

❖ Demand has increased 30–40% post-pandemic.

- ❖ While need exceeds \$25M, we are requesting \$10M given current budget constraints.  
*“Are you familiar with the Family Justice Center (FJ) Program? It is a program administered by OES and is operated on a two year grant cycle that has been critical in addressing and mitigating the current rise in violence and has helped to establish and maintain the burgeoning network of family justice centers across the state. Our grant has allowed us to do \_\_\_\_\_. Examples of the impact include: \_\_\_\_\_.”*
- ❖ **Address VOCA Cuts**
  - Federal VOCA cuts threaten critical frontline services. We urge the state to develop a gap-filling strategy to avoid devastating losses in survivor support programs.
- ❖ **Support SB 841 – Safety for Domestic Violence Victims**
  - Strengthens legal protections and access to safety for victims and survivors
  - Protects domestic violence shelters, homeless shelters, rape crisis centers, family justice centers, and human trafficking service providers from unwarranted immigration enforcement.

Guide the member/ staff to the [Policy Priorities handout](#) for more details.

## 6. Closing & Questions (4 min)

- ❖ **Thank the legislator/staff again and ask:**  
*“Can we count on your support for these budget and policy priorities?”*  
*“Is there any additional information we can provide?”*
- ❖ **Offer to be a resource and extend an invitation**  
*“We’d love to host you for a tour of our FJC or involve you in a future local event.”*
- ❖ **Remember to leave the legislator packet and exchange business cards**

## AFTER YOUR MEETING

- ❖ **Fill out your Legislative Meeting Form** and drop it off at our “Happy Half-Hour” debrief.
- ❖ **Team Leader and participants send written thank-you’s** and follow-up meeting requests to the legislator and/or member of their staff.
- ❖ **Extend another invitation to connect with your FJC** or attend an upcoming event.
- ❖ **Share highlights on social media and tag your legislator** using their social media handles found in our [Social Media Toolkit](#).