

2026 POLICY PRIORITIES

CALIFORNIA FAMILY JUSTICE NETWORK



1. Address the VOCA Funding Crisis

2. Strengthen Survivor Safety Protections
(SB 1056 & AB 1657)

3. Support & Sustain California's
Family Justice Centers

BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT FOR SURVIVORS

Supporting survivors of domestic and interpersonal violence is one of California's most effective investments in public safety, public health, and community resilience.

The need for effective victim services is more urgent than ever. According to the Public Policy Institute of California, **more than half of all reported domestic violence incidents in 2023 involved aggravated assault, up from just 35% in 2019** and the highest level seen in more than two decades. Firearms continue to play a deadly role in domestic violence homicides, while housing instability, economic hardship, trauma, and social isolation create additional barriers for survivors seeking safety.

At the same time, California's victim service providers are confronting devastating funding reductions that threaten access to life-saving services for survivors and their children.



The share of domestic violence incidents classified as aggravated assaults has reached a 20-year high."

— Public Policy Institute of California, April 2025

Despite these challenges, Family Justice Centers across California are demonstrating that **coordinated, survivor-centered interventions can reduce violence, save lives, and strengthen communities**. Through a proven multidisciplinary model that brings together law enforcement, prosecutors, advocates, healthcare providers, and community organizations under one roof, Family Justice Centers provide comprehensive support to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, child abuse, elder abuse, and other forms of interpersonal violence.

FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS: PROVEN IMPACT¹

Reducing Violence and Saving Lives

Family Justice Centers have been shown to reduce domestic violence homicides, lower recantation rates, and increase offender accountability. At One Safe Place in San Diego County, for example, no clients were killed in 2025 despite 54% of those served being assessed as high lethality risk.

Improving Survivor and Family Outcomes

Family Justice Centers reduce trauma, increase survivor safety, and improve long-term outcomes for both survivors and their children through coordinated, trauma-informed care.

Strengthening Systems and Economic Efficiency

Domestic violence costs California an estimated **\$73.7 billion** annually.² Family Justice Centers reduce these costs by preventing violence before it escalates, reducing high-cost outcomes such as domestic violence homicides (estimated at \$10–17 million per death³), and improving system efficiency through coordinated, co-located services that reduce duplication and improve access and outcomes for survivors and families.

POLICY PRIORITY 1

ADDRESS THE VOCA FUNDING CRISIS: FUND VICTIM SERVICES AT \$50 MILLION

The Issue

California's victim services system is facing a historic funding crisis due to steep declines in the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Fund. VOCA-funded programs across the state have already experienced a **44.7% reduction, jeopardizing critical services for nearly 1 million survivors.**

Programs serving victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, child abuse, elder abuse, and other violent crimes are facing staff layoffs, service reductions, waiting lists, and potential program closures.

Without intervention, survivors will lose access to essential services including emergency shelter, counseling, legal advocacy, children's services, and coordinated support that helps families achieve safety and stability.

A one-time \$100 million state investment in 2025 prevented widespread service disruptions, but that **funding expires on June 30, 2026.** While the Governor's May Revision proposes \$25 million for victim services, this amount is insufficient to sustain current service levels and will result in significant cuts across California's victim assistance system.

Solution

Provide \$50 million in the final 2026-27 California state budget to stabilize and sustain victim services while long-term funding solutions are developed.

This investment will preserve California's victim services infrastructure in 2026-2027, ensuring survivors of violence continue to have access to safety planning, advocacy, healing services, and pathways to justice. It is also critical to sustaining Family Justice Centers and other community-based providers that coordinate services across multiple systems.

Why It Matters

Victim services are a critical part of California's public safety infrastructure. Without immediate action, providers will be forced to reduce staff, scale back programs, or eliminate services that thousands of survivors rely on every day. At a time of increasing severity and lethality of violence, California cannot afford to weaken its victim services network. This \$50 million investment helps ensure survivors can access safety, support, and healing when they need it most.

POLICY PRIORITY 2

STRENGTHEN SURVIVOR SAFETY PROTECTIONS (SB 1056 & AB 1657)

SB 1056 — Protecting Survivor Privacy and Preventing Re-Traumatization

The Issue

Survivors of sexual violence often face ongoing trauma long after a crime has occurred. When sexually explicit images or recordings become part of a criminal case, the unnecessary copying, sharing, or dissemination of these materials can further violate survivors' privacy and dignity. Without clear safeguards, survivors may experience additional fear, humiliation, and emotional harm while seeking justice through the legal system.

Solution

SB 1056 (Grayson) requires courts to issue protective orders governing the disclosure of sexually explicit material involving adult victims in criminal cases.

The bill limits the copying and dissemination of this sensitive evidence and prohibits defense attorneys from providing copies to defendants or others without court authorization and a showing of good cause.

Why It Matters

California's justice system should protect survivors from further harm throughout the legal process. SB 1056 helps ensure that the process protects both accountability and survivor well-being.

This legislation will:

- Protect survivor privacy and reduce re-traumatization by limiting unnecessary dissemination of sensitive evidence.
- Establish clear, trauma-informed safeguards for handling sexually explicit material in criminal proceedings.
- Improve survivor confidence in reporting crimes and participating in prosecutions.

The Issue

For survivors seeking emergency protection from abuse, delays and procedural barriers can create serious safety risks. Some courts have required survivors to provide advance notice to the person they are seeking protection from before filing for an ex parte restraining order, creating confusion, inconsistency, and unnecessary obstacles to obtaining immediate protection.

Solution

AB 1657 (Rogers) strengthens access to emergency domestic violence restraining orders by ensuring courts cannot require advance notice to the restrained party as a condition of an ex parte restraining order.

Why It Matters

California should ensure that survivors can access emergency legal protections quickly, safely, and without unnecessary procedural obstacles.

AB 1657 will:

- Remove unnecessary barriers to obtaining emergency protective orders.
- Promote consistent court practices across California.
- Improve access to timely protection for survivors facing abuse, threats, or coercive control.

POLICY PRIORITY 3

SUPPORT AND SUSTAIN CALIFORNIA'S FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS

The Issue

Family Justice Centers, recognized as a best-practice model for coordinated victim services in California Penal Code Section §13750(a), are among California's most effective community-based public safety investments.

By co-locating law enforcement, prosecution, healthcare, social services, and community-based organizations, Family Justice Centers reduce barriers to safety, improve cross-system coordination, and strengthen outcomes for survivors and families impacted by domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, human trafficking, and other forms of interpersonal violence.

The network of California's Family Justice Centers continues to grow in response to rising statewide demand, including more complex and high-lethality cases. Despite this expansion, state investment has remained largely flat and primarily discretionary, while federal and philanthropic funding has declined. As a result, **centers are operating under increasing strain, widening the gap between system capacity and community need.**

Core Public Safety Infrastructure

Family Justice Centers are a proven model for improving public safety and system effectiveness. Their multidisciplinary, co-located approach strengthens coordination across systems, increases accountability, and ensures survivors can access comprehensive, trauma-informed services in one place.

Across California, Family Justice Centers play a central role in responding to interpersonal violence while improving efficiency across public systems.

Solution

To sustain and expand this impact, **California must establish a stable statewide funding strategy for Family Justice Centers** - aligning state investment with increasing service needs, greater case complexity, and continued network expansion.

Why It Matters

A sustained statewide funding strategy will ensure that Family Justice Centers can meet rising demand and continue serving as the backbone of coordinated victim response in California.

Supporting survivors is about more than individual recovery—it is about reducing violence, preventing future harm, healing trauma, strengthening families, and improving public safety outcomes across communities.



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

— San Diego County District Attorney Summer Stephan, Immediate Past President, National District Attorneys Association

Domestic and interpersonal violence is a statewide public safety crisis.

It devastates lives, fuels trauma, increases homelessness and economic instability, harms children and families, and contributes to preventable deaths. Domestic and interpersonal violence is also linked to broader patterns of escalating violence, including homicide, murder-suicides, and mass shootings.

Family Justice Centers and the California Family Justice Network provide a proven, trauma-informed, collaborative response to this crisis. When survivors can access immediate protection, support, and coordinated services, communities are safer, violence is prevented, and long-term harm is reduced.

We respectfully urge your support to:

- **Fund victim services in the FY 2026-27 state budget at \$50 million**
- **Pass SB 1056 (Grayson) and AB 1657 (Rogers)**
- **Strengthen and sustain California’s Family Justice Centers through a long-term statewide funding strategy**

Together, we can build safer communities, strengthen families, and ensure that every survivor has access to the safety, support, and services they need.



1 Gwinn, C. & Strack, G. (2026). DV Homicides of women on the rise for a decade. Domestic Violence Report, 31 (5), 73. 2 Gwinn, C., & Strack G. (2025). Family Justice Center Framework Impact Report. Alliance for Hope International. <https://www.familyjusticecenter.org/resource/fjc-impact-report-2025/> 3. Harris, G (2016). Transforming health through multisector partnerships. North Carolina Medical Journal, 77 (4) 257-261. <https://doi.org/10.18043/ncm.77.4.257>