



Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

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July 26, 2016

Hon. Kevin R. Culhane, Presiding Judge
Sacramento Superior Court
720 Ninth Street, Department 47
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Judge Culhane:

On behalf of the Sacramento District Attorney's Office, I would like to express my appreciation to the Grand Jury for addressing the important topic of Sacramento County's law enforcement response to family violence. Domestic violence and the associated trauma not only negatively impact the direct victims of abuse but also their children, other loved ones, and the community as a whole.

The most effective way to deal with these problems is to provide services to victims through a collaborative community effort. Recognizing this, our office has worked with both county and city governments, along with community based organizations to create a Sacramento Regional Family Justice Center (SRFJC). The SRFJC opened for legal services in July 2016 and our goal is to have all related services available by the end of 2016.

The SRFJC will provide a collaborative framework to complement and enhance our community efforts to deal with domestic violence. All law enforcement officers working family violence cases and those assigned to the SRFJC will be offered trauma informed training by the SRFJC and its partner agencies.

The District Attorney's Office works with all local law enforcement agencies prosecuting domestic violence cases. The Citrus Heights Police Department has been a leader in employing a Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT) which has been very successful in providing the type of services necessary to help victims. Elk Grove and the City of Sacramento Police Departments have maintained dedicated units to respond to domestic violence.

The opening of the SRFJC will provide a conduit for community organizations, social service agencies and victim advocates to collaborate in a way that reduces stress and systematic obstacles for victims of family violence. We will also invite law enforcement to collaborative monthly meetings including: The Domestic Violence Prevention Collaboration, The Sacramento County Domestic Violence Death Review Team and the Sacramento County Elder Death Review Team.

While the Grand Jury report correctly states the Sacramento Sheriff's Department does not maintain a dedicated detective unit for domestic violence, it should be noted detectives from their Felony Assault Detective Unit do investigate domestic violence cases. Our office has been impressed with the efforts of

these detectives and their willingness to respond to our supplemental requests for investigation. A number of these Sheriff detectives have extensive training in the area of domestic violence and provide expert testimony in court for both Sheriff Department and Sacramento Police Department cases.

In 2013, and 2014, the Sacramento Domestic Violence Prevention Collaboration presented Sacramento Sheriff's Detective Dennis Prizmich with the annual award for going above and beyond in assisting victims of Domestic Violence. The District Attorney's Office is grateful for the hard work of the many victim advocate agencies in our community; including, A Community for Peace, My Sister's House, and WEAVE. We agree that providing coordinated and accessible domestic violence services for victims and their families is an effective way to deal with the many issues involved in domestic violence. We endorse the DVRT program piloted by the Citrus Heights Police Department as a best practice and look forward to working collaboratively with the Sacramento Regional Family Justice Center.

Sincerely,



Anne Marie Schubert
District Attorney

AS/jf

Cc: Sacramento County Grand Jury
Sacramento County Clerk-Recorder's Office