

## Victim Services Division

The San Mateo County Victim Services Division has been providing support to victims of crime and their families since 1975. Our Victim Advocates care for a victim's physical, emotional and financial needs after a crime. We do this by providing support, information, links to community resources and assisting in the enforcement of victim's rights.



### HOW CAN A VICTIM ADVOCATE HELP YOU?

Our Domestic violence Victim Advocates can help you with:

**Information about victims' rights:** Victims of crime are entitled to certain rights. Our Victim Advocates will inform you about those rights and assist you in asserting them.

**Support and information throughout the criminal justice process:** The court process can be difficult to navigate. Our Victim Advocates can ensure that you understand what is happening and that your voice is heard throughout the process.

**Apply for victim compensation:** Our Victim Advocates can help you apply for assistance with certain expenses related to the crime including medical and mental health, relocation or home security upgrades.

Our services are free of charge and are provided to all individuals regardless of immigration status, race, religion or income.

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## Contact Us

**650-599-7479**  
[victimservices@smcgov.org](mailto:victimservices@smcgov.org)

400 County Center, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Redwood City, CA 94063

222 Paul Scannell Dr., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
San Mateo, CA 94402

1050 Mission Road  
South San Francisco, CA 94080

Visit us on the Web: [da.smcgov.org](http://da.smcgov.org)

## Helpful Contacts

### Jail Inmate Locator:

To sign up to be notified when an offender is released from jail, please visit [www.vinelink.com](http://www.vinelink.com) or call 650.363.4424. You will need the offender's name, date of birth and/or inmate number.

### Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse (CORA):

*Domestic violence support and legal assistance*  
Crisis line: 800.300.1080  
Email: [info@corasupport.org](mailto:info@corasupport.org)

### Bay Area Legal Aid:

*Legal assistance and Restraining Order Clinics*  
650.472.2666

### Legal Aid of San Mateo County:

*Legal assistance and pro bono representation*  
650.588.0915

safe zone



## Support for Domestic Violence Survivors



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**Victim Services Division**  
**SAN MATEO COUNTY**

## Domestic Violence

Domestic violence, or intimate partner violence, are terms that cover different types of acts committed by a current or former intimate partner against another. It isn't limited to physical or sexual violence. It can also take the form of emotional or psychological abuse, financial abuse, and other controlling behaviors.

Victims and survivors may face many barriers when seeking help including fear, shame, lack of money or other resources, social and family pressure.

### ARE YOU IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP?

#### Does your partner:

- Look at or act in ways that scare you?
- Control what you do, who you talk to or where you go?
- Push, hit, or strangle you?
- Intimidate you with guns or other weapons?
- Threaten you?
- Threaten to commit suicide?

If you recognize any of these signs, you may be in an abusive relationship. Consider reaching out to someone you trust for help.

## Safety Planning

You may not be ready to leave an abusive relationship right now. However, it is important that you create a plan to protect yourself if you need to leave. The following actions can help you develop a safety plan.

### At home

- Identify ways to get out of your home safely, including potential exits such as windows, side or garage doors
- Talk to your children about safe places to hide or where to go for help
- Set up an emergency signal with trusted friends and neighbors that will alert them to call for help
- Collect important papers (such as birth certificates, custody papers, bank account information, insurance cards and school records) in a safe location
- Pack a bag with items that you will need such as clothes, medicines, keys and cash

### At work

- Give the building security a photo of your abuser and a copy of your restraining order
- Request an escort to your car
- Vary the route that you take home

You do not have control over your partner's abuse, you do have control about how to respond to protect yourself and/or your family. For assistance creating your safety plan, please contact your Victim Advocate.

**IF YOU FEEL UNSAFE, CALL 911**

## Criminal Justice Process

After a domestic violence incident is reported to the police, the police will investigate and refer the case to the District Attorney's Office to review for criminal charges.

It is the responsibility of the District Attorney's Office, and not the victim, to decide if a criminal case will be filed.

For more information about the steps of the criminal justice process contact your Victim Advocate.

### Criminal Protective Order

If the suspect will be charged criminally, he/she will have an arraignment to hear the charges. At the arraignment the Judge will determine what type of protective order is necessary to protect you. If you wish to speak about the types of protective orders issued by the court and address your safety concerns, please contact your Victim Advocate.



### Sentencing

The typical sentence for a domestic violence case will vary based on the facts of the case. A sentence for a domestic violence incident will likely include all or a combination of a protective order, jail or prison time, anger management classes, domestic violence classes, probation, restitution and fines.