



# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE PEOPLE

**SONOMA COUNTY**  
**DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

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# MESSAGE

FROM CARLA RODRIGUEZ  
SONOMA COUNTY  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

It is my honor and privilege to serve the residents of Sonoma County. As District Attorney, my primary responsibility is to prosecute all crimes that occur in our county, including murders, sexual assaults, abuse against elders, DUI fatalities, crimes against consumers, and environmental violations. The dedicated employees at the District Attorney's Office work tirelessly to further our mission: to enhance public safety and provide justice to crime victims, consumers, and all residents through the equitable prosecution of criminal and civil cases. We work closely with justice partners, local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, and several community-based organizations to create a diverse safety net for every person involved in the criminal justice system. We embrace intervention, rehabilitation, crime prevention, and community well-being in all aspects of our work. Thank you for letting us serve you.



# OVERVIEW



The Sonoma County District Attorney's Office is dedicated to providing the members of our community with a safe place to live by holding the guilty accountable, protecting the innocent, and preserving the dignity of victims and their families. We seek truth and justice in a professional manner, while maintaining the highest ethical standards. In pursuit of this mission, the District Attorney resolves to:

- **Promote** a work environment that emphasizes high ethical standards, professionalism, and competent legal representation.
- **Establish** an atmosphere of compassion, trust, and mutual respect.
- **Maintain** public confidence by creating a day-to-day operation that is efficient and effective.
- **Provide** training for employees and education for the public to be knowledgeable about the administration of justice.
- **Create** and maintain open communication to promote the best interests of the community.
- **Encourage** an environment that is positive and courteous among employees and members of the public.
- **Collaborate** with law enforcement and community groups to deter crime.
- **Ensure** the rights of victims are upheld with dedication to treating victims with dignity, respect, and compassion.



# WHAT DOES THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY DO?

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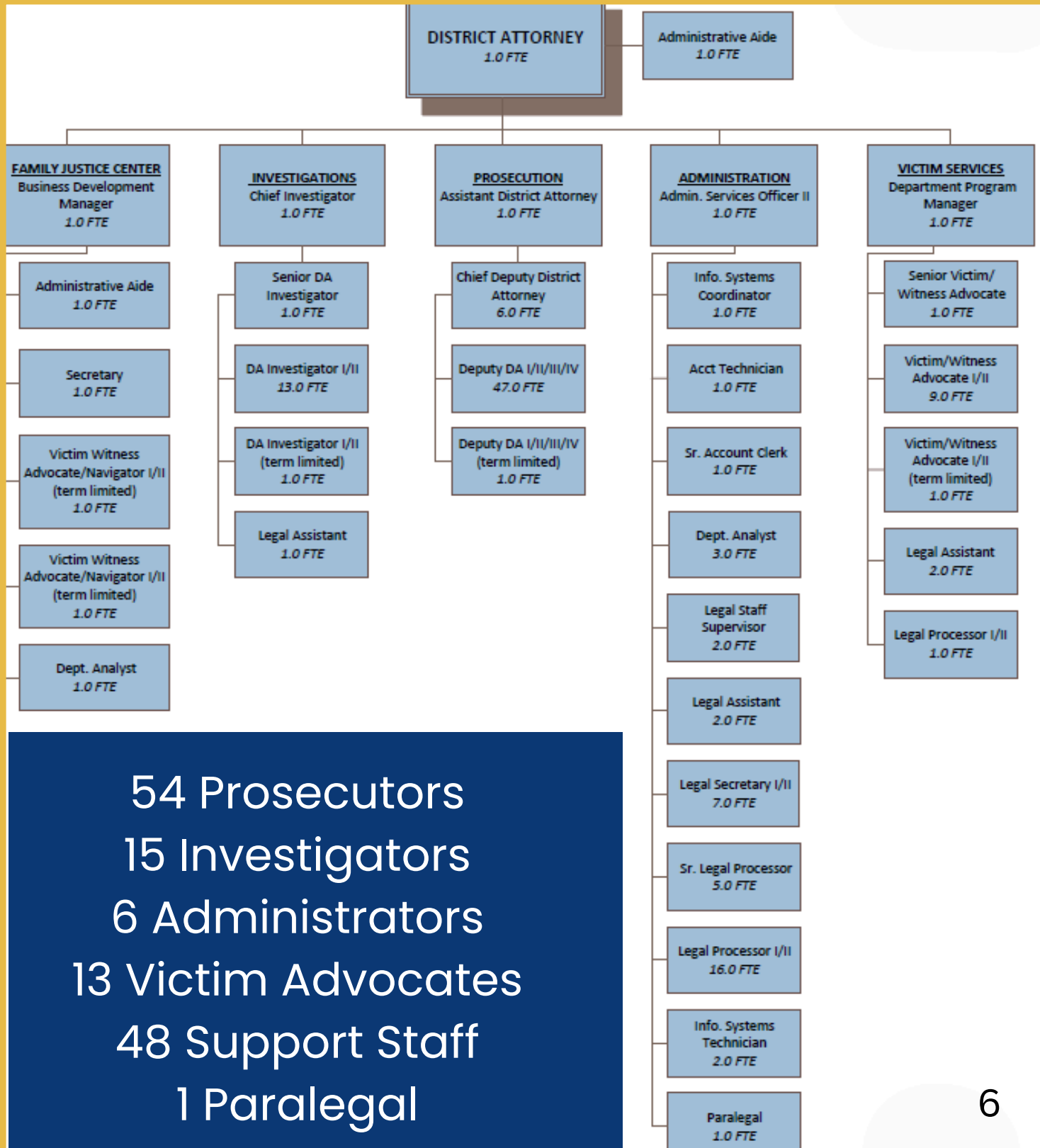
The Sonoma County District Attorney's office has over 140 employees working across 5 divisions, several branch offices, and numerous specialized units to provide legal expertise and compassionate victim support. The office also hosts the Family Justice Center Sonoma County, an independent nonprofit organization that houses staff from over 18 local agencies to connect victims with a multitude of services all under one roof. Each employee is highly skilled and dedicated to working on behalf of the community in furtherance of enhancing public safety, preventing crime, and providing justice to victims.

*Click here to watch a video  
about what the District  
Attorney's Office does*

# Office of the District Attorney

## 137 Permanent Staff \*

\*Does not include extra-help employees, interns, law clerks

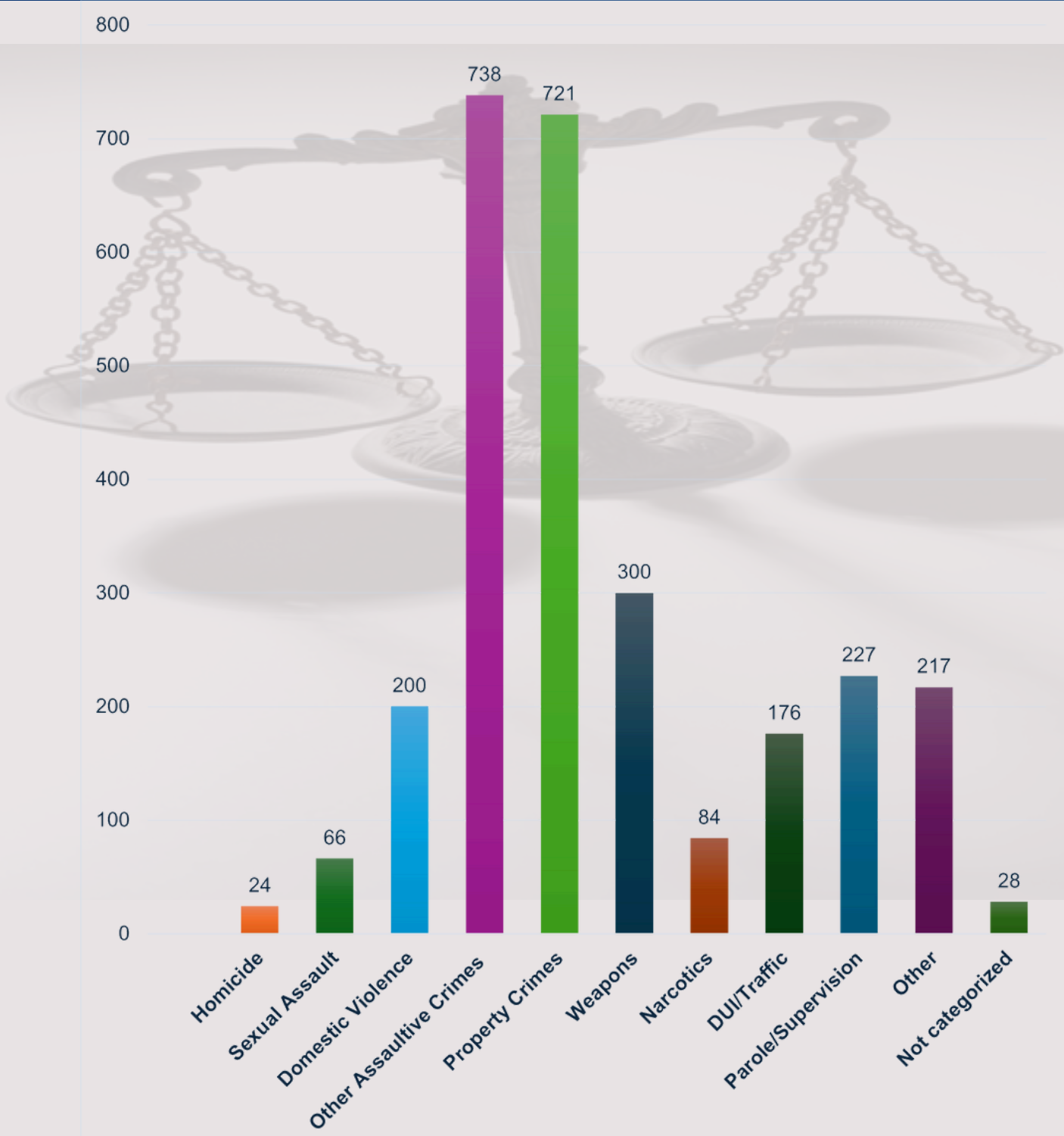




# The DA's Office in 2024: At A Glance



# 2024 FELONY PROSECUTIONS BY TYPE OF CRIME



15,565 Crime Reports Reviewed  
2781 Felony Cases Filed



# SIGNIFICANT CASES

## **People v. Jesse Granado-Lopez**

### ***Kidnap and Sexual Assault of Girl Walking to School***

Defendant Jesse Granado-Lopez was driving in his vehicle when he forcibly kidnapped a 14-year old girl as she was walking to school. He drove her to a secluded location and sexually assaulted her. An hour after this attack, the defendant attempted to kidnap a second 14 year-old off the street and force her into his vehicle. The second victim was able to fight him off and escape. Mr. Granado-Lopez was later located and arrested by the Sonoma County Sheriff's Department and eventually brought to trial; he is now serving multiple life sentences for his crimes.



## **People v. David Kyle Lubkin**

### ***Murder at Petaluma Outlet Mall***

Mr. Lubkin met the victim in the parking lot of the Petaluma Outlet Mall under the guise of purchasing a necklace advertised on Craig's List. When the victim arrived, the defendant removed a "ghost gun" from his waistband and shot and murdered the victim. After a multi-weeks trial, the defendant was found guilty of first degree murder and sentenced to 50 years-to-life in prison.



# SIGNIFICANT CASES

## **People v. Jose Centeno** ***Children Locked Up and*** ***Abused by Adoptive Parents*** ***for Years***

Mr. Jose Centeno and his wife Gina adopted three siblings when they were very young. The Centenos inflicted horrific physical, sexual, and psychological abuse on the children, who they kept locked away in a boarded-up room, chained to their beds. One of the children disappeared and was never seen again. After almost a decade in abusive isolation, Mr. Centeno left the remaining two siblings in Mexico where they disclosed the abuse. Gina Centeno died while the trial was pending. Jose Centeno was convicted of every charge and allegation related to torture, kidnap for financial gain, and multiple forcible sex crimes against a child, and is now serving multiple life sentences for his crimes.



## **People v. Christopher** **Regalado** ***Domestic violence case*** ***involving violent assault***

Mr. Regalado attacked the victim by assaulting her, dragging her 20 feet by her hair to the bathroom, slamming her face into the wall, punching her, biting her nose, and then holding her down and filling up the bathtub while telling her he was going to kill her. After jury trial the defendant was convicted and sentenced.



# SIGNIFICANT CASES

## **People v. Averill & Griego**

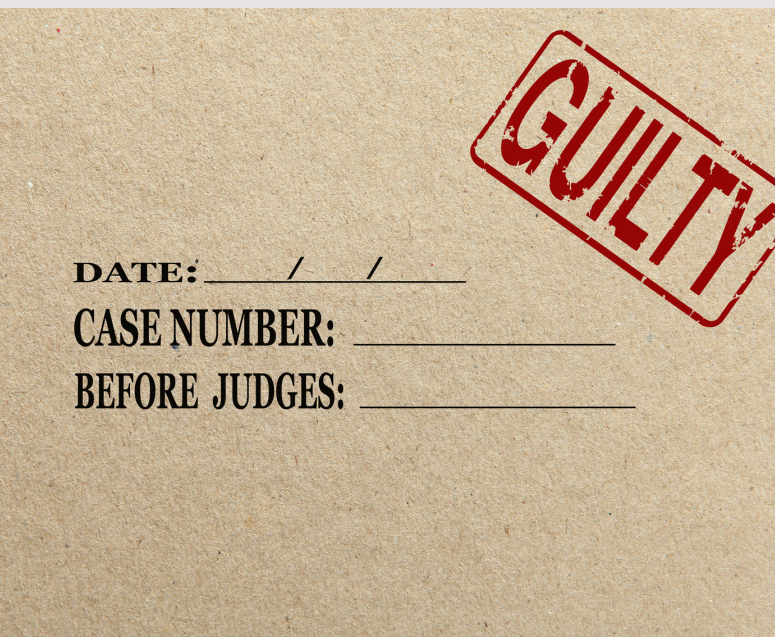
***Defendants sentenced to life in prison for kidnapping, residential burglary and assault***

The defendants were familiar with the victims, having worked on a project at their house decades earlier that involved the installation of a large safe. In 2023, armed with a firearm and wearing masks, they went to the home and forced the 61 year-old woman and her 74 year-old husband to provide the combination to their safe, after gagging them, zip-tying their wrists, and threatening to kill them at gunpoint. After a 4 week trial, both defendants were convicted and sentenced to life terms in state prison.



## **People v. Barrientos-Perez** ***Child Molestation case results in hundreds of years of state prison***

The two defendants were convicted following a six week trial with a combined 43 counts of sexually assaulting multiple children. One defendant received 500 years-to-life in prison. The second received 485 years-to life.



# SIGNIFICANT CASES



## **People v. Lenin Lopez**

### ***Repeat Thief Caught by DA's Organized Retail Theft Unit***

In June, 2024, our Organized Retail Theft investigator observed the defendant selling brand new power tools at a flea market in Sebastopol. The investigator did some research and learned that Mr. Lenin Lopez had stolen similar tools on several other occasions, both before and after the flea market. The DA's office worked with several other law enforcement agencies to arrest Mr. Lopez in August, 2024. Nearly 500 units of stolen property valued over \$9,400 were recovered. He was convicted of two felony theft charges and sentenced to jail/probation.

## **People v. Pedro Lopez-Plascencia**

### ***Human Trafficking case involving minor victim***

Mr. Lopez-Plascencia made contact with a 14 year-old girl on Snapchat. That evening, he went to her house and picked her up. They used drugs together. Within days, the defendant began trafficking the victim out of a Rohnert Park hotel room. He was convicted of several crimes including sex trafficking of a minor, possessing child sexual abuse material, and providing a minor with drugs for a stipulated 12 year prison term.

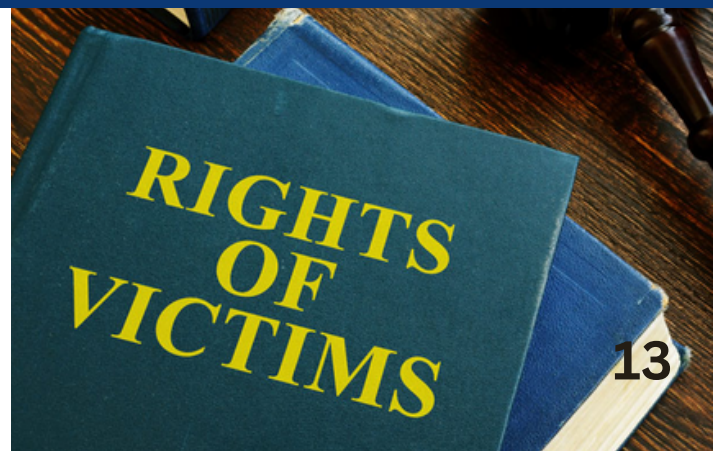




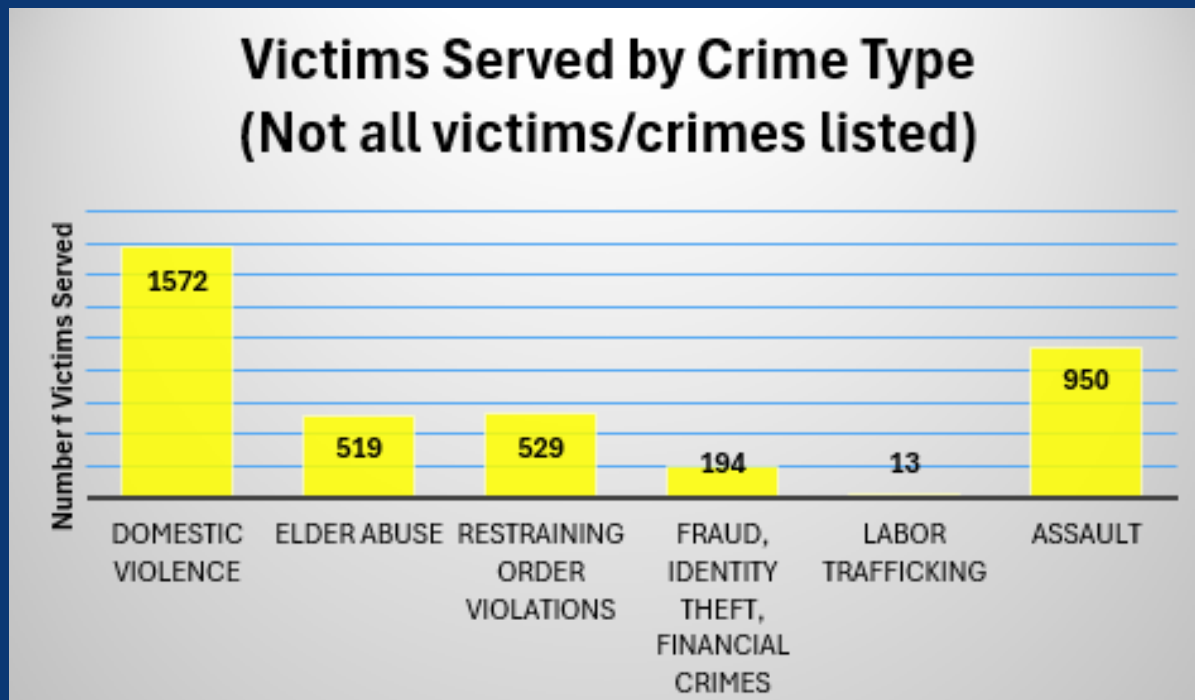
# SERVING CRIME VICTIMS



The Sonoma County Victim Services Division (VSD) helps crime victims whose cases have been referred to the DA's office. The VSD is committed to reducing the trauma that victims may experience following a crime. We want to help victims and their families reclaim their lives in the aftermath of a crime. We provide assistance from the moment the crime occurs throughout the length of the criminal case, and at any later appellate or parole hearings.



When our office receives a police report for review of criminal charges, a Victim Advocate reaches out to the victim *regardless of whether or not a criminal case has been filed*. In 2024, our team of Victim Advocates received **2,902** new referrals. With the existing caseload, we served a total of **5,035** victims in 2024.



Number of Safe  
Stays provided  
to victims &  
their families

**69**

Number of claims  
filed with the  
Victim  
Compensation  
Board

**277**





# NEW PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES



As your elected District Attorney, I am committed to advancing our mission by implementing new programs and improving how we serve Sonoma County. Here are two of the programs we started in 2024.

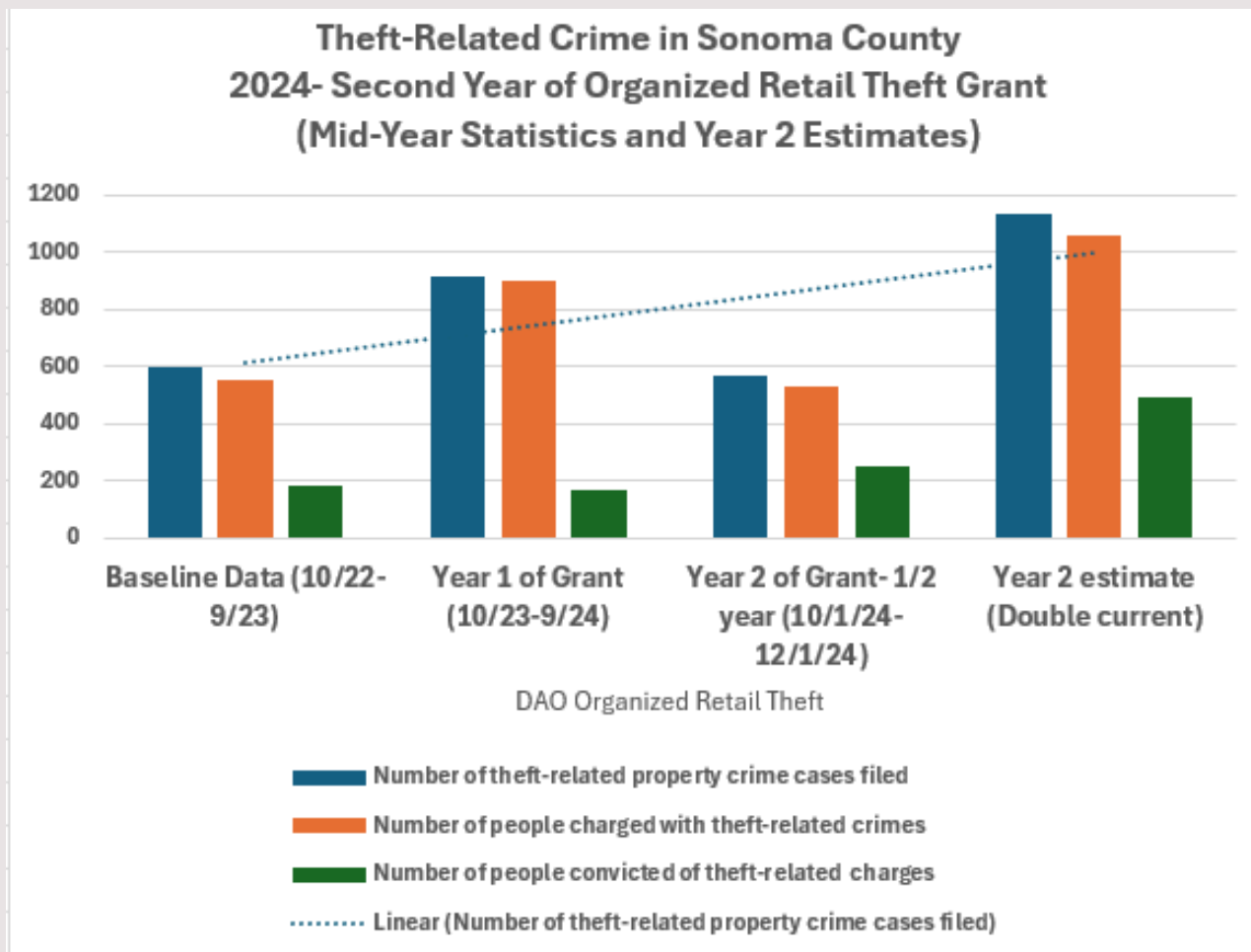




# ORGANIZED RETAIL THEFT

The District Attorney's Office applied for and received a \$2 million award through the state's Organized Retail Theft (ORT) grant to support local retailers suffering from increased theft and to deter future crime. In 2024, the "ORT Unit" was formed. Their efforts include:

- Establishing direct communication between local businesses and law enforcement agencies
- Organizing retail theft "blitzes" throughout the county
- Developing a new communication system to alert business owners in real-time about theft happening in particular stores
- Improving morale of local retailers by assisting them with repeat offenders
- Improving overall confidence in the criminal justice system by holding repeat offenders accountable
- Deterring future theft through aggressive prosecution



# WAGE THEFT & LABOR JUSTICE



In May 2024, the Sonoma County District Attorney's Office was awarded \$147,275 by the California Department of Industrial Relations to fund wage theft investigations and prosecutions. We created the Wage Theft Unit and immediately got to work protecting some of our county's most vulnerable victims. California's laws apply to all employers and employees, *regardless of the employee's legal status.*



**"Wage theft unfairly harms our local workers and their families. Unscrupulous employers who steal from their workers will be held accountable, as would any other person breaking the law. I am committed to prosecuting wage theft to level the playing field for workers and to give victims the justice they deserve."**

**–District Attorney Carla Rodriguez**

A stack of US dollar bills, including \$100 and \$20 bills, is visible in the bottom left corner of the image.

# WAGE THEFT HOTLINE

## 1-833-88-WAGES



# **SPECIALIZED UNITS AND DIVISIONS**





# ENVIRONMENTAL AND CONSUMER LAW DIVISION

The Sonoma County District Attorney's Office's Environmental and Consumer Law Division (ECLD) enforces environmental and consumer protection laws both criminally and civilly. The division is composed of seven attorneys, one paralegal, three investigators (DAIs), and two support staff.



ECLD prosecutes defendants who are accused of unfair, deceptive, and fraudulent business practices in our community. ECLD provides Consumer Alerts to educate the community about current scams and other consumer issues in our county. We strive to protect consumers, business owners, and the county as a whole through litigation, collaboration, and outreach.

***In 2024, just a few of ECLD's accomplishments include...***

## **Worker's Comp Fraud**

- Received 15 suspected fraud claims for review
- Potential losses in excess of \$646k
- 7 cases investigated by DA Investigators
- 8 cases filed

## **Auto Insurance Fraud**

- Received 118 suspected fraud claims for review
- Potential losses in excess of \$2 million
- DAIs investigated 36 cases
- 16 cases filed

## **Public Outreach**

- Educated community about rights & duties for workplace injury & reporting fraud
- Potential outreach to over 7500 individuals, including seniors & youth, through DMV, bus, and theater ads

# ECLD IN THE NEWS



September 16, 2024 | [Office of the District Attorney](#)

## Home Depot Settles Violations Related to California Price Accuracy Law for \$1,977,251

District Attorney Carla Rodriguez announced today that District Attorneys of the Counties of San Diego, San Bern

July 12, 2024 | [Office of the District Attorney](#)

## Home Depot Pays \$750,000 To Settle California Gift Card Violations

December 02, 2024 | [Office of the District Attorney](#)

## Valley Pacific Petroleum Services, Inc. Pays \$1.1 Million Dollars to Settle California Environmental Violations

District Attorney Carla Rodriguez announced today that her office, in conjunction with the District Attorneys of Fresno County, Humboldt County, Joaquin County and Tulare County, settle Valley Pacific Petroleum Services, Inc. dba Bonner Pet

today that her office, in conjunction with the District Attorneys of Los Angeles, Contra Costa and Ventura, se

October 03, 2024 | [Office of the District Attorney](#)

## Safeway, Albertsons, and Vons Pay Nearly \$4 Million to Resolve Allegations of Price Overcharges and False Weight Advertisements

Sonoma County District Attorney Carla Rodriguez announced today that Safeway, Albertsons, and Vons have agreed to settle the allegations of price overcharges and false weight advertisements and will pay \$3,962,500.

September 09, 2024 | [Office of the District Attorney](#)

## Santa Rosa Man Sentenced To Local Prison For More Than Nine Years For Stealing More Than \$350,000 From Customers Of His Classic Car Restoration Business

## FOCUSING ON... ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

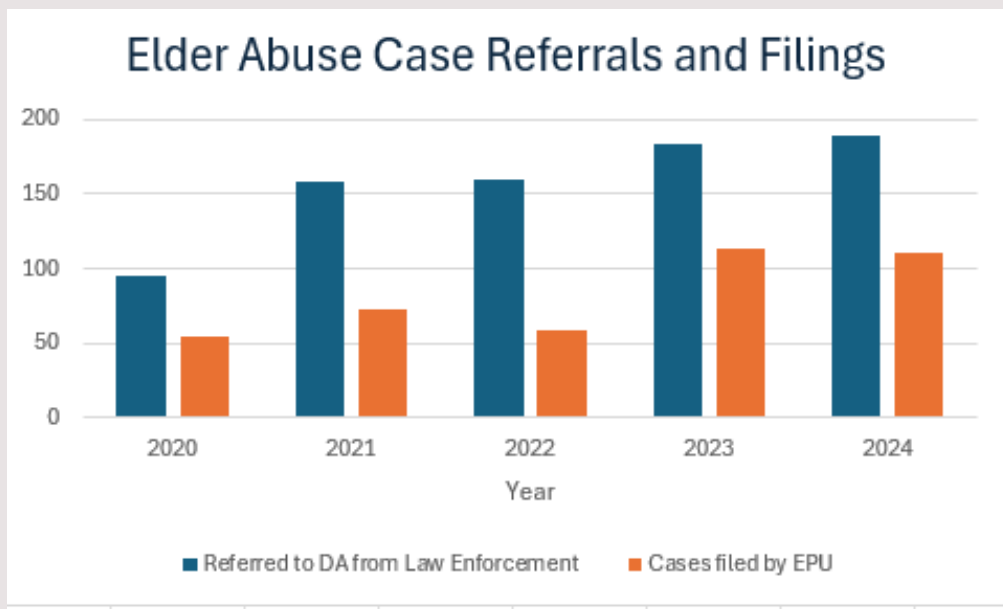


ECLD handles a wide range of environmental violations civilly and criminally in a fair and firm manner to protect our citizens and environment from those who would pollute our air, ground, water, or degrade our uniquely beautiful natural resources. Such cases include illegal handling or disposal of hazardous waste, water pollution, air pollution, natural resources destruction, timber harvesting, and others. We work closely with local, state, and federal resource protection agencies to provide a coordinated response to violations of environmental laws.

# ELDER PROTECTION UNIT



The District Attorney's Office is dedicated to protecting members of our elder and dependent adult community. Older adults aged 60+ account for 27% of Sonoma County's total population, a number that is projected to increase to 33% by 2030.



**“Elder abuse” includes any crime against a person age 65 or older and includes all crimes including fraud, embezzlement, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect.**



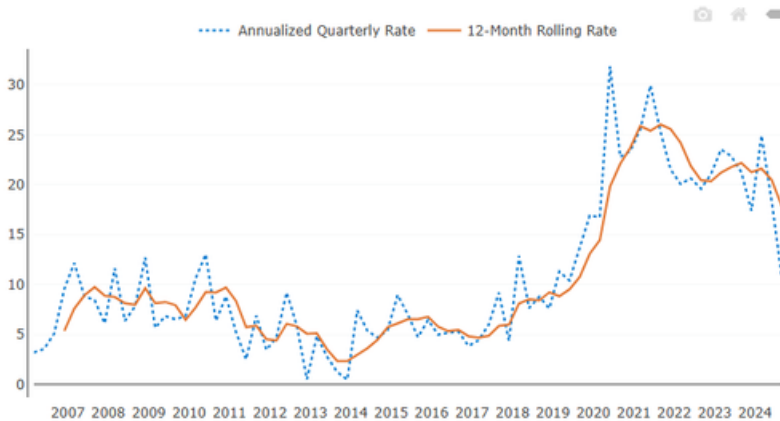
The Elder Protection Unit works closely with other county agencies to ensure that elder abuse investigations and prosecutions are prioritized and that elder crime victims are treated with dignity. The Elder Protection Unit is staffed with a supervising chief deputy district attorney, two full-time deputy district attorneys, one district attorney investigator, and one victim advocate.



# Narcotics Unit



Any Opioid-Related Overdose Deaths - Sonoma County Total Population  
Age-Adjusted Rate per 100,000 Residents - 2024 data are preliminary



## 2024 Notable cases

**People v. Aybar-Salgado:** Conviction for possession of 12 pounds of methamphetamine. 7 years local prison (jail).

**People v. Sanchez-Arias:** Conviction for possession of 23 pounds of methamphetamine and one kilo of fentanyl. 14 years local prison.

**People v. Polyak:** Local drug dealer in possession of methamphetamine. 4 years local prison.

**People v. Mendonca:** Sales of over one kilo of methamphetamine. 10 years, 4 months state prison.

**People v. Frostic/Bernard:** Fentanyl exposure and fatal overdose of 15 month-old child. Both parents convicted of voluntary manslaughter. 11 years state prison.

**People v. Valencia-Velasquez:** Possession of 2 kilos of cocaine and 5 pounds methamphetamine. 7 years local prison.

The Sonoma County District Attorney's Office is dedicated to keeping our community safe through the aggressive prosecution of narcotics-related crimes. Sonoma County lost 99 of its community members to drug overdose in 2023 alone. The Narcotics Unit initiated an Opioid Working Group to identify and track suspected overdose deaths in Sonoma County and to identify traffickers who bring the harmful drugs into our county. In 2024, two of our attorneys were cross-designated as Special United States Attorneys in order to handle aggravated narcotics cases at the federal level. We treat every opioid overdose death as a potential homicide.



# HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

The Sonoma County Human Trafficking Task Force (HTTF) was convened by the Sonoma County District Attorney's Office in 2007 to address the issue of human trafficking in our community. Other members include local law enforcement, federal law enforcement, other county agencies, and several non-profit organizations.



The mission of the Human Trafficking Task Force is to ensure that all victims of human trafficking in Sonoma County – both children and adults – receive all resources available to them, and that traffickers and purchasers are identified, investigated, and prosecuted.



In 2024, the HTTF focused its attention on the growing number of suspected illicit massage businesses in our community. Members of the task force worked with local officials and code enforcement officers to provide new avenues for disrupting illicit businesses that provide opportunities for human trafficking.





# BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

The Bureau of Investigation is comprised of 15 investigators and one full-time Trial Support Specialist whose primary goal is to provide investigative assistance in active, filed criminal cases. The Bureau is proud to have some of the most experienced and highly trained law enforcement officers within its ranks. Our investigators utilize their specialized skills to uphold justice and victims' rights through the ethical and fair prosecution of criminal and civil cases. They are responsible for the safety of victims, witnesses, and staff. They are dedicated to supporting our justice partners in county-level investigations and providing technical support to other law enforcement agencies. The Bureau also conducts limited original investigations, primarily in the areas of consumer fraud, insurance fraud, environmental crimes, and Organized Retail Theft.





# JUVENILE JUSTICE DIVISION



## STOPPING THE PIPELINE–

### *DA-led Truancy Mediation Program*

We want to keep kids in school and out of truancy court. The DA's office actively participates in **"truancy mediation"** with school officials, truant students, and their parents. Our hard work is paying off.

In the **2023/24** school year, we held **46** truancy mediations at local schools.  
**-60% of the students improved their attendance** (Truancy petitions filed against 40% of the students)

In the **2024/25** school year, we held **52** mediations at local schools.  
**-83% of the students improved their attendance** (Truancy petitions filed against 17 %of the students)

Our Juvenile Division is dedicated to promoting public safety and upholding victims' rights. We balance those interests with the knowledge that our decisions can affect the trajectory of a child's life. We actively collaborate with justice partners to ensure that juvenile offenders are given meaningful opportunities at rehabilitation and treatment. Our goal is to help juvenile offenders avoid future contact with the adult criminal justice system while keeping our neighborhoods safe.



# SPECIALTY PROGRAMS

## VETERANS' TREATMENT COURT

We work collaboratively with the Sonoma County Superior Court, the Probation Department, the Public Defender, and the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs to provide specialized treatment as an alternative to jail for all justice-involved veterans who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, or other medical, mental health, or behavioral conditions as a result of their service. Over 60 veterans were served in 2024 alone. Several of our attorneys have served in the military and actively staff Veterans' Court.



## F.A.C.T. COURT

(**F**orensic **A**ssertive **C**ommunity **T**reatment)

We work collaboratively with Sonoma County Superior Court, Sonoma County Behavioral Health, Sonoma County Probation, and the Sonoma County Public Defender's Office to identify and address the complex needs of mentally ill individuals through intensive, community-based treatment and probation services.

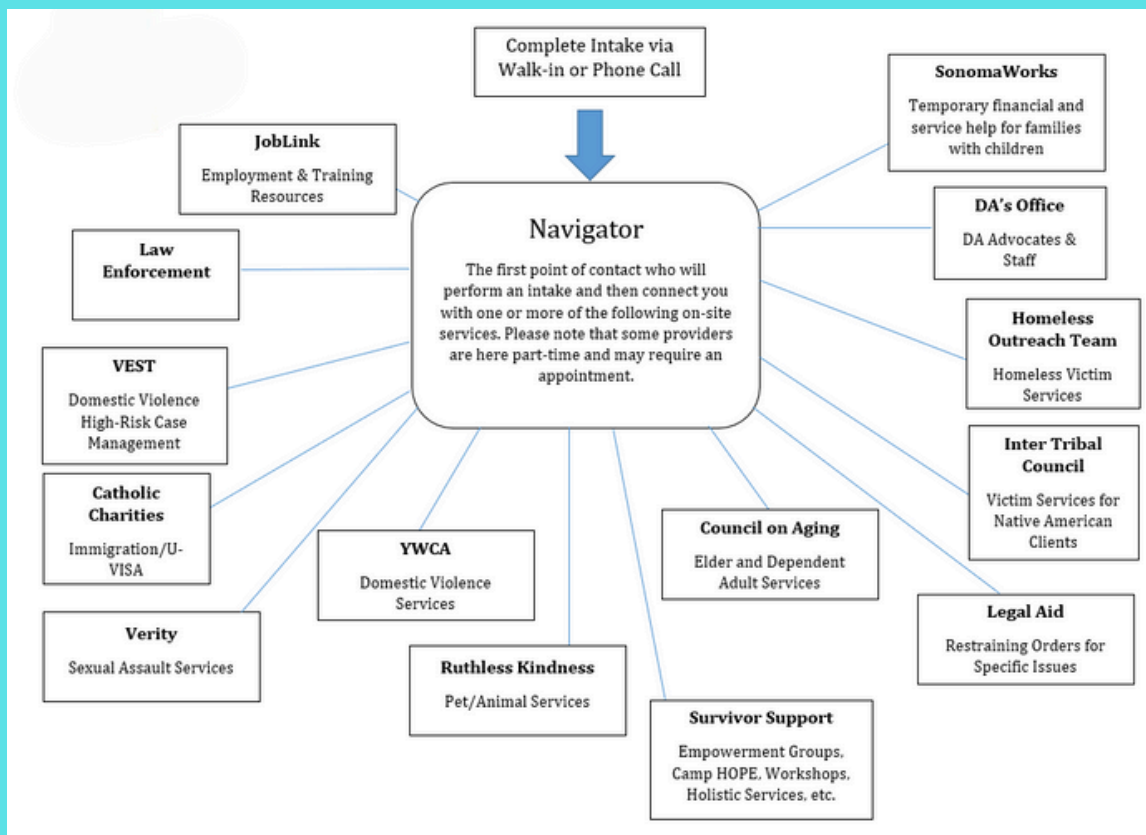




# FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER

## Sonoma County

**The Family Justice Center (FJC) is a collaborative of multiple partner agencies who work together to assist survivors of family violence. The FJC is a “one stop” location where survivors can access a variety of services all under one roof. All services are free, and there is no obligation to make a police report or testify in court.**



**The District Attorney's office provides limited financial and administrative support to the FJC, with assistance from our Board of Supervisors. The Family Justice Center is an independent entity, run under the leadership of Executive Director Marsha Lucien. The Family Justice Center Foundation Board was established to provide additional financial and volunteer support. The FJC's core mission is to help survivors move forward safely and with dignity. Victims need only tell their story one time, in one safe space.**

**Marsha Lucien, MBA**  
**Executive Director of FJCSC**





**FAMILY  
JUSTICE CENTER**  
Sonoma County

**By providing free and confidential wrap-around services, the Family Justice Center empowers victims of interpersonal violence to live free from fear and abuse. It provides comprehensive services, centered on and around the victim, through a single point of access. Building on strong interagency collaboration, the FJC protects the vulnerable, stops the violence, and restores hope.**



## **Family Justice Center Sonoma County 2024 Year in Review**

- 1,300+ survivors served, including 149 male survivors
- 43% of clients referred to onsite partner Legal Aid
- 54% of clients reported Domestic Violence as their primary victimization
- 26% of clients reported Elder Abuse as primary victimization
- 20% Other Victimizations including Stalking, Human Trafficking, Child Abuse, and Sexual Assault
- 3,000+ lbs of food distributed to clients and their families
- 1,500+ individuals received food assistance
- 3,500+ digital interactions across Google
- The Domestic Violence High-Risk Team launched to prevent domestic violence homicides; over 22 high-risk cases reviewed with 400+ hours of intensive case management
- North Bay Trauma Recovery Center joins the FJC to provide free, bilingual mental health services to survivors and their children



Thank you for letting  
us serve you.



*Serving Sonoma County*

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