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## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



# SOLANO COUNTY

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August 1, 2017

Honorable Judge Robert C. Fracchia  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
County of Solano  
600 Union Avenue  
Fairfield, CA 95433

### **RE: Response to Grand Jury Report – Solano County Family Justice Center**

Judge Fracchia:

Pursuant to Penal Code sections 933(c) and 933.05, the Solano County Board of Supervisors responds to Findings and Recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 5a and 5b contained in the 2016/2017 Grand Jury Report entitled "Solano County Family Justice Center."

#### **Finding 1**

The Solano County Family Justice Center building does not accommodate a sufficient number of on-site partners or provide adequate privacy.

#### **Response to Finding 1**

**District Attorney's Office:** The District Attorney and the Director of the Solano Family Justice Center partially disagree with this finding. Since the inception of the current administration beginning in October 2014, the goal at the Solano Family Justice Center has been to increase direct services on-site to victims and survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, elder abuse and human trafficking. Given the limited space at the center, the Office of Family Violence Prevention and on-site partners have collaboratively worked together to strategize and maximize the utilization of available space while still maintaining confidentiality and privacy.

**Board of Supervisors:** The Board of Supervisors agrees with the District Attorney's response. The Office of Family Violence Prevention has worked collaboratively with on-site partners to maximize the use of the available space while maintaining privacy and confidentiality.

#### **Recommendation 1**

The Solano County Family Justice Center reconfigure the current building to accommodate more on-site partners to reach the model of a "one-stop-shop" and provide sufficient privacy.

### Response to Recommendation 1

**District Attorney's Office:** The recommendation has been implemented. Angel Aguilar, the new Director of the Solano Family Justice Center, has taken further steps to increase direct services to victims of crime while maintaining confidentiality and privacy and utilizing the limited space in the most efficient manner. Mr. Aguilar has re-assigned the on-site partners to better suit the services that they provide. Each on-site partner is assigned an office. To further ensure privacy, "white noise machines" are placed outside the office door during confidential meetings. To accommodate additional on-site partners, all OFVP staff members have relocated to one office. As services and programming at the SFJC continue to increase, it is our hope that this will lead to a larger space that 604 Empire Street.

**Board of Supervisors:** The recommendation has been implemented and the Board of Supervisors agrees with the District Attorney's approach to more effectively and efficiently using the space available to provide direct services and programs to victims of crimes.

### Finding 2

The number of on-site partners has been inconsistent and the "one-stop" idea has not developed as envisioned.

### Response to Finding 2

**District Attorney's Office:** The District Attorney and Solano Family Justice Center partially disagree with this finding. Although the number of on-site partners has been inconsistent at times, the Center has always worked to ensure that essential services were rendered such as: domestic violence advocacy, court accompaniment, restraining orders, crisis intervention, safety planning and basic need assistance. A Family Justice Center in Penal Code section 13750 as a multiagency, multidisciplinary center where public and private agencies assign staff members on a full-time or part-time basis in order to provide services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, elder or dependent abuse, and human trafficking from one location in order to reduce the number of times a victim has to tell their story, reduce the number of places a victim must go for help, and increase access to services and support for victims and their children. Pursuant to Penal Code section 13750(c), "Staff members at a family justice center may be comprised of, but are not limited to, the following: law enforcement personnel, medical personnel, District Attorney, victim witness program personnel, domestic violence shelter service staff, community based rape crisis, domestic violence, and human trafficking advocates, social service agency staff members, child welfare agency social workers, county health department staff, city or county welfare and public assistance workers, non-profit agency counseling professionals, civil legal service providers, supervised volunteers from partner agencies, and other professionals providing services."

The Solano Family Justice Center currently has the following personnel on site:

- **Law enforcement** – DA Investigator
- **Medical** – Courage Center II Forensic Examiner
- **District Attorney** – Deputy DA's are frequently on-site for multi-disciplinary interviews, follow-up on cases, victim interviews, training, and meetings with partners and members of the law enforcement community
- **Victim Witness Program** – Victim Witness Advocate
- **Domestic Violence Shelter Service Staff** – Safe Quest Solano (a non-profit organization)
- **Community Based Rape / Crisis / DV / Human Trafficking Advocates** – Solano Advocates for Victims of Violence (SAVV – nonprofit organization), Trauma Recovery Center, Safe Quest

- **Social Service Agency Staff** – Child Welfare Social Workers are on-site frequently for MDI interviews and meetings
- **County Public Assistance Worker** – Solano Coalition for Better Health (regularly), Health and Social Services Eligibility Worker (will be on site this month)
- **Non-Profit Agency Counseling Professionals** – Child Haven (children's mental health), Victim Witness Advocate (adult and child mental health), and TRC (on-site in July for children and adult mental health)
- **Civil Legal Service Providers** – One bilingual pro-bono attorney who specializes in family law and immigration, and an additional pro-bono attorney who assists with family law consultations; OFVP assists with restraining order; SAVV assists with restraining orders for Spanish speaking clients
- **Supervised Volunteers from Partner Agencies** – We currently have volunteers and interns working under the supervision of the Family Justice Center Director

**Board of Supervisors:** The Board of Supervisors agrees with the District Attorney's response to the finding and concurs that the Center has worked to provide clients with essential services.

## Recommendation 2

Solano County Family Justice Center actively recruits more on-site partners to better serve domestic violence victims with the comprehensive services they will need for support.

### Response to Recommendation 2

**District Attorney's Office:** The recommendation has been implemented. However, we continue to strengthen our collaboration within the community in an effort to better serve those in need.

**Board of Supervisors:** The recommendation has been implemented and the Board of Supervisors supports the continued efforts by the District Attorney.

## Finding 3

Transportation to the Solano Family Justice Center does not effectively serve the needs of clients.

### Response to Finding 3

**District Attorney's Office:** The District Attorney and the Solano Family Justice Center partially disagree with this finding. The Solano Family Justice Center is centrally located in Fairfield, which is desirable due to the close proximity to the courthouse and the District Attorney's Office. However, it poses challenges for those who reside in other parts of the County. Efforts to address this issue include: (1) providing protective orders to victims at the Vallejo courthouse, (2) conducting multi-disciplinary interviews at a partner satellite office in Vallejo and (3) OFVP staff meetings with victims out in the field on an as needed basis.

**Board of Supervisors:** The Board of Supervisors agrees with the District Attorney's response to the finding that there are some ongoing challenges regarding client access to resources and supports the District Attorney and the Solano Family Justice Center in continuing their efforts to address these issues.

### Recommendation 3

The Solano County Family Justice Center secure funding to effectively provide transportation to its clients.

#### Response to Recommendation 3

**District Attorney's Office:** The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. We are in the process of analyzing our budget and looking into alternative means of funding for transportation to the Solano County Family Justice Center. Our target date to complete the analysis is August 31, 2017.

**Board of Supervisors:** The recommendation has not yet been implemented and the Board of Supervisors will review and consider the District Attorney's analysis and recommendations regarding alternative means of funding.

### Finding 5

Funding from the County to provide sufficient financing for the Solano County Family Justice Center has increased.

#### Response to Finding 5

**District Attorney's Office:** The District Attorney and the Solano Family Justice Center agree with this finding. Both salaries and benefits and operational costs have increased over the years.

**Board of Supervisors:** The Board of Supervisors agrees with the District Attorney's response to the finding.

### Recommendation 5a

Solano County Office of Family Violence Prevention staff increase expertise in grant-writing and aggressively pursue new grants to reduce county expenses for the Family Justice Center.

#### Response to Recommendation 5a

**District Attorney's Office:** The recommendation has been implemented. Since October 2014, our office has aggressively pursued grant opportunities that would better assist victims of crime. In February 2016, the Courage Center II, a child advocacy center, opened at the Solano Family Justice Center. In collaboration with Napa/Solano SANE/SART, we applied and received a grant from Kaiser Foundation to make that happen. In April 2016, our office successfully obtained a grant for the underrepresented and underserved population in the amount of \$350,000 for two years. That grant has enabled our office to hire two Tagalog speaking victim witness advocates to serve victims in the Filipino community. California Office of Emergency Services awarded our office \$532,430 to address service gaps and needs of crime victims in Solano County. This grant opportunity has enabled advocates to reach out to students in middle school and high school. It also supports Safe Quest Solano, an on-site partner, to provide daily elder abuse, sexual assault, and domestic violence advocacy. Our office worked collaboratively with our on-site partners to successfully apply for a Trauma Recovery Center grant in the amount of \$602,000 for two years. This grant funded by Victim Compensation Board will provide wrap-around services for all victims of violent crime. The grant will also provide on-site mental health clinicians. We continue to search for grant opportunities to help fund programming and services at the SFJC. We contract with grant writers on an as needed basis.

**Board of Supervisors:** The recommendation has been implemented and the Board of Supervisors applauds and encourages the District Attorney to continue to secure grants and other means of funding to sustain the services at the Family Justice Center.

**Recommendation 5b**

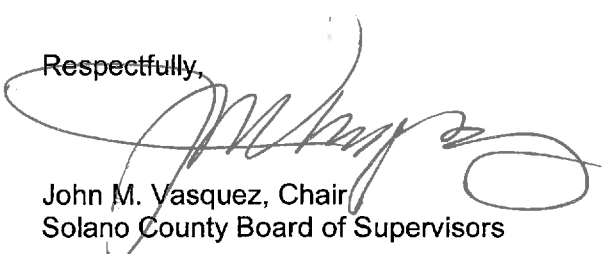
Solano County Family Justice Center establish a relationship with a non-profit foundation to help solidify the center's financial stability.

**Response to Recommendation 5b**

**District Attorney's Office:** The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the near future. We are currently in the process of forming a new foundation to help financially support the center. The process should be completed within the next several months.

**Board of Supervisors:** The Board of Supervisors agrees with the District Attorney that the recommendation has not yet been implemented and supports the department's work in forming a new foundation to help support the center.

Respectfully,



John M. Vasquez, Chair  
Solano County Board of Supervisors

cc: Clerk of the Board, Solano County Board of Supervisors  
Krishna Abrams, District Attorney  
Dennis Bunting, County Counsel, Solano County  
Solano County Grand Jury Office