

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY

Subject

County Domestic Violence Prevention Policy

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Domestic Violence Prevention Definition

Domestic violence prevention is defined as an active process that promotes healthy and harmonious relationships and includes efforts to address all forms of family violence, including intimate partner, elder, child, and animal abuse. Also known as intimate partner violence, domestic violence includes the entire continuum of violent acts, including verbal, emotional, psychological, emotional, physical, and sexual harm.

Purpose

The purpose of the Domestic Violence Prevention Policy is to support and expand the Board's current Prevention Policy (A-114) and advance the leadership role to identify, facilitate, and prioritize domestic violence prevention initiatives and services. This countywide policy is intended to improve the practices of County agencies relative to domestic violence prevention by implementing procedures and protocols that are inclusive and collaborative among and between County departments, public and private agencies, and community-based organizations.

Background

Domestic Violence, the silent epidemic, affects thousands of San Diego County residents each year. In 2018, law enforcement agencies responded to 17,513 calls for domestic violence. In each of these cases, and the thousands of unreported cases, the cooperative and nurturing relationship between individuals has broken down. It is this breakdown in family and societal norms that makes a policy on domestic violence essential.

In order to effectively prevent domestic violence, the entire community must promote community and family well-being, be proactive in identifying and preventing domestic violence, and establish a zero tolerance posture as it relates to acts of violence. Given San Diego's wealth of racial, ethnic, cultural, and gender diversity, this domestic violence policy attempts to reflect the entire population of the County and their unique needs.

Additionally, this policy supports the *Live Well San Diego* vision to improve the health and well-being of residents. Specifically, this policy supports the *Live Well San Diego* primary objectives to promote healthy, safe, and thriving families by reducing domestic violence and promoting violence prevention.

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Guiding Principles

The following guidelines underline the Board's Policy:

- Inclusive of all community members;
- Community and resident driven;
- Innovative and sensitive to community needs;
- Promoting community and family safety and well-being;
- Addressing trauma, risk, and resiliency for all parties, including victims, perpetrators, family members, and witnesses/bystanders;
- Developing domestic violence prevention strategies informed by evidence-based and promising practices to support existing community resources; and
- Targeting all segments and levels of society including children and adults.

Policy

It is the policy of the Board of Supervisors that:

1. Domestic violence is unacceptable in our communities.
2. The County shall promote primary violence prevention that starts as early as possible within the family setting with or without children present, and in schools beginning with preschool.
3. The County shall develop a plan to include County departments and their efforts focused on strengthening community-based intervention activities focused on preventing violence.
4. The County shall incorporate behavioral assessment standards into contracts and services that support domestic violence services, mental health services, and alcohol and drug services. This will include cross training for professionals to enhance their ability to assess and refer, when domestic violence is present with these factors.
5. The County shall include Behavioral Health Services providers to participate in training to enhance their ability to screen and refer, when domestic violence is a presenting issue, consistent with local Mental Health Services Act planning activities.

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6. The County shall enhance and expand training in domestic violence that includes early recognition, prevention, and intervention strategies.
7. The County shall promote the development of data and information systems to track the incidence of domestic violence and to gain a better understanding of domestic violence in San Diego County.
8. The County shall in its funding and contracting procedures, encourage and promote flexibility and collaborative initiatives in designing and adopting mechanisms for domestic violence prevention and intervention programs.

Sunset Date: This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12-31-2026.

Board Action:

- 12-17-96 (1)
- 3-14-06 (11)
- 12-09-08 (33)
- 01-29-13 (9)
- 11-19-19 (7)

CAO Reference:

1. Health and Human Services Agency
2. Public Safety Group