

**The San Diego Regional Human Trafficking and  
Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children  
Advisory Council**



**Meeting Minutes**

February 11, 2026

1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m.

County Administration Building

1600 Pacific Highway San Diego, CA 92101

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Room 207 C/D

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**Attendees:** David Oates, Amanda Stephens, Ember Price, Yusef Miller, Trish Martinez, Anabel Luna, Francisco Brambila, David Jarman, Jerrica Phillips, Carolyn Matzger, Kanani Titchen, Ellora Garcia in proxy of Arturo Garcia, Marjorie Saylor, Melissa Haupt

**I. Chair welcome**

The meeting was called to order at 1:30pm by Vice Chair Carolyn Matzger

**II. Announcement of members participating by teleconference and proxy**

- **Virtual:** Anabel Luna, Francisco Brambila
- **In-person:** David Oates, Amanda Stephens, Ember Price, Yusef Miller, Trish Martinez, Anabel Luna, Francisco Brambila, David Jarman, Jerrica Phillips, Carolyn Matzger, Kanani Titchen, Ellora Garcia in proxy of Arturo Garcia, Marjorie Saylor, Melissa Haupt
- **Proxy:** Ellora Garcia in proxy of Arturo Garcia

**III. Approval of Minutes**

- December 2025 minutes were reviewed
- Motion to approve was made and seconded
- Minutes approved without objections

**IV. Public comment on non-agenda items**

- **Center for Justice & Reconciliation**
  - i. Announced the upcoming HT-Radar Biannual Meeting, including guest panelists and will share more details via email
  - ii. Shared their second research brief
- **Petals of Hope (North County)**
  - i. Shared details about creative workshops and upcoming human trafficking awareness training on March 21
- **Sheriff's Office**
  - i. Patrice from the Sheriff's Office shared several updates regarding new programming at Las Colinas:
  - ii. A new support group has been launched, cofacilitated by two correctional counselors.
    1. Sessions occur twice a week for approximately eight weeks.
  - iii. The San Diego Volunteer Lawyers Program attends to provide legal education and assistance, including help with record clearance and review of both state and newly available federal vacatur ("Baker") petitions.
  - iv. GenerateHope also provides in custody classes, and referrals are made directly from program sessions.
  - v. Patrice emphasized:
    1. Many women do not initially realize they have been trafficked.
    2. Education and awareness efforts inside the facility are helping more individuals self-identify and seek help
  - vi. Additional comments highlighted:
    1. Collaboration with Volunteer Lawyers, noting that one formerly incarcerated

- graduate returned to share her success navigating reentry.
- 2. The Sheriff's Office reviews vacatur petitions when filed.
- 3. Strong partnership with community providers to ensure that women receive accurate information and pathways to services.
- BSCC
  - i. Shared fundraising event happening April 23<sup>rd</sup>
- Emergency Management – External Affairs Association
  - i. A representative introduced herself as Sandra, a crafting advisor with the Emergency Management External Affairs Association. She explained that their work focuses on integrating survivor insights into emergency management policies and procedures, particularly during disasters.
  - ii. Her goal is to ensure that the needs and vulnerabilities of trafficking survivors are recognized early so potential risks can be mitigated before situations escalate.
- Local Faith Community - Jesus Culture (Rancho Peñasquitos)
  - i. Shared that they are in the process of forming a group specifically dedicated to supporting anti-human trafficking efforts throughout San Diego County.
  - ii. Expressed the church's interest in:
    - 1. Learning more about the organizations and partners involved in the regional anti-trafficking response
  - iii. Identifying opportunities for collaboration
  - iv. Building ongoing partnerships to enhance community support for survivors and prevention work
  - v. Thanked the Council for the opportunity to attend and look forward to future engagement.

## V. Presentations

- **Review and next steps: County-contracted peer support navigation, and Ordinance update, Sarah Gordon, County of San Diego Public Safety Executive Office**
- Overview
  - i. Provided an overview of the pilot program launched in response to the Board of Supervisors' 2022 directive.
  - ii. The program has served 103 adult survivors since 2023 via contracts with community-based organizations.
  - iii. Key findings include extreme housing needs—especially for survivors with children—challenges hiring peer navigators, and strong engagement within reentry settings such as Las Colinas.
  - iv. Emergency housing vouchers were used effectively but will not be available moving forward.
  - v. The County is in budget review to determine whether the program will continue. If funded, an updated RFP may be released within 4–6 weeks.
- **Youth survivors of human trafficking: Improving healthcare access and treatment, Kanani Titchen MD, and Ellora Garcia LCSW, UC San Diego**
  - i. Medical and research team presented findings from a mixed methods study involving 24 surveys and 9 interviews with youth survivors.
  - ii. Nearly half accessed healthcare while being trafficked but lacked understanding of their right to emergency care without insurance or a guardian.
  - iii. Barriers included transportation, stigma, fear, traumatic experiences in healthcare, and digital forms of exploitation.
  - iv. Native American youth were disproportionately represented.
  - v. Youth expressed preference for nontraditional mental health supports and developmentally appropriate interventions.
  - vi. A new graphic novel prevention tool was introduced, with plans to expand research statewide.

## VI. Roundtable Updates

- **Business:**
  - i. Reported continued progress in preparing for a spring career fair in partnership with GenerateHope. Planning includes recruitment of professionals from a variety of industries to serve as mentors and career speakers for survivors. Efforts are underway to broaden collaborations with local businesses to create new employment pathways and long-term professional support opportunities.
- **Child and Family Well-Being:**
  - i. Highlighted that 50 percent of youth in out of home care between October and December 2025 were placed with kinship caregivers. They reported successful use of the online CSEC screening platform and ongoing improvements to protocols, including school-based guidance. Feedback is being integrated into updated cross agency procedures to ensure timely support for youth at risk.
- **Community:**
  - i. Shared updates on collaborations with tribal partners, including child abduction tabletop exercises and community engagement efforts in North County. Multiple cities are renewing their human trafficking awareness initiatives. The sector is preparing to restart cyber based demand reduction operations and resume massage parlor outreach in coordination with prosecution partners. They emphasized continued efforts to standardize prevention messaging and multicity collaboration.
- **Education:**
  - i. Announced new countywide webinars for parents, including online safety sessions for elementary families and human trafficking awareness training for middle and high school families. Spanish interpretation is now consistently available. A multidisciplinary educator training series is in development to strengthen school-based response systems across districts.
- **Health:**
  - i. No update
- **Law Enforcement:**
  - i. Reported that the Human Trafficking Task Force conducted a weeklong “Stand on Demand” operation in January across four jurisdictions, resulting in 120 buyer related arrests. The operation reflects increased demand reduction enforcement and multiagency coordination
- **Prosecution:**
  - i. The City Attorney’s Office announced receipt of all incoming 647(b)(2) cases related to the January operation, with arraignments beginning next week. Many of those arrested will be referred to the Sex Trafficking Education and Prevention Program as an alternative pathway focused on accountability and deterrence.
- **Research and Data:**
  - i. Highlighted the successful release of the “Ember’s Story” graphic novel centered on labor trafficking through forced drug distribution. Early pilot results with at risk youth have been positive, especially among justice involved adolescents. Work has begun on a sequel focusing on a female youth character. The sector also noted upcoming leadership transitions and ongoing evaluation projects.
- **Survivor Services:**

- i. No update
- **Survivor Voices:**
  - i. Welcomed two new survivor leaders and provided updates on the development of a standardized drug and alcohol screening protocol, advocacy for youth based prevention programs, and legislative involvement. They celebrated progress on a new bill concerning nonconsensual intimate imagery, which emerged from a connection made at the previous Council meeting. The sector continues emphasizing survivor leadership and cross sector legislative alignment.

## **VII. Adjournment**