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For Immediate Release

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New DA Outreach Campaign Encourages Action to Combat Domestic Violence

‘Now is the Time’ Launched as New Stats Show DV Prosecutions Up

With the start of national Domestic Violence Awareness Month, San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) announced today that her office along with its law enforcement and community partners is unveiling high-profile community outreach campaign called *Now is the Time* that addresses the ongoing crime of intimate partner violence. The billboard and literature campaign gives tools to DV victims, witnesses and offenders to take action, to get help and to make a difference in San Diego County.

**Now is the time...
to Seek Support**

Call the National Domestic Violence Hotline **1-800-799-7233**
for resources, support and help planning for your safety.



Partnering closely with the San Diego Domestic Violence Council, the District Attorney's impactful campaign provides the community with a better understanding of how to recognize domestic violence and what to do about it. More than 60 billboards will be displayed across San Diego County with five

different messages directed at domestic violence victims, offenders and those who might see something happening in their community or with their loved ones. In addition, wallet cards and postcards – in English and in Spanish – are being provided to community organizations for distribution. The campaign is being funded by a grant from the California Office of Emergency Services.

“People may not know where to turn for support, how to help a friend, how to recognize the signs and how to take action,” District Attorney Summer Stephan said. “We want victims to know that help is available to get them out of an abusive relationship and provide protection. We also want friends, families and co-workers to know there is a way they can support someone who is experiencing abuse, and offenders need to know it is possible to stop the cycle of violence.”

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Last year, there were more than 17,300 incidents of domestic violence reported in San Diego County – a 4 percent increase from the year before. Last year, law enforcement referred 6,859 domestic violence cases to the District Attorney’s Office for review.

A bright spot in the figures shows that domestic violence homicide is down. Last year, seven people were killed by their intimate partner, down from 12 the year before and 16 in 2015 – a 50 percent drop in a two-year period.

“Even though deaths are down, one person killed is too many,” DA Stephan said. “That’s why we want to spread the word about the *Now is the Time* campaign. Domestic violence tears families apart and is the single greatest cause of injury to women in the United States.”

San Diego’s success rate in decreasing intimate partner homicide is attributed to a unique, collaborative approach and to ongoing outreach and innovative programs established by the District Attorney’s Office and its partners.



Now is the time... to Help a Friend

Whether you are the victim of relationship abuse or the person causing harm
Call the National Domestic Violence Hotline **1-800-799-7233**



California Governor's Office
of Emergency Services
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For example, last year the District Attorney spearheaded a countywide Strangulation Protocol for law enforcement, which outlines a coordinated community response on how to investigate and document strangulation cases. Studies have shown that episodes of non-fatal strangulation have a greater likelihood of leading to homicide. The Strangulation Protocol puts into place a system of uniform detection, documentation and response so defendants and victims receive consistent treatment across the county.

Since the District Attorney’s Office started taking a deeper look at the potential lethality of non-fatal strangulation and spearheaded the strangulation protocol, the number of prosecutions involving strangulation has increased threefold. Thanks to the protocol and training, the signs and symptoms of strangulation injuries are being better documented.

Another program includes forensic exams, dispatches forensically-trained nurses to crime scenes to provide medical care and documentation in serious domestic violence and strangulation cases. As a result, there has been a 40 percent increase in filing felony strangulation cases that use this exam as part of the documentation.

Finally, in recognizing the link between homelessness and domestic violence, the DA’s Office has located employees on a regular basis at local homeless shelters and tent cities to identify domestic violence trauma survivors to get them counseling and other services.

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If you or someone you know is the victim of domestic violence, please call 1-800-799-SAFE (7233).

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About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office

The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue justice and support victims daily across San Diego County. DA Summer Stephan has devoted her life to protecting children and families and providing justice to the voiceless and most vulnerable. She is a national leader in the fight against sexual exploitation and human trafficking, and has served as a Deputy District Attorney in San Diego County for 28 years.

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