

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO 247 West Third Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor San Bernardino, Ca 92415-0302

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## NEWS RELEASE

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## SAN BERNARDINO SUPERIOR COURT ANNOUNCES NEW SERVICES AND PARTNERSHIPS ON THE ISSUE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

On June 10, 2014, the San Bernardino County Superior Court hosted a Domestic Violence Summit at the Goldy S. Lewis Community Center in Rancho Cucamonga for education, awareness, and strategies to address the problem of domestic violence. This event was paid for by The Superior Court also announced the launching of a new on-line tool to improve access to the courts for domestic violence cases.

Domestic violence is assaultive and controlling behaviors, including physical, sexual, psychological and economic control, committed by individuals against family members. According to the 2010 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men have experienced severe physical violence by an intimate partner. One family living through a domestic violence event may need to access multiple court systems within the Superior Court – criminal, family law, juvenile, probate, and civil.

The Summit brought together a variety of organizations, including domestic violence shelters and victim advocates, law enforcement, the District Attorney's office, the Public Defender's office, legal assistance organizations, Judges, Court staff, and community service groups.

During the daylong event, the participants were challenged with not only identifying the most urgent needs of the community, but also prioritizing those needs and formulating action steps. Identified as the top priority is the formation of a formal Domestic Violence Partnership to hold regularly-scheduled meetings to discuss issues affecting the community. This Partnership will then have the opportunity to address some of the other top needs, such as placing more community resources in key court locations.

Attendees at the Summit were also introduced to the Court's new on-line system for preparing the legal forms needed to start a request for a domestic violence restraining order in family law court. These free programs will be available through the court's website at <a href="https://www.sb-court.org">www.sb-court.org</a>. A person using the program needs to only answer simple and relevant questions. The program, designed by several attorneys, uses the answers to the questions to fill out the required forms. This PDF file can then be electronically transmitted to the court for filing for filing 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. All documents submitted will be processed on that (or the next) business day.

A comprehensive report regarding the work accomplished by the Domestic Violence Summit is expected to be released in July.

The Summit was financially supported through the Court's Access to Justice Funds and from Grant No 2013-WF-AX-0025 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice

For further questions, please contact Sharon Bragg, Supervising Paralegal, at 909-521-3448.