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## Domestic Violence Victims Need Our Help

### **SARA RONDON, DVP DIRECTOR**

Los Angeles County Bar Association

Domestic Violence Legal Services Project (DVP)

From January 1, 2020 to March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 the DVP had already provided assistance to over 1,000 victims of domestic violence and elder abuse inside the Los Angeles Superior Court-Stanley Mosk Courthouse. And then, March 16<sup>th</sup> arrived. As the state of California began to shut down, affecting courts, business, and most importantly people, the Los Angeles County Bar Association Domestic Violence Project (LACBA DVP) scrambled to make plans to assist victims who desperately needed help. After more than 30 years of providing services inside the Los Angeles Superior Court, the DVP moved offsite and began remote services. It was quickly discovered that most of the victims we serve are unable to effectively cope with remote services; due to lack of computers, printers, or even email. Along with the emotional and or physical trauma that they have sustained due to violence, adding the hardship of having to navigate technology, is simply unattainable for our victims.

The DVP then temporarily moved all staff to the Family Justice Center-Central Bureau, where a system was created to allow for pick-up and delivery of restraining orders in person, while still maintaining all safety protocols. The DVP works efficiently with LA Superior Court staff to send and receive restraining orders from an offsite location for the safety of litigants, court staff, and DVP staff.

After seeing a decline in restraining order inquiries of more than 50%, the DVP is once again beginning to receive phone calls and emails requesting assistance from victims in distraught situations. DVP staff, and a dedicated group of volunteers, are stepping up and making sure that assistance is offered. Now nearly, two months into the new “normal” the DVP continues to provide services to victims of domestic violence and elder abuse; by phone, email, and in person.

The DVP wishes to thank the City of Los Angeles-Office of the Mayor for their willingness to house staff full time at the Family Justice Center-Central Bureau and making space and supplies readily available. We also

wish to thank the Los Angeles Superior Court for working so hard to ensure that victims of violence still have a safety net available to them by working with LACBA and community partners to ensure the issuance of potentially lifesaving restraining orders.

How long this new “normal” will last no one knows. But we do know that the DVP will be here for all those that need us.

For assistance with a Domestic Violence or Elder Abuse  
Restraining Order, please call or email:

**213-624-3665**      **[dvp@lacba.org](mailto:dvp@lacba.org)**

Victim Statement\* *“Thank you so very much for all your help and time. I truly appreciate it! The help means a lot to me. Thank you for being so quick and efficient at everything. I'll make sure to follow through!”*

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