

ALAMEDA COUNTY FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER WINS FEDERAL FUNDING TO EXPAND SERVICES - *Department of Justice grant to be utilized to serve family violence victims countywide*

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Background information: <http://acfjc.org/>

Oakland, California. Alameda County Administrator Susan S. Muranishi today announced the county's receipt of a \$990,000 grant from the United States Department of Justice to expand the services offered by the Alameda County Family Justice Center.

"We are delighted to expand to a countywide scale the Alameda County Family Justice Center's innovative programs," Muranishi said. "The Family Justice Center brings together government agencies, community-based organizations, and all sectors of our community to focus on effective and compassionate services to victims of family violence. These funds enable the Family Justice Center's partners to continue reaching out to all victims countywide."

Funds from the grant will be utilized to place victim advocates within police departments in the county, support a Family Justice Center mobile response team, and expand the services offered at the Family Justice Center through a system of Family Justice Center Navigators.

"Since we opened the doors of the Family Justice Center in 2005, we have consistently sought ways to innovate and stretch our resources as far as possible --- all with an eye towards assisting victims to bring stability to their lives," said Nancy

O'Malley, Chief Assistant District Attorney, Alameda County. "These grant funds enable us to continue to innovate and work towards the day when all families in Alameda County are free from the specter of violence and intimidation."

Work to establish the ACFJC was initially coordinated by the Alameda County District Attorney's Office after being selected as 1 of only 15 communities for funding from the President's Family Justice Center Initiative (U.S. Department of Justice) in 2004. Since its launch, the ACFJC has: (1) provided services to more than 20,000 victims and their families, including more than 2,000 children who have witnessed domestic violence (DV); (2) reduced DV deaths from an annual high of 26 to 6 in 2005; (3) increased domestic violence prosecutions; (4) opened the first in the nation Safe Place Alternative (SPA) for sexually exploited minors; and (5) added infrastructure and support for counseling, child care, public health, faith-based, and deaf/ASL services.

"I am truly thrilled with the news. This grant will help our county to continue to build on what we have envisioned: to eliminate domestic violence related death and to serve our domestic violence victims and their families in more efficient and appropriate ways. Our community partners and our residents will be the ultimate beneficiaries," said Alameda County Supervisor Alice Lai-Bitker.

"It is truly extraordinary to see lawyers, criminal justice agencies, victim advocates, government agencies, community-based organizations, and community leaders making such progress toward ensuring victim safety and offender accountability," Supervisor Lai-Bitker added.