



ERIK NASARENKO

VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

NEWS RELEASE



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Contact: Joey Buttitta
Title: Communications Manager/PIO
Phone: (805) 767-3400
Email: Joey.Buttitta@ventura.org

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\$1.66 Million in Federal Funding Secured for Domestic Violence Shelter at Ventura County Family Justice Center



(Photo from L-R) Caroline Prijatel-Sutton, Executive Director at Coalition for Family Harmony; Erik Nasarenko, District Attorney Ventura County; Congressman Salud Carbajal; Congresswoman Julia Brownley; Dr. Sevet Johnson, Ventura County Executive Officer; Dianne McKay, Ventura County Family Justice Center Foundation Chair

VENTURA, Calif. – The Ventura County Family Justice Center (FJC), a program and services administered by the District Attorney’s Office, was the recipient of \$1.66 million secured by Congressman Salud Carbajal in the federal budget. The federal funding will expand services at the Ventura FJC location by increasing the number of domestic violence shelter beds once the new Emergency Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Housing project is completed. Currently, only 24 emergency shelter beds exist in Ventura County. This new project will bring up to 18 additional beds to the county.

On Monday, May 20, 2024, District Attorney Nasarenko was joined by Congressman Carbajal and Congresswoman Julia Brownley at the Ventura Family Justice Center to highlight this new funding, which President Biden signed into law in March.

“We are very fortunate in Ventura County to have outstanding support from our Congressional representatives,” District Attorney Erik Nasarenko said. “Congressman Carbajal and Congresswoman Brownley continue to step up and provide critical funding to support victims of crime. We thank them for their ongoing and successful efforts to aid the work of the Family Justice Center.”

Congresswoman Brownley secured \$640,000 in federal funding in January 2023 to be used towards launching a second FJC site, in Oxnard. The Carmen Ramirez Family Justice Center is currently undergoing renovations and is expected to partially open to the public this summer.

The Family Justice Center is a community support system that uses a holistic approach to uplift and empower victims and their families. The Ventura County Family Justice Center offers a comprehensive selection of services to Ventura County residents seeking a safe environment to recover, heal, and break the cycle of violence.

Congressman Salud Carbajal: “The Ventura County Family Justice Center provides invaluable support to survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence, and trauma that can leave them at risk of choosing between homelessness and further violence. The funding I helped secure in this year’s federal budget will help them expand their capacity to help Ventura County survivors, and I will continue to work in Washington to ensure critical programs like VCFJC have the support they need from Congress to expand and improve their services.”

Congresswoman Julia Brownley: “The Family Justice Center and its programs and services have played an instrumental role in how Ventura County, its community partners, and law enforcement address family violence and trauma. The approach is not only comprehensive and holistic, but it is truly life-changing and lifesaving. Much like the collaborative effort that takes place at the Family Justice Center to support victims and survivors, it was through collaboration and strong partnerships that Congressman Carbajal successfully carried this project through the appropriations process in Congress and secured federal funding for the expansion of the center’s services. I applaud his leadership, and I look forward to continuing to work together to support the Family Justice Center and its remarkable endeavor in delivering care and hope for those who have been impacted by violence and trauma.”

Caroline Prijatel-Sutton, Psy.D, Executive Director, Coalition for Family Harmony: “Coalition for Family Harmony is thrilled to partner with the Ventura County Family Justice Center and Ventura County District Attorney’s Office to provide shelter and support for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Safe housing is one of the most immediate needs of a survivor so having more beds in the county for the purpose of leaving abusive homes and beginning the healing process is vital for the safety and well-being of individuals and families. Coalition for Family Harmony has decades of experience providing emergency shelter for all survivors and we are looking forward to opening this new housing option. We are grateful to U.S. Congressman Salud Carbajal for securing this funding and understanding the needs of survivors in Ventura County.”

More information about the work being done by the Ventura County Family Justice Center can be found at www.vcfjc.org.