

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HOLLY J. MITCHELL
AND JANICE HAHN**

September 26, 2023

Proclaiming October 2023 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and October 18, 2023, as Domestic Violence Providers Appreciation Day

Since 1989, Domestic Violence Awareness Month has been observed each October to encourage public awareness and action around domestic violence, (which also includes intimate partner violence) to advocate for legislation and protections for survivors, and to educate leaders.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines intimate partner violence as physical violence, sexual violence, stalking and/or psychological aggression (including coercive acts such as limiting access to phones, family, and transportation, or exploiting vulnerabilities such as immigration status or undisclosed sexual orientation) by a current or former intimate partner (spouses, boyfriends, girlfriends, ongoing sexual partners, and/or dating partners). Needless to say, domestic violence/intimate partner violence causes trauma for all those involved. By recognizing Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Los Angeles County (County) is focusing on what the County can do to prevent, provide interventions, and address the harms of domestic violence.

According to the County’s 2020 Department of Public Health Report, among adults aged 18 and older, 20% of women and 13% of men reported having been physically and/or sexually abused by an intimate partner in their lifetime. Survivors face negative health outcomes that can have long-term effects such as conditions that affect the heart, reproductive system, and nervous system. Survivors can also experience mental health

problems such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder; and among women who have experienced different forms of victimization in their lifetimes, intimate partner

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violence emerged as a leading cause of homelessness.

Every month, an average of 70 women are shot and killed by an intimate partner in the United States (according to CDC National Violence Death Systems, 2019). Nearly 1 million women alive today have reported being shot or shot at by an intimate partner, and over 4.5 million women have reported being threatened with a gun by an intimate partner (according to the 2020 US Census and the November 2000 National Violence Against Women Survey).

Domestic violence is a serious public health issue in California, affecting people from many different backgrounds and contexts including race, religion, age, occupation, educational level, culture, socio-economic status, gender, or sexual orientation. However, survivors from racial and ethnic communities and historically underserved populations often encounter additional barriers to seeking safety and receiving effective, culturally competent, and trauma-informed assistance. Addressing domestic violence/intimate partner violence requires implementation of a comprehensive, coordinated, and survivor-centered approach to programming.

This October provides the County with an opportunity to connect survivors to community-based organizations, to recognize the work of the Domestic Violence Council, and the many other domestic violence shelter-based agencies who do so much with so little, including providing housing, legal services, counseling, advocacy, children's programming, and a host of other services. These critical services, hotlines and domestic violence/intimate partner violence are listed on the County's Department of Public Health website¹. It is also a time to continue to empower and educate the broader community about non-shelter-based domestic violence agencies that provide an array of services from school-based training to community outreach, individual counseling, housing navigation, financial empowerment, hotline services, legal services and more. Further, it's a time for policy makers and others to ensure proper investments are being prioritized to help intervene and address the complex issues surrounding domestic violence/intimate partner violence. During the month of October, and always, it is important to recognize

¹ DPH Hotlines and Resources: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/dvcouncil/resources/resources.htm>

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and support victims of domestic/intimate partner violence and to assist survivors in getting access to these services when they are ready and need it the most.

WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1. Proclaim October 2023 as “Domestic Violence Awareness Month” in the County of Los Angeles (County).
2. Proclaim that “October 18th, 2023, is Domestic Violence Providers Appreciation Day”.
3. Encourage all County employees and residents to reach out and support agencies throughout the County that provide services to survivors of domestic violence and their families, such as those listed on DPH’s hotline and resource website.² Additionally, encourage all County employees and residents to stay aware of warning signs and to reach out to support their friends, neighbors, colleagues, and co-workers who are impacted by domestic violence/intimate partner violence.
4. Encourage all County employees and departments to work in partnership to support members of our community who, in addition to domestic violence, face intersectional issues and barriers including shame, stigma and cultural taboos against seeking help.

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² DPH Hotlines and Resources: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/dvcouncil/resources/resources.htm>