

REVISED MOTION BY SUPERVISOR LINDSEY P. HORVATH December 5, 2023

Prioritizing Gender-Based Violence Prevention in Los Angeles County

Gender-based violence – violence directed against women, LGBTQ+ people, or other gender minorities because of their gender – remains pervasive worldwide. Gender-based violence can include sexual, physical, mental, and economic harm inflicted in public or in private. Almost one in three women have been subjected to physical and/or intimate partner (or non-partner) violence. More than four in five women live in countries without robust legal protection. Gender-based violence can occur regardless of a victim or perpetrator's sexual orientation, gender identity or relative strength, and any type of person can be a victim or perpetrator of gender-based violence regardless of their identity. However, people from marginalized groups are at an increased risk as abusers will often weaponize existing homophobic and transphobic stigma, discrimination, and lack of education around LGBTQ+ people, to perpetuate their control. Despite how widespread gender-based violence is globally, governments have not allocated adequate resources

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towards violence prevention. No country is within reach of eliminating intimate partner violence.¹

The statistics are equally bleak closer to home. On average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the U.S. The presence of a gun in a domestic violence situation increases the risk of homicide by 500%, and intimate partner violence accounts for 15% of all violent crime.² According to the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence, in FY 2020-2021, domestic violence programs in California answered 213,674 hotline calls, and provided 608,658 bed nights for survivors and their children. There were 29,498 unmet requests for shelter. Programs provided services to 2,161 LGBTQ individuals – who, according to UCLA's Williams Institute, are nine times more likely than non-LGBTQ people to be victims of violent hate crimes – and 401 youth victims of dating violence. On just one day in 2021, 4,553 survivors received services, and there were 1,071 unmet requests for services. Forty-two percent of unmet requests were for housing or emergency shelter. In 2020, California law enforcement agencies received 160,646 domestic violence-related calls, 72,628 of which included a weapon.³

Los Angeles County has a variety resources for people experiencing, or who have experienced, gender-based violence – including the Department of Public Social Services

¹ UN Women – Headquarters. “In Focus: 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.” Nov. 10, 2023, www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/in-focus/2023/11/in-focus-16-days-of-activism-against-gender-based-violence.

² National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. “NATIONAL STATISTICS.” 2021, <https://ncadv.org/statistics>.

³ California Partnership to End Domestic Violence. “California Domestic Violence Fact Sheet.” 2022, https://cpedv.memberclicks.net/assets/PolicyDocs/Domestic%20Violence%20Fact%20Sheet_2022_update_.pdf

Greater Avenues for Independence Specialized Supportive Services unit, the Department of Public Health Los Angeles County Domestic Violence Council, Los Angeles County Office of Women's Health, the Chief Executive Office Women and Girls Initiative, and the Los Angeles County Commission for Women – in addition to the services and supports provided through community-based organizations. Additionally, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) works to provide services and shelter for people experiencing domestic/intimate partner violence who are unhoused or become unhoused to escape violence. Though coordination among these entities may exist from case to case, there is not a centralized hub for survivors to easily access services and resources, aside from calling the Los Angeles County Domestic Violence Hotline (800-978-3600).

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a motion on March 13, 2018, introduced by Supervisors Sheila Kuehl and Mark Ridley-Thomas to address the epidemic of gun violence in our communities in the wake of the Parkland mass shooting. The motion directed the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Chief Executive Office (CEO) to create an Office of Violence Prevention within DPH, and tasked the new office with coordinating the County's various violence prevention efforts and leading the County in a violence prevention strategic planning process.⁴ The subsequent report to this motion recommended that a future Office of Violence Prevention should be housed in DPH and charged with implementing evidence-informed strategies designed

⁴ Kuehl, Sheila/Ridley-Thomas, Mark. "Addressing the Epidemic of Gun Violence in Our Communities." Mar. 13, 2018. Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.
<https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/121584.pdf>.

to address multiple forms of violence, including domestic violence, date rape, and sexual violence.⁵

On February 19, 2019, the (Board) unanimously passed another motion by Supervisors Kuehl and Ridley-Thomas to officially establish the Office of Violence Prevention (Office) within DPH. Per the motion, the charge of the Office is to improve coordination and support existing efforts across the County to prevent multiple forms of violence, through a renewed focus on prevention, and to ensure that strategies are responsive to community and are trauma informed. A stakeholder engagement process was undertaken to inform the work of Office, and the working group issued the following four recommendations:

1. Build on what exists and strengthen what works;
2. Create a bigger tent in any efforts to prevent violence in LA County;
3. Grapple with the implications of the County's vast geography in a deep and meaningful way; and
4. Build toward a comprehensive, countywide violence prevention initiative.

As we approach the five-year anniversary of the establishment of the Office, a review of its work and mission – especially as it relates to the prevention of gender-based violence – is timely to ensure the Office is adequately resourced; remains focused on the Board's priorities, particularly efforts to incorporate and highlight gender-based violence prevention; and is centering the experience of survivors of violence to appropriately inform

⁵ Department of Public Health. "Countywide Office of Violence Prevention." Jun. 15, 2018. <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/121720.pdf>.

prevention strategies as well as to improve delivery of services and support in a trauma-informed manner.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors directs the following:

1. Instruct the ~~Auditor-Controller~~ Department of Public Health Office of Violence Prevention in coordination with the County's Domestic Violence Council, Office of Women's Health, the Commission on Sexual Assault and Chief Executive Office to report back in 30 days with ~~perform a performance audit within 120 days of the Department of Public Health Office of Violence Prevention to determine~~ the following:
 - a. How has the Office of Violence Prevention fulfilled its mission to date as originally envisioned by the Board?
 - b. Has the Board allocated adequate resources and/or authority to do the work with which it was charged?
 - c. How has the Office of Violence Prevention integrated, uplifted, and led on gender-based violence prevention? Are these efforts informing prevention methodologies as well as service delivery to survivors of violence?
 - d. What data/metrics are being used to define and measure their work and success?
 - e. Recommendations for improved coordination and integration of gender-based violence, and needed resources and funding.

2. Upon submission of the report ~~completion of the performance audit~~, the findings shall be presented at ~~a meeting of the Audit Committee~~, and ~~subsequently at~~ a meeting of the Board of Supervisors.
3. Instruct the Executive Office, in coordination with the Board Chair's staff, the Chief Executive Office, and all relevant departments, to establish and convene, starting in January 2024 and occurring on a bi-weekly basis (twice per month), a meeting of policy deputies from each board office, as well as staff from appropriate departments, to be known as the Gender-Based Violence Prevention Board Deputies Meeting, to focus County policy development and implementation in partnership with the Office of Violence Prevention.

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