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Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services During COVID-19 – Susan Dalati

A pandemic will not curtail Domestic Violence. To the contrary, there is concern that Domestic Violence has, and will continue, to rise during COVID-19. There also have been many questions and concerns regarding the current status of Domestic Violence (DV) and Sexual Assault (SA) service providers. It is now more important than ever, in a time of isolation and seclusion, for victims to have access to resources.

The CILS DV Legal Team is currently providing DV and SA services remotely and taking on new client referrals. Although we are based in San Diego county, we serve Riverside and San Bernardino counties as well. We are also available to provide general information and referrals for other counties. Potential clients can reach out to our legal advocate at (760) 746-8941 ext. 106. Please leave a message along with a safe phone number and your call will be promptly returned.

The current pandemic has caused DV and SA providers to evaluate how to effectively and safely continue services and assistance for victims and/or survivors. Service providers, including the CILS DV Legal Team, which consists of one DV dedicated attorney and a legal advocate, have been meeting regularly to update each other on the most recent developments and procedures.

During the “shelter in place” orders, most confidential DV shelters continued taking referrals and agencies continued taking hotline calls. However, other types of services went virtual. Agencies are starting to offer those services again in-person with safety procedures in place. For the most specific up to date information it is best to call the agency directly. See below for a list of specific resources.

RELATED SERVICES

For more general information regarding domestic violence and sexual assault resources, please see the following links.

For Native American Specific Resources:

1. Avellaka “Safety for Native Women” Program: [Website](#), Phone: (760) 742-8628.
2. Cahuilla Consortium Helpline: Phone: (951) 330-0479; Advocacy email: h4nwadvocate@gmail.com.
3. Lipay Nation of Santa Ysabel Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Advocacy 24/7: [Website](#), Phone: (760) 765-8897.
4. Indian Health Council’s “Peace Between Partners” Program: [Website](#), Advocate and Therapist: (760) 749-1410 ext. 5249.
5. San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians Native Women’s Resource Program: [Website](#), Phone: (760) 651-5171.
6. Southern Indian Health Council’s REVIVE Program: [Website](#), Phone: Office: (619) 445-1188 ext. 200.
7. Strong Hearted Native Women’s Coalition, Inc.: [Website](#), Phone: (760) 644-4781.
8. StrongHearts Native Hotline: [Website](#), Helpline: (844) 762-8483.

Non-Native American Specific Resources:

1. California Courts Self Help: <http://www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp-domesticviolence.htm>.
2. National Center for Domestic and Sexual Violence: http://www.ncdsv.org/publications_wheel.html.
3. National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: (800) 273-8255 (TALK).
4. Rape Abuse Incest National Network: [Website](#), Helpline: (800) 656-4673 (HOPE).

DV and Courts

The Courts have been handling limited types of matters, but many changes are occurring to increase services. You should visit the courts’ individual websites for important updates as procedures vary county by county. The CILS DV Legal Team is also available to assist with providing information should questions arise.

California Courts Reopening:

California Courts are beginning to ease months of pandemic-related closures. As courts reopen, you should expect to get a temperature check, wear a mask prior to, and during, entry of the courthouse, and to safely socially distance yourself while attending hearings. A 75-page pandemic recovery guide, written by a Judicial Council working group, can be found [here](#). It contains guidance on courts safely reopening. Here's a snapshot of how some courts across California have implemented changes in light of the novel Coronavirus:

- **Humboldt County:** The court announced on May 18th that it resumed family, civil, and probate calendars using remote video and phone conferencing. Courtrooms and the clerk's office remain closed. Find the press release [here](#).
- **Inyo County Superior Court:** The court issued an order extending deadlines for certain matters scheduled between April 18th and May 13th but it appears the courts have since reopened. You can review the order [here](#).
- **Los Angeles Superior Court:** The court will be expanding operations on June 22nd with social distancing requirements. Select courtrooms permit parties to appear by telephone. Find specific courtroom information [here](#).
- **Orange County:** Jury trials started with a soft reopening on May 26th. Social distancing requirements are enforced.
- **Riverside County:** The court has rescinded the court holiday governing non-emergency and civil filings. The court issued a 7th emergency order authorizing the court to extend by 30 days the time to hold criminal trials. The court is summoning jurors for trials set in mid-June. Read the rescission [here](#) and the emergency order [here](#).
- **Sacramento County Superior Court:** The court extended its closure through July 10th but will resume holding criminal trials on June 15th. The court extended the time period within which a hearing on a juvenile dependency petition must be held. Mandatory temperature checks and face coverings required. Find the Extension Order [here](#).
- **San Bernardino:** The court began reopening on May 29th. All courthouses, with the exception of those in Big Bear and Needles, are open for limited hours and modified services. Face masks and physical distance are required.
- **San Diego Superior County Superior Court:** The court resumed most operations on May 26th although jury trials were not being scheduled at that time. Court officials have set a June 24th deadline for scheduling status conferences in civil matters. There are precautions to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread. Read what they are doing [here](#).

All CILS offices are currently accepting calls and providing legal assistance to tribes and individual Native Americans.

For assistance contact the CILS office closest to your tribal location at:

Escondido Office
(760) 746-8941

Bishop Office
(760) 873-3581

Eureka Office
(707) 443-8397

Sacramento Office
(916) 978-0960

SUPERVISED VISITATION

Due to COVID-19 and local "stay at home" orders, custody and visitation may be affected. Generally, child custody and visitation orders must be followed. However, during the current pandemic, it may be difficult for parents to follow. Also, parents may not be able to get court orders right away due to court closures and limited services. Many forums are offering virtual visitations for parents to comply with visitations.

- o For parents who were ordered by a judge to have monitored visits with their child, the Judicial Council of California has created a [Tip Sheet for Virtual Visits](#).
- o Here are some resources to make the most out of virtual visitations: [Zoom Visits for Infants](#), [Fun Prompts for Conversations](#), [Virtual Visits by Age](#), [Virtual Visitation Guide](#) – which includes poems and project ideas!
- o This [Tech Options](#) worksheet provides a list of low or no cost technology options for virtual visits.

TRIBAL COVID-19 FUNDING RESOURCES

This [document](#) provides guidance regarding Indian Health Service COVID-19 funding distributions to tribes and tribal organizations. Including the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, and the CARES Act.

Don't forget...

FCC – COVID-19 Telehealth Program. Provides eligible health care programs support in purchasing telecommunications, information services, and connected devices necessary to provide telehealth services to patients in response to COVID-19. More information can be found at: <https://www.fcc.gov/covid-19-telehealth-program>.

There is currently no deadline.

EPA – State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreement Program. Noncompetitive. Grant is to support activities and projects to improve the health and welfare of low income, minority, tribal, and indigenous communities. EPA will give special consideration to applications addressing the impacts of COVID-19 in communities with environmental justice concerns. Grant information can be found at:

<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/state-environmental-justice-cooperative-agreement-program#tab-2>

DEADLINE June 30, 2020.

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP). Grant will support recipients who seek to engage high-risk populations and provide substance use disorder/opioid use disorder prevention, treatment, and recovery services. For more information see:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=324246>

DEADLINE July 13, 2020.

USDA – The CARES Act Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program. Focuses on helping rural communities use telecommunications to connect teachers and medical service providers. For more information see:

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/distance-learning-telemedicine-grants>.

DEADLINE July 13, 2020.

Administration for Community Living (ACL) – The CARES Act: Support Older Adults with People of Disabilities in the Community During COVID-19 Emergency. Grant will fund home-delivered meals, care services in the home, respite care and other support to families and caregivers, and more. For more information:

<https://acl.gov/news-and-events/announcements/supporting-community-living-during-covid-19-cares-act-and-civil>.

No Deadline.

How Can CILS Help?

CILS staff can discuss whether the tribe is eligible for a grant and in preparing documentation.

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