



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## CONTACT:

Susun Kim 510-974-7200  
Contra Costa Family Justice Center Executive Director  
Natalie Oleas 925-521-6366  
Contra Costa Family Justice Central Center Director

### **Stay Safe Contra Costa's bus ad campaign highlights danger of guns in domestic violence relationships in October**

**Richmond, CA**, October 3, 2023 – In Contra Costa County, 63% of domestic violence deaths are caused by guns.<sup>1</sup> Those deaths are preventable, and help is available to those at risk. **Stay Safe Contra Costa** is sharing that message on dozens of buses across Contra Costa this October (Domestic Violence Awareness Month) in an effort to reach more Contra Costa residents with potentially life-saving information.

“The intersection of domestic violence and gun violence threatens and concerns our whole community, and there is broad agreement that abusers should not have access to guns. Enforcing gun relinquishment requirements will save lives,” said Susun Kim, Executive Director of the Contra Costa Family Justice Center.

When a gun is present in a domestic violence relationship, death is **20 times more likely** to occur. In California, law enforcement officers must remove guns found at the scene, and people under restraining orders must relinquish any guns and ammunition within 24 hours of being served with the order.

**California SB 320** (Domestic Violence and Firearms in California Family and Juvenile Dependency Court Matters, effective 1/1/2022) **puts teeth into this safety regulation by requiring California courts to monitor and enforce compliance with the law.** If proof of gun relinquishment is not filed in court within 48 hours, a judge must send law enforcement to collect the firearms, and notify the district attorney's office that the restraining order has been violated.

---

<sup>1</sup> Contra Costa Alliance to End Abuse, [Domestic Violence Death Review Team Report 2010-2019](#).

Gun relinquishment policies like SB 320 can reduce domestic violence homicides by 16% according to researchers.<sup>2</sup>

Though California has some of the strongest gun safety laws in the US, domestic violence shootings continue to claim lives; there were 991 domestic violence homicides in the state between 2012 and 2021. In 2021, the number of domestic violence-related calls for assistance involving firearms in California reached the highest level reported since 1995.<sup>3</sup>

Domestic Violence Restraining Orders (DVROs, also called protective orders) are legally binding court orders that instruct the person who has harmed to stay away from the survivor and other family members. DVROs can also include protections such as ordering a person to move out, stay away from workplaces or children's schools, or provide financial support. Other restraining orders are available for situations of threatened gun violence (where a specific individual is not under threat) civil harassment, workplace violence, elder abuse, and school violence. Find more information about restraining orders at the [California Courts Self-Help website](#).

“Restraining orders are just one part of an effective safety plan, and may not be the right tool for every survivor’s situation,” cautions Kim. “Survivors can contact Navigators at the Family Justice Center or Advocates at STAND! For Families Free of Violence to get connected with resources that best meet their own and their families’ needs.”

Stay Safe Contra Costa is a collaborative project aimed at saving lives by raising awareness about domestic violence gun fatalities and how communities can support domestic violence survivors. Launched by the Contra Costa Family Justice Center, STAND! For Families Free of Violence, and Bay Area Legal Aid, **Stay Safe Contra Costa** connects with the community through a network of partnerships with county and nonprofit agencies, via [webinars](#), a [new website](#) in English and Spanish, written materials, and [social media](#), as well providing one-to-one information to individual clients.

The campaign is part of a statewide effort funded by the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence (CPEDV), and the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) to raise awareness and [share a range of safety options](#) for survivors and service providers.

---

<sup>2</sup> M. Zeoli, et al., “Analysis of the Strength of Legal Firearms Restrictions for Perpetrators of Domestic Violence and Their Associations With Intimate Partner Homicide,” *American Journal of Epidemiology* 187, no. 11 (2018): 2365–2371.

<sup>3</sup> California Office of Gun Violence Prevention, [Data Report: The Impact of Gun Violence in California](#), August 2023.

The Contra Costa Alliance to End Abuse, a program of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors and administered by the Employment and Human Services Department, coordinates public and private partnerships to end domestic violence and other forms of interpersonal violence in the County. The Contra Costa Alliance to End Abuse supports the important work of the Stay Safe Contra Costa bus ad campaign to keep everyone safe from the threat of gun violence.

Contra Costa Family Justice Center serves survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking, sexual assault, elder abuse, and child abuse by connecting them with the legal, medical, mental health and economic resources they need to survive and thrive.

STAND! For Families Free of Violence provides survivors with crisis support and community-based services as well as school-based prevention programming for youth.

Bay Area Legal Aid offers no-cost legal assistance to survivors of domestic violence and coordinates the county's Restraining Order Clinic.

To get help or ask questions, contact:

**STAND! For Families Free of Violence**

[www.standffov.org](http://www.standffov.org)

24-Hour Crisis Line 1(888) 215-5555

**Bay Area Legal Aid**

[www.baylegal.org](http://www.baylegal.org)

1-800-551-5554

**Contra Costa Family Justice Center**

[www.cocofamilyjustice.org](http://www.cocofamilyjustice.org)

Richmond (510) 974-7200

Concord (925) 521-6366

Antioch (925) 281-0970

Fairfield (707) 784-7635