



HEATHER FERBERT
CITY ATTORNEY
CITY OF SAN DIEGO

PRESS RELEASE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOVEMBER 26, 2025

Ibrahim Ahmed
(619) 666-4161
iaahmed@sandiego.gov

 [heatherferbert.ca](https://www.instagram.com/heatherferbert) | sandiego.gov/cityattorney

OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY AWARDS \$463,000 GRANT TO SAN DIEGO CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE FOR SPECIALIZED DUI PROSECUTION TEAM

SAN DIEGO — City Attorney Heather Ferbert announced today that the San Diego City Attorney's Office has secured a \$463,000 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to support a specialized prosecution team focusing on alcohol and drug-impaired driving cases. The grant program runs through September 2026. Driving under the influence of drugs (DUID) cases remain a significant concern due to widespread use of cannabis, prescription drugs, and fentanyl.

"Impaired driving continues to put lives at risk on our roads, and this grant will strengthen our ability to hold dangerous drivers accountable," said **City Attorney Heather Ferbert**. "With dedicated resources and specialized training, our office can more effectively prosecute these cases and help keep our communities safe."

The specialized prosecution team will also partner with the statewide Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor Training Program to train other prosecutors and investigators and collaborate with law enforcement agencies on best practices for handling and managing driving under the influence (DUI) cases.

"Through focused prosecution efforts and strong partnerships, we are working toward a future where all people will be safe on California roads," **OTS Director Stephanie Dougherty** said. "Together, we're holding impaired drivers accountable and encouraging safe, responsible choices that help build a culture where safety comes first."

The Criminal and Community Justice Division of the San Diego City Attorney's Office prosecutes misdemeanor offenses occurring in San Diego, Poway, and 4S Ranch. During the previous grant period, OTS funding supported specialized prosecutor review of over 330 cases involving drug or drug and alcohol impaired driving. During the same period, the City Attorney's Office also reviewed over 2,000 alcohol DUI cases.

Due to widespread misconceptions that cannabis and prescription medications do not impair one's ability to drive safely, prosecuting DUID cases remains challenging. Effective DUID prosecution requires advanced training, and collaboration between prosecutors and law enforcement. Vertical case handling (meaning the cases are handled from start to finish by specialized prosecutors) is also key, ensuring special attention is given to these dangerous offenses. In court, the City Attorney's DUID Team seeks both pre-trial conditions and sentences that protect the community. Out of court, the DUID Team provides guidance and training to other prosecutors. Finally, the DUID Team meets periodically with law enforcement to collaborate on recurring and emerging issues in the area.

The DUID Team consists of Deputy City Attorneys Lauren Holt and John Mackesy. Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

###



SAN DIEGO CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
1200 THIRD AVENUE, SUITE 1620
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101



[heatherferbert.ca](https://www.instagram.com/heatherferbert.ca)



[LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/sandiego-city-attorney)

Press releases can be accessed on the San Diego City Attorney's website: www.sandiego.gov/cityattorney