



GETTING HELP WITH PERSONAL AND FAMILY PROBLEMS

SDPD Crime Prevention

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PREFACE

The SDPD is committed to working in a problem-solving partnership with individuals, community groups, and businesses, as well as with schools, hospitals, religious groups, private organizations, and other government agencies to fight crime and improve the quality of life for the people of San Diego. Problem solving is a key component in the Department's philosophy of Neighborhood Policing, which focuses on community crime and disorder problems and recognizes the need for close relationships between the police and other elements in the City to identify and solve problems. However, Neighborhood Policing cannot succeed on the efforts of the police alone. All elements of the City have responsibilities to fulfill.

Twelve community responsibilities are defined in a paper entitled *Community Responsibilities for Making Neighborhood Policing Work in San Diego: A Resource Guide for Individuals, Community Groups, and Businesses*. They are:

- Voicing concerns about disorder problems
- Employing crime prevention measures
- Knowing about crime and disorder in your community
- Addressing and solving certain community problems
- Volunteering services to police and other community groups
- Commenting on SDPD personnel performance in Neighborhood Policing
- Reporting crimes and suspicious activities
- Reporting suspicious person, activities, vehicles, etc. to prevent terrorism
- Reporting other problems and incidents
- Helping to convict and punish criminals
- Getting help with personal and family problems
- Exercising parental authority

The first six are discussed in that paper. The last six, including this one, are discussed in separate papers. They are published as part of the SDPD's continuing efforts to promote Neighborhood Policing. They provide information to help individuals, community groups, businesses, property owners, and others fulfill their responsibilities. All can be opened on the Community Resources and Responsibilities page of the SDPD website at www.sandiego.gov/police/services/prevention/community.

Individuals with personal or family problems need to get help before problems get out of hand and cause further difficulties. Two problems that are most prevalent in society are substance abuse and domestic violence. Some resources that provide referrals and help with these and other problems are suggested below. Also suggested are ways to get help if you are involved in a conflict or have been a victim or witness to a crime.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE

Individuals needing help with alcohol and drug abuse problems should call the County Health and Human Services Agency's Behavioral Health Services toll-free hotline at **(888) 724-7240** to get a list of organizations in their area that have treatment programs. Free material on the effects, prevention, and treatment of alcohol and drug abuse can be obtained by calling the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information at **(800) 729-6686** or searching the Internet website of the Office of National Drug Control Policy at **www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov**.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

San Diego County, in partnership with the Center for Community Solutions, now has a 24/7 Domestic Violence Hotline that provides crisis counseling, safety planning, referrals to various service agencies, and information on shelter bed availability, restraining orders and other legal aid, etc. The toll-free number is **(888) 385-4657**. Persons with existing domestic violence problems or cases should call the San Diego Family Justice Center's Domestic Violence Info Line at **(619) 533-6000** for assistance. That line is staffed Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

You should call for help if your partner exhibits any of the following behaviors.

- Tells you that you can never do anything right
- Shows jealousy of your friends and time spent away
- Keeps or discourages you from seeing friends or family members
- Embarrasses or shames you with put-downs
- Controls every penny spent in the household
- Takes your money or refuses to give you money for expenses
- Looks at you or acts in ways that scare you
- Controls who you see, where you go, or what you do
- Prevents you from making your own decisions
- Tells you that you are a bad parent or threatens to harm or take away your children
- Prevents you from working or attending school
- Destroys your property or threatens to hurt or kill your pets
- Intimidates you with guns, knives, or other weapons
- Pressures you to have sex when you don't want to or do things sexually you're not comfortable with
- Pressures you to use drugs or alcohol

These are listed on the National Domestic Violence Hotline's website at **www.thehotline.org/is-this-abuse/abuse-defined**, which also defines various kinds of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, and digital abuse, and sexual and reproductive coercion.

Answers to many questions about domestic violence are contained in a consumer education pamphlet entitled *Can the Law Protect Me from Domestic Violence?* published by the State Bar of California. It is on the Bar's website at **www.calbar.ca.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=Ikr3QL9riFs%3D&tabid=1330**. It and other pamphlets listed below can be ordered by calling **(888) 875-5297**.

OTHER PROBLEMS

You can now call **211**, the new 24/7 national dialing code for information and referrals about community, health, and disaster services. Information is available on addictions, child care, clothing, counseling, domestic violence, employment, food, housing, legal assistance, parenting, senior services, sexual assault, shelters, youth and teen services, and many other topics. This information is also online at **www.211SanDiego.org**.

For immediate assistance on mental health problems you can also call the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency's Behavioral Health Services' toll-free hotline line at **(888) 724-7240**. Professional counselors are available 24/7 to help callers through their crises and refer them to appropriate services. Counseling is available in Spanish and other languages.

Another source of information is the set of eight single-issue pamphlets for consumers who are seeking legal advice or have a problem with their attorney. They are published by the State Bar and can be read on its website in English and Spanish at www.calbar.ca.gov by clicking on Pamphlets in the left-hand menu and then on the title of the pamphlet of interest. These pamphlets deal with the following issues:

- Finding the Right Lawyer
- A Lawyer Referral Service Can Help You
- Having a Fee Dispute with Your Lawyer?
- Having a Problem with Your Lawyer?
- The Client Security Fund Can Help You
- Do I Need a Will?
- Do I Need Estate Planning?
- Do I Need a Living Trust?

The first three titles are also available in print along with *Kids & the Law: An A-to-Z Guide for Parents, Seniors & the Law: A Guide for Maturing Californians*, and *When You Turn 18: A Survival Guide for Teenagers*. Click on "order form page" to order copies. Those who don't have access to the Internet may call **(888) 875-5297** to order copies.

Free legal assistance for seniors 60 and older in San Diego County can be obtained from the Senior Citizens Legal Services Program of Elder Law and Advocacy (ELA). Staff attorneys travel to community outreach sites on regular monthly schedules. Call **(858) 565-1392** for an appointment. And visit its website at <http://seniorlaw-sd.org> to see what resources it has available and sign up for its newsletter to keep up to date on legal issues facing seniors.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Many personal and family problems can be resolved through mediation. By California law aimed at reducing court caseloads, the initial mediation sessions are free of charge. One organization you can call to negotiate restitution and resolve conflicts between victims and offenders arising from property crimes like theft, vandalism, burglary, and trespass is the San Diego Restorative Justice Mediation Program at **(619) 280-1993**. It also deals with conflicts between family members, e.g., parent-child. Mediation provides an opportunity for frustrated parents, unhappy children, and troubled families to talk about the things that bother them, set goals, and work out agreements to help them get along better.

To resolve civil disputes involving neighbors, landlords and tenants, family members (divorce and parent-child), businesses, etc., you can call the National Conflict Resolution Center (NCRC) at **(619) 238-2400** or go to its website at www.ncrconline.com to open a case. A case coordinator will call you within 24 hours to gather information about your case. The NCRC mediates disputes free of charge through funding by the County of San Diego.

To deal with parent-child problems, the NCRC lists the following reasons to consider mediation:

- It's different from therapy.
- No one tells you what to do.
- What everyone has to say is important.
- Each person is listened to with respect.
- It works for 90 percent of the parents and teens who try it.
- Your family controls the outcome by forming agreements that work for those involved.

- It can prevent disputes from escalating to violence.
- It's confidential. No one reports anything that is said in mediation.
- You have nothing to lose.

CRIME VICTIM AND WITNESS SERVICES

The County DA's Victim Assistance Program offers comprehensive services to victims and witnesses of all types of crimes. Services are provided from the moment the crime occurs for as long as assistance is needed; there is no cutoff for assistance by the program. The Program was created by the passage of Sec. 13835 *et seq* of the California State Penal Code, which mandates local comprehensive centers for victim and witness assistance throughout California. Its services are described online at www.sdcda.org/helping/victims/victim-services.html. If you have been a victim of a crime and need assistance, you can call **619-531-4041**. A Victim Advocate will speak with you and determine how we can assist you. Program services are provided free of charge, and there is no legal citizenship requirement to receive assistance.

Mandatory victim services include the following:

- Crisis intervention
- Emergency assistance
- Resource and referral assistance
- Direct follow-up counseling
- Property return assistance
- Orientation to the Criminal Justice System
- Court escort and court support
- Case status and case disposition information
- Notification of family and friends
- Employer notification
- Victim of crime claims assistance

Optional services include:

- Creditor intervention
- Child care
- Restitution information
- Witness notification
- Funeral and burial arrangements
- Crime prevention information
- Temporary restraining order information
- Transportation assistance
- Court waiting area
- Employer intervention

The Program also provides help in getting emergency funds, financial assistance from the California Victim Compensation Program (CalVCP), and referrals to other agencies that provide assistance. Information about CalVCP can be obtained online at www.calvcp.ca.gov or by calling **(800) 777-9229**. Answers to frequently asked questions about being a crime victim are provided in a consumer education pamphlet entitled *What Should I Do If I Am a Crime Victim?* published by the State Bar. The text is available on the State Bar's website at www.calbar.ca.gov by clicking on Consumer Education in the left-hand menu and then on Legal Information, Criminal Justice, and then its title.