



San Diego City Attorney Jan I. Goldsmith

NEWS RELEASE

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CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE TO SAVE \$217,000 ANNUALLY BY CONSOLIDATING OFFICES

San Diego, CA: The City Attorney's Office announced that it will save the City of San Diego \$217,000 annually by moving its Domestic Violence Unit at the San Diego Family Justice Center (SDFJC) about five blocks to the City Attorney offices at the Civic Center Plaza building. The Domestic Violence Unit consists of attorneys, investigators, victim advocates and other support staff. The move will occur in December.

"We've concluded that we can save the City money and improve efficiency of domestic violence prosecutions," stated City Attorney Jan Goldsmith. "We will not reduce our commitment to the SDFJC one bit. We will be there for victims and hold perpetrators accountable. We'll just be more efficient."

Similar to how the District Attorney's Office is structured, the City Attorney's Office will continue to maintain desk space at the SDFJC and the lawyers, investigators and victim advocates will continue to meet with witnesses, police and victims helping the victims understand the court process, keep them on board for trial and provide them with information about resources. All operations of the Domestic Violence Unit, however, will be housed with the balance of the office.

"I try to avoid splitting a law office if possible. When there are branch offices there are duplication costs in management, legal books, supplies and equipment," said Goldsmith. "Now, we will be more team based and can better use our resources."

"The move back to Civic Center Plaza will have a positive impact on the work of the attorneys in the Domestic Violence Unit," said Chief Deputy City Attorney Kathleen McManus, head of the Unit. "We will have access to the full legal library, to lawyers that work in our appellate unit whose expert advice on procedural matters is invaluable, and to former domestic violence prosecutors who can provide advice and ideas on how to successfully prosecute these difficult cases. We will also be closer to the courthouse."

The City Attorney's office will continue to find ways to save money without impairing the quality of legal work delivered to the City. "Every bit helps. We have stayed within budget and will do everything we can to cut expenses," said Goldsmith. "We do not fill vacancies unless absolutely necessary in order to deliver legal services. We have worked to return outside counsel matters and to properly bill our time to outside agencies when appropriate. And, we're winning lawsuits, practicing preventative law and trying to help our client through a tough time with solid legal work."

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