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## **Governor Signs City Attorney's GVRO Law**

*Family justice centers now required to inform clients about gun violence restraining orders*

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed into law a bill championed by San Diego City Attorney Mara W. Elliott that touts the availability of Gun Violence Restraining Orders to victims of domestic violence.

AB 2137, sponsored by Assemblymember Brian Maienschein, requires California's two dozen family justice centers to inform victims of domestic violence about their right to pursue Gun Violence Restraining Orders (GVROs) as well as Domestic Violence Restraining Orders (DVROs), depending on their circumstances. Your Safe Place – A Family Justice Center, which is run by the San Diego City Attorney's Office, last year became the first FJC in the state to offer both types of restraining orders.

Studies have shown there is a fivefold increase in domestic violence homicides when the abuser has access to a firearm.

**"I am thrilled that California family justice centers will be required to inform domestic violence victims about this life-saving tool that can be used to remove guns from volatile situations and save lives,"** City Attorney Mara W. Elliott said. **"When people know about GVROs, they are very inclined to seek them to protect themselves and their family members. As this bill goes into effect, my Office is committed to training staff at any family justice center on how to obtain GVROs to stem the tide of gun violence."**

The signing, on June 20, 2022, comes as the U.S. Senate considers legislation that would expand funding for "red flag" laws, a class of judicial orders that includes GVROs.

**"AB 2137 builds upon the services that family justice centers offer by providing them the materials needed to inform victims of the purpose and protections GVROs provide,"** Assemblymember Maienschein said. **"I am pleased that the Governor signed this bill and am confident that victims and families across the state will benefit from the option of pursuing another layer of protection from their abusers."**

Since Elliott was elected in 2016, San Diego has become a national leader in obtaining GVROs – 899 through March 31, 2022.

GVROs are important in domestic violence cases because research has shown that the risk of homicide increases fivefold when a firearm is present.

**“Our office has obtained hundreds of GVROs in San Diego, each one approved by a judge, through the combined efforts of our Gun Violence Response Unit, the police department, and the staff at Your Safe Place,” Elliott said. “This new law will allow us to help other communities achieve this same level of success for their most vulnerable populations.”**

Family justice centers provide support for victims of various forms of domestic and interpersonal violence and have assisted countless individuals in finding safety.

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