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City Attorney Secures 27 GVROs in May

11 cases involve people who threatened suicide

City Attorney Mara W. Elliott announced today that her Office secured 27 Gun Violence Restraining Orders (GVROs) in May, including 11 cases involving people who threatened self-harm.

“These incidents demonstrate that San Diego has not been spared from the rising threat of suicide by firearm,” City Attorney Mara W. Elliott said. **“GVROs allow us to step in, with court approval, to de-escalate dangerous situations so that those who are at risk can seek the help they need.”**

Suicide rates have risen 36 percent since 2000, and the availability of guns plays a significant factor in suicide attempts. A Harvard School of Public Health study found that more than 80 percent of suicides by gun are lethal, as compared with drug overdoses, which are lethal in just 1.5 percent of attempts.

To obtain a GVRO, the petitioner must show direct evidence that the person at issue demonstrated a potential threat to himself or others. In the self-harm cases last month, that direct evidence included:

- A man who sent a text message to his work supervisor saying he had had enough and that “[i]t all ends tonight.” He asked his supervisor to “[c]heck on my wife and kids.”
- A soldier who unsuccessfully attempted to buy a gun locally threatened to drive to Oregon to avoid California’s strict gun laws so that he could purchase a gun and then kill himself.
- A husband who threatened his wife and punctured her car’s tires told police that he was suicidal and demonstrated that sentiment by pointing a gun to his head.
- A man who was expelled from a church told his wife, “When you go to your meeting, tell those three (church leaders) that if they do allow me back into the congregation, I will shoot them, then you, and then myself.” Another incident at a different church also involved a man who threatened to commit suicide who held a Glock 17 handgun to his head.

Recent City media releases can be accessed on the San Diego City Attorney’s website: <https://www.sandiego.gov/cityattorney>
Follow the City Attorney’s Office on Instagram: [San Diego City Attorney Mara W. Elliott \(@sdcityattorney\)](#) • [Instagram photos and videos](#)

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- A driver, after causing an accident, told police that he was taking his terminally ill dog to the beach for the last time and then twice asked the officers to shoot him. He had a pistol and 300 rounds of ammunition in his car.

Seven of the other GVROs in May stemmed from domestic disputes.

San Diego is a national leader in using “red flag” laws to prevent predictable gun violence in situations where a person with access to guns has shown a propensity toward violence. GVROs are civil orders that prohibit the use, purchase, or possession of all firearms and ammunition. They can remain in effect for one to five years.

Before a court grants a petition for a GVRO, respondents are afforded full due-process rights, including the right to legal representation in a court hearing that is open to the public.

Find out more about how the City Attorney’s Office is protecting San Diego from gun violence [here](#).

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