

PATHWAYS FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

California Law Enforcement & Hospital Response Portfolio

A survivor-facing guide to what police, sheriff's deputies, emergency departments, social workers, and victim advocates can do - and what survivors can ask for.

California statewide guide with a dedicated Los Angeles County section

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Safety: If there is immediate danger or a medical emergency, call 911. If device or browser activity may be monitored, use a safer device when possible.

Educational use: This portfolio explains public procedures and resources. It is not individualized legal or medical advice, and local procedures can vary.

1. How to Use This Portfolio

This guide is designed so a survivor can compare the response they received with official California and Los Angeles procedures. It does not assume that every incident will lead to an arrest, protective order, prosecution, or hospital social-work visit. Those outcomes depend on the facts, legal standards, staffing, jurisdiction, and the survivor's needs.

Use it to ask concrete questions: What was documented? Was an Emergency Protective Order discussed? What report number was assigned? Were weapons addressed when legally applicable? What resources were provided? Was a private hospital interview offered? Was a social worker or advocate available?

2. Police and Sheriff's Deputies: Core Role

California law-enforcement officers responding to domestic violence can investigate, separate and interview people, document injuries and statements, collect or preserve evidence, determine whether an arrest is legally warranted, address protective orders, and connect victims with resources. Police departments and sheriff's departments are both law-enforcement agencies; a sheriff's department is not merely a process-serving agency.

A survivor can ask for the incident or report number, the responding officers' or deputies' identifying information, information about obtaining a report, and information about available victim services. A survivor can also tell officers about threats, strangulation, stalking, weapons, injuries, damaged property, children who witnessed the incident, prior incidents, existing court orders, and digital evidence.

3. Emergency Protective Orders (EPOs)

A responding law-enforcement officer may request an Emergency Protective Order from a judicial officer. California Courts explains that judges are available 24/7 for these emergency requests. An EPO can include no-contact, stay-away, move-out, and firearm/ammunition restrictions. It is short-term protection, generally lasting 5-7 days, and is different from a survivor-filed Domestic Violence Restraining Order.

Ask at the scene: "Can you explain whether an Emergency Protective Order is appropriate here, and if not, what my next protective-order option is?"

A longer-term Domestic Violence Restraining Order is requested through Superior Court. Common California forms include DV-100 (request), CLETS-001 (confidential law-enforcement information), DV-109 (notice of hearing), and DV-200 (proof of personal service). A long-term DVRO may last up to five years and may be renewed.

4. Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD)

LAPD publishes domestic-violence information and identifies Domestic Abuse Response Teams (DART) as partnerships between LAPD and victim-advocacy organizations in specified divisions. DART advocates can provide crisis support and help connect survivors to services; availability and coverage depend on the division and current program operations.

Current LAPD-listed DART advocate contacts:

77th - Project Peacemakers: 323-974-9677

Newton - Project Peacemakers: 323-846-6569

Southwest - Project Peacemakers: 213-400-8368

Northeast - Peace Over Violence: 213-955-9090

Hollenbeck - Peace Over Violence: 213-955-9090

Van Nuys - Domestic Abuse Center: 818-481-5482

Rampart - Children's Institute: 213-260-7600

LAPD's public guidance tells victims to seek medical attention when needed and to ask medical staff to photograph injuries and keep detailed records. LAPD also describes officers at the scene as able to obtain an EPO.

5. Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD)

LASD's 2026 domestic-violence policy is especially specific. Deputies are directed to document children living at the location and those present during the incident; offer an EPO and document the result; provide the Family Abuse Intervention Resource (FAIR), Report Information, and VINE materials; and, when practical, interview family members present. LASD policy also addresses temporary custody of firearms or deadly weapons in plain sight or found during a lawful search under applicable law.

If a victim requests an EPO, LASD policy directs the deputy to attempt to obtain it. If a victim declines, policy gives a deputy discretion to seek one without the victim's consent when the deputy believes the victim remains in danger. In criminal domestic-violence cases, LASD policy directs the investigating detective to present the case to the District Attorney's Office for filing even if the victim declines prosecution.

VINE: LASD policy describes Victim Information and Notification Everyday as a notification system related to an offender's impending or actual release from LASD custody. Survivors should keep their registration/contact information secure.

6. What to Ask Before Law Enforcement Leaves

- What is the incident/report number, and how do I obtain a copy?
- What agency/station/division is handling the report?
- Was an EPO offered or requested? If granted, when does it expire and what does it order?
- If there is an existing restraining/protective order, was it checked and was any suspected violation documented?
- Were visible injuries, damaged property, threatening messages, video, photographs, witness names, or other evidence documented?
- Did I tell the officer/deputy about strangulation, threats to kill, stalking, weapons, escalating violence, or threats involving children/pets?
- If children were present or witnessed the incident, was that documented?
- If a firearm or deadly weapon was present, what action was taken and what receipt/information was provided, if applicable?
- What victim-services, shelter, advocacy, VINE, or safety-planning information is available?
- Who should I contact for follow-up investigation?

7. California Hospital and Emergency Department Response

California hospitals have long been required to maintain policies for routine screening for spousal or partner abuse, documentation of related injuries or illness, staff education, crisis-intervention information, and referral information that includes hotlines, shelter-based programs, legal services, and temporary restraining-order information.

Under Health and Safety Code section 1281.5, general acute care hospitals with emergency departments must also have policies that let an ED patient safely and discreetly self-identify as a victim of domestic violence or human trafficking. Minimum requirements include confidentiality, a reasonably prompt private interview by medical personnel (which the patient may decline), information about local services/resources, and trauma-informed care.

A useful request at triage: “I need to speak privately with medical staff. I am experiencing domestic violence and I do not want the person with me present for this conversation.”

Medical needs come first. Survivors can describe all injuries and symptoms, including pain, loss of consciousness, breathing or swallowing problems, head injury symptoms, pregnancy concerns, sexual assault, and prior injuries. They can ask what was documented in the medical record and how to request their records later.

8. Hospital Social Worker / Domestic Violence Advocate

The exact staffing model differs by hospital. A social worker, case manager, or domestic-violence advocate may be involved. Their practical role can include crisis assessment, safety planning, shelter and advocacy referrals, discussion of protective-order resources, help identifying transportation or emergency needs, coordination with victim-service programs, and planning for a safer discharge. They do not replace the treating clinician, police, an attorney, or the court.

Before leaving the ER, ask: “Is a social worker or domestic-violence advocate available?” “Can we make a safety plan before discharge?” “Can you give me written local resources?” “How do I get my medical records?” “If I cannot safely return home, what shelter or emergency-placement resources can you contact?”

9. ER Survivor Checklist

- I had an opportunity to speak privately, away from the person who may be harming me.
- I described all injuries and symptoms, including symptoms that are not visible.
- I told staff if strangulation/choking, head injury, sexual assault, pregnancy, or weapons were involved.
- I asked what injuries and statements were documented in my medical record.
- I asked whether photographs or other clinical documentation were appropriate.
- I received or requested local domestic-violence resources.
- I asked for a social worker, case manager, or DV advocate if available.
- I discussed a safe discharge destination and transportation if returning home is unsafe.
- I know how to obtain discharge papers and medical records.
- I know what symptoms require immediate return to the ER or emergency follow-up.

10. Statewide and Los Angeles Resources

Resource	Contact / Use
Emergency	911 - immediate danger or medical emergency
National Domestic Violence Hotline	800-799-7233; text START to 88788 - confidential support and local referrals
California Victims Resource Center	800-842-8467 - statewide victim information, legal information, resource navigation
California Victim Compensation Board	800-777-9229 - crime-related expense assistance; CalVCB, P.O. Box 3036, Sacramento, CA 95812-3036
Safe at Home - CA Secretary of State	877-322-5227 - confidential address program and enrolling-agency information
211 California	Dial 211 - local community resources
LA County Domestic Violence Hotline	800-978-3600 - confidential 24/7 automated language/ZIP routing to a local agency

For local domestic-violence programs anywhere in California, the California Department of Social Services directs survivors to the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence program locator and to 211. Court self-help centers can provide free legal information about restraining-order forms and procedure.

11. Survivor Cross-Check Worksheet

Use this page after a police/sheriff or ER encounter. It is a memory and follow-up aid, not a complaint form.

Date/time of incident or visit:

Agency / hospital:

Officer/deputy/staff names or badge/ID numbers:

Report / incident / medical-record number:

EPO discussed? Result / expiration:

Evidence or injuries documented:

Children / witnesses documented:

Resources or brochures received:

Social worker / advocate contact:

Follow-up detective / unit / clinic:

Questions still unanswered:

12. Source Notes and Official References

This portfolio was checked against current public materials available in October 2026. Because policies, telephone numbers, programs, and forms can change, Pathways should periodically re-verify the resource page before distributing large quantities.

Primary references used:

- California Courts Self-Help - Guide to Protective Orders; Domestic Violence Restraining Order process and forms.
- Los Angeles Police Department - Domestic Violence Information / DART.
- Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department - Manual of Policy and Procedures 5-09/030.00 Domestic Violence; 2026 field guidance.
- California Department of Public Health - AFL 25-09 implementing HSC 1281.5.
- California Health & Safety Code 1259.5 - hospital screening/documentation/referral policies.
- California Victim Compensation Board - victim compensation and statewide victim-resource information.
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health - Domestic Violence Coalition / hotline.

Pathways for Victims of Domestic Violence - Survivor Education Portfolio