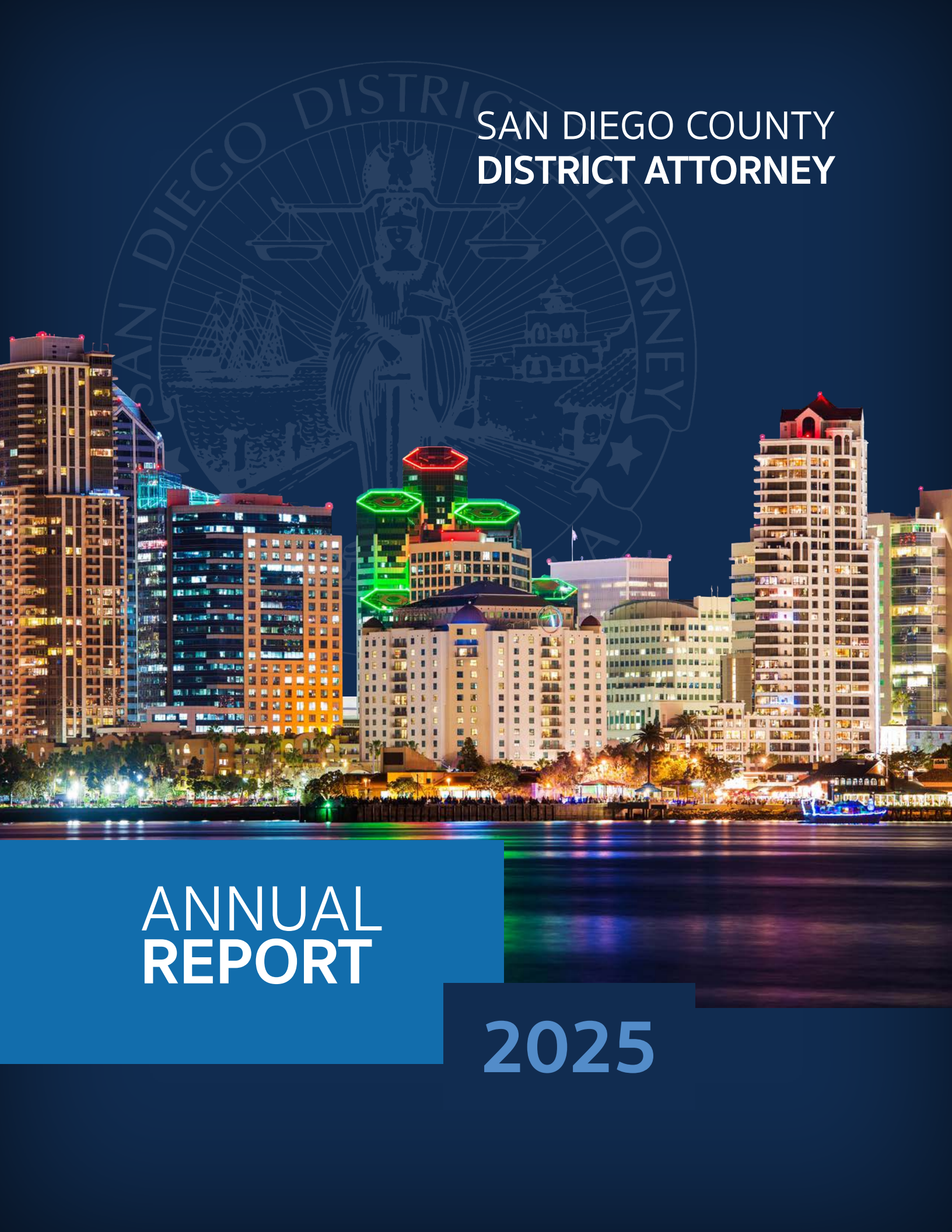


The seal of the San Diego County District Attorney is a large, circular emblem in the background. It features a central figure holding scales of justice, surrounded by the words "SAN DIEGO COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY". The seal is rendered in a light blue, semi-transparent style.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

A nighttime photograph of a city skyline, likely San Diego, with various skyscrapers and buildings illuminated. The lights from the buildings are reflected in the water in the foreground. The sky is dark, and the overall scene is vibrant with city lights.

ANNUAL REPORT

2025

MESSAGE FROM SUMMER STEPHAN

SAN DIEGO COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Serving as District Attorney for San Diego County is a profound honor and duty to safeguard the safety and dignity of every person in every neighborhood across San Diego County. I am proud of the DA team of nearly 1,000 dedicated professionals who serve more than 3.3 million residents with integrity, courage, and an unwavering commitment to justice.

Our office prosecutes every felony committed in San Diego County and all misdemeanor crimes that occur outside the City of San Diego. In close partnership with nine police departments and the Sheriff's Office, we work every day to ensure that those who harm others are held accountable and that victims are heard, supported, and protected.

We proudly represent all 18 cities and the diverse unincorporated communities that make up our region. From our youngest children to our seniors, every person deserves to live free from fear. Safety is not simply a policy goal, it is a fundamental human right and the foundation upon which families, businesses, and neighborhoods thrive.



- Just days before the holidays, Operation Home for the Holidays rescued 19 human trafficking victims in a three-day, multi-agency effort focused on recovering survivors, connecting them to safety and services, arresting traffickers, and reducing the demand for sex for pay through accountability.
- We opened One Safe Place South, a new Family Justice Center in National City to augment the work we are already doing at our One Safe Place North in San Marcos. One Safe Place South filled an immediate hole in services, especially for human trafficking, domestic violence, child abuse and elder abuse victims in the area.
- We brought organized criminals to justice in a wide-ranging takedown of street gang members operating in San Diego County at the direction of the largest prison gang, known as the Mexican Mafia, which has ties to Mexico's cartels. They preyed on business owners by forcing mafia-style tax payments. They dealt illegal drugs, committed widespread violence and trafficked weapons such as ghost guns and AR 15s.
- We obtained \$13.6 million in consumer protection judgements against three companies, including HelloFresh. The companies were illegally engaging in automatic payment renewals, price overcharging and engaging in deceptive lending practices.

INDEX

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- We released new data showing that nearly all habitual drug defendants under Prop. 36 are on a lifesaving treatment track with only 3.5% sentenced to prison, while its repeat theft provisions are already helping deter crime and restore a sense of security for businesses once targeted by chronic offenders.
- From September to December 2025, we conducted a countywide Financial Elder Abuse Prevention Campaign to increase awareness of scams targeting older adults. Centered on the message "Stop. Hang Up. Tell Someone." The multilingual campaign used integrated traditional and digital media reaching more than 4.4 million people and delivering more than 45.9 million impressions, exceeding projections by 2.2 million impressions countywide. Our office has been able to combat scams that target seniors through a first of its kind Elder Justice Task Force.
- We sponsored a bill preventing rapists and child molesters from qualifying for elder parole at 50- years-old.
- I testified twice before Congressional Committees of the U.S. Congress both times about national threat of organized retail crime, keeping our nation's lawmakers apprised of how San Diego County is prosecuting these crimes and keeping our community safe through collaboration within law enforcement task forces and partnership with the community.

This annual report highlights how we combine strong prosecution with prevention, innovation, data-driven strategies, and community-based programs that bridge public health and public safety. It also reflects the compassion and resilience of our team, who stand beside victims on their darkest days and carry the weight of that responsibility with professionalism and heart.

I am deeply grateful to the men and women of this office for their service and to the communities we serve for their trust. Together, we continue working to keep San Diego County among the safest urban counties in the nation.

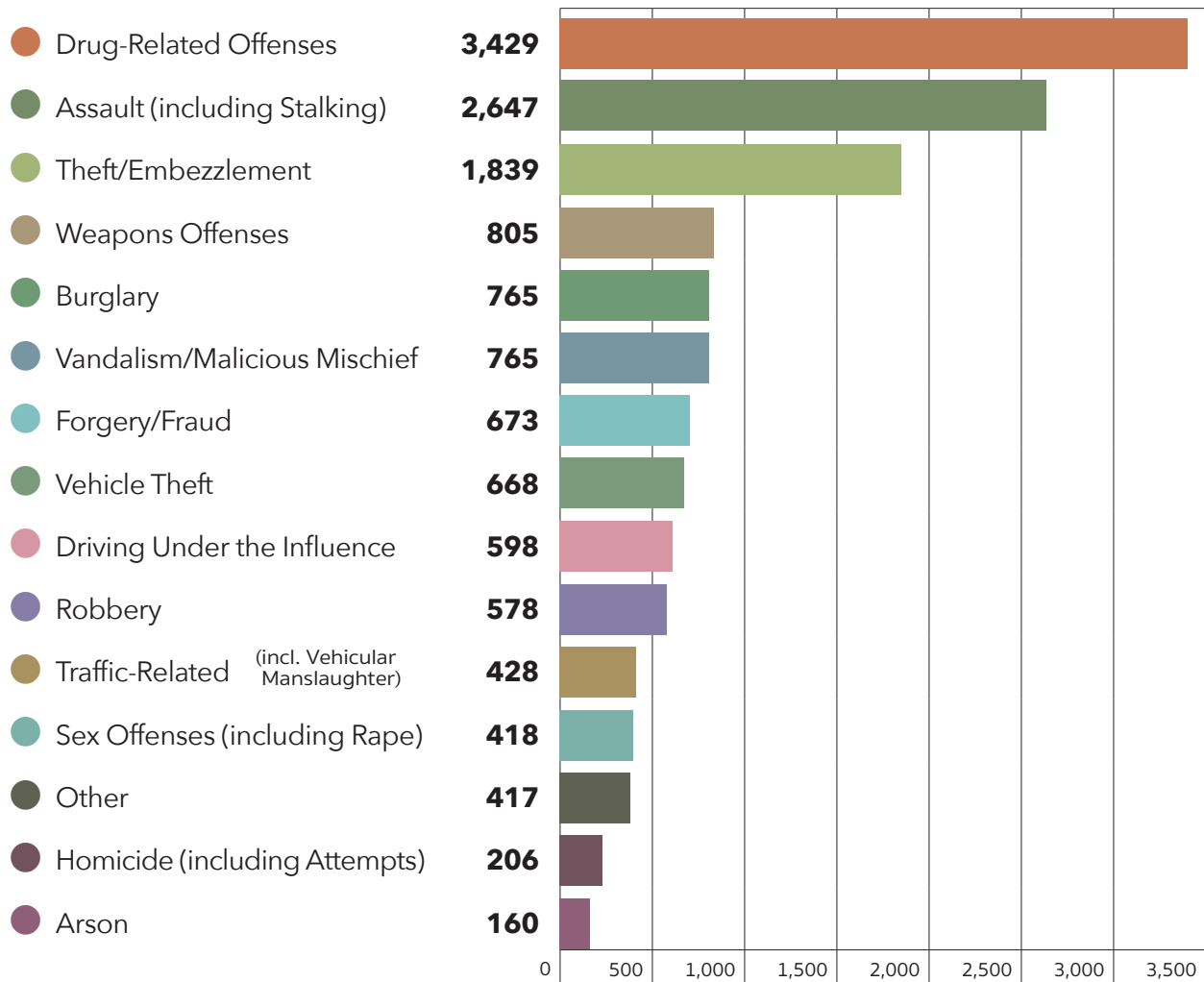
OVERVIEW OF THE

DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

The San Diego County District Attorney's Office is responsible for prosecuting felony crimes committed in the county. It also prosecutes misdemeanor offenses that occur outside the City of San Diego. Each year, the more than 350 prosecutors in the District Attorney's Office file about 40,000 criminal cases on behalf of the county's nearly 3.3 million residents.



2025 Felony prosecutions by type of crime



What Does the District Attorney Do?

The Mission of the District Attorney's Office is to pursue equal and fair justice for all and to build safe neighborhoods in partnership with the communities we serve, by ethically prosecuting those who commit crime, protecting victims and preventing future harm.

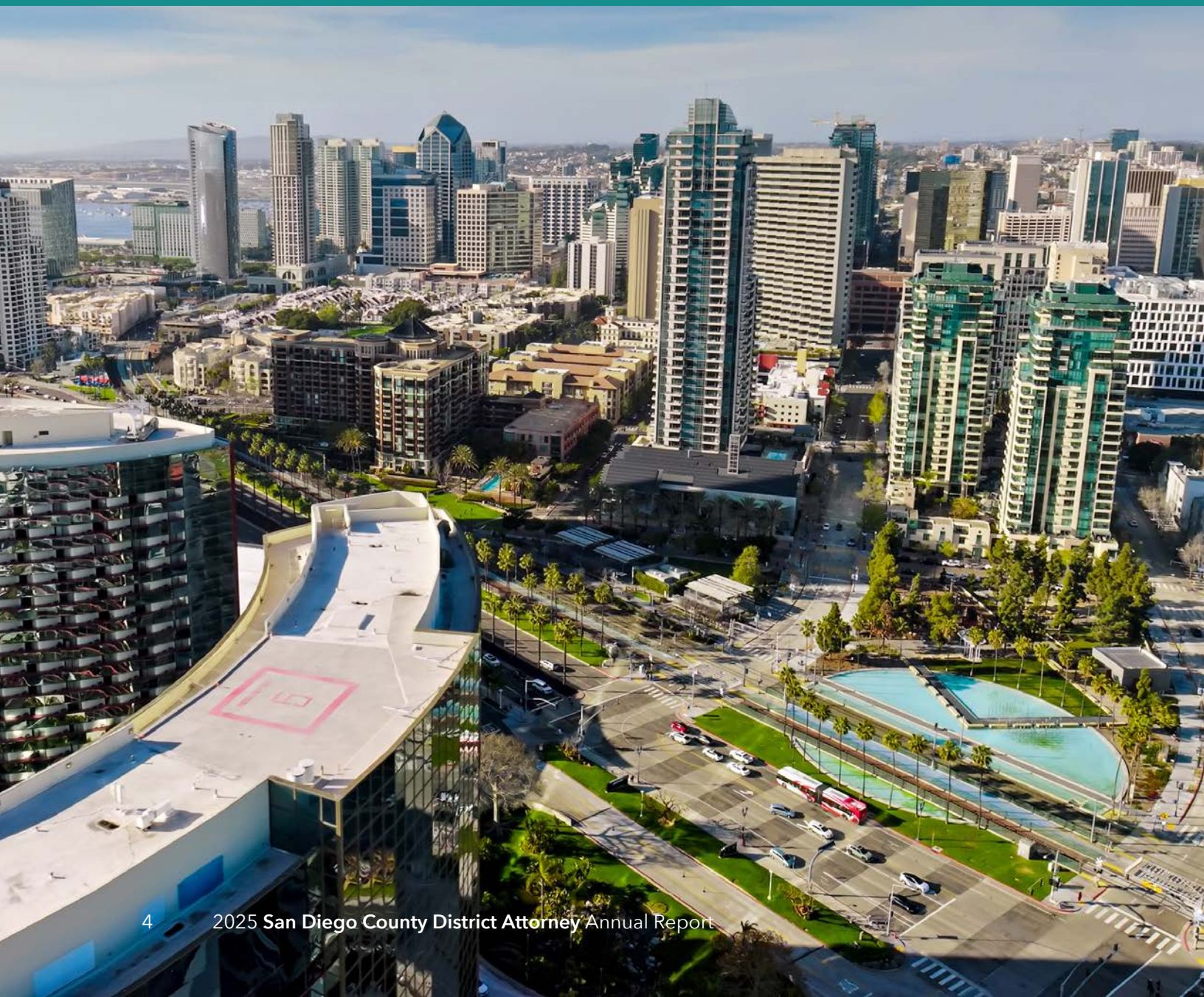
More than 1,000 DA employees work across 22 divisions, branch offices, and our two Family Justice Centers, One Safe Place North and One Safe Place South, each carrying out specialized work on behalf of the people of San Diego County. One great way to understand what the District Attorney's Office does is by watching this video.



WATCH OUR VIDEO TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

NEW PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

Each year, the District Attorney's Office implements new initiatives and looks for innovative solutions that support advancing our mission. Below are some of the new programs introduced in 2025 that support safe and healthy neighborhoods



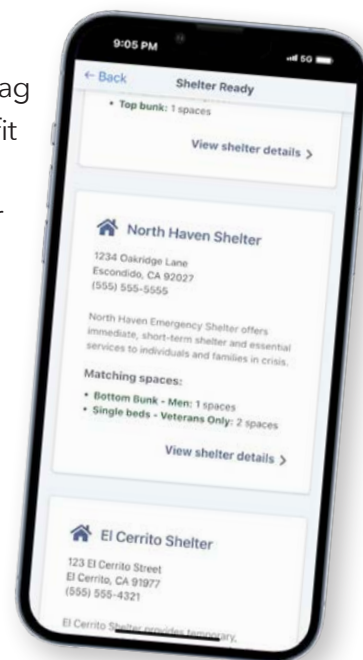
Bridging the Gap: Real-Time Solutions for Homelessness

In 2025, the District Attorney's Office took a major step toward regional safety by expanding Shelter Ready, a first-of-its-kind mobile app designed to move people off the streets and into beds immediately. [You can watch a video about Shelter Ready, here.](#)

For frontline workers, finding a shelter bed used to be a game of phone tag and guesswork. Now, thanks to a partnership with a leading tech nonprofit and dozens of local agencies, they can locate and secure emergency housing in real time. This isn't just about data; it is about intervention. Our research shows that those experiencing homelessness are significantly more likely to be victims of crime, struggle with addiction, or become involved in the justice system. By streamlining the path to shelter, we aren't just helping provide a bed, we are helping break the cycle of crisis and making San Diego County safer for everyone. Using technology in this way brings hope, dignity, and real time solutions to a complex public health and public safety crisis that is intrinsic to homelessness. In 2025, Shelter Ready supported 1,697 people in their search for emergency shelter.

"Before we started using Shelter Ready, we were spending approximately 40 hours each week attempting to fill our beds through our community partners. This time was consumed by writing down waitlists, vetting potential referrals, setting up intake times, and answering phone calls from individuals seeking shelter and community partners wanting to make referrals. Since implementing Shelter Ready, we have remarkably reduced our weekly hours to less than 15."

- A Shelter Manager in San Diego County (The complete testimonial is at shelterready.org)



One Safe Place South Opens in National City, Supporting Victims of Crime

The South County Family Justice Center opened its doors in October 2025, serving as a centralized victim services hub for South County residents. This regional family justice center model allows victims to focus on their healing instead of traveling across the region to receive care. One Safe Place: the South Bay Family Justice Center joins the first OSP location which opened in San Marcos in 2022 and has served more than 11,500 individuals, primarily victims of domestic violence. One Safe Place South provides no-cost crisis-intervention services to anyone who has experienced family violence, child abuse, sexual assault, domestic violence, hate crimes, elder abuse, human trafficking, violent loss, or other crimes. Other services include connections to safe shelter and housing, long-term mentoring, workforce readiness, clothing, and educational opportunities, all under one roof.

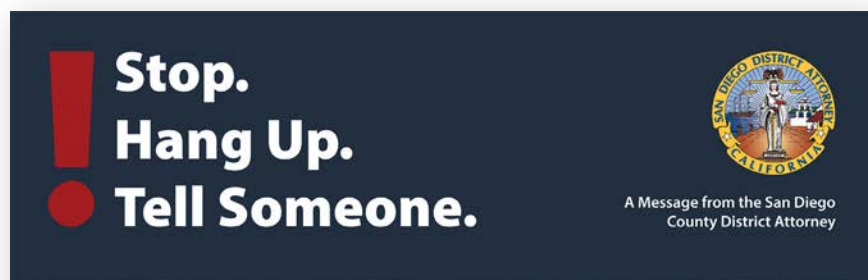
[Watch a video about One Safe Place South »](#)



DA Launches Far-Reaching Elder Fraud Prevention Campaign

In response to the surge of predatory technology, investment, and romance scams targeting our seniors, the District Attorney's Office launched a high-impact financial elder abuse prevention campaign. From September to December 2025, we mobilized a multilingual, cross-platform strategy centered on a singular, life-saving directive: "Stop. Hang Up. Tell Someone." The campaign shattered expectations, reaching over 4.4 million residents and generating 45.9 million impressions, which surpassed our projections by 2.2 million and empowered our community against financial exploitation.

[Watch the news conference announcing this campaign »](#)



Microsoft isn't calling – scammers are.

They want your trust and your money. If you're told to give computer access, withdraw funds, or purchase gold – **it's a scam.**

Report scams to local police and FBI at **IC3.gov.**



Mag-ulat na





Healthcare Fraud Working Group Established

In 2025, the Insurance Fraud and Workplace Justice Division launched the Health Care Fraud Working Group (HCFWG), a powerhouse coalition designed to dismantle complex medical fraud networks. By uniting the District Attorney's Office with elite partners including the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of California, and the Department of Defense – the HCFWG employs a multidisciplinary strike force to protect public and private resources.

This collaborative initiative moves beyond traditional boundaries to expand investigations, uncover hidden victims, and maximize restitution recovery. Through this unified front, our office and federal stakeholders are ensuring that those who exploit the healthcare system are held accountable, returning vital funds to the community. Other partners include the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General, Department of Defense Crime Investigative Services, Department of Veteran's Affairs Office of the Inspector General, and California Department of Insurance.

LENS OF JUSTICE

THROUGH SIGNIFICANT CASES

By the time a criminal case is resolved, so many employees of the District Attorney's Office have a hand in achieving justice. Prosecutors, investigators, paralegals, victim advocates, support staff, an IT team and even court dogs. The following is a sampling of distinguished cases.



PEOPLE V. PABLO JOHNSON

Stepson Murders Stepfather, Claims Self-Defense

A 25-year-old man stabbed his stepfather to death in their Rancho Bernardo home, leaving more than 100 stab wounds. After the murder, the defendant took a photo of the victim and sent it to his friend. Pablo Johnson was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to 26 years-to-life in prison.

PEOPLE V. EZEKEL LOPEZ

Driver High on Cocaine Kills Fetus of Pregnant Woman

Despite warnings from a prior DUI, Ezekel Lopez consumed cocaine and alcohol and then drove, speeding down W. Taylor Street in Vista. He swerved out of his lane and crashed head-on into a car traveling in the opposite direction. The victim, a pregnant mother, was in the vehicle with her husband and two-year-old daughter. She was rushed to the hospital, but her 27-week-old fetus could not be saved. The defendant was sentenced to 22 years-to-life in prison.

PEOPLE V. TROY SCHOLDER

Hells Angels Gang Member Viciously Beats Victim

A jury convicted Troy Scholder, a Hells Angels gang member, of attempted murder and assault with a deadly weapon for a vicious racially motivated attack on three men. Fourteen Hells Angels gang members and supporters violently beat three men. During the beating, Scholder stabbed the victim in the chest as he was lying helplessly on the ground. Scholder was sentenced to 21 years-to-life in prison.

PEOPLE V. DAVAROLD ZENO AND WILLIE WILLIAMS

Gang Members Killed Rival While He Slept

A jury convicted two Lincoln Park gang members of killing a gang rival while he was asleep in his bed. Davarold Zeno and Willie Williams committed a carjacking, drove to their rival's home, sneaked up to his bedroom window and fired 16 rounds into the bedroom, striking the victim four times in the back. The defendants were found guilty of first-degree murder with lying in wait special circumstances. They are facing life without the possibility of parole.

PEOPLE V. FARRAH NAZEMI

Title Fraud Using Forged Deeds

A jury convicted Farrah Nazemi for recording two fraudulent deeds transferring ownership of the home that she lost to foreclosure and was sold at a trustee's sale back to herself. In a separate incident she recorded a forged deed transferring another property to herself after the property owner prevailed in a civil suit to void a contract and evict her. During execution of a search warrant, investigators found copies of the deeds, notary stamps, and a "PAID" bank stamp in her bedroom. Nazemi was sentenced to two years in state prison.

PEOPLE V. DAVID FRANCISCO

Uncle Sexually Abused 8-Year-Old Nephew

In the summer of 2023, David Francisco moved in with his sister and her three young children, including the 8-year-old victim. Within a few months, Francisco gained the trust of the victim and his mother. On at least six separate occasions, Francisco sexually assaulted the 8-year-old in the bathroom and bedroom of the apartment. The child was left with injuries and contracted a sexually transmitted disease from his uncle. The defendant's sexual abuse only came to an end when the victim's mother walked in on the act, rescued her son and called police. Francisco was tried in a Vista courtroom and was convicted of six counts of sodomy of a child. He was sentenced to 150 years-to-life in prison.

PEOPLE V. EDUARDO MAGANA

Victim Killed in Motel Room, Body Never Recovered

Eduardo Magana, who was convicted of killing his ex-girlfriend, had a history of domestic violence against her. So, when Alexis Guadarrama went missing, a close friend reported her missing, with the knowledge that she was planning to meet Magana the same night. Magana killed the victim inside a motel room, concealed her car and belongings, loaded her body into his car, and drove off. Magana was tracked driving to San Bernardino County as well as different parts of Los Angeles County soon after returning home from the motel. Despite law enforcement and civilian efforts, the victim's body has not been recovered. Three and a half months after the victim was killed, Magana was sentenced to 15 years-to-life in prison.

PEOPLE V. PAUL CUSAMANA

Lifetime Commitment for Sexually Violent Predator

Paul Cusmana was convicted of attempted murder, forcible rape, oral copulation and sodomy of a 16-year-old girl in 1986. In that case, Cusamana admitted that he saw the young victim through a window and broke into her home intending to "make love" to her then kill her. He served 33 years in state prison and was subsequently found to qualify as a mentally disordered offender in San Luis Obispo County, where he committed multiple assaults and incidents of indecent exposure against correctional officers and prison staff. Pursuant to the Sexually Violent Predator Act, prior to his release from prison, Cusamana was evaluated by state appointed psychologists who diagnosed him with multiple mental disorders that predisposed him to the commission of sexually violent offenses. The San Diego County District Attorney's Office filed a sexually violent predator petition against him. Following a trial in 2025, the petition was found true and Cusamana was found to be a sexually violent predator, and the court imposed a lifetime commitment to the Department of State Hospitals.

PEOPLE V. DERIK REYES

Deranged Man Attacks Two Young Women Two Months Apart

Defendant Derik Reyes violently sexually assaulted his half-sister in her own home in front of the victim's 3-year-old daughter who was screaming on a nearby bed. The victim yelled for help while fighting off Reyes. She clawed at him, scratching and punching him, finally knocking him off balance. She grabbed her daughter and ran to safety. Two months later, Reyes attacked a neighbor on the same street after entering her home through a rear patio door. Reyes lunged at the victim, tried to remove her shirt and pants, and attempted to force oral sex while the victim screamed for help. A next-door neighbor heard the victim's screams, armed himself with a gun, stopped the attack and held Reyes at gunpoint before he was taken into custody by police. Reyes was swiftly convicted by a jury, found sane by the court, and he was sentenced to life in prison.

PEOPLE V. ROBERT YOUNG AND GALINA MIGALKO

Unlicensed Medical Practitioners Treat Elder Victim

A jury convicted Robert Young and Galina Migalko for the unlicensed care of an 80-year-old woman diagnosed with autoimmune hepatitis. The defendants directed the victim to reject medical treatment in favor of restrictive diets, supplements and daily colonics, claiming they could cure her. The victim's medical condition deteriorated over five months, culminating in hospitalization and confirmed liver damage. Young and Migalko received over \$10,000 for unproven treatments and diagnostic tests. Young was sentenced to five years and eight months in state prison and Migalko was sentenced to four years and four months in local prison.

PEOPLE V. AARON MUNGUIA

Violent Family Confrontation

Aaron Munguia disrupted a family gathering in Spring Valley, initiating a violent confrontation. After an attempted shooting of his wife's cousin failed when his "ghost gun" malfunctioned, Munguia terrorized those present – including a seven-year-old child – by pointing the loaded weapon at multiple victims and threatening their lives. He eventually fled, firing a round into the air. Law enforcement later recovered the firearm and matching ammunition at his residence. Following a successful prosecution, Munguia was convicted of all charges in July 2025. He was sentenced to 24 years and four months in state prison, ensuring justice for the traumatized family.

PEOPLE V. ANGEL PADILLA

Hatchet Homicide of Homeless Individual

Without warning, and with no clear motive, defendant Angel Padilla approached a homeless victim, who was sitting against a wall in west Chula Vista, and violently struck the victim in the back of the head with a hatchet, killing him. Padilla was convicted by a jury of first-degree murder and was sentenced to 56 years-to-life in prison.

PEOPLE V. SEAN HAWKSWORTH

Man Shot Friend in the Head

Following a multi-day disappearance, the victim was discovered deceased inside a newly purchased trash can at his apartment. His vehicle and high-end personal belongings were missing. Investigators identified Sean Hawksworth as the purchaser of the receptacle and uncovered a storage unit in his name containing the victim's property and a kilogram of cocaine. Digital forensics revealed Hawksworth conducted incriminating searches regarding DNA evidence and whether "God cannot forgive" certain sins. After a successful trial, Hawksworth was convicted on all counts on June 13, 2025. He was sentenced to 22 years plus 25 years to life, removing a dangerous offender from the community.

PEOPLE V. RAFAEL BANDA

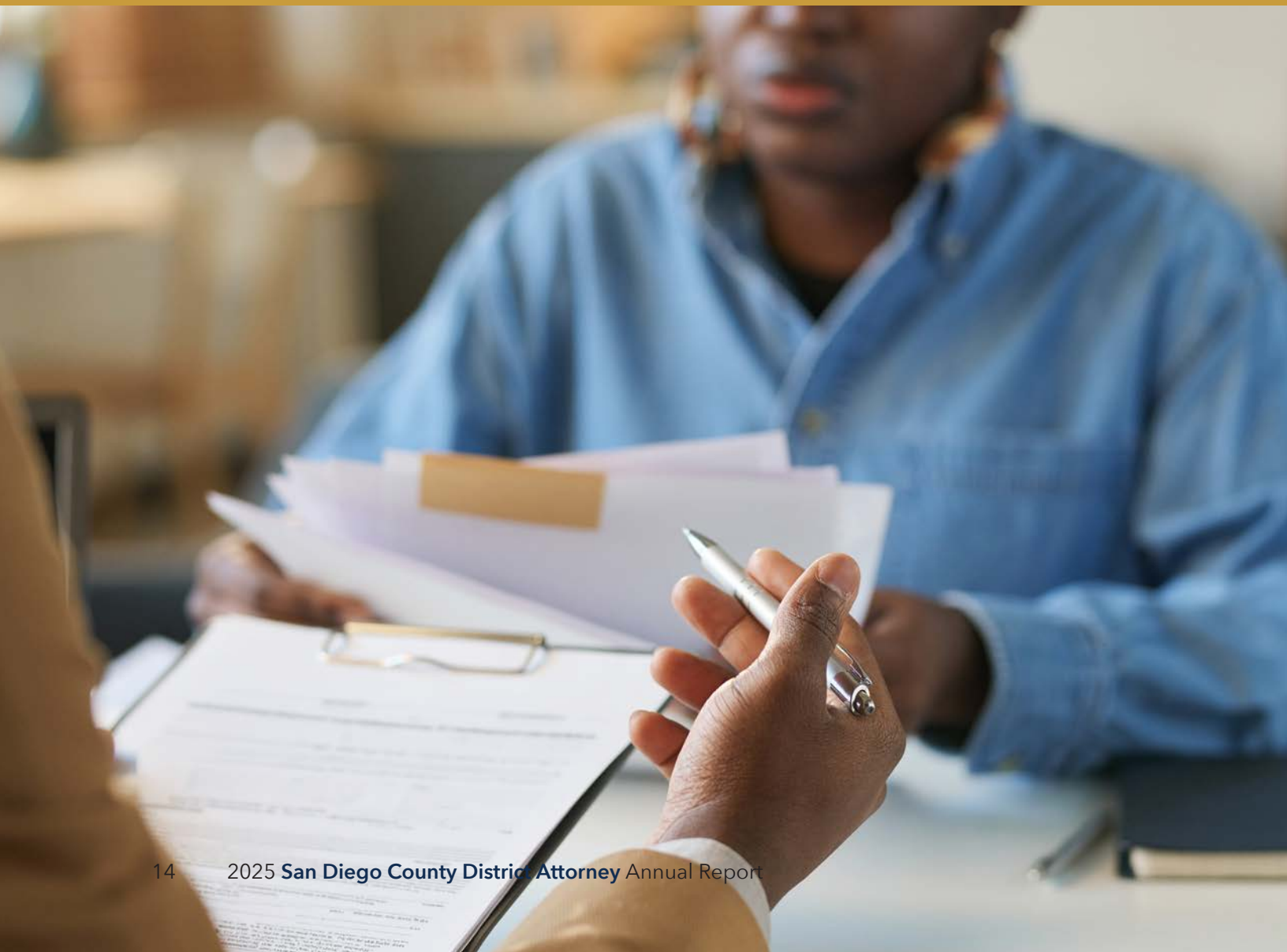
Defendant Raped, Murdered and Dismembered Body

Rafael Banda raped a victim in South San Diego after trying to make her wrap and dismember a dead woman at gunpoint. Banda restrained and murdered the second victim by using blunt force trauma, asphyxiation caused by being wrapped in plastic, and drug poisoning. Banda was sentenced to two life terms without the possibility of parole, plus 25 years.



SUPPORTING VICTIMS AND RESTORING LIVES

One of the main roles and responsibilities of the District Attorney's Office is to support victims of crime. In fact, the District Attorney's Office is the number one provider of victim services in San Diego County. We support victims in several ways, including assisting victims through the court process, informing them of their rights in the criminal justice system and advocating for them through each step of a criminal case and beyond. In addition, our [Victim Assistance Program](#) offers comprehensive services at no cost, even if a suspect is not identified or if criminal charges have not been filed.



The Victim Services Division

The Victim Services Division is comprised of three components: Victim Assistance Program, Joint Powers Authority Unit, and Criminal Restitution Compact Unit. It assists victims with their recovery from the effects of crime and provides services, which include crisis intervention, referrals to community resources, court support, and Victim Compensation Board assistance.

In 2025 the Victim Assistance Program:

Assisted **9,335** crime victims
Provided **506** crisis interventions
Made **10,169** referrals to community resources
Provided **5,751** case status updates
Made **2,552** court accompaniments
Assisted **1,950** victims with filing Victim Compensation Board applications through Victim Advocates
Provided **\$24,336** in emergency assistance for immediate needs, such as medical, housing, relocation, food, and personal items

Our Victim Assistance Program also provides outreach and education by partnering with law enforcement, non-profit organizations and the public at numerous community events. Ollie, the North County Facility Dog, provided support for **321** crime victims during interviews and court hearings.

The Victim Services Division also maintains a Crisis Response Team whose members have received specialized training and are available to respond to provide services and support to victims and survivors after a mass violence incident occurs.

In addition to the claims, restitution and crisis response efforts, the Victim Assistance Program holds an annual holiday drive for crime victims and their families. Through staff coordination, the District Attorney's Office comes together to donate household goods, toys, clothing, and gift cards. Helping bring joy to those in need during the holiday season.

Joint Powers Claims Unit:

Determines eligibility to the Victim Compensation Board and pays eligible crime-related expenses.
Processed **507** violent crime victims claims
Processed **1,796** bills from victims and service providers
Facilitated over **\$1 million** payments to crime victims from the California Victim Compensation Board

Criminal Restitution Recovery Unit:

Ensures that defendants are ordered to pay back restitution on cases where the Victim Compensation Board has paid benefits.
Completed **1,556** restitution orders
Obtained **\$878,670** restitution fines
Secured **\$643,555** in restitution from defendants payable to the Victim Compensation Board and over **\$21 million** in victim restitution



ONE SAFE PLACE: SAN DIEGO COUNTY FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS

One Safe Place gives trauma survivors in North and South County a safe place to receive acute crisis care, advocacy, counseling, legal services, childcare, connections to shelter and housing, and social service benefits in one place. There are 108 partner agencies working collaboratively to provide hope, healing and justice for the community.



Significant ‘HOPE MOMENTS’ at One Safe Place included:

Support Without Barriers: A Survivor’s Journey

When a human trafficking survivor first arrived at One Safe Place North, she was understandably skeptical. After years of exploitation, she doubted whether the help being offered was real or if she would be faced with legal fees that she could not afford just to prove her case.

The reality she found was a community of support designed specifically for her needs. We immediately connected her with a pro bono attorney who provided expert legal guidance at no cost. As she began to feel more secure, we were able to expand her support team to include:

- **Criminal Record Vacatur:** A legal program to help clear her past record, removing a major barrier to her future employment and housing.
- **Civil Litigation Support:** An attorney to pursue accountability against a hotel that was complicit in her trafficking.

She entered our doors feeling overwhelmed and unsure if she was even eligible for help. She left with a clear plan, a dedicated legal team, and the affirmation that what happened to her as a teenager was not her fault. At One Safe Place, we believe justice is a right, not a privilege. By removing the financial and systemic barriers to recovery, we ensure every survivor is treated with the dignity and support they deserve.

Restoring Dignity: A 25-Year Journey Toward Safety

When an Arabic-speaking survivor arrived at One Safe Place South, she was seeking an end to 25 years of domestic violence. Her situation required a multi-layered approach, and our team immediately coordinated a bilingual, trauma-informed response to address both her legal and personal needs.

To ensure her immediate safety and stability, we provided:

- **Legal Advocacy:** Assistance navigating and completing restraining order paperwork.
- **Essential Resources:** Enrollment in public benefits and the provision of food and gas cards to address urgent financial gaps.
- **A dignified shopping experience** at our “Boutique” where she and her children could select new clothing and essentials. The impact of these services was deeply personal. Upon entering the boutique, the survivor was moved to tears, asking if the experience was “a dream.” She shared that after decades of control, she had not been permitted to choose her own clothes in years.

She left One Safe Place not just with legal protections and physical resources, but with a renewed sense of value. By providing a safe environment where she felt seen and supported, our team helped her transition from a state of vulnerability to one of empowerment. Her story serves as a powerful reminder that professional intervention is most effective when paired with genuine compassion.



In 2025, both Family Justice Centers:

Served **4,010** guests

Conducted intakes with **1,550** primary victims with an accompanying 933 household members

Coordinated **4,479** return visits for services with staff and partners

Held **10,093** case management sessions/encounters

Distributed **5,202** pounds of food

Provided **6,893** items of clothing, hygiene, blankets and baby supplies

Provided **6,812** attorney legal services such as restraining order applications

Conducted **3,462** therapy sessions

Connected **173** victims with emergency shelter and other housing

Welcomed **900** children to our child waiting area

Responded to **4,390** phone calls received on our main reception line

Responded to **1,188** emails at our GetHope@OSPSanDiegoCounty.gov email address



CARE COMMUNITY CENTER

The CARE Community Center is a satellite office of the District Attorney's Office located in National City that provides crime prevention and intervention services for the community. In 2025, the center served more than 7,673 groups, providers, individuals and families. Of these, 230 were assessed for their needs, resulting in 282 referrals to community-based organizations, as well as direct connections to employment and food services offered at the center.

In addition to conducting needs assessments, the CARE Center provides a free, clean, and safe meeting space for the community and local organizations to deliver services. In 2025, the center received more than 834 room reservation requests.



Through its community outreach team, the CARE Center served over 7,000 people through initiatives such as Homeless Pop-Up Resource Fairs, the Health and CARE Fair, Public Safety Talks, and events serving reentry populations.



The CARE Center hosted a Homeless Court Resource Fair in Chula Vista at the MTS Palomar Trolley Station.

- 130 attendees
- Provided 30 haircuts
- Housed 5 families



FACTS AND FIGURES

Measuring outcomes of the work of the District Attorney's Office and providing data to the public is an important part of embracing transparency and building trust with the community we serve.



Elder Justice Taskforce

In 2025, San Diego seniors continued to fall victim to elder financial scams perpetrated by transnational criminal organizations losing a shocking \$140 million a year. The San Diego Elder Justice Task Force (EJTF), which launched in 2021, brings together partners including the San Diego County District Attorney's Office, the FBI, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of California, County of San Diego Adult Protective Services, The San Diego Law Enforcement Coordination Center, along with local law enforcement agencies including San Diego Police Department and San Diego County Sheriff's Office, Oceanside Police Department, and others. The EJTF is focused on disrupting the financial networks facilitating these scams for overseas networks by investigating and prosecuting the couriers and money launderers operating here in the United States. In addition, the EJTF is working to recover and return funds lost by elder victims wherever possible, keeping data on the amount of fraud impacting the County of San Diego and educating the community about the greatest current threats. San Diego's Elder Justice Task Force is the only initiative of its kind in the nation.



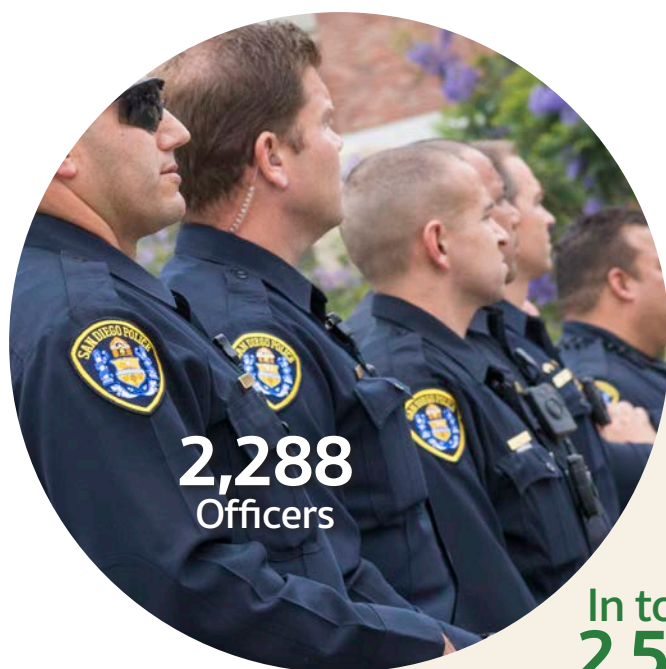
Using Technology to Protect Victims of Domestic Violence

The DA's Family Protection Division initiated a texting program in 2021 to provide victims of domestic violence with immediate updates on the status of their cases. Since the program launched, 22,393 victims of crime were kept abreast of their case using text messages and 81,492 texts have been sent. In 2025 alone, 4,736 victims of crime were kept abreast of their case using text messages, and 16,513 texts were sent. The system sends automated text messages to a victim's cell phone with case updates, links to domestic violence resources and other pertinent information, including the status of the case review, the name and contact number of the assigned prosecutor and victim advocate, whether charges are being filed or not, and other case status updates. The program started as a pilot in the North County branch and is now in effect in all branches countywide for any case involving intimate partner violence and the program has a robust approval rating from those contacted.

De-Escalation Training

The District Attorney's Office continued its collaboration with police agencies in San Diego County in 2025, providing curriculum for de-escalation training for peace officers. The DA's Office is committed to engaging in the development and implementation of effective, evidence-based crisis intervention and de-escalation programming by providing access to tools in support of law enforcement officers, dispatchers, first responders, and others who may encounter people in crisis. The goal is a reduced need for the use of deadly force, improved officer safety, and reduced likelihood of injury to the person in crisis and the public. In 2024, 2,889 peace officers completed the DA-led training.

Training by the numbers



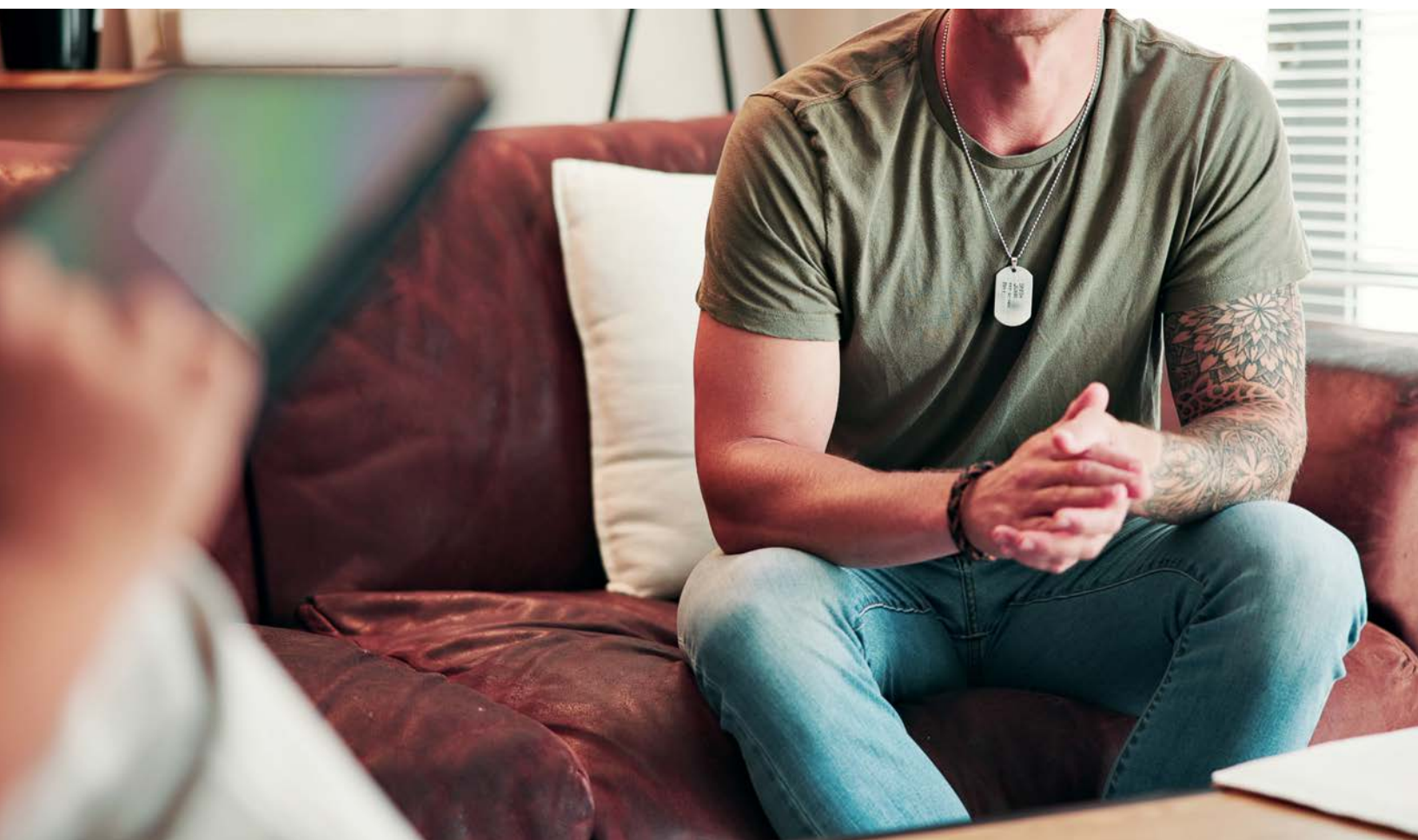
In total,
2,555
individuals
completed
the DA-led
training



Veterans Treatment Court

Veterans Treatment Court provides an opportunity for veterans to earn redemption through a nationally recognized criminal diversion program that takes participants with criminal convictions and places them on a separate and specialized track of treatment and rehabilitation rather than incarceration. Most participants are in the program for 18 to 24 months. If all treatment, supervision, and community service commitments are met, their case can be dismissed and sealed. In 2025 there were 12 new participants and 10 who successfully graduated from the program, had their criminal cases dismissed and their rights restored.

12 new participants | **10** graduates



Providing Safe Shelter for Victims of Crime

When professionals use the [SoCal Safe Shelter Collaborative](#), tool to help victims of domestic violence, trafficking, and sexual assault, they can help these victims avoid spending hours or even days trying to find safe shelter. The program leverages technology to quickly identify available shelter matching to the victim's needs, so they can quickly move from dangerous situations and begin receiving support services.



CURRENT ACTIVE PARTNERS: 52 TOTAL PARTICIPATING

11

Sheltering
agencies with
300 beds

41

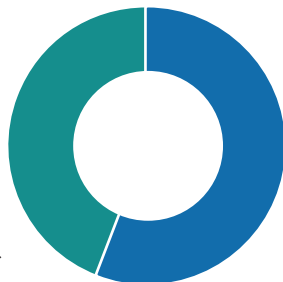
Referral only
organizations



854 REQUESTS FOR SHELTER

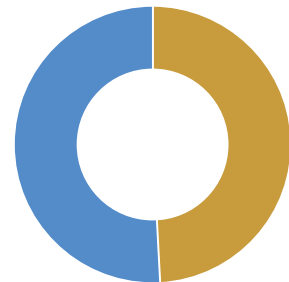
57%

of the requests
resulted in at least
one "possible"
match and opening
for available shelter*



48%

of the survivors
seeking safe shelter
had one or more
children with them,
totaling 797 children



*Even when all shelters respond that there are no openings, the survivor has saved critical time calling shelters that do not have an opening and/or match for their shelter needs. They can begin looking for other shelter options or request an emergency hotel stay.



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

1,040 PERMANENT STAFF



350 Prosecutors



125 Investigators



135 Paralegals



358 Support Staff



72 Administration



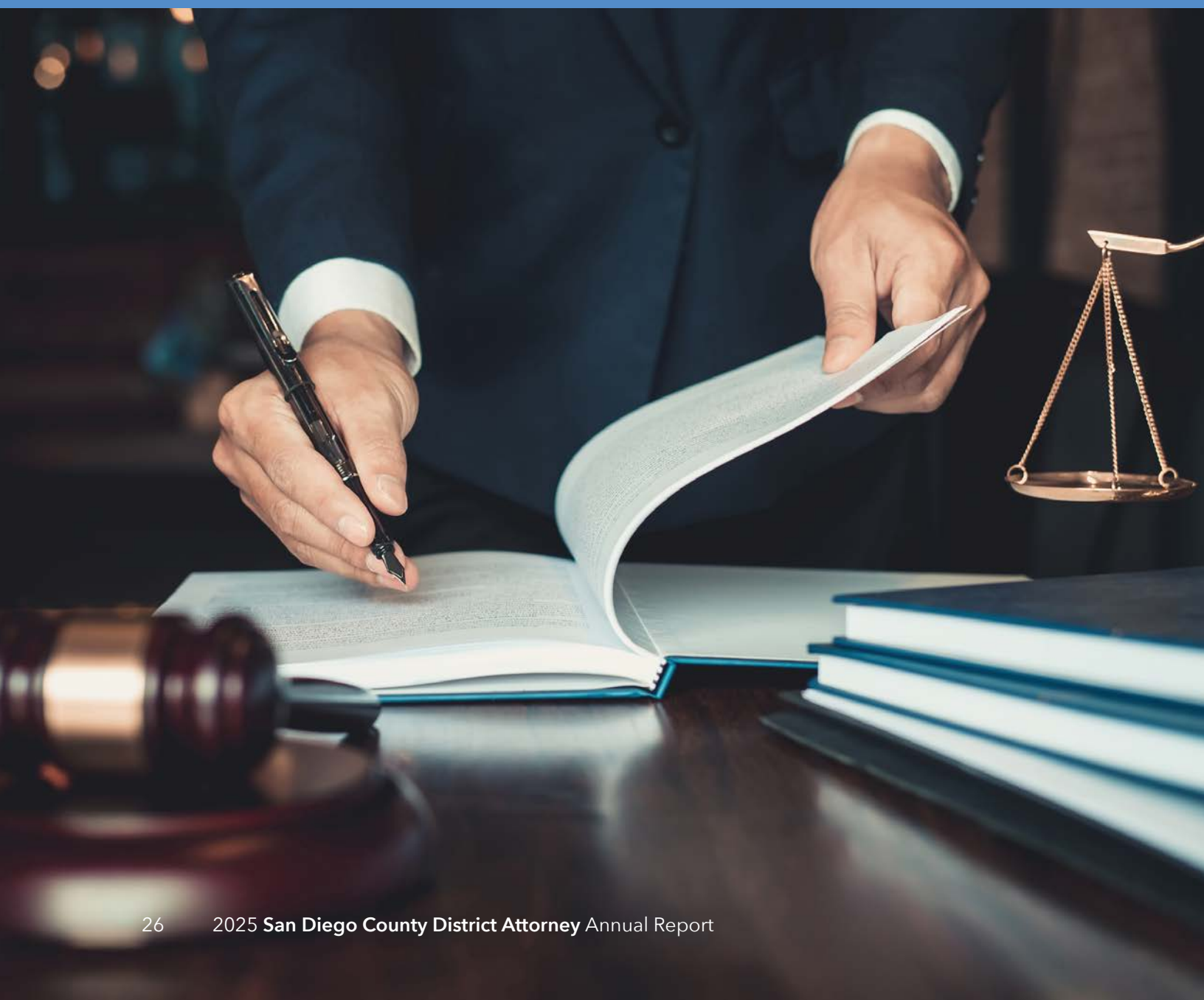
OUR BUDGET

The District Attorney's total budget for fiscal year 2025 to 2026

\$290,342,000



SPECIALIZED UNITS AND DIVISIONS



Appellate and Training Division

The Appellate and Training Division serves as the legal research arm of the District Attorney's Office, managing special projects, navigating complex legal issues, and conducting the analysis and implementation of new laws. The division handles writs and appeals in the San Diego Superior Court, California Courts of Appeal, and California Supreme Court. The scope of litigation this division addresses ranges from capital cases to misdemeanors. The division also handles public and interagency record requests, as well as subpoenas for District Attorney's Office employees or records. The Training Unit within the Appellate Division provides quality legal training for office staff, while the Ethics Coordinator advises and supports deputy district attorneys regarding their significant ethical responsibilities in prosecuting cases.



In 2025, the Appellate and Training Division successfully clarified the implied malice standard for Watson murders in *People v. Nevarez*. In a published opinion, the California Courts of Appeal agreed that implied malice does not require a DUI offender to be driving at the exact moment the offender's intoxicated driving caused death. This division also continues to be deeply involved with Racial Justice Act litigation and the development of law. Additionally, it helped to reorient Behavioral Health Court to better serve the needs of its participants. It also had the opportunity to begin exploring the exciting world of artificial intelligence and assess how it may be safely utilized in administrative processes.



Branch Offices

Crime happens in all corners of the county, which is why the District Attorney's Offices are embedded in every area of the community, including North County, South County, East County, a Juvenile Division east of Linda Vista, a community center in National City, Family Justice Centers in San Marcos and National City as well as its downtown office at the Hall of Justice. Prosecutors, investigators, paralegals, victim advocates and a host of support staff carry out the mission of the office in each location.



In 2025, the Bureau of Investigation:
completed **39,515+** investigative tasks
conducted over **2,665** interviews
executed **439** search warrants
completed **42** extraditions
drafted **189** arrest warrants
created **1,731** trial exhibits for court through
its Trial Support Services Unit
completed **3,196+** fingerprint comparisons
recovered **7** children abducted by a parent

Bureau of Investigation

The Bureau of Investigation is the law enforcement arm of the San Diego County District Attorney's Office. In 2025, the Bureau was comprised of 125 district attorney investigators and 35 professional support staff, including paralegals, investigative specialists, trial support specialists, crime & intelligence analysts, and process servers. The Bureau has earned the reputation of having some of the most experienced and highly trained investigators among its ranks, who have been recruited from law enforcement agencies across California.

The Bureau provides a wide range of skilled investigative services to support the District Attorney's prosecutorial and crime prevention mission, including victim and witness protection in serious gang and narcotics cases so witnesses can safely testify. The Bureau is also responsible for original investigations across specialized domains such as public corruption, insurance fraud, economic crimes, organized retail crime, series related robbery and burglary, parental child abduction, and cold case homicide.

Since 2023, our collaboration with the San Diego Police Department's Criminal Intelligence Unit (CIU) has transformed the fight against organized crime in the region. This partnership centralized efforts to combat out-of-county and international burglary rings, leveraging advanced investigative tools and multi-agency coordination. Together, we dismantled major crews including Hoover's 12, the Palomino Players, and South American Theft Groups, linked to over 150 residential and commercial burglaries, jewelry store heists, and multi-state theft operations totaling \$16 million in losses. These efforts resulted in 23 arrests, 11 active warrants, and successful prosecutions, including a 38-year sentence for a key defendant. The partnership also uncovered federal-level gang and human trafficking activity, leading to ongoing international investigations. By integrating intelligence, technology, and interagency collaboration, this initiative has significantly disrupted organized crime networks and safeguarded communities across Southern California.

Case Issuing and Extraditions Division

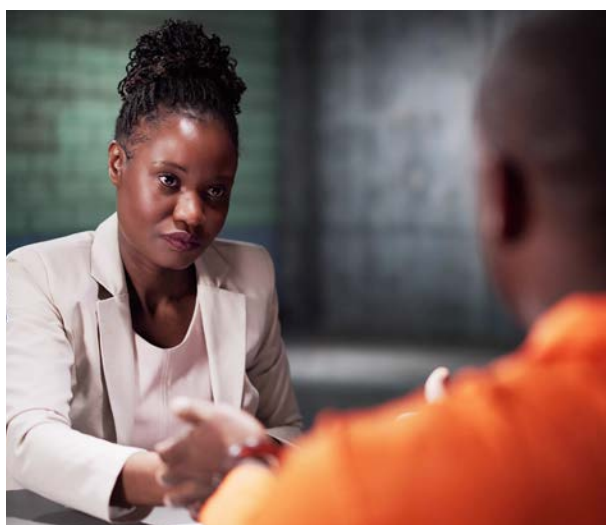
The Case Issuing and Extraditions Division serves as the front line for all felony cases entering the District Attorney's Office and is comprised of the Case Issuing, Extraditions, and Priors Units, staffed by Deputy District Attorneys, law enforcement liaisons, paralegals, and professional staff. In 2025, the division, consisting of 46 total members, processed 7,775 cases involving 8,611 suspects, while ensuring timely, accurate review and compliance with evolving legal and procedural requirements, including the implementation of two significant changes in the law: race-blind charging and Proposition 36.

In addition to reviewing and processing all general felony case submissions, the division coordinates the review and filing of felony cases downtown, oversees the office's eDiscovery process, and handles specialized matters including Proposition 57 reviews, Certificates of Rehabilitation, Clemency Petitions, and CODIS (Combined DNA Index System) hit cases. The Priors Unit supports prosecutions by obtaining prior convictions and prison packets necessary to prove allegations and priors in court and by responding to disposition and information requests from outside agencies.



Collaborative Justice Division

The Collaborative Justice Division works to address the underlying causes of criminal behavior and resolve them in partnership with community treatment providers, mentors, law enforcement agencies, and the courts. This division consists of three teams: Collaborative Courts Team, Restitution Recovery Team, and Lifer Hearing Unit. It also oversees the administration of the Community Justice Initiative program, responding to Proposition 47 and Proposition 64 petitions, and processing PC 290.5 petitions. Individuals with prior felony convictions for selected property crimes and simple



possession of narcotics can petition the court for reduction to a misdemeanor under Proposition 47. Others with marijuana related prior convictions can petition the court for reduction to a misdemeanor and in most cases of simple possession the case can be dismissed pursuant to Proposition 64. The District Attorney is responsible for screening all these petitions to make a recommendation to the court on whether the case is eligible for reduction or dismissal.

Consumer Protection Unit

The District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit, a section in the Economic Crimes and Consumer Protection Division, prosecutes unfair, fraudulent and deceptive business practices that harm consumers and law-abiding businesses. In 2025, the Consumer Protection Unit filed nine major civil law enforcement cases against unfair or deceptive business practices, resulting in final judgments with injunctions stopping the unlawful practices and recovering more than \$14 million in civil penalties, costs, and victim restitution. The cases against companies including Walmart, Hello Fresh, Lowe's, Attractive Gem Jewelers, and Tax Network LLC, involved deceptive lending practices, unlawful automatic renewal plans, mimicry of government documents, retail price overcharges, and other unlawful practices.



In April 2025, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors acknowledged the Consumer Protection Unit's accomplishments by issuing a proclamation honoring the unit's "outstanding service, leadership, and commitment to the citizens of San Diego County" and declaring April 8, 2025, to be "San Diego County District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit Day" in the County.

The Consumer Protection Unit also operates a consumer complaint hotline available to all San Diegans. To report a consumer complaint to the District Attorney's Office, call (619) 531-3507 or go online to <https://www.sdcda.org/preventing/consumer-protection/>.

Conviction and Sentence Review Unit

The Conviction and Sentence Review Unit is committed to the highest standard of professional integrity as it conducts meticulous reviews of post-conviction cases. This unit works collaboratively with all our criminal justice partners to identify post-conviction cases where there may be a credible claim of innocence and cases where new technologies would allow testing or retesting of remaining evidence. In 2025, the unit received six cases for conviction review. The Conviction and Sentence Review Unit also reviews previously sentenced cases to determine whether it would be in the interest of justice to petition the court to recall and resentence an individual who has already been sentenced. When determining whether to support the resentencing of an individual, the unit carefully evaluates several factors, such as victim input, community safety, the disciplinary record or record of rehabilitation of the inmate, current sentencing law, and the prospects of successful reintegration of the sentenced individual. In 2025, we supported five such re-sentencings. The public, attorneys, or convicted persons can apply to have a conviction reviewed or a sentence recalled for resentencing [via this page on the DA's public website](#).



more than
\$13.6 million
in consumer protection
judgments against
multiple companies

Economic Crimes and Consumer Protection Division

Economic crimes often have dire consequences, from destroying family equity in a property to rendering corporate stocks worthless to shareholders. These crimes may be committed by individuals against institutions or other individuals. The Economic Crimes Division is responsible for prosecuting a wide variety of wrongdoings, including elder financial abuse, computer intrusion, complex identity theft, investment scams, embezzlements, real estate matters, counterfeit goods, environmental crimes and the theft of public assistance funds.

Extraditions Unit

Criminals often flee San Diego after committing a crime here, attempting to hide in foreign countries such as Mexico. The DA's Extraditions Unit successfully brings fugitives from abroad or from other states to face criminal prosecution in San Diego and seeks justice for crime victims. International extradition is complex and varies from nation to nation with very specific legal requirements involving multiple agencies. We work with local and federal law enforcement organizations as well as the U.S. Department of Justice and foreign governments to extradite, deport or expel fugitives back to San Diego, within the parameters of extradition treaties and foreign immigration laws. In 2025, the extraditions team executed 59 domestic extraditions and seven international extraditions.





9,110
family protection
cases reviewed

Family Protection Division

The Family Protection Division is a team of dedicated, experienced, and specially trained deputy district attorneys, district attorney investigators, victim advocates, and staff who prosecute crimes of homicide, intimate partner violence, physical and sexual child abuse, internet crimes against children, elder abuse, stalking, and cases involving child sexual abuse material. The division is comprised of 43 deputy district attorneys, who handle all felony cases from issuance to trial, vertically. They are stationed in El Cajon, Chula Vista, Vista, and the Hall of Justice in downtown San Diego. In 2025, they reviewed 9,110 cases. The division is dedicated to supporting victims through the criminal justice process and ensuring all victims are treated with compassion and dignity and given access to the essential services they need. The division works closely with numerous law enforcement agencies to investigate and prevent violent crimes, while also working closely with community partners to provide life-saving resources and public service awareness campaigns. Through the Family Protection Division, the District Attorney's Office is committed to holding defendants accountable and seeking justice for the thousands of victims impacted by family violence each year in San Diego County.

Gangs Division

The District Attorney's Office successfully prosecutes complex murder cases and other serious crimes perpetrated by violent gang members who terrorize neighborhoods. These cases are handled by one prosecutor from beginning to end – also called vertical prosecution – in our Gangs Division. Cases in this division are expertly navigated by our 27 prosecutors and 15 investigators to bring justice to families left in the wake of violence. In 2025, the Gangs Division obtained 16 murder convictions. Nine of those defendants were sentenced to life without parole. It also prosecuted other cases including kidnapping for rape, assault with great bodily injury, robbery, carjacking and possession of illegal firearms, such as ghost guns, by gang members.

Information Technology Division

The Information Technology Division (ITD) strategically uses technology to support the operation of the District Attorney's Office. The employees who make up this unit, design, develop, implement, and support all information technology hardware, software, business applications, and websites. They also provide support for prosecution in the courtroom and community outreach efforts. In addition, ITD provides direct support to the San Diego City Attorney's Office in their use of the District Attorney's case management system for criminal prosecution.

In 2025, the District Attorney's IT division achieved significant progress in information security across the infrastructure to further support modernization initiatives like artificial intelligence through:

- DA case archive document digitization
- DA staff computing hardware and software upgrades to support AI processing
- DA Digital Evidence Management and Case Management systems modernization efforts

Insurance Fraud and Workplace Justice Division

The average person doesn't give insurance fraud or workplace justice a second thought. But the fact is insurance fraud costs U.S. consumers an estimated \$80 to \$90 billion per year. In California, it's a \$15 billion-a-year problem. It's the second largest economic crime in America, exceeded only by tax evasion. The San Diego County District Attorney's Office combats this problem by using experienced specialists to confront the insurance fraud epidemic. Within this division is the Workplace Justice Unit, which is comprised of a dedicated prosecutor, DA investigator and paralegal. The unit prosecutes unfair business practices, wage and hour violations, payroll tax evasion, wage theft and labor trafficking cases.

Juvenile Division

The goal of the juvenile justice system is to ensure that youth who touch our criminal system receive the appropriate rehabilitative services while safeguarding victims' rights and public safety. This division is comprised of dedicated support staff, investigators, paralegals, victim advocates and prosecutors. It handles cases involving those under 18 in all of San Diego County. Within this branch office, there are several vertical units with attorneys who specialize in child abuse and domestic violence, human trafficking, gangs, and school threats.

Juvenile cases can present unique and complicated issues that differ from adult court. Juvenile cases are confidential and little information is publicly available because the system is designed to provide rehabilitative services to youthful offenders outside the public eye. Juvenile court does not focus on punishing the youth, instead, it focuses on rehabilitation and trauma informed treatment in conjunction with public safety.

Between November 2021 and December 2025, the District Attorney's Office's Juvenile Diversion Initiative (JDI) has successfully diverted over 1,400 juvenile cases from the Juvenile Justice system. JDI is a county wide early intervention program that prioritizes diversion options for youth instead of filing formal petitions. The DA's JDI program is administered by the National Conflict Resolution Center, which engages community partners to address the causes of a youth's unsafe behavior using restorative practices to repair harm to crime victims and the community.

Law Enforcement Liaisons

Two experienced prosecutors are on call 24/7 to answer questions, provide guidance, and help draft and review search warrants for all law enforcement officers who operate within our jurisdiction. Our liaisons also support 350 prosecutors in the office in the areas of case investigation and trial preparation. Our liaisons work closely with the bench and continually deploy, upgrade, and train users on the E-Warrant System.

Lifer Hearing Unit

The DA's Lifer Hearing Unit has two main goals: to ensure that dangerous prisoners with life sentences are not released carelessly or improvidently, and to ensure that crime victims and their families are given an opportunity to participate in the parole hearing process and have their voices heard. The Lifer Hearing Unit is comprised of a team of seasoned prosecutors who serve as gatekeepers at parole hearings for some of the most dangerous criminals in the state. In 2025, there were 571 lifer parole hearings scheduled. 49 inmates received parole grants from the California Board of Parole Hearings and 522 hearings resulted in denials, postponements, or stipulations to a denial of parole. Of the 49 inmates that received parole grants, 19 received special consideration for elderly parole, 10 received special consideration for youthful parole, and 13 received special consideration for both elderly and youthful parole.

Major Narcotics Division

The primary objectives of the Major Narcotics Division are to investigate and prosecute large-scale narcotics traffickers, dealers who furnish controlled substances leading to overdose and death, and cases involving drug endangered children, drug-related violence, clandestine drug labs, and illegal dispensaries. In addition, our deputies receive specialized training in the handling of confidential information and cooperating individuals. This division works closely with state and federal law enforcement agencies and partner with various organizations and community stakeholders to



combat the proliferation of illegal and dangerous drugs and reduce the harm caused by their use.

Members of the Major Narcotics Division are active in educating the public on the dangers of illegal drug use and the resources available for those seeking help with a substance use disorder. The division strives to protect the public through fair and ethical prosecution, education, and collaboration.



2,012

requests for
local priors

404

out-of-county
requests

83

requests for
prison packets

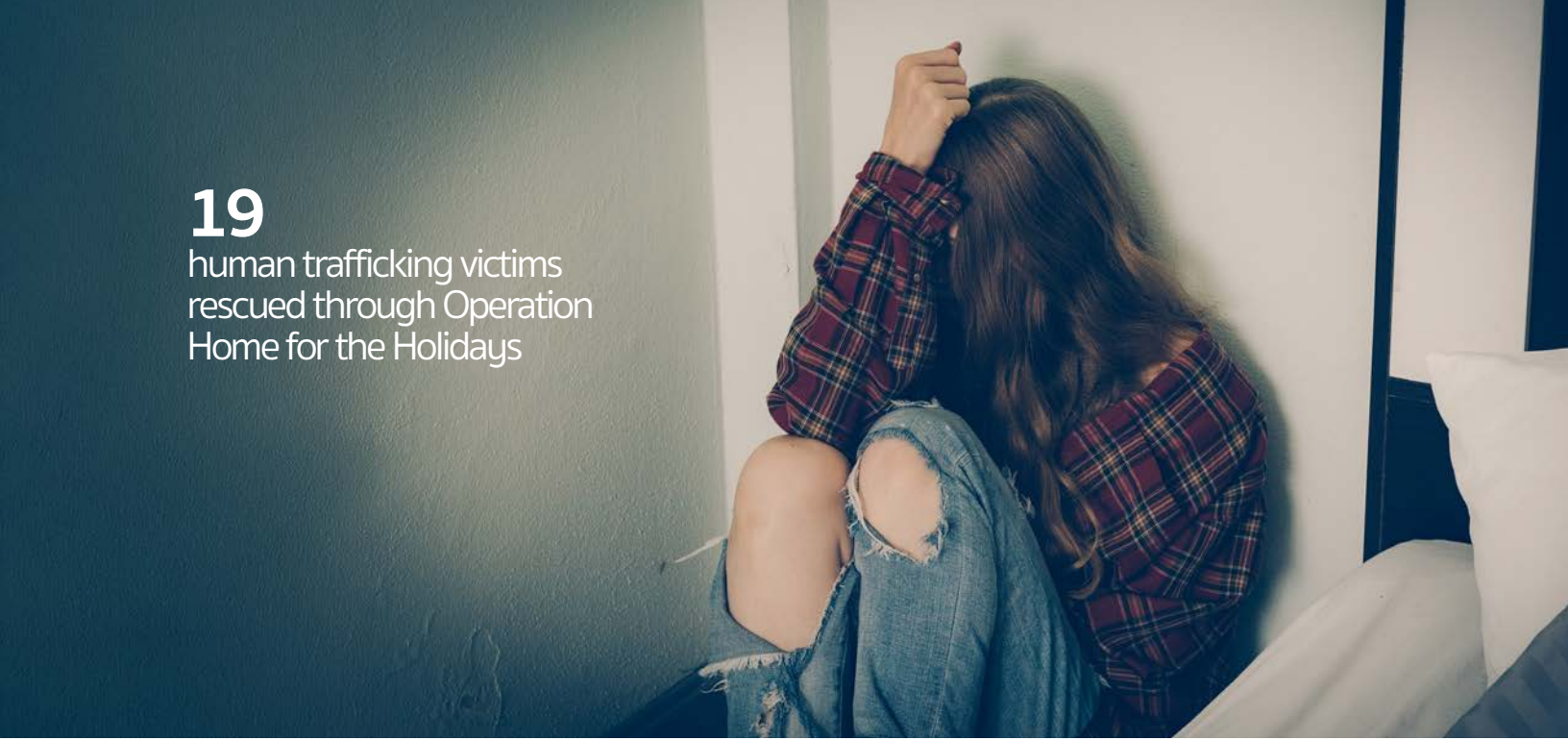
Priors Unit

The Priors unit is responsible for ordering and obtaining prior convictions and prison packets necessary for proving allegations and priors in court. The unit also responds to requests for dispositions and other information from outside agencies. In 2025 the unit received and fulfilled 2,012 requests for local priors, 404 out-of-county requests, and 83 requests for prison packets.

Restitution Recovery Team

The Restitution Recovery Team was created in 2018 with the mission to improve restitution practices countywide. Its main goals are to improve the way restitution information is obtained, to provide attorneys and staff with resources and training to efficiently obtain restitution orders in court, and to maximize restitution recovery by correcting deficient court orders and providing crucial victim information to collection agencies. In 2025, the Restitution Recovery Team assisted in the disbursement of over \$500,000 in collected restitution funds to previously unknown crime victims by obtaining and providing missing court documents to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.





19

human trafficking victims
rescued through Operation
Home for the Holidays

Sex Crimes and Human Trafficking Division

Some of the most sensitive criminal cases are handled in the District Attorney's Sex Crimes and Human Trafficking Division. A team of prosecutors, investigators, victim advocates, paralegals and professional staff come together in this unit to protect victims and prosecute those who sexually assault and sell human beings for profit. This unit handles all litigation involving sexually violent predators and partners with two task forces, the San Diego Regional Human Trafficking Task Force and the Sexual Assault Felony Enforcement Task Force, to stop traffickers and sex offenders from harming others. This team also promotes awareness and prevention strategies in schools and in the community, so the public has the tools they need to recognize the red flags of human trafficking.

An example of the collaborative work performed in this division in 2025 includes Operation Home for the Holidays, which rescued 19 human trafficking victims just days before the holidays in a three-day, multi-agency effort focused on recovering survivors, connecting them to safety and services, arresting traffickers, and holding reducing the demand for sex for pay through accountability.

Special Operations Division

The Special Operations Division investigates cases involving misuse of public funds, political corruption, hate crimes, threats and other crimes impacting the integrity of the justice system, such as criminal misconduct of government officials, including peace officers and other public employees. The division also reviews officer-involved shootings and in-custody deaths.

Superior Court Division

The Superior Court Division is responsible for prosecuting some of the most challenging cases in the District Attorney's Office. This division includes the cold-case homicide team which uses cutting-edge forensic science to bring murderers to justice despite the passage of time, the major violators team, which prosecutes those that commit serial robberies or burglaries across the county and the DUI homicide team, which prosecutes all DUI homicides across the county. Finally, the Superior Court division handles pre- and post-conviction criminal mental health issues on behalf of the office including trial competency, conservatorships for dangerous defendants, and committing dangerous mentally disordered defendants to state hospitals. The variety and volume of cases including robbery, assault, arson, narcotics, and homicide, ensures that the deputies, investigators, and staff of the Superior Court Division are generalists who have the broad skills and knowledge necessary to prosecute a wide range of serious and complex cases.





HALL OF JUSTICE

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