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NEWS RELEASE

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Ventura County Family Justice Center Grand Opening

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Gregory D. Totten announced today the grand opening of the Ventura County Family Justice Center and an open house to be held at the facility on Saturday, January 11, 2020, from 10:00 a.m. to noon. The public will be provided an opportunity to see the behind the scenes operation of the 15,000-square-foot facility – the first of its kind in Ventura County.

The Family Justice Center is a collaborative partnership of public and private agencies working in a one-stop environment to provide integrated, wrap-around services for domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, human trafficking, and elder/dependent abuse victims.

The District Attorney’s Office began work on the development of the Family Justice Center in 2015 with the express goal of supporting and improving the lives of those impacted by family violence and trauma. The integration of these services will provide easier access to victims and allow service providers the ability to more readily identify children exposed to significant adverse childhood experiences. This exposure places them at an elevated risk for a lifetime of risky behaviors, criminal justice intervention and mental and medical health conditions including anxiety, obesity, heart disease and a host of other preventable ailments. The goal of the center is to minimize the risk of immediate physical danger and death while simultaneously holding the offender accountable and providing a crime prevention model to break the generational cycle of violence in at-risk homes.

District Attorney Totten said, “Our goal is to move beyond the justice system’s traditional focus on holding offenders accountable and provide a richer, multi-faceted, and more robust emphasis on responding to the impact of violence on the innocent victims, survivors, and their families.”

Local law enforcement, social service agencies, and medical service providers serve as the first point of contact and primary source of referrals for many Family Justice Center clients. Members of the District Attorney's Office are co-located at the Family Justice Center with several County agencies and community-based organizations including the Area Agency on Aging, Department of Child Support Services, Health Care Agency, Human Services Agency, Public Health, the Coalition for Family Harmony, Interface Children and Family Services, Ventura County Legal Aid, Healthcare for Justice Foundation, Voices of Ventura County, and the Ventura County Arts Council. More agencies will be moving in soon.

In December 2018, the Ventura County District Attorney's Office was awarded a California Office of Emergency Services grant to fund initial lease costs for the Family Justice Center operation at the current location. The Ventura County Family Justice Center Foundation, a 501(c)(3), was formed in 2018 to secure long-term funding for the facility.

In September 2019, the Ventura County Family Justice Center earned affiliation status with the Alliance for HOPE International. Affiliated centers have demonstrated their commitment to the guiding principles of the Family Justice Center movement, a close working relationship with our national technical assistance and training program, and a focus on providing trauma-informed care for survivors and their children.

Survivors and staff from our partner agencies will be available to guide our guests through the Center and help explain the traditional barriers to seeking services as well as the value of this collaborative approach. Visitors will also be able to view new murals by Ventura artist MB Hanrahan and hear the story that inspired their creation.

- Program and ribbon-cutting scheduled to begin at 10:30 a.m.
- Open house will follow program.
- Parking is limited and will not be available on-site.

More information is available about the Family Justice Center and the partnering agencies at www.vcfjc.org

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The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 280 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and other professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.

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