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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Domestic Violence Solutions to Survivors Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic: *"You Are Not Alone"*

SANTA BARBARA, Calif., March 30, 2020 – "Home" should be a special place that provides safety, comfort and peace, especially during these unpredictable times. For domestic violence survivors, home is the most dangerous place to be, creating an environment of constant fear. California's "Shelter in Place" mandate brings new challenges for those quarantined with their abusers. The emotional and financial stress can pose increased safety risks, leading to an escalation in violence. Unfortunately, with this pandemic comes an increase in isolation: one of the main ways abusers maintain control.

Domestic Violence Solutions for Santa Barbara County is working diligently to continue providing safety, shelter and support services, while maintaining the health and well-being of their clients and staff.

Help is available for anyone experiencing domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. The crisis and information line is in operation 24 hours a day, seven days a week:

**805.963.4458.** In order to minimize the danger of community contact, Domestic Violence Solutions is only accepting new clients at their emergency shelter in North

County and making alternate arrangements for those living in South County. Client eligibilities, case management, therapy and counseling, housing assistance, and job/life skills assistance are now completed through phone or video conferencing. Virtual drop-in consultation and support services are available to the public. All volunteer, community outreach and educational events have been postponed until further notice.

*"Our most vulnerable neighbors bear the heaviest burden in times of crisis,"* said Jan Campbell, executive director of Domestic Violence Solutions. *"Our entire staff is committed to our mission of providing safety, shelter and support to victims of domestic violence and their families – we are here for you."*



Safety planning is incredibly important during the COVID-19 pandemic. [RAINN \(Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network\)](#), the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization, recommends the following **safety strategies**:

- *Make a list of supportive people to have regular check-ins with via phone or video chat*
- *Take breaks outside, keeping social distancing in mind*
- *Consider what places in your home are easy to get in and out of during a conflict*
- *Create a code word to share with your support network that indicates you are in need of immediate help*
- *Make and hide an “escape bag” with your important documents, medicine, keys and other items*
- *Be gentle with yourself; you’re doing the best you can*

Domestic Violence Solutions thanks the community for their generosity and support during this difficult time. To make a donation and learn about the agency’s most pressing needs, please email Jenni-Elise Ramirez, development officer, at [JenniEliseR@DVSolutions.org](mailto:JenniEliseR@DVSolutions.org). Due to health and safety reasons, used clothing/items are currently not accepted.

For more information on how Domestic Violence Solutions is handling the pandemic, safety planning ideas, community resources, and more, please visit their [COVID-19 website](#).

*Domestic Violence Solutions is dedicated to ending the cycle of domestic violence by providing prevention and intervention services, emotional support and advocacy to those in crisis, and playing a leadership role in effecting social change. For more information, please contact Julia Black at [juliab@dvsolutions.org](mailto:juliab@dvsolutions.org) or visit [www.dvsolutions.org](http://www.dvsolutions.org).*

**DVS 24-Hour Crisis and Information Line: 805.963.4458**