

NEWS

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For Immediate Release

Education, Enforcement Removes Guns from People Under Restraining Orders

Redwood City – [A year ago](#), the County of San Mateo launched a targeted effort to get firearms out of the hands of people with domestic-violence, gun-violence and certain other civil restraining orders against them.

Today, on the one-year anniversary of the creation of the Gun Violence Prevention Program, County, Court and law enforcement officials report the following:

- Between Oct. 1, 2022, and Sept. 30, 2023, the Superior Court granted 403 civil restraining orders.
- Sixty-five of those orders included requirements to relinquish firearms.
- Of those, the Court processed 48 “proof of compliance forms,” meaning firearms were turned in voluntarily and documented.
- Detectives followed up with the remaining 17 orders either to bring those individuals into compliance or, if they had moved out of the county, notified the new jurisdictions.
- Detectives also verified information on all of the 48 “proof of compliance forms.”

As a result, 168 firearms – 67 rifles or shotguns and 101 handguns – were surrendered to law enforcement or federal firearms licensed dealers in compliance with court orders.

“We set the bar high from the very beginning,” said San Mateo Superior Court Judge Susan Greenberg. “Our high compliance rate is a significant achievement for the Gun Violence Prevention Program. It provides safety to protected parties in civil restraining order cases, and to the public.”

The program targets a gap in California’s efforts to reduce gun violence: while many laws are on the books, little funding often goes toward enforcement. The Board of Supervisors stepped in with a pledge of \$2 million over two years to launch the local effort.

The Sheriff’s Office, local police departments, District Attorney’s Office, Superior Court and other partners are involved.

The initiative focuses on voluntary compliance – informing individuals a court order requires them to relinquish any firearms or face criminal charges. Early efforts included revising forms so people subject to court orders could better understand the law and streamlining how law enforcement is notified of court orders, said Bill Massey, chief inspector for the District Attorney’s Office.

“We have established a system that has become a model for counties throughout the state,” Massey said. “We are meeting our stated priorities of reducing the time when law enforcement becomes aware of an order and increasing voluntary compliance.”

Detectives assigned to the program are also alerted within less than 24 hours whenever a court order is issued requiring firearms relinquishment and begin working to encourage compliance.

Dave Pine, president of the Board of Supervisors and who led efforts to launch the program, said the deaths of five women this year – all allegedly as a result of domestic violence – point to the urgent need both to bolster enforcement of existing laws and to provide domestic violence survivors with the help they need to get restraining orders.

“California leads the nation in the [number of gun laws](#) on the books,” Pine said, “What we are doing here locally is putting teeth into those laws, and I’m thrilled with the results so far. We are literally taking guns away from individuals who have been ordered to give them up.”

Local efforts are building momentum.

The Gun Violence Prevention Program’s detectives from the San Mateo and South San Francisco police departments, reassigned to the District Attorney’s Office, are systematically reviewing a state database that lists persons known to be prohibited from possessing firearms.



Representatives from the program meet routinely with County and Court representatives to share information and track progress. The County has contracted with the U.C. Davis Violence Prevention Program to evaluate its effectiveness.

The Gun Violence Prevention Program is funded from the Measure K half-cent sales tax, which provides local funds for local needs.

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