

Since the shelter-in-place order took effect in March to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, the number of reported domestic violence cases has increased significantly in Santa Cruz County. Extended time spent isolated with violent partners increases opportunities for violence, and mandatory social isolation has fractured vital support networks that domestic violence survivors typically rely on to seek help or escape violence. The *Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women (CPVAW)* needs your help to remind individuals feeling trapped that they are not alone.

CPVAW encourages our city leaders to make every effort to let community members know about this problem and to publicize the below resources for those in need of support.

- [Monarch Services](#): 24-hour, free, confidential, bilingual crisis line: 1.888.900.4232.
- [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#): 1.800.799.SAFE (7233)

As October is domestic violence awareness month, we must acknowledge that this pandemic has reinforced upsetting truths: social inequities related to health are magnified during a crisis and sheltering in place does not inflict equivalent hardship on all people. Intimate partner violence can be physical, emotional, sexual or psychological. People of all races, cultures, genders, sexual orientations, socioeconomic classes and religions experience intimate partner violence. However, such violence has a disproportionate impact on communities of color and other marginalized groups. Economic instability, unsafe housing, neighborhood violence and lack of childcare and social support can worsen already tenuous situations. Learn more from New England Journal of Medicine's [A Pandemic within a Pandemic](#).

CPVAW commissioners are calling on the City of Santa Cruz to act now. Please consider sharing these vital resources when you or the Santa Cruz Police Department speaks publicly. Please make certain these hotline numbers are highlighted on every City of Santa Cruz website as part of the COVID response. Acknowledging domestic violence and its widespread consequences on our community is vital during this crisis.

Sincerely,
Commissioners of CPVAW