



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
OFFICE TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\***

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**BUILDING ON THE SUCCESS OF THE STATEN ISLAND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
RESPONSE TEAM, THE MAYOR'S OFFICE ANNOUNCES THE FUTURE HOME OF  
THE CITY'S FIFTH AND FINAL FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**

*One-stop Center Will Provide Comprehensive Services to Staten Island's Domestic Violence Victims*

Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence Commissioner Yolanda B. Jimenez and Staten Island District Attorney Daniel M. Donovan Jr. today announced the future home of New York City's fifth Family Justice Center located in Staten Island anticipated to open in 2014. Building on the experience of the City's four other Family Justice Centers, the Staten Island Center completes the goal of providing an easily accessible Family Justice Center in every borough of New York City. The Staten Island Center will provide comprehensive multilingual services to victims of domestic violence and their children, as well as elder abuse and human trafficking victims. With only one appointment, victims can meet with a prosecutor; receive legal advice on federal immigration remedies, divorce and custody issues, and orders of protection; talk to a counselor; learn about educational and job training opportunities; and apply for emergency housing – all while their children play safely in the next room.

"Our Administration has made combatting domestic violence a priority and we've worked to improve and innovate the way we provide victims with the support and resources they need to reclaim their lives," said Mayor Bloomberg. "Since 2001 intimate-partner homicides have been reduced by 43 percent and our network of Family Justice Centers has been a key component of that success."

The Family Justice Center Initiative is part of the Bloomberg Administration's overall effort to reduce domestic violence and provide comprehensive services to victims. As a result of the City's focus on this issue, family related crimes have declined by 13 percent citywide since 2001. Once the Staten Island Family Justice Center opens, domestic violence victims throughout all five boroughs will have access to a centralized and safe location where they may get all of the help that they need in their own borough.

(more)

“I have worked since 2007 to bring a Family Justice Center to Staten Island and am happy to see that pursuit finally come to fruition,” Richmond County District Attorney Daniel M. Donovan, Jr. “My advocacy to Mayor Bloomberg and Speaker Quinn secured the \$3.1 million needed for space renovations and construction costs. This much-needed center will be a clearinghouse of comprehensive services and vital resources for domestic violence victims on Staten Island, all available in a single location, and I can’t wait for it to open.”

“The NYC Family Justice Centers provide state of the art services for survivors of domestic violence, including teens, trafficked persons and the elderly,” said Deputy Mayor for Legal Affairs Robles-Román. “The Center at Staten Island will complete our mission to reach all victims in their own borough.”

“Domestic violence victims who are able to access services that help keep them safe and address their needs are much more likely to participate in the prosecution of their abuser,” said New York City Criminal Justice Coordinator John Feinblatt. “This center will help victims to recover faster and assist the justice system in holding offenders accountable.”

The \$3.1 million Family Justice Center will be located at 126 Stuyvesant Place in close proximity to various court buildings, including Criminal, Family and Supreme Courts and where the District Attorney will co-locate Assistant District Attorneys from the Sex Crimes/Special Victims Bureau. This collaboration will expand the Center’s reach to a significant range of the City’s most vulnerable populations.

“Soon victims in all five boroughs will have access to the same coordinated services at a Family Justice Center,” said Commissioner Jimenez of the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence. “For thousands of New Yorkers that suffer at the hands of a loved one this Center will be a safe place where they may begin their path to safety and economic independence.”

“I wish to thank Richmond County District Attorney Dan Donovan for working with the City Council to get the necessary funding for the Staten Island Center, and I also wish to thank Commissioner Yolanda Jimenez of the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence for the ground work her office has done in the past two years to help us reach this critical and important juncture,” said Councilwoman Debi Rose.

The creation of the New York City Family Justice Center in Staten Island comes after the Staten Island Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT) has successfully operated in the borough since it was launched in 2012. DVRT works with high-risk victims of intimate partner violence and elder abuse and provides multi-agency service plans and coordination to meet the needs of the clients and their children. Over forty-five City and State agencies and community-based organizations have partnered with DVRT to bring comprehensive services to more than 60 clients since the inception of the program. The strong partnership of agencies created through DVRT will be incorporated into the design and implementation of the Staten Island Family Justice Center. The Center will also expand on the services already provided to victims of domestic violence at Centers in Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens, and Manhattan. Collectively, since 2005, the Centers have assisted over 97,000 clients, and more than 20,000 children have visited the children’s rooms.

The Center will bring together a number of community-based service providers and a wide range of City agencies to reach the collective goal of reducing the number of family violence incidents, recidivism and homicides. The Center will provide victims with a diverse spectrum of services that they need to put their lives back together:

- Civil legal representation for immigration and Family Court matters
- Prosecution of domestic violence crimes
- Safety planning
- Access to emergency shelter and housing
- Assistance with filing police reports
- Public benefits
- On-site childcare
- Counseling for victims and child witnesses
- Support groups
- Services for the elderly and the disabled
- Financial literacy
- Job and vocational training
- Language interpretation

Since January 2002, the City has been developing a more comprehensive and innovative approach to combat domestic violence and hold batterers accountable. The Police Department has more than doubled the number of successful home visits to domestic violence victims since 2001 and has enhanced training for police officers to obtain evidence that could be critical for prosecutions when they respond to a domestic incident. The City has increased the number of emergency shelter beds by 35 percent for victims of domestic violence. Training is being provided to increasing numbers of front-line City agency staff to enhance awareness and understanding of domestic violence victims' needs and of available resources. Homeless shelters have implemented screening protocols designed to determine if clients need domestic violence services, and to place families in locations where they will be safe from a batterer.

To date, the FJC initiative has been part of a public-private partnership supported by grants made to the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to supporting innovative programs throughout NYC's five boroughs. Private funding of this pilot has helped provide critical evidence of its effectiveness, leveraging the current public investment in the new Staten Island Center. Past supporters of the FJC initiative include The Allstate Foundation, Avon Foundation, Brooke Jackman Foundation, Joe Torre Safe at Home Foundation, Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, Robin Hood Foundation, Stavros Niarchos Foundation, Tamara Mellon, Verizon Foundation and HopeLine by Verizon. For more information, go to [www.nyc.gov/fund](http://www.nyc.gov/fund) and follow the Fund on Twitter @NYCMayorsFund.

For help from the Family Justice Center near you or to support the Family Justice Center Initiative visit [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov) or call 311.

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Contact:	Alejandra Soto (OCDV)	(212) 442-0490
	Douglas Auer (Staten Island DA)	(718) 556-7150