

OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

COUNTY OF YOLO

JEFF W. REISIG
DISTRICT ATTORNEY



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JOHN EHRK
CHIEF INVESTIGATOR

NIKKI ABAURREA
CHIEF FISCAL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Laura Valdes,
Victim Services Program Manager
laura.valdes@yolocounty.org

**January is National Stalking Awareness Month
Yolo DA is collecting cell phones for victims**

(Woodland, CA)- January 3, 2019- A nice warm cup of coffee waits for you in the kitchen, like any other day. You get ready and head to work to begin your day. Everything seems normal until you see a familiar car parked in your work parking lot. Recognizing the vehicle, you drive to a safe place and call the police. Your stalker has found you again.

January is Stalking Awareness Month. It is a time to educate ourselves and others around you about the seriousness of stalking. Stalking is serious, often violent, and can escalate over time. Stalking is often committed by someone the victim knows, and stalking by an intimate partner is the most common and most dangerous type of stalking. According to the Center for Disease Control, "Approximately 1 in 6 women and 1 in 17 men have experienced stalking at some point in their lives."

The first step to finding a solution to the problem is realizing that stalking can happen to anyone. Stalking is a course of conduct that can last for weeks or even years, and can take a toll on a victim's emotional health and sense of security. Stalkers use a variety of tactics that can include unwanted phone calls, texts, contact via social media, unwanted gifts, property damage, and threats.

If you feel you are being stalked, it is best to keep an ongoing journal of the incidents when they occur. Note the *date, time, and location* of where you are, and briefly *describe the incident*. If the incident escalates to where you, or someone around you, are in danger of being hurt, call 911. If you or someone you know is or has been a victim of stalking, ask for help from local resources in our community. Two such resources are Empower Yolo's 24-hour Crisis Line(s) (530) 662-1133 or (916) 371-1907 and Yolo County Victim Services at (530) 666-8187.

During National Stalking Awareness Month, the Yolo County District Attorney's Office is collecting used cell phones to distribute to victims in need. If you are interested in donating to support the cause, please bring any used - but functional - cell phones and/or chargers to the District Attorney's Office during the month of January, 2020. The Yolo County District Attorney's Office is located at 301 2nd Street, Woodland, CA 95695.

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