



COUNTY OF YOLO

Office of the County Administrator

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Toy Drive for Criminal Legal System Impacted Families

(Woodland, CA) – The Yolo County Public Defender’s Office’s Racial Justice Committee is proud to announce the first-holiday toy drive to help benefit families impacted by the criminal legal system.

The holidays can be a particularly difficult time. For some families, they may be dealing with separation, as one of their loved ones may be serving a jail or prison term. For other families, secondary consequences of criminal legal system involvement (court fines and fees, barriers to employment, etc.) make the holidays more stressful due to financial stressors.

"People of color are not only disproportionately impacted by the criminal legal system but also by the economic repercussions of these disparities," stated Jennifer Melgoza, president of the Racial Justice Committee. "The Racial Justice Committee recognizes that, as a result, the holiday season can be a financially and emotionally difficult time for system-impacted families. By sponsoring this event, we hope to alleviate some of the seasonal difficulties felt by communities of color."

The Public Defender’s Office is requesting donations through a Toy Drive in order to stock their Toy Shop. Through December 15th, the Public Defender’s Office is accepting donations of new and gently used toys, stocking stuffers, gift cards, and holiday wrapping supplies. The Toy Shop will be open to families impacted by the criminal legal system and the general public on December 16th.

For this community event, the Public Defender’s Office will be transforming its conference room into a magical Toy Shop. Unwrapped toy and stocking stuffer donations will be arranged so adults can individually pick out presents for the children in their lives. In this safe and cheerful atmosphere, parents, grandparents, aunts, & uncles will be able to personally choose their children's gifts and have them wrapped in preparation for the upcoming holidays.

"We know that family support is integral to our client's success in the community and that strong family ties are associated with reducing recidivism and increasing public safety," said Public Defender Tracie Olson. "Yet we also know that the holidays can put a lot of extra stress on families. It is our hope that our Toy Shop will foster holiday joy and strengthens family and community connections."

The Toy Drive will accept donations of new and gently used unwrapped toys through December 15th at the Public Defender’s Office, located at 814 North Street, Woodland. On December 16th, the Toy Shop will be open at the Public Defender’s Office from 1-4 pm or until donated supplies last.

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