



# COUNTY OF YOLO

Office of the County Administrator

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Toy Drive For Criminal Legal System Affected Families

(Woodland, CA) - The Racial Justice Committee of the Yolo County Public Defender's Office is delighted to announce the commencement of its annual holiday toy drive, which benefits local families affected by the criminal legal system. This marks the second year that the Public Defender's Office is organizing a toy drive, in partnership with Toys for Tots, and with contributions from Supervisor Vixie Sandy. The Yolo County Public Defender's Office aspires to make a difference by giving more toys to families in need this holiday season and is immensely appreciative of those able to donate.

The holiday season can be an especially challenging time. Some families may grapple with separation as a loved one serves a jail or prison term. Others face the secondary consequences of involvement in the criminal legal system, such as court fines, fees, and barriers to employment, or exacerbating financial stress during the holidays.

"Last year, this event helped provide toys to over 130 children," stated Eleni Bonilla, Chair of the Racial Justice Committee. "Now, in our second year and in partnership with Toys for Tots, our goal is to give even more!"

For this community event, the Public Defender's Office will transform its conference room into a magical Toy Shop. Donations of unwrapped toys and stocking stuffers will be displayed, allowing adults to individually select presents for the children in their lives. In this safe and joyful atmosphere, parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles will have the opportunity to personally choose gifts for their children, which will be wrapped in preparation for the upcoming holidays.

"We recognize that family support is integral to our clients' success in the community, and strong family ties are associated with reducing recidivism and increasing public safety," said Public Defender Tracie Olson.

"However, we also understand that the holidays can impose extra stress on families. Our hope is that our Toy Shop will foster holiday joy and strengthen family and community connections."

The toy drive will accept donations of new and gently used unwrapped toys, stocking stuffers, and wrapping supplies through December 15th. Donations can be brought to the Public Defender's Office at 814 North Street, Woodland. On December 18th, the Toy Shop will be open at the Public Defender's Office from 1-4 pm or until supplies last.

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