



**SUMMARY**

California’s address confidentiality program, Safe At Home, is an important component of overall safety planning for survivors of domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, human trafficking and elder and dependent abuse, as well as reproductive health care workers.

**BACKGROUND**

Safe at Home is a confidential address program administered by the California Secretary of State’s office that offers survivors of domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, human trafficking and elder and dependent abuse, as well as reproductive health care workers, a substitute mailing address to receive first class, certified, and registered mail. This address is also accepted by California state, county, and city government agencies in lieu of a residential or other mailing address where a victim can be tracked down, keeping the residence address confidential and out of the hands of someone who might want to harm the survivor.

As of 2021, there were 5,546 participants in the program, a 14% increase from 2020. Of those participants, 3,641 identified as victims of domestic violence. During 2021 the program received 1,554 applications and forwarded 81,159 mail pieces to participants.

This program remains an important component of the overall safety plan for survivors of violence and abuse. AB1726 will update the program in several ways to increase its functionality for participants and accessibility for applicants.

**SOLUTION**

AB 1726 will:

- Clarify that applicants are only required to provide information about additional parents if there is a 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> legal parent. Currently, the application process requires this information even if there is no additional legal parent.
- Clarify that participation in the program does not indicate children are at risk in the participant’s care, an important clarification to

protect survivors in custody or dependency case proceedings. Survivors should feel confident enrolling in the program without worrying that it will negatively impact their ability to retain custody.

- Strengthen protections against disclosing a participant’s home address and contact information.
- Expand timelines for court documents to be served if the person is a Safe At Home participant. Since court documents must be sent to the Secretary of State’s office and then forwarded to the participants, extended timelines are needed to ensure that participants receive their court paperwork with sufficient time to respond.
- Provide program participants with additional time to notify the Safe At Home program of any change in address or legal name changes without risking termination from the program.
- Require the program to attempt to contact the participant via phone or email before terminating the participant for mail being returned as nondeliverable, to provide an opportunity for the participant to resolve the issue before being terminated.
- Create clear timelines for a program participant’s termination from the program if they move out of the state, giving participants the opportunity to put in place a safety plan in their new state of residence.

**SUPPORT**

California Partnership to End Domestic Violence  
American Association for Doctors of Behavioral Health  
Futures Without Violence  
Gray’s Trauma-Informed Care Services Corp  
Los Angeles Center on Law and Justice  
SAVE (Safe Alternatives to Violent Environments)

**CONTACT**

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