

# **PATROLLER**

**JULY 2025** 

Newsletter for the Patrollers, volunteers, and supporters of Castro Community On Patrol in San Francisco, California, USA.

#### **ESTABLISHED 2006**

#### **CHIEF OF PATROL**



**Chf. Greg Carey** (Public Relations)

# ASSISTANT CHIEF OF PATROL



AChf. Ken Craig (Volunteer Training & Certification)

# DEPUTY CHIEF OF PATROL



**DChf. Brian Hill** (Information Technology)

# DEPUTY CHIEF OF PATROL



DChf. Kyle Wong (Volunteer Scheduling & Retention)

# PROTECT THE CASTRO BY VOLUNTEERING



Castro Community On Patrol (CCOP) is just one of up to five previous volunteer Patrol organizations that formed out of extreme need, to protect the Castro and it's residents and visitors. Most of those prior patrols eventually disappeared, either when the immediate threat dissipated, or due to operational challenges.

CCOP has the honor of being the longest serving volunteer community patrol in the neighborhood, and we will hopefully celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> year of service in 2026 – but sadly we "may" not make it to that milestone without a new infusion of volunteers ready to continue our long mission of protecting the Castro and its residents, businesses, employees, and all visitors to the area.

When CCOP was formed in 2006, in response to well-publicized violent assaults targeting Gay men, we had a volunteer roll call of over 150 Patrollers within a few

months. This allowed us to deploy three teams of three patrol volunteers, on every Friday and Saturday evening for the first six months of our existence. That level of visibility and awareness had a profound positive impact on the general safety of the Castro neighborhood.

As with all volunteer groups, once the outrage and "excitement" of responding to the threat was over, a number of those initial patrol volunteers drifted away to other interests opportunities, but we were able to retain a small core of 40 around dedicated, focused, and consistent volunteers which allowed us to deploy one team of three patrol volunteers each weekend. Not the visibility and coverage of the first six months, but still important and extremely valuable.

The COVID-19 pandemic decimated our volunteer numbers, and those of other volunteer manv groups in the Castro and beyond. Changes in how social media shares information and how people news consume and information has also had a significantly detrimental impact on our ability to reach out to potential new patrol volunteers.

As this article is written, we

only have 8 volunteers on our rolls, severely limiting our ability to deploy evening visibility patrols. We are still meeting our many non-patrol obligations to the community, but WE DESPERATELY NEED MORE PATROL VOLUNTEERS to allow us to continue to deploy visibility safety patrols on weekends and to provide safety support to the many community events we are asked to assist throughout the year.

We only ask for a minimum of one 3-hour patrol a month! We provide all training and equipment. Help us to:

#### PROTECT THE CASTRO

# S.F.P.D. CRIME DATA SNAPSHOT

<u>SFPD Crime Data</u> results citywide for the following specific categories between 1/1/2025 to 7/27/2025

|            | 2025  | Yr – Yr % |
|------------|-------|-----------|
| Homicide   | 14    | -30.0%    |
| Robbery    | 933   | -25.8%    |
| Assault    | 1,198 | -12.9%    |
| Burglary   | 2,121 | -27.8%    |
| Veh. Theft | 1,818 | -45.3%    |
| Larceny    | 9,393 | -23.2%    |
| TOTAL      |       | -26.7%    |

During the same period last year, SFPD recorded a total of 21, 449 reports, compared with a total of 15. 718 reports this year, representing a 26.7% drop overall.

## **PATROL NEWS**

#### DUE TO LOW VOLUNTEER NUMBERS, WE WERE UNABLE TO DEPLOY ANY VISIBILITY PATROLS IN JULY



As we discuss in our main page article, our extremely low volunteer numbers at the moment meant we were unable to form any patrol teams throughout the month of July, so no visibility safety patrols took place.

We continue to maintain our community support functions through our participation in many other groups, nonprofits, and organizations, but we were unable to deploy any patrols – one of our core missions and objectives.

Our visibility safety patrols offer multiple significant benefits:

- They provide additional eyes and ears to help keep the community safe and protected,
- They provide a visible deterrent to would-be troublemakers or those who may target the Castro,
- They allow us to chat with residents and visitors and offer guidance,

- They often allow us to defuse minor conflicts amicably without involving law enforcement resources,
- They also allow us to be first reporters to professional emergency responders when the need arises.

Our goal, and desire, is to deploy at least one patrol team each weekend. To achieve that goal, we would need to have at least 30 patrol volunteers on our rolls. As we only have 8 volunteers at the moment, most of whom have significantly different availability and other commitments on weekends, our ability to deploy a three-person team is extremely rare.

Our Chiefs of Patrol have been shouldering the goal of supporting most community support requests since the COVID-19 Pandemic started, and continue to support as many requests for support as possible, but without a significant influx of new Patrol volunteers this situation simply may not be sustainable over a long period of time.

If you have read this far in this newsletter, and in this article, please consider **VOLUNTEERING** with us. If you can't volunteer yourself, please share this appeal with anyone you think may be a good volunteer for us and encourage them to sign up with us.

I helped to found Castro Patrol, and I've been patrolling ever since, now nineteen-years and still counting. I continue to dedicate so much time, energy, and focus to CCOP because I fully believe in the mission and goals it serves. Volunteering and patrolling is not suited to everyone, but if you think it may be something you would like to do – TRY US OUT.

"SAFETY is a COMMUNITY EFFORT"

## **BEGINNERS SELF-DEFENSE CLASS**

# COMMUNITY SELF-DEFENSE SEMINAR IN SEPTEMBER



While we are struggling to deploy regular visibility foot patrols in the neighborhood, we are still responding to community requests from individuals and organizations seeking our unique knowledge and skills to provide safety support for their events, and to offer training to the general public.

Following a number of inquiries about our very popular 3.5-hour Beginners Self-Defense training class, we have scheduled our next such class for:

# SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 13, 2025 12:30 PM - 4:00 PM In the heart of the Castro

The class is \$30 per attendee and is a fun and empowering, information packed, low impact three and a half hours designed for complete beginners with no prior self-defense experience. You will learn essential concepts and techniques to protect yourself, your loved ones, and the community at large in various situations. Anyone of at least 18 years of age (no upper limit to this class) and older is welcome and encouraged to sign-up.

Our experienced, knowledgeable, and friendly instructors will guide you through the essential thought processes, practical skills, and strategies to boost your safety

and confidence.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn valuable self-defense skills in a supportive, fun, and empowering environment.

All post-training reviews are anonymous, and results are confidential, however these testimonials were freely provided:

"The class was fun, well-paced, and full of really useful information."

"Everyone should take this training, and probably repeat it a few times to really lock in the ideas presented."

"I learned so much for the class. I feel much safer and more confident now. Thank you."

"As a former victim of violence, I was apprehensive about the class, but the instructors compassionate, were professional, friendly, and extremely knowledgeable. felt safe and comfortable during the class and learned a lot."

"I cannot say thank you enough for providing this training for the community. It is essential."

We firmly believe that you can NEVER have too much knowledge, information, or skill when faced with a challenging situation – but you can DEFINITELY have too little when the "chips are down."

This basic class is a good introduction to self-defense concepts for yourself, your loved ones, your friends, and the community in general. Bring a friend or two and make it an afternoon of leaning and fun.

## PATROL TRAINING ACADEMY

#### BY Chief Ken Craig, Community Patrol Service

#### THE HEART AND SOUL OF OUR UNPAID VOLUNTEERS

Volunteering in unpaid safety roles offers a unique blend of service, dedication, and impact that extends far beyond the boundaries of individual effort. Organizations such as Castro Community On Patrol (CCOP), an all-volunteer public safety and neighborhood watch nonprofit, exemplify how grassroots safety programs enhance community resilience, build trust, and save lives. The commitment of individuals who dedicate their time to patrol streets, engage residents, and serve as visible symbols of community strength underscores a powerful model of civic engagement. These volunteers demonstrate that safety is not solely the



responsibility of formal law enforcement agencies—it is a shared duty that thrives when citizens are empowered and actively involved.

#### A Legacy of Service and Visibility

Since its inception in 2006 as a program of SF SAFE, and its later transformation into an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 2024, Castro Community On Patrol has stood as a beacon of community-led safety. The core philosophy behind CCOP is simple yet profound: by maintaining a regular and visible presence on the streets of the Castro, trained volunteers deter crime, provide assistance, and offer reassurance to residents, visitors, and business owners alike. Visibility is an essential part of this strategy. A patroller's presence is not just symbolic—it is preventative. It disrupts the conditions in which crime or harm might otherwise take root.

This approach taps into the "guardian effect," a concept supported by criminological research which shows that the mere presence of non-aggressive, watchful individuals in public spaces significantly decreases the likelihood of unlawful activity. CCOP patrols, adorned with identifiable vests and equipped with training in observation, communication, and first aid, serve not only as deterrents but as first points of contact for those in need.

The power of such visibility cannot be overstated. In a time when many communities experience a reduction in police staffing and slower emergency response times, the presence of trusted community volunteers becomes even more critical. They create a connective tissue between official responders and the public, filling vital gaps through proactive engagement and situational awareness.

## PATROL TRAINING ACADEMY

#### THE HEART AND SOUL OF OUR UNPAID VOLUNTEERS Cont:

#### **Communication and Voluntary Compliance over Force**

What distinguishes CCOP from more traditional safety models is its strict adherence to a philosophy of communication and voluntary compliance, rather than the use or threat of force. This principle is embedded in the training and operational doctrine of the organization. Patrollers are taught to approach each situation with calm, clarity, and respect, focusing on de-escalation and active listening. Their role is to provide information, facilitate safer behaviors, and bridge gaps in understanding between the public and local authorities.

This emphasis on communication recognizes that most safety issues in community settings arise not from malicious intent, but from confusion, lack of awareness, or momentary distress. By calmly and confidently engaging with individuals—whether that means helping a disoriented tourist, redirecting someone in a mental health crisis, or alerting emergency services when appropriate—CCOP volunteers act as safety mediators.

This approach also promotes long-term community trust. In marginalized neighborhoods such as the Castro—home to a historically vibrant and resilient LGBTQ+ population—relationships between residents and formal law enforcement have not always been harmonious. CCOP's gentle, approachable style reimagines what community safety looks like: cooperative, compassionate, and centered around dialogue rather than discipline.

#### Real Impact: Lives Saved and Communities Strengthened

While the day-to-day role of a CCOP patroller may include walking the neighborhood, checking on local businesses, or providing assistance during street festivals, the impact can be profoundly life-altering. Over the course of its history, CCOP has directly saved three lives due to timely and appropriate responses from its volunteers. These life-saving interventions are the most vivid and dramatic examples of how critical the organization is to the community. Trained volunteers who are motivated by altruism, and not by power or recognition, can and do perform acts of heroism that reverberate through the community.

Beyond such singular events, CCOP's ongoing work has a quieter, but no less essential, cumulative effect. The organization supports public events, helps direct people during emergencies, and acts as additional eyes and ears during times of high foot traffic or civil unrest. These functions may not always make headlines, but they reinforce a sense of order, connection, and shared responsibility within the neighborhood.

#### PATROL TRAINING ACADEMY

#### THE HEART AND SOUL OF OUR UNPAID VOLUNTEERS Cont:

#### Personal Growth and Volunteer Fulfillment

Volunteering for an organization like Castro Community On Patrol offers significant personal benefits as well. Volunteers gain practical skills in communication, emergency response, observation, and community relations. They develop a heightened sense of awareness and a deeper understanding of the social dynamics within their neighborhood. More than that, they experience the satisfaction of knowing their presence matters—that their willingness to step forward makes the streets safer, the community more united, and the fabric of civil society stronger.

Many CCOP volunteers report a renewed sense of purpose and identity. For some, especially those who are retired or looking to give back to the LGBTQ+ community, the opportunity to serve aligns with personal values of justice, protection, and service. Others are motivated by a desire to honor the legacy of those who came before—those who fought for safety, dignity, and equality in the Castro, often at great personal risk.

#### **Conclusion: A Model for Community Empowerment**

As cities grapple with complex safety challenges, the model exemplified by Castro Community On Patrol offers a compelling vision for community-based engagement. The success of CCOP shows that with training, dedication, and heart, volunteers can become vital contributors to public safety. Their non-confrontational, visibility-focused approach not only reduces risk but also fosters trust and unity.

Volunteering in unpaid safety roles is not just about filling a gap left by stretched municipal services—it is about reclaiming public space for peace, support, and community pride. It is a quiet act of resistance against fear and division, and a bold affirmation that we all have a role to play in protecting each other. Through visibility, communication, and commitment, organizations like CCOP embody the very best of civic spirit—and their work, in all its quiet consistency and occasional heroism, makes our neighborhoods not only safer, but better places to live.

In a world where so many feel powerless to effect change, the volunteers of Castro Community On Patrol remind us that change begins with a walk, a conversation, a helping hand, and a heart committed to the safety of all.

#### WHO / WHEN / WHERE / HOW

#### LIFE / PROPERTY THREATENING OR CRIME IN PROGRESS?

#### Call 9-1-1

In any situation where life or property is at imminent risk, or where a crime is in progress right now, call 9-1-1 for an immediate emergency response.

#### NO IMMEDIATE THREAT TO LIFE OR PROPERTY?

#### Call 415-553-0123

In situations which are less critical or immediate but where a Police or Fire response may still be required, use the non-emergency number above.

#### San Francisco District Supervisor's Office

Supervisor Rafael Mandelman District 8.

Call 415-554-6968 MandelmanStaff@sfgov.org

San Francisco District Supervisors represent you and can assist in many areas of concern that involve formal Government agencies or departments. If their office cannot assist you directly, they will help to put you in contact with resources that can assist.

#### San Francisco Official Resources

San Francisco Federal Bureau of Investigation 415-553-7400

San Francisco Police Department Mission Station 415-558-5400 <u>SFPDMissionStation@sfgov.org</u>

San Francisco Police Department Park Station 415-242-3000 <u>SFPDParkStation@sfgov.org</u>

SFFD Street Crisis Response Team
Call 911 for people in severe mental distress

SFFD Street Wellness Response Team
415-553-0123 for homeless related non-criminal issues

San Francisco City Services
3-1-1 to report "things" i.e. human waste, trash, etc.

**Mental Health Services For Everyone** 9-8-8

#### San Francisco District Attorney's Office

350 Rhode Island Street North Building, Suite 400N, 94103

Call 628-652-4000 DistrictAttorney@sfgov.org

The DA's office prosecutes crime in San Francisco and offers various services for victims of crime.

VICTIM SERVICES: 628-652-4100 HATE CRIME HOTLINE: 628-652-4311

#### **Community Resources**

Castro Community Benefits District Services 415-500-1181 <a href="mailto:ExecDirector@castrocbd.org">ExecDirector@castrocbd.org</a> Cleaning Services: 415-471-7536

Castro Cares Community Ambassadors Program Call or Text 415-471-7536

Community Patrol Service
CommunityPatrolService@gmail.com

SFPD LGBTQ+ Community Advisory Forum LGBTQ.forum@sfgov.org

24 Hour National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233

**Trevor Project** 

212-695-8650 (LGBTQQI+ youth in need of support)

SF Adult Protective Services (APS) Hotline 415-335-6700 or 1-800-814-0009

# Castro CBD, Castro Cares Program



be a part of the solution

Castro Cares is a unique community collaborative providing supplemental outreach and hospitality services throughout the district to the city's homeless support services and the work of the San Francisco Police Department. The program is funded by a city grant and through public donations.

The program deploys uniformed Community Ambassadors 7-days a week. They interact with the residents, business employees and owners, visitors, and with those living on the streets.

To find out more about the Castro Cares program, or to donate in support of the program, check out their website at www.castrocbd.org/castro-cares/

# SFPD LGBTQ+ Advisory Forum



The San Francisco Police Department, LGBTQ+ Advisory Forum was formed in 2010 and welcomes LGBTQ+ volunteer members from around the city. Members meet quarterly with SFPD command staff, to offer input on SFPD Policy, raise concerns, work on community projects and learn more about the SFPD.

To find out more, contact us at <a href="mailto:SFPD.LGBTQ.Forum@gmail.com">SFPD.LGBTQ.Forum@gmail.com</a> and we will be happy to chat with you about how to become a permanent member..

# SFPD SAFE PLACE Program



The <u>SFPD SAFE PLACE</u> program is a collaborative effort between SFPD and San Francisco Businesses to offer a temporary "safe haven" to victims of crime or harassment until law enforcement or medical professionals arrive.

The program mission is to reduce hate crimes, bullying, harassment, and discrimination. By working together, we can encourage crime reporting and promote safety and security.

To find out more, contact us at <a href="mailto:lNFO@CastroPatrol.org">lNFO@CastroPatrol.org</a> and we will be happy to chat with you, and enroll you into the program.

# Community Patrol Service



Community Patrol Service (CPS) is a not-forprofit community organization that works with neighborhoods throughout the United States who wish to develop a Community On Patrol Service (COPS) organization such as Castro Community On Patrol (CCOP). CPS will offer free advice, guidance, training information, suggestions, and non-fiscal support throughout the development of your own COPS group.

To find out more, contact us at <a href="mailto:CommunityPatrolService@gmail.com">CommunityPatrolService@gmail.com</a> and we will be happy to chat with you, and enroll you into the program.

#### PROTECT THE CASTRO



#### BE THE DIFFERENCE

GIVE US JUST THREE HOURS A MONTH AS A PATROL VOLUNTEER,
TO MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN THE COMMUNITY

Castro Community On Patrol (CCOP / Castro Patrol) needs volunteers to help us patrol the Castro neighborhood on a monthly basis. YOU could be our next Trainee Patroller! Our next Community HERO.

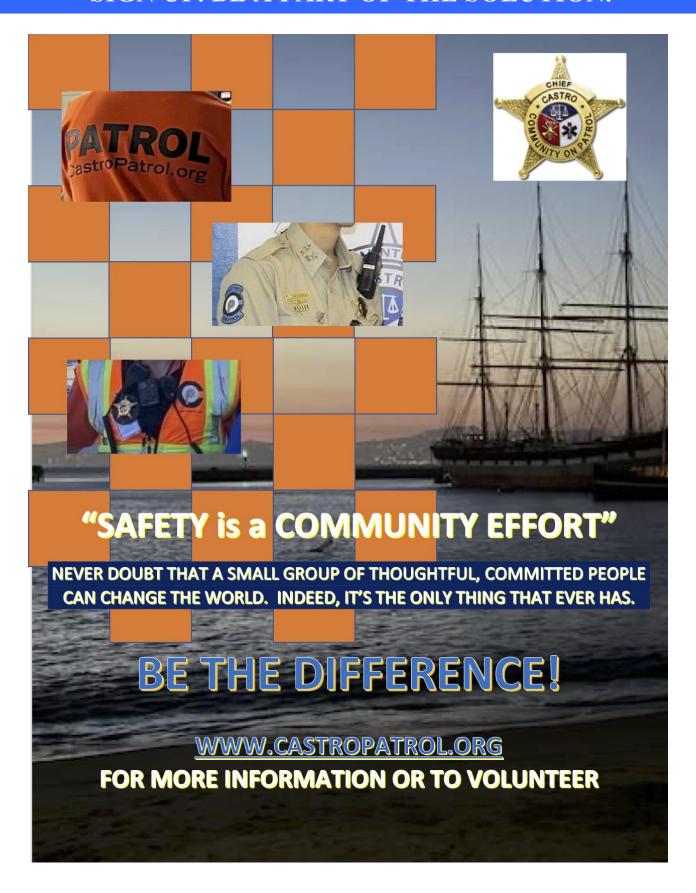
We have successfully patrolled the Castro neighborhood since 2006, deploying in teams of three unpaid volunteer Patrollers who walk for a 3-hour shift which they select themselves. Our patrols provide assistance, distribute free safety whistles, offer guidance, and deliver support to the residents, businesses, and visitors of the Castro, interacting with thousands of people every year.

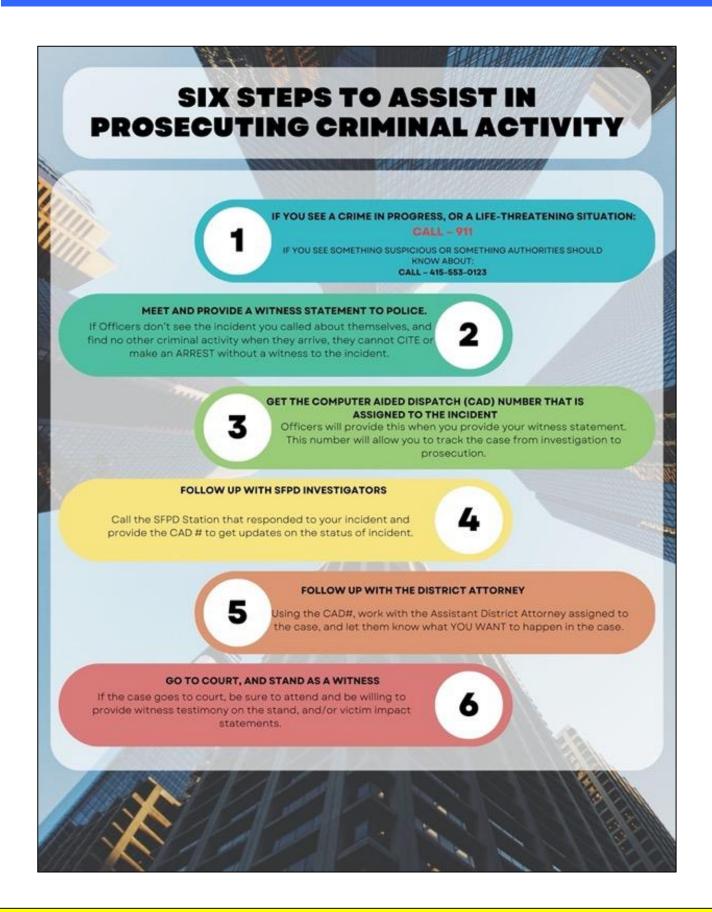
We **ARE** often "First Reporters" by calling in Medical, Fire, or Law Enforcement professionals when needed, and we will offer assistance when safe to do so until the professionals arrive. We **DON'T** break up physical fights or put our volunteers into dangerous situations.

Our volunteers are mostly members of the LGBTQ+ community, but we are open and welcoming to **ALL**. We provide full training, and you will always deploy with other experienced, knowledgeable, and dedicated volunteers. Patrolling is fun, you get to meet lots of people, and you can feel good about helping out your community. Sign up TODAY and become a neighborhood HERO tomorrow.

www.CastroPatrol.org | info@CastroPatrol.org

#### SIGN UP. BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION.





# REPORT HATE CRIMES



# SAFE

sanfranciscopolice.org

This location is a SAFE PLACE for victims of hate crimes and harassment to call 911 and wait for police to arrive.

**EMERGENCY CALL 911** 

# SAFETY FOR EVERYONE



As a COMMUNITY we need to come together to help mitigate and eradicate any violence on the streets, targeting anyone in the neighborhood, but this needs EVERYONE to participate and get INVOLVED:

- 1. TRAIN so you know how to defend yourself and what to do when you are threatened, or feel threatened,
- USE the community support opportunities available throughout the neighborhood if you need them, and encourage loved ones and friends to do the same,
- 3. **HELP** anyone in trouble by using your SAFETY WHISTLE to call attention to the incident, and hopefully many other community members will do the same,
- 4. CALL 9-1-1 immediately to report any acts of violence or threats of violence so Police can respond as quickly as possible time may be of the essence,
- PROVIDE the details of what you saw to Police if you are a witness to a
  violent incident. Only witness statements can lead to an arrest, charges, and
  ultimately conviction. YOUR statement may be critical,
- 6. FILE A REPORT with Police if you are the victim of a violent incident. SFPD are trained and required to be professional, empathetic, and understanding when you need to report a criminal act against you. San Francisco and California are SANCTUARY locations so don't worry about your immigration status in the U.S. when reporting. Have a trusted friend or organization with you when you make your report.
- 7. SHARE your incident details with <a href="INFO@CastroPatrol.org">INFO@CastroPatrol.org</a> so we can not only support you through the legal process, but we can also track these incidents to help us recognize patterns and work with SFPD to target dangerous areas or times with more enforcement.

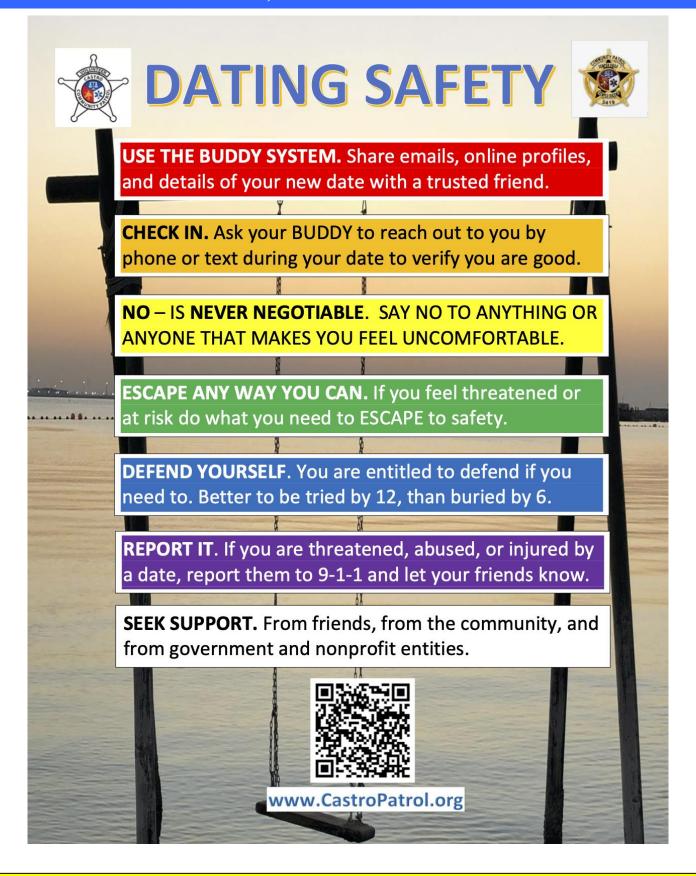
SAFETY is a COMMUNITY EFFORT. The WHOLE community needs to respond and shout with one voice "WE WILL NOT BE VICTIMS, WE WILL NOT BE TARGETS, WE WILL FIGHT BACK."











# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE IS AGAINST THE LAW AND OFTEN LEADS TO SERIOUS INJURY OR WORSE.

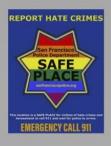
DON'T BECOME A MARTYR.

# DO YOU NEED HELP?

- Are you regularly subjected to acts of degradation, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation, or excessive control?
- Do you feel UNSAFE with your intimate partner?
- Do you feel empowered to make decisions for yourself?

Abusers rarely stop their abuse, but frequently escalate to more serious attacks. Ask for help!

LGBTQ Anti-Violence Project: 1-212-714-1141 FORGE Transgender Project: 1-414-559-2123 Youth LGBTQ Help Center: 1-800-246-7743









# **ANGEL SHOTS**

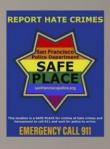
THIS ESTABLISHMENT RECOGNIZES AND SUPPORTS
THE ANGEL SHOT SAFETY PROGRAM

# DO YOU NEED HELP?

- Are you on a DATE that is not going well?
- Do you feel UNSAFE?
- Is anyone BOTHERING your or making you feel UNCOMFORTABLE?
- Are you being FORCED to do something against your will?

ASK OUR SECURITY STAFF OR YOUR SERVER FOR AN "ANGEL SHOT."

WE WILL HANDLE THINGS DISCRETELY AND WE WILL PROTECT YOU UNTIL YOU ARE SAFE & SECURE.









# **HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS SLAVERY BY A DIFFERENT NAME. TARGET THE TRAFFICKERS AND HELP SAVE THE VICTIMS.

# DO YOU NEED HELP?

- Are you FORCED to work for little or no reimbursement?
- Do you face physical or psychological abuse if you do not work as demanded?
- Can you leave at any time, without fear of retribution?
- Are you expected to do things outside of your comfort zone, such as performing sexual favors for strangers?

National Human Trafficking Hotline
Call: 1-888-373-7888
Text: HELP to 233733 (BEFREE)
www.humantraffickinghotline.org

