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Date: July 16, 2010
For Immediate Release**Contact: Annmarie Billotti**
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ELK GROVE - The Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) announced today that the necessary closure of its San Diego and Santa Ana District Offices on November 1, 2010 will not impede the DFEH's delivery of services to hate crime victims and victims of discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations. The DFEH will continue to meet its civil rights mission statewide-including those areas currently served by the San Diego and Santa Ana District Offices-with greater efficiency and effectiveness after office consolidation is complete.

The DFEH continues to serve all California communities, regardless where DFEH offices are located. Hate crimes victims and victims of employment and public accommodation discrimination need only call 800-884-1684 to access the DFEH's services. This manner of access is designed to be more convenient to a victim of discrimination than standing in line at a public counter.

Statewide, at any time of day, victims of employment discrimination also may schedule an appointment for an intake interview, or request and obtain an immediate right-to-sue online, by logging onto www.dfeh.ca.gov. Almost 100% of all intake interviews are conducted by telephone. One-third of all intake interview appointments made by victims of employment discrimination are made online. About 60% are made by employment discrimination victims who call the DFEH's 800 number. Currently, more than 50% of the right-to-sue letters the DFEH issues are requested online. Of the remaining requests the DFEH receives, about 45% are sent via U.S. mail.

The DFEH Employment Unit continues to operate in three regional offices (Bay Area, Elk Grove, and Los Angeles) and three satellite offices (San Jose, Fresno and Bakersfield) across the State. As a result, the Department retains a strong presence in Southern California with its Los Angeles Regional Office.

Where physical intake interviews and mediation conferences are required, DFEH staff will travel throughout the State to serve complainants and respondents. The DFEH also continues to conduct extensive outreach to all parts of the State through presentations, case law alerts, publications, videos, and mass communications.

All 22 full-time DFEH employees affected by the San Diego and Santa Ana District Office closures have been offered their same jobs and allowable relocation expenses to transfer to the Department's Elk Grove Headquarters. Those who did not elect to transfer to Elk Grove have been placed on a list for priority hiring in other State agencies and given re-employment assistance. Many already have found new jobs.

Consolidating the San Diego and Santa Ana District Offices with DFEH Headquarters, rather than eliminating positions, will enable the DFEH to continue carrying out its civil rights mission for all Californians for many years to come.

The mission of the DFEH is to protect the people of California from unlawful discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations and from hate violence. In fiscal year 2009-2010, the DFEH realized approximately one million dollars in general funds savings due to new efficiencies and office consolidations. For more information about the DFEH's achievements and the laws the department enforces, please visit www.dfeh.ca.gov.