

NEW MERGER PRESS RELEASE

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EAST BAY
FAMILY DEFENDERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Legal Services for Prisoners with Children Announces Merger with East Bay Family Defenders

September 19, 2023 | Oakland, California

We are proud to announce the merger of East Bay Family Defenders (EBFD) with Legal Services for Prisoners with Children (LSPC). Our shared mission and values around ending family separation, restoring human and civil rights, and undoing the harm of the war on drugs have brought us together to deepen the community impact of our work.

EBFD brings to LSPC a degree of expertise in juvenile dependency law and a proven model of holistic, interdisciplinary defense for parents. LSPC holds skills and expertise in building community power, and policy change, and over 40 years of dedication to preserving family ties. As we incorporate the work of EBFD, we will continue our fight to end family separations and reunify families impacted by the criminal legal and family policing systems.

Founded in 1978, LSPC organizes communities impacted by the criminal justice system and advocates to release incarcerated people, to restore human and civil rights and to reunify families and communities. We focus on the specific legal and social policy issues affecting incarcerated parents and their children, family members caring for children of incarcerated parents and formerly incarcerated people. LSPC has been a leader in exposing how the expansion of the prison system damages low-income communities and communities of color, and how women and their children have been specifically affected by mass incarceration.

Between 2018 and 2021, East Bay Family Defenders piloted an interdisciplinary family defense model that has been shown to make a dramatic difference in the length of time

children spend in foster care when compared to other models of representation and saw impactful results. EBFDD's services kept hundreds of children out of foster care in Alameda County. In 2022, EBFDD reorganized as a small, community based legal clinic offering preventive, interdisciplinary legal defense to families at risk of separation; training and legal education for family and community members, community-based organizations, and students; and support for coalition-based policy advocacy.

By taking on the great work of EBFDD, we will increase the capacity of the combined organization to provide legal support, training and advocacy aimed at preventing family separation and supporting family reunification, while offering individualized legal advice and representation for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated parents at risk of or facing family separation. EBFDD's family defense expertise will inform LSPC's litigation and policy advocacy, building on LSPC's powerful history of wins, as we bring forth new policy ideas and campaigns from the direct experience of the families impacted by the criminal legal and family policing systems.

Thank you for your continued support and trust in our work. We are excited about this new chapter and look forward to working together to create a more just and equitable world.

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