

Facts Myths about the First Offender Prostitution Program

Myth: The FOPP is voluntary.

Fact: The FOPP is one of the diversion programs run by the SF District Attorney's office and is in many cases cheaper than defending one's self in a criminal proceeding where a conviction could result in a jail sentence.

Myth: Only men attend the FOPP.

Fact: Women, transgender as well as men who are arrested for prostitution are mandated to attend the FOPP.

Myth: Diversion programs means that offenders won't have a criminal record.

Fact: Any diversion program and arrest will show on a criminal record. Re-titling offenders into survivors or victims makes no difference to the court system.

Myth: If a migrant person with no work card or documentation gets arrested and goes through a diversion program, they will not be deported.

Fact: Anyone who is arrested and isn't an American citizen can be deported if they are arrested for anything. Additionally, they will not be able to extend a visa or obtain a work card or apply for citizenship.

Myth: Stopping the city from operating the FOPP will take away funds from those who want to transition out of working as prostitutes.

Fact: The FOPP contractor, SAGE Project Inc. doesn't provide transition services for prostitutes. They provide 'referrals to medical, vocational and legal services' as well as 'wrap around services'. That means that they don't provide direct services by qualified professionals.

Myth: Stopping the city from operating the FOPP will take away funds from programs for women and girls involved in prostitution.

Fact: Stopping the city from enforcing the prostitution laws will make more money available for services. Stopping the city from operating the FOPP, that involves forced attendance into reeducation programs, is the only way to get the truly voluntary attendance.

Myth: The FOPP educations clients of prostitutes to view them in a different light by paying former prostitutes tell personal tragedy stories.

Fact: The FOPP's Saturday men's program features a questionnaire as well as former prostitutes, who get paid to promote stereo types in the form of hate speech against prostitutes and client of prostitutes as scare tactics.