



# Board Agenda Item 31

DATE: August 23, 2022

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Kirk Haynes, Chief Probation Officer

SUBJECT: Victim Witness Assistance Program Grant Application/Agreement

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

- 1. Retroactively authorize the Chief Probation Officer's previous submittal of a grant application to the State of California, Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) for the Victim Witness Assistance (VW) Program (\$1,632,094);**
- 2. Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute a Grant Application/Agreement for the VW Program with Cal OES, effective October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023; and**
- 3. Approve and authorize the Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector, or his designee, to execute the required Authorization for the Grant Subaward Certification of Assurance of Compliance; and**
- 4. Adopt resolution authorizing the Chairman to execute the retroactive grant Application and Agreement and any extensions or amendments thereto with Cal OES for the period of October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023, subject to review and approval as to legal form by County Counsel, and as to accounting form by the Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector, not to exceed \$1,632,094.**

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. To meet the grant filing deadline, the Grant Application was previously submitted by the Probation Department, contingent upon your Board's approval. The Application provides funding for the Fresno County James Rowland Crime Victim Assistance Center (CVAC), which the Department has operated for crime victims and witnesses in Fresno County since 1975. The recommended actions will authorize the previous submittal of the grant application and the execution of the Grant Agreement. Once the Grant Agreement is executed by the Chairman and Cal OES, the application documents become the final agreement between the County and Cal OES. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

If the recommended actions are not approved, the Grant Application will be withdrawn, which will result in a significant reduction of services provided by the CVAC.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions, which will provide for the continued grant funding of the CVAC. The grant is a total of \$1,632,094 in grant funds. The required match has been waived by Cal OES. The Department does not charge the grant for indirect costs. Sufficient appropriations and estimated revenues are included in Probation's FY 2022-23 Recommended Budget for Org 3432.

DISCUSSION:

The Department has operated the CVAC in Fresno County since 1975. In 2021, CVAC provided services to 7,407 new victims of crime. Services include crisis intervention and counseling, emergency assistance and referrals, orientation to the criminal justice system, court and parole hearing support, assistance writing victim impact statements for the Court, criminal case status and disposition, employer and creditor intervention, assistance filing for financial help with the California Victim Compensation Program, as well as information and referrals regarding protective and restraining orders. Service locations over the years have been expanded from a single office to three separate locations. The additional locations have improved access and resulted in efficient service to victims of crime in Fresno County. Funding through Cal OES continues to make these services possible.

The Request for Application for this grant, including the allocation of funds, was provided to the Department on March 17, 2022, with a filing deadline of June 30, 2022. In order to meet the filing deadline, the application was previously submitted to Cal OES, contingent upon your Board's approval, and is being brought to your Board with the associated agreement on the first available Board date. Once the Grant Agreement is executed by the Chairman and Cal OES, it becomes the final agreement between the County and Cal OES, effective October 1, 2022.

The grant funds the following positions: one Assistant Deputy Chief Probation Officer, three Senior Victim-Witness Advocates, ten Victim-Witness Advocates, one Program Technician, one Office Assistant, and two Student Workers.

Beginning with FY 2018-19, additional monies were awarded by Cal OES to fund an additional Victim-Witness-based Mass Victimization Advocate (MVA) position, which has been dedicated to the objective of supporting response readiness in the event of mass victimization/terrorism incidents. These funds are made available in order to prepare Victim-Witness centers to participate in a coordinated community response to mass victimization/terrorism incidents. As required by the grant, CVAC will continue to develop a victim assistance plan to support and enhance immediate response and recovery efforts due to mass victimization/terrorism incidents. The MVA attended Crisis Response training and will continue to focus on mass crisis incidents due to a criminal event.

The fourth recommended action will adopt a resolution authorizing the Chairman to submit the previously submitted grant application and to execute any extensions or amendments to this grant, as required by Cal OES, subject to review and approval as to legal form by County Counsel's Office and as to accounting form by the Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector, and not to exceed the total of \$1,632,094.

If the grant funding is eliminated, the positions funded with this grant will be deleted, unless an alternative funding source is identified.

California Environmental Quality Act

The Grant requires subrecipients to certify their project is in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Local government agencies must certify that they have adopted or certified the completion of an environmental impact report that complies with the requirements of CEQA, or they have filed a Notice of Exemption with the County Clerk.

The proposed Grant application/agreement is exempt under Section 15061, subdivision (b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment. This determination is based on the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment, and a grant application funding victim witness assistance staff is not the type of activity that can reasonably be considered as causing a direct physical change, or foreseeable indirect change, to the environment. Assuming your Board's approval of the recommended actions, Staff will prepare to post a Notice of

Exemption.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #46, September 7, 2021

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Application/Agreement with Cal OES

On file with Clerk - Resolution (Org 3432)

CAO ANALYST:

Samantha Buck