



Board Agenda Item 5

DATE: February 20, 2018

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Lisa A. Smittcamp, District Attorney-Public Administrator
Margaret Mims, Sheriff-Coroner
Delfino Neira, Director, Department of Social Services

SUBJECT: Retroactive Electronic Suspected Child Abuse Report System
Application/Agreement

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

1. **Retroactively authorize the District Attorney-Public Administrator's previous submittal of grant application to the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) for the Electronic Suspected Child Abuse Report System for the time period October 1, 2017 through December 31, 2018 (\$250,000);**
2. **Authorize the Chairman to execute a retroactive grant application/agreement and Certification of Assurance of Compliance for the Electronic Suspected Child Abuse Report System with Cal OES for the time period October 1, 2017 through December 31, 2018 (\$250,000);**
3. **Adopt Budget Resolution increasing FY 2017-18 appropriations and estimated revenues in the District Attorney- Grants Org 2862 in the amount of \$200,643 (4/5 vote);**
4. **Adopt Budget Resolution increasing FY 2017-18 appropriations and estimated revenues in the Sheriff-Coroner's Org 3111 in the amount of \$49,357 (4/5 vote); and**
5. **Approve Amendment to the Salary Resolution adding one Paralegal I/II to District Attorney- Grants Org 28623250 effective July 2, 2018 as reflected in Appendix D.**

The purpose of the Electronic Suspected Child Abuse Report (ESCAR) system is to establish a database which allows for the sharing of electronic suspected child abuse reports with the District Attorney, Department of Social Services (DSS), Sheriff-Coroner and local law enforcement. To meet the grant proposal deadline of September 29, 2017, the competitive grant application was submitted contingent upon your Board's approval. It should be noted that once the Grant Award Face Sheet is executed by the Chairman and Cal OES, the executed documents become the final Agreement between the County and Cal OES.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

If the recommended actions are not approved, the process for handling Suspected Child Abuse Reports will continue to be manual and improvements to the cross-reporting process will be limited.

RETROACTIVE AGREEMENT:

The District Attorney-Public Administrator received notification on December 21, 2017 that the grant proposal was selected for funding. Due to the late selection and notification of funding, the departments are coming to your Board with the grant application/agreement and associated agenda item at the first available

date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. Estimated revenues and appropriations of \$200,643 will be added to District Attorney-Grants Org 2862 to fund program related ESCAR system activities for the District Attorney Paralegal position and DSS. Additionally, estimated revenues and appropriations will be increased for the Sheriff-Coroner's Org 3111 in the amount of \$49,357 to offset ESCAR system expenses. The funding associated with the District Attorney-Grants Paralegal position is effective July 2, 2018, and will be funded through December 31, 2018 (as part of the initial grant term), followed by 2 additional 12 month grant terms which are noncompetitive.

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of the ESCAR system is to establish a database which allows for the sharing of electronic suspected child abuse reports with the District Attorney, DSS, Sheriff-Coroner's Office (FSO) and local law enforcement.

There are 15 law enforcement agencies in Fresno County with jurisdictions throughout the rural and metro areas of the County. The County of Fresno FSO is the primary law enforcement agency for the purpose of this grant application. The FSO, District Attorney's Office (DA), and DSS currently maintain a collaborative relationship with regard to investigations and/or standard working processes. However, with regard to protocols, collaboration and/or attention to effective cross-reporting and oversight of suspected child abuse reports, substantial improvements can be made.

Current processes are essentially manual and create system gaps. Moving from a manual to a digital suspected child abuse report system would increase accountability in the cross-reporting process and ensure that all agencies involved in investigating child abuse and neglect receive timely notification and complete their investigations expeditiously and with shared information. The ESCAR system is anticipated to contribute to improved investigations and prosecutions and significantly reduce gaps which may place the children of Fresno County at risk of significant harm.

As the lead applicant agency for this grant, the DA is excited to have the opportunity to move forward with the implementation of an ESCAR system and to realize the benefits of the associated improvements in protocols/collaboration that would parallel this project. Although the DA is the lead agency, this project will be truly collaborative and will involve a close partnership with DSS and FSO. Together, the DA, FSO, and DSS are committed to improving and enhancing our current cross-reporting processes. The implementation of an ESCAR system would be a significant improvement for Fresno County.

The recommended actions allow for the DA to apply for these funds, allow the Chairman to execute a Grant Award Face Sheet with Cal OES for the ESCAR system, and provide funding to add a Paralegal position to the DA's Office. If approved, the executed Grant Award Face Sheet for the application will be forwarded to Cal OES to finalize the application/agreement.

If grant funding for this program is discontinued, the associated position will be deleted.

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Agreement with OES
On file with Clerk - Resolution (Org 2862)
On file with Clerk - Resolution (Org 3111)
Salary Resolution (Org 2862)

CAO ANALYST:

Jeannie Z. Figueroa