



Legislation Text

File #: 23-0737, Version: 1

DATE: August 22, 2023
TO: Board of Supervisors
SUBMITTED BY: Kirk Haynes, Chief Probation Officer
SUBJECT: Victim Witness Assistance Program Grant Application/Agreement

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

- 1. Retroactively approve and 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 (\$1,637,065), to provide funding for the Fresno County James Rowland Crime Victim Assistance Center;**
- 2. Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute a Grant Agreement with State of California, Governor's Office of Emergency Services for the Victim Witness Assistance Program, for the period of October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024 (\$1,637,065), including all required certifications; 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.**

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If the recommended actions are not approved, the Grant Application will be withdrawn, which will result in a significant reduction of services provided by the CVAC. It will also result in the elimination of the positions dedicated to this Program unless an alternative funding source is identified.

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 \$1,637,065 in grant funds. The combined total of 2022 VOCA and 2023 VOCA required match of \$369,715 has been waived by Cal OES. There are 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 positions funded in this program. Sufficient appropriations and estimated revenues are included in Probation's FY 2023-24 Recommended Budget for Org 3432 that will be presented to your Board in mid-September. It should be noted, the Department does not charge indirect costs to administer the grant Program.

DISCUSSION:

The Probation Department has operated the CVAC in Fresno County since 1975. The Department has received Victim Witness Assistance grant funds from Cal OES since 2003. Each year Fresno County has been awarded by the Cal OES, through a non-competitive request for application process, the Victim Witness Assistance grant to fund the Department's existing Program. Your Board provided yearly approval for the grant application, most recently on August 23, 2022.

The Request for Application for this grant, including the allocation of funds, was provided to the Department on March 27, 2023, with a filing deadline of June 30, 2023. 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. On August 22, 2023, once the Application/Grant Agreement is executed by the Chairman and Cal OES, it becomes the final agreement between the County and Cal OES, effective October 1, 2023.

This grant will be used to provide services including 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. In 2022, CVAC provided services to 9070 victims of crime. Funding through Cal OES continues to make these services possible. 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.

On January 29, 2019, your Board approved and authorized the retroactive application and agreement for the FY 2018-19, in which additional monies were awarded by Cal OES to fund the third Sr. Victim-Witness Advocate as a Mass Victimization Advocate (MVA) position. This position 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 has attended Crisis Response training and will continue to focus on mass crisis incidents due to a criminal event. If the grant funding is eliminated, the positions funded with this grant will be deleted, unless an alternative funding source is identified.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #31, August 23, 2022
BAI #52, January 29, 2019
BAI #29, June 17, 2003

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Application/Agreement with Cal OES

CAO ANALYST:

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