



Legislation Text

File #: 2020-0392, **Version:** 1

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): District Attorney
Staff Name and Phone Number: Renate Amantite, ASO II 565-3150
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:
District Attorney's Violence Against Women Program

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Board Resolution to authorize the Sonoma County District Attorney to sign a contract with the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services to continue participation in the Violence Against Women Vertical Prosecution program and accept \$303,817 in funding for the term July 1, 2019 through December 31, 2020.

Executive Summary:

Board approval and authorization is requested to allow the District Attorney to accept the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services: Violence Against Women Vertical Prosecution Grant Award of \$303,817 for the term July 1, 2019 through December 31, 2020.

In 2013 the California Office of Emergency Services began a Violent Crimes Against Women grant program to encourage and support counties adoption of a vertical prosecution model for the handling of violent crimes against women, including the most egregious domestic violence and sexual assault crimes. The purpose of The Violence Against Women Vertical Prosecution Program is to improve conviction rates and minimize victim trauma and is designed to improve the criminal justice system's response to violent crimes against women through a coordinated, multi-disciplinary prosecutorial response including specialized units with a highly qualified Prosecutor and an experienced Victim Advocate. Sonoma County has had a successful vertical prosecution unit since 2013 when the grant program began. Under Sonoma County's true vertical prosecution unit, the same Attorney and Victim Advocate work collaboratively to handle these cases from beginning to end. To continue this successful program Sonoma County is being awarded this grant for a seventh year.

In November 2019, the District Attorney's Office received notification from California Office of Emergency Services that the Violence Against Women Vertical Prosecution Program Grant would be awarded for another year, July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020, providing \$202,545 toward the program. Matching funds in the amount of \$67,515 contributed to the total project cost of \$270,060. Those funds were included in the FY 19/20 budget for the District Attorney's Office.

In April 2020, California Office of Emergency Services extended the term of the grant from June 30, 2020 to December 31, 2020 and awarded additional funds of \$101,272. This additional funding increased the grant funds to \$303,817 for a total program cost, including match of \$67,515, of \$371,332 with a grant term of July

1, 2019 to December 31, 2020.

Discussion:

The purpose of the grant is to support the Vertical Prosecution model endorsed by the Office of Violence Against Women, which provides the State Formula Grants to the California Office of Emergency Services in support of this program. With this funding, the District Attorney’s Office, with resources leveraged by the Family Justice Center, established a true vertical prosecution and victim advocate program for a specialty caseload involving serious felony domestic violence and sexual assault crimes. The specialized Prosecutor along with the assigned bilingual Victim Witness Advocate and Investigator, are co-located at the Family Justice Center to receive and handle each referral from case inception to conclusion. The vertical prosecution model yields better victim service, intake, referral, and court service outcomes for victims, and provides a higher level of coordination between law enforcement agencies and prosecution staff.

Grant funding is used toward the salaries and benefits of the Deputy District Attorney IV (DDA IV). The \$67,515 match required for grant funding will be provided with General Fund dollars through the District Attorney’s budget and staff allocation. The initial grant funds and match were appropriated in the adopted budget for Fiscal Year 2019-20. The additional funds awarded to extend the grant through December 2020 are projected for use in Fiscal Year 2020-21. This additional funding did not include any match requirement.

We request Board authorization for the District Attorney to sign a contract with the California Office of Emergency Services to accept the initial grant award of \$202,545 for the term July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020 as well as the amount of \$101,272 added to the award in April 2020 with the extension of the grant term to December 31, 2020.

Prior Board Actions:

California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services has awarded this grant to the Sonoma County District Attorney’s Office for the past six years, beginning in FY 2013-14 and the Board has authorized the acceptance of funds each year.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 19-20 Adopted	FY20-21 Projected	FY 21-22 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$270,060	\$101,272	
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$270,060	\$101,272	
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF	\$67,515		
State/Federal	\$202,545	\$101,272	
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			

Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$270,060	\$101,272	

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Continuation of the Sonoma County Violence Against Women Vertical Prosecution program will cost \$371,332 with an award from California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) of \$303,817 and a required match of \$67,515 from the General Fund. A portion of these funds, \$270,060, was already approved in the FY 2019-20 budget. The remainder of funds, \$101,272, was added to the award by Cal OES in April 2020 and is included in the District Attorney's FY 2020-21 Recommended Budget.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

No staffing impacts

Attachments:

Resolution

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

Violence Against Women Vertical Prosecution Program Award
Grant Subaward Amendment