



Legislation Text

File #: 2019-1455, **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:

Alcohol and Drug Impaired Vertical Prosecution Program Renewal

Recommended Action:

Adopt a resolution authorizing the District Attorney to sign a contract with the State of California, Office of Traffic Safety to continue a specialized DUI Vertical Prosecution program and accept \$234,032 in grant funding for the term October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020. The objective of this grant is to reduce the incident and injuries of alcohol-involved and drug-involved collisions, injuries and deaths.

Executive Summary:

Board approval and authorization is requested to allow the District Attorney to sign a contract to continue participation in the Alcohol and Drug Impaired Driver Vertical Prosecution Program funded by the State of California, Office of Traffic Safety for \$234,032 for the 2019/20 Federal Fiscal Year.

Discussion:

The Office of Traffic Safety awarded Sonoma County District Attorney's Office a one-year renewal of the Driving Under the Influence Vertical Prosecution grant for \$234,032 for the term October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020. This year's funding is equivalent to last year after a significant 34% reduction of \$119,505 from the previous year. The objective of this grant is to reduce the incident and injuries of alcohol-involved and drug-involved collisions, injuries and deaths. The District Attorney's Office has participated in the State's Driving Under the Influence Vertical Prosecution Program for the past eight years, and the program's grant funding helped create and sustain the Sonoma District Attorney Driving Under the Influence Vertical Prosecution program for the prosecution of the most serious driving under the influence cases. Driving under the influence is one of Sonoma County's most grave problems and these cases represent a significant workload for the Sonoma District Attorney's Office as well as the other Justice Partners.

During Fiscal Year 2017/2018, the District attorney filed 2,657 DUI cases, 1,730 (65%) of those cases were filed by the Vertical DUI (VDUI) Prosecution team. More than 10% (13.7%) of the cases filed by the Sonoma County District Attorney's Office during the grant year 2017/2018 were filed by the VDUI unit.

The vertical prosecution method of handling cases is resource intensive and allows a prosecutor to handle

each case throughout each step of the criminal process. Being involved in the full continuum of each case improves prosecutorial efforts and outcomes. The Sonoma Vertical Driving Under the Influence attorneys also collaborate with local law enforcement to provide community education and outreach in an effort to reduce the incidents of driving under the influence. These attorneys attend training each year and help provide training to local law enforcement on the detection and investigation of suspected Driving Under the Influence offenders. They participate in local law enforcement Driving Under the Influence checkpoints and share information with peers and law enforcement personnel throughout the county and across the state allowing them to build their knowledge base and educate other jurisdictions. With specialized prosecutors and better-trained law enforcement, all Driving Under the Influence offenders are held fully accountable for their conduct, and all Sonoma County residents enjoy a safer community.

The funds from this grant will cover the majority of the salary and benefits of one of two full-time Deputy District Attorneys in this specialized unit.

Prior Board Actions:

The Board of Supervisors has approved the Office of Traffic Safety Driving Under the Influence Vertical Prosecution grants annually since FY 2012/13.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 19-20 Adopted	FY20-21 Projected	FY 21-22 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$243,659	\$258,035	\$268,098
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$243,659	\$258,035	\$268,098
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF	\$9,624	\$24,003	\$34,058
State/Federal	\$234,032	\$234,032	\$234,032
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$234,032	\$258,035	\$268,098

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

This grant decreased by \$119,505 from Federal Fiscal Year 2017/18 to Federal Fiscal Year 2018/19. This is the result of a reduction in funding at both the Federal and State level. The grant funding will be short \$9,627 the cost of the grant paid attorney. The grant revenue shortfall is covered by the General Fund. The General Fund pays the full salary and benefit costs for the second attorney assigned to this specialized unit. The grant funding is not projected to rise in subsequent years to meet the increasing rise in the attorney position costs; therefore, the continuation of this program will require an increased contribution from the General Fund. For the grant funded position, the cost increase is projected at \$24,003 in FY20-21 and \$34,058 in FY21-22.

The future of this grant funding is uncertain. When the District Attorney’s Office ceases to receive this funding, the District Attorney will be requesting additional General Fund in order to continue this high impact program, a program that demonstrates Sonoma County’s continued commitment to holding the most severe under-the-influence offenders accountable for the risk they cause on our roadways and harm, including loss of life, they cause to our citizens.

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

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

Resolution for Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) Alcohol and Drug Impaired Driver Vertical Prosecution Program Grant

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:

Contract from the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) Alcohol and Drug Impaired Driver Vertical Prosecution Program Grant