



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 2020-0865, **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

**Supervisory 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 Driving Under the Influence Vertical Prosecution program and accept \$255,000 in grant funding for the term October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021. 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 (VDUI) funded by the State of California, Office of Traffic Safety for \$255,000 for the 2020/21 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 \$255,000 for the term October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021.

The objective of this grant is to reduce the incidents and injuries of alcohol-involved and drug-involved collisions, injuries and deaths. The Sonoma County District Attorney's Office has been selected for continued participation in the State's Driving Under the Influence Vertical Prosecution Program for the past eight years, and grant funding helped create and sustain this 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 a threat to the citizens of Sonoma County. These cases represent a significant workload for the Sonoma County District Attorney's Office including the continual increase in drug related under the influence driving incidents.

During Fiscal Year 2018/19 the District attorney filed 2,647 DUI cases, 1,769 (67%) of those cases were filed by the Vertical DUI Prosecution team. More than 15% of the cases filed by the Sonoma County District Attorney's Office during the grant year 2018/19 were filed by the VDUI unit.

The vertical prosecution method of handling cases is resource intensive and allows a prosecutor to handle each case through every step of the criminal process. Being involved in the full continuum of each case improves prosecutorial efforts and outcomes. The Sonoma County VDUI program currently consists of two attorneys who also collaborate with local law enforcement to provide community education and outreach in

an effort to reduce the occurrences 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 grant program originally covered the cost of two attorneys for this specialized unit. With salary and benefit increases and reductions grant funding in previous years, the grant currently pays for only one attorney and the General Fund covers salaries and benefits for the second attorney. The number of cases, serious nature of these crimes, and risk to citizens warrant the addition of a third attorney to this program; however, continued county budget challenges has prevented this expansion. This grant is highly competitive and at this point we are uncertain about the continuation of this funding. The number of cases, serious nature of these crimes, and risk to citizens warrant the addition of a third attorney to this program; however, continued county budget challenges may prevent any expansion of the unit. When this grant funding ceases, the District Attorney will submit a request to the Board for additional general funding in order to sustain this critical county 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.

#### 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

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY 20-21 Projected</b>	<b>FY21-22 Projected</b>	<b>FY 22-23 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses	\$255,000	\$263,083	\$270,975
Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$255,000</b>	<b>\$263,083</b>	<b>\$270,975</b>
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF		\$8,083	\$15,975
State/Federal	\$255,000	\$255,000	\$255,000
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>\$255,000</b>	<b>\$263,083</b>	<b>\$270,975</b>

#### Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

This grant increased by \$20,968 from Federal Fiscal Year 2019/20 to Federal Fiscal Year 2020/21. This increase follows a significant reduction in funding of \$119,000 in 2018/19, and no increase in 2019/20 funding. The

Office of Traffic Safety increased the amount based on significant salary increases incurred over the past two fiscal years due to equity adjustments and cost of living adjustments. The current District Attorney budget includes both the salary and benefit appropriations and the grant revenue so no additional budget action is required. The continuation of this program may require an increased General Fund contribution in future fiscal years to cover increasing salaries and benefits costs in the event that the grant revenues remain flat. Cost increases for the grant funded position is projected at \$8,083 in FY21-22 and \$15,975 in FY22-23.

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:**

Grant Award Document