



Legislation Text

File #: 2021-0524, **Version:** 1

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Human Services

Staff Name and Phone Number: Nick Honey 565-4343; Jake Harpin 565-6518

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Title:

California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES), Victim Services Branch, Child Advocacy Center Program Grant Funding (VOCA-KC grant)

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the Director of the Human Services Department to accept Victims of Crime Act (VOCA-KC) grant funding from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES), Victim Services Branch, in the amount of \$206,000 for the grant period of April 1, 2021, through March 31, 2022; and to execute the Grant Subaward on behalf of the County of Sonoma, including any extensions or amendments.

Executive Summary:

The purpose of the CalOES Child Advocacy Center Program grant is to fund affiliate, developing, and accredited Child Advocacy Centers in California to provide services to child abuse victims, with a goal of reducing trauma to children and their families by using a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) approach. The non-competitive VOCA-KC grant will fund ongoing therapeutic services for child victims of abuse and their families at the Redwood Children's Center (RCC), operated by the Human Services Family, Youth & Children's Division (FY&C). The funding will provide continuing professional development for the MDT, as well as continue to partially fund a two-year time-limited Program Planning & Evaluation Analyst (PPEA) (.6 FTE) to provide program oversight of the administrative operations of RCC. Additional funding through FY&C supports the remaining portion of this PPEA position to provide administrative support for Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) programming (.15 FTE) as well as the administration of housing access programs through the Bringing Families Home grant (.25 FTE).

Discussion:

Sonoma County serves approximately 450 foster youth each year and FY&C, in conjunction with community partners, provides many supportive services for those children and families. The Redwood Children's Center (RCC), located at the Family Justice Center, works closely with partner agencies to support children victims of abuse and their families, and is the only accredited Child Advocacy Center (CAC) in Sonoma County. RCC serves as the coordination hub for investigation and intervention services for child victims of sexual and physical abuse. RCC coordinates services including MDT meetings and case management for children who are victims of sexual exploitation by providing forensic interviews, supportive services, therapy referrals, medical exams, victim advocacy, and case management for those children and families.

Since its inception in 1994, RCC has worked alongside law enforcement, the Department of Health Services

and child welfare social workers, providing over 7,397 forensic investigative interviews and over 1,533 forensic sexual assault medical exams to children in our community. On average, RCC conducts 245-295 of the total forensic interviews each year in a safe, child-focused environment in which a child tells their story once to a trained forensic interviewer who knows how to ask questions in a way that does not re-traumatize the child.

RCC also leads the County's CSEC program, created through Senate Bill 855. The CSEC program uses an interagency and MDT approach to provide collaborative prevention, intervention activities and services for youth who are at risk or victims of CSEC activities. Youth involved with RCC are screened and assessed for CSEC activity and support is coordinated as part of the MDT response within the Family Justice Center.

After the RCC interview, the MDT gathers develops a plan about how to best support the child and family. The MDT includes medical professionals, law enforcement, mental health practitioners, the District Attorney's office, social workers, victim advocates, and other professionals. As the coordination hub for investigation and intervention services for child victims, RCC has utilized CalOES funding since 2018 to improve and increase services for victims in the areas of mental health, victim support and advocacy, multidisciplinary response, and providing a child focused setting. RCC provides children with therapy referrals for treatment in trauma informed and evidence-based modalities, medical exams, victim advocacy, and case management for child victims of abuse. Therapy partners include Verity, LifeWorks of Sonoma County, the YWCA, and other therapists working in the community. Verity provides victim advocacy to children interviewed by RCC as well as trauma resources. RCC also supports children and families through the Family Justice Center which houses legal aid, victim's witness services, immigration services, and access to safe houses.

While these ongoing services support victims, the needs of victims have progressively become more complex, requiring increased coordination of services and an expansion of mental health services. The VOCA-KC grant will fill this gap by supporting training in evidence-informed modalities for RCC staff.

Prior Board Actions:

7/14/2020: Approved 2021 CalOES Child Advocacy Center Program Grant Funding

7/10/2018: Approved new positions and funding from CalOES for training and enhancements at RCC.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 20-21 Adopted	FY21-22 Projected	FY 22-23 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$51,500	154,500	
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$51,500	\$154,500	0
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal	\$51,500	\$154,500	
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			

Total Sources	\$51,500	\$154,500	0
---------------	----------	-----------	---

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

HSD received \$206,000 grant from CalOES to administer the VOCA-KC grant, Child Advocacy Center Program. Funding for the \$51,500 was included with the Human Services FY20/21 budget and \$154,500 will be included in HSD's FY21/22 budget. No county general fund is needed for this grant.

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:

- 1) Resolution
- 2) Grant Subaward Approval Letter

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

None