



Legislation Text

File #: 2022-0565, **Version:** 1

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Human Services

Staff Name and Phone Number: Nick Honey 565-4343; Justine Arenander 565-2127

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, Victim Services Branch, Child Advocacy Center Program Grant Funding

Recommended Action:

Adopt a resolution authorizing the Director of the Human Services Department to accept Victims of Crime Act grant funding from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, Victim Services Branch, in the amount of \$206,000 for the grant period of April 1, 2022, through March 31, 2023; and to execute the Grant Subaward on behalf of the County of Sonoma, including any extensions or amendments.

Executive Summary:

The purpose of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (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 Victims of Crime Act (VOCA-KC) grant will fund ongoing therapeutic services for child victims of abuse and their families at the Redwood Children's Center, operated by the Human Services Department's 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 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 the PPEA position to provide administrative support for Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children 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 7,612 forensic investigative interviews and over 1,476 forensic sexual assault medical exams to children in our community. On average, RCC has conducted 282 forensic interviews annually 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 Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (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 are 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 develops a plan for 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 others. 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 a child-focused and trauma-informed setting. These services include mental health treatment, victim support and advocacy, and a multidisciplinary response. 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 actively 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.

Strategic Plan:

This item directly supports the County's Five-year Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following pillar, goal, and objective.

Pillar: Healthy and Safe Communities

Goal: Goal 1: Expand integrated system of care to address gaps in services to the County's most vulnerable.

Objective: Create a "no wrong door" approach where clients who need services across multiple departments and programs are able to access the array of services needed regardless of where they enter the system.

Prior Board Actions:

6/8/2021: Approved 2022 CalOES Child Advocacy Center Program Grant Funding

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 22-23 Adopted	FY 23-24 Projected	FY 24-25 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	154,500		
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	154,500		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal	154,500		
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	154,500		

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

HSD received a \$206,000 grant from CalOES to administer the VOCA-KC grant, Child Advocacy Center Program. Funding of \$51,500 was included with the Human Services FY21/22 budget and \$154,500 is included in HSD's FY22/23 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 Sub-Award

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

None