



Agenda Date: 5/22/2007
Agenda Placement: 6A

NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Carol Strobel for Gary Lieberstein - District Attorney
District Attorney
REPORT BY: Carol Strobel, Administrative Services Officer, 253-4215
SUBJECT: Renewal of Spousal Abuser Prosecution Program (SAPP) grant

RECOMMENDATION

District Attorney requests the following actions in connection with the State of California Department of Justice Domestic Violence Spousal Abuser Program for Fiscal Year 2007-2008:

1. Authorization to sign a grant award in the amount of \$35,727; and
2. Adoption of a resolution approving \$7,145 in County match.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The County of Napa has received the Domestic Violence Spousal Abuser Program grant from the State of California for twelve years. These funds provide for the vertical prosecution of spousal abuse cases. In Fiscal Year 2007-2008, the District Attorney's Office expects to receive \$35,727 from the State. These funds require a \$7,145 match from the County.

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact?	Yes
Is it currently budgeted?	Yes
Where is it budgeted?	District Attorney
Is it Mandatory or Discretionary?	Discretionary
Discretionary Justification:	This item is discretionary in that there is no mandate to accept these funds or vertically prosecute spousal abuse cases. However, these funds offset the cost of the Deputy District Attorney who prosecutes spousal abuse cases. Without these funds, the cost to the County General Fund would increase. The

	prosecution of spousal abuse crimes is a mandated function of the District Attorney's Office.
Is the general fund affected?	Yes
Future fiscal impact:	The Spousal Abuser Prosecution Program should continue into the future as this is a noncompetitive grant. If funds were reduced, the General Fund would have to support this activity in the District Attorney's Office.
Consequences if not approved:	If this grant is not approved, the District Attorney's Office would need additional County General Funds to continue the mandated function of prosecuting spousal abuse cases.
Additional Information:	None.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The proposed action is not a project as defined by 14 California Code of Regulations 15378 (State CEQA Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The County of Napa has received the Domestic Violence Spousal Abuser Program grant from the State of California for twelve years. In Fiscal Year 2007-2008, the District Attorney's Office expects to receive \$35,727 from the State. These funds require a \$7,145 match from the County.

Under this allocation, the District Attorney's Office vertically prosecutes spousal abuse cases by assigning one experienced Deputy District Attorney to the case from the filing of charges to sentencing. There are many proven advantages to having one attorney assigned to a case from inception until completion. One of the most significant advantages is that victims, who already come to the justice system traumatized by their abusers, are able to establish a closer working relationship with the prosecutor handling their case. These abused individuals are generally completely ignorant about the criminal justice system, and thus, become frightened because they quickly learn that it will have such a tremendous, but unknown, impact on their lives. With that one prosecutor, victims are able to have their questions answered more quickly and consistently. This promotes victims having greater knowledge about what is transpiring in their cases, understanding the system, and, thus, there is less likelihood of them being re-victimized by the very system that is supposed to be helping them. Therefore, dealing with a single prosecutor throughout the legal process provides greater continuity and confidence, and is less traumatic for the victims of spousal abuse. Without vertical prosecution, three or more Deputy District Attorneys could be involved in the victim's case. From the prosecutor's perspective, having a better working relationship with victims increases the likelihood of a just and successful result since it is common knowledge that victims of domestic violence tend to recant.

This grant funds 40% of the salary and benefits of a Deputy District Attorney who is prosecuting spousal abuse cases. The match is the County's General Fund portion of the attorney's salary and benefits which is included in the District Attorney's Fiscal Year 2007-2008 budget. The total General Fund contribution to this position is \$51,533.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

A . Resolution

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Molly Rattigan