



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Agenda Date: 9/10/2019

Agenda Placement: 6A

NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board Agenda Letter

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Nikki Lundeen for Allison Haley - District Attorney
District Attorney

REPORT BY: Nikki Lundeen, Staff Services Manager - 253-4215

SUBJECT: Application and Acceptance of Funding for Victim/Witness Assistance Program

RECOMMENDATION

District Attorney requests approval of and authorization for the Chair to sign a Certification of Assurance of Compliance document that authorizes the District Attorney to apply for and sign grant Subaward documents with the California Office of Emergency Services for the Victim/Witness Assistance Program in the anticipated amount of \$405,964 for the term of October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Approval of the recommended action will allow the District Attorney to apply for and sign grant subaward documents, including amendments, extensions, and modifications, thereof, for continuation of the Victim/Witness Assistance Program. This subaward program, administered by the California Office of Emergency Services, provides Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding for continued services to crime victims and witnesses throughout 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?	Mandatory
Is the general fund affected?	No

Future fiscal impact:	Appropriations have been included in the District Attorney's adopted budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 and appropriations for future fiscal years will be budgeted accordingly.
Consequences if not approved:	If this item is not approved, the District Attorney will not be able to obtain continued funding from the State of California for provision of mandated victim and witness services to victims of crime. Additionally, the County would need to identify another department or non-profit to serve as the victim and witness services provider within the County.
Additional Information:	

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

California Penal Code Sections 13835 through 13835.10 mandate that every county in the State of California be provided funding for comprehensive services for victims and witnesses. Funding is designed to help victims and witnesses of all types of crime by maintaining local centers that provide comprehensive assistance, including all legislatively mandated services. Victim/Witness Assistance Centers (VWACs) arose in 1983 in an effort by the Legislature to reduce the trauma and insensitive treatment that victims and witnesses experienced in the criminal justice system. Today, State and Federally funded VWACs operate in each of the 58 counties and in the City of Los Angeles and play a vital role in California's criminal justice system. 51 are housed in District Attorney's Offices, one in a City Attorney's Office, three in Probation Departments, two in community-based organizations, one in a Sheriff's Department and one in a Social Services Department. Napa County moved our victim services from a non-profit agency to the District Attorney's Office in Fiscal Year 2010-2011.

Each VWAC is required to perform 14 mandatory services: crisis intervention, emergency assistance, resource and referral assistance, direct counseling, victim of crime claims, property return, orientation to the criminal justice system, court escort, presentations and training to local criminal justice agencies, public presentations and publicity, case status and case dispositions, notification to family and friends, employer notification and intervention, and assistance with restitution. The following 10 optional services may be provided if they do not preclude the efficient provision of mandatory services: employer intervention, creditor intervention, child care, notification to witnesses of any change in the court calendar, funeral arrangements, crime prevention information, witness protection, assistance in obtaining temporary restraining orders, transportation, and provision of a waiting area during court proceedings separate from defendants and families and friends of defendants. The Victim/Witness program staff offers and provides mandated and optional services to an average of 1,500 victims each fiscal year.

The County's anticipated funding level for the current funding cycle of October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020 is approximately \$405,964 for continuation of the Victim/Witness Assistance Program. Today's recommended action will authorize the Chair to sign the Certificate of Assurance of Compliance (COAOC) document, which authorizes the District Attorney to apply and sign for these grant subawards, including acceptance of additional funding, extensions, modifications or amendments thereof. The action will also designate the District Attorney's Office as the continued provider of victim and witness services in the County.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

None

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Susan Kuss