



San Bernardino County

Legislation Text

File #: 7085, Agenda Item #: 34

REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY AND RECORD OF ACTION

November 15, 2022

FROM

JASON ANDERSON, District Attorney

SUBJECT

Non-Financial Agreement with the City of Ontario to Provide Victim Advocacy Services

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Approve non-financial agreement with the City of Ontario to provide onsite Victim Advocacy Services to victims of crime from November 15, 2022 through September 30, 2023.

(Presenter: Michael Fermin, Chief Assistant District Attorney, 382-3662)

COUNTY AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Provide for the Safety, Health and Social Service Needs of County Residents.

Pursue County Goals and Objectives by Working with Other Agencies and Stakeholders.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Approval of this item will not result in the use of additional Discretionary General Funding (Net County Cost), as this is a non-financial agreement (Agreement). The estimated salary and benefit cost for a Victim Advocate is \$108,522. The position is being funded by the Grant Subaward for the 2022-23 San Bernardino County (County) Victim/Witness Assistance Program (Program) approved by the Board of Supervisors (Board) on October 4, 2022 (Item No. 23). Sufficient appropriation and revenue was included in the Department's 2022-23 budget and will be included in the 2023-24 budget.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In accordance with Penal Code Section 13835 et seq., the Bureau of Victim Services of the District Attorney's Office (Department) has administered the Program for the County since 1980. The Program has received grant funding annually since its inception to provide a wide variety of social services to victims of and witnesses to crimes, including referrals to physical and mental health providers, coordination of volunteer support from the community, and assistance in applying for benefits from the Victims of Crime funds for economic losses.

To reach victims and witnesses of crime more quickly, the Department is continuing its hospital-based and police-based advocacy programs. The Agreement with the City of Ontario (City) will allow the Department to keep a Victim Advocate at the City's Police Department. The Victim Advocate will continue to provide all mandatory and optional services, under California Penal Code 13835.5 to include crisis intervention, resources and referrals, California Victim Compensation Board (Cal VCB) application assistance, emergency funeral/burial assistance to families, emergency relocation assistance and, in limited circumstances, provide

timely death notification support with law enforcement personnel.

Job duties will also include responding to crime scenes (once secured) upon request of law enforcement and providing immediate assistance to victims, witnesses and their families. Responding soon after a crime is essential to assist victims and witnesses that may be experiencing a wide range of emotions and feelings who may also need emergency services such as food, shelter and clothing.

The City will continue to provide an outfitted office space, office supplies, printing capability, and internet capability so that the Victim Advocate can access the Department's case management system. They will continue to train the Victim Advocate on their procedures and if needed, continue to provide a computer specifically for the needed purpose. The City will also continue to provide a separate waiting area for victims or witnesses of crime.

On March 17, 2022, California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) released its Request for Application (RFA) for Program grant funding for the current period of October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023. This grant funding is only available to past year recipients of the Victim Witness Assistance grant. The estimated annual cost of one Victim Advocate position for Ontario was included in the 2022-23 Victim/Witness Assistance Program grant application to Cal OES, approved by the Board on June 14, 2022 (Item No. 28).

A non-financial agreement between the Department and the City from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022, was approved by the Board on October 5, 2021 (Item No. 31), as part of the Grant Subaward for the 2021-22 County Program. The current Agreement with the City will be in effect for the remainder of the grant period and renewed in successive years as funding allows. The Department expects grant funding to continue and will renew the Agreement to match the grant period. If funding is reduced or Program goals change, the City has the option to end advocacy services or to fund the costs of the Victim Advocate position.

PROCUREMENT

N/A

REVIEW BY OTHERS

This item has been reviewed by County Counsel (Katherine Hardy, Deputy County Counsel, 387-5455) on October 17, 2022; Finance (Kathleen Gonzalez, Administrative Analyst, 387-5412) on October 27, 2022; and County Finance and Administration (Robert Saldana, Deputy Executive Officer, 387-5423) on October 28, 2022.