



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 5/18/2021

File #: 21-547

To: Board of Supervisors

From: District Attorney

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Authorization for the District Attorney to Execute any and all Documents Necessary to Administer, Modify, Amend and Reapply for Funding Made Available by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services through the Unserved/Underserved Victim Advocacy and Outreach Program (4/5 Vote Required)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Ratify the District Attorney's execution and submission of any and all documents necessary to accept, administer, which includes any amendments and extensions, thereof, modify and reapply for funding made available by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services through the Unserved/Underserved Victim Advocacy and Outreach Program for the second through fourth quarters of fiscal year 2019-2020 and the first through third quarters of fiscal year 2020-2021 (requires 4/5 vote);
2. Authorize the District Attorney to execute any and all documents necessary to accept, administer, which includes any amendments and extensions, thereof, modify and reapply for funding made available by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services through the Unserved/Underserved Victim Advocacy and Outreach Program for the remainder of calendar year 2021 (requires 4/5 vote); and
3. Authorize the District Attorney to execute any and all documents necessary to apply for any additional funding that may be made available by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services through the Unserved/Underserved Victim Advocacy and Outreach Program (requires 4/5 vote).

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

State of California Office of Emergency Services, Victims of Crime Act, Budget Unit 1100-291
District Attorney - Underserved Victim

DISCUSSION:

In September 2019, the Humboldt County District Attorney's Office submitted an application for non-competitive annual funding made available by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) through the Unserved/Underserved Victim Advocacy and Outreach Program for

the second through fourth quarters of fiscal year 2019-2020 and the first through second quarters of fiscal year 2020-2021. This application was submitted in response to the annual application necessary to maintain the terms of the 2016 competitive grant award of the Unserved/Underserved Victim Advocacy and Outreach Program for a 5-year non-competitive term. The funding is available through the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), which are federal funds managed and dispersed annually to eligible counties by Cal OES. The annual application was approved for \$218,750 in VOCA federal funding. This award amount was approved during the fiscal year 2019-2020 and fiscal year 2020-2021 budget processes.

In October 2020, the District Attorney's Office submitted an application for remaining funding of the five-year non-competitive grant for calendar year 2021. The annual application was approved in March 2021 for \$228,052 in VOCA federal funding.

Funding received from Cal OES through the Unserved/Underserved Victim Advocacy and Outreach Program has allowed the District Attorney's Office to provide increased direct services and enhanced safety of victim and witness populations in Humboldt County who historically have been underserved due to race, socio-economic status, disability or sexual orientation. Services provided include, without limitation, crisis intervention, emergency assistance, resource and referral assistance, direct counseling/therapy, claim assistance, property return, orientation to the criminal justice system, court escort, presentations and training for criminal justice agencies, public presentations and publicity, case status/disposition, notification of family/friends, employer notification/intervention and restitution. All of these services are mandated by California Penal Code Sections 13835.4 through 13835.5. Other direct services that are not mandated, but are provided, include, without limitation, temporary restraining order assistance, providing crime prevention information, witness notification and funeral/burial arrangements.

Accordingly, it is recommended that the Board authorize the District Attorney to execute any and all documents necessary to accept, administer, which includes any amendments and extensions, there of, modify and reapply for grant funding made available by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services through the Unserved/Underserved Victim Advocacy and Outreach Program for the second through fourth quarters of fiscal year 2019-2020, the first through third quarters of fiscal year 2020-2021 and the remainder of calendar year 2021. The delay in bringing these items before the Board was due to temporary changes in departmental operations due to restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as relocating the Victim Witness office twice during this past year.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Approval of the non-competitive grant award allows the County of Humboldt to be reimbursed for services performed in accordance with the scope of work described in the grant application in an amount up to a maximum of \$218,750 for the period of Oct. 1, 2019 through Dec. 31, 2020. This funding supplied salary and benefits totaling \$101,607 along with operating expenses of \$55,703. The program reverted \$61,440 allocated for salaries and benefits for a victim witness program specialist. Due to the multiple office moves, office space limitations due to COVID-19 precautions and longer recruitment process the District Attorney's Office was unable to successfully fill the vacancy.

Approval of the grant award will also allow the County of Humboldt to be reimbursed for services performed in accordance with the scope of work described in the grant application up to a maximum of \$228,052 for the period of Jan. 1, 2021 through Dec. 31, 2021. Funding will be received by budget unit 1100-291 District Attorney - Underserved Victim Advocacy. There will be no impact to the General Fund.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

The recommended actions support the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Framework by seeking outside funding sources to benefit Humboldt County needs, providing community-appropriate levels of service and investing in county employees.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

California Governor's Office of Emergency Services

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board may choose not to approve the grant award. However, this alternative is not recommended as it would cause a loss of anticipated revenue for the County of Humboldt. Furthermore, it would leave the community, as well as the region, without the funding to support the provision of services to victims and witnesses of crime in Humboldt County.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Grant Award Letter and application for the period of October 1, 2019 through December 31, 2020
2. Grant Award Letter and application for the period of January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: C-18
Meeting of: May 14, 2019
File No.: 19-710