



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: District Attorney
Department No.: 021
For Agenda Of: August 18, 2020
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Director: Joyce E. Dudley, District Attorney, x82308
Contact Info: Megan Rheinschild, Victim-Witness Program Director, x82408
SUBJECT: Agreement Renewal with California Victim Compensation Board (CalVCB) to Provide
Emergency Funds for Crime Victims; Agreement No. S20-023

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: N/A

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Adopt a Resolution approving, ratifying, and authorizing the District Attorney to renew an Agreement with the California Victim Compensation Board (CalVCB) to provide reimbursement of expedited payment of funeral/burial expenses, crime scene clean-up expenses, and emergency domestic violence and sexual assault relocation expenses for the period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023; and
- b) Determine that the above action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(4), because it consists of government funding mechanisms or other government fiscal activities, which do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment, and approve the filing of a Notice of Exemption on that basis.

Summary Text:

Through this agreement with CalVCB, the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Victim-Witness Assistance Program staff assists qualifying victims by paying expenses on an emergency basis when the applicant would suffer substantial financial hardship if the payment was not made. Victim-Witness claims staff processes eligible applicant claims, and authorizes the immediate payment of funeral and burial expenses, crime scene clean-up expenses, and relocation expenses for victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault. Claims are paid from a County revolving trust account directly to the service provider and/or the victim. Staff then processes and submits claims to CalVCB, and CalVCB issues reimbursements to the District Attorney's

Office to replenish the trust account. Claims are reviewed and evaluated to ensure the reimbursement amounts do not exceed the amounts authorized in State Statute. This program is a critical service to victims in crisis, and is recommended for continuation.

Per the CalVCB Agreement, the District Attorney is required to maintain written documentation on file showing authorization by the Board of Supervisors for the District Attorney to sign the Agreement. In order to meet state deadlines and properly receive the anticipated allocation to the revolving fund account, the District Attorney preliminarily executed the revolving fund agreement pending formal authority from the Board of Supervisors. The purpose of this Board Letter is to request that the Board formally authorize the District Attorney to sign the Agreement with CalVCB to provide reimbursement of expedited payment of funeral/burial expenses, crime scene clean-up expenses, and emergency domestic violence and sexual assault relocation expenses for the period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023.

Background:

Since Fiscal Year 1987-88, the Office of the District Attorney has contracted with the California Victim Compensation Board (formerly the California Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board) to verify claims for victims of serious crimes in order to obtain reimbursement for losses suffered as a result of those crimes. Following the sudden death of a loved one, families are often placed under significant financial hardship due to the cost of funeral/burial expenses. Typically, these types of services providers are unable to wait until CalVCB reimbursement claims have been paid to receive their payments.

In January 1999, CalVCB established an agreement with the Office of the District Attorney, which enabled the Victim Witness Assistance Program to provide immediate payment of a victim's funeral/burial expense directly to the service provider through a County trust account, thereby alleviating the surviving family's financial burden. Effective July 2000 and 2002, the program was mandated to provide emergency relocation funds to victims of domestic violence. It was later expanded to include victim reimbursement for crime scene clean-up expenses, and emergency relocation expenses for victims of sexual assault.

During the prior agreement period of July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2020, a total of \$165,423 in funeral/burial expenses were paid to victims of violent crime and replenished by CalVCB.

Fiscal Analysis:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this agreement. To establish a revolving fund account, CalVCB advanced the District Attorney's Office \$25,000.00 in Fiscal Year 2000-01 to pay qualifying claims as authorized by Government Code section 6504. An additional \$40,000.00 was awarded in Fiscal Year 2019-20, and we expect these funds to become available as part of the revolving fund account in Fiscal Year 2020-21. The revolving fund is replenished on an expense reimbursement basis for the agreement period.

Special Instructions:

Please return Minute Order and one (1) duplicate original Resolution to John DeAlba.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Board Resolution

Attachment B: Agreement No. S20-023

Attachment C: Notice of Exemption

Authored by:

John DeAlba, Department Business Specialist, x82434.