



Legislation Text

File #: 14-2082, Version: 1

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: NOVEMBER 6, 2013

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER/s/

DOCKET TITLE:

Consideration of a Supplemental Grant Application to the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services For the Department of Community and Human Services Sexual Assault Center.

ISSUE: Submission of a one year grant application (CY2014) to the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, in the amount of \$9,317 for the Sexual Assault Center.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Approve the submission of the grant application to the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) for funding in the amount of \$9,317, by the November 15, 2013 grant application due date.
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to execute all documents that may be required.

BACKGROUND: The Sexual Assault Services Program was created by the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 (VAWA 2005) and is the first Federal funding stream solely dedicated to the provision of direct intervention and related assistance for victims of sexual assault. The Sexual Assault Services Program Formula Grant is for a one year funding period, Calendar Year (CY) 2014. In Virginia, the Department of Criminal Justice Services is responsible for administering and monitoring grants with the intent of improving direct services to victims of sexual violence.

The Department of Community and Human Services Sexual Assault Center is currently the only program providing comprehensive specialized services to victims of sexual violence in the City of Alexandria. The Center has been awarded DCJS funding since 1999 and receives the equivalent of 2.3 FTE positions which have been supported since 2000. The current grant award for FY 2014 is \$188,062. This application would supplement the existing grant. The additional funds provided through the Sexual Assault Services Program Formula Grant are designed to supplement other funding sources directed at addressing sexual assault.

DISCUSSION: Sexual assault remains a pervasive and severely under reported crime in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that more than 1 in 3 women (35.6%) and more than 1 in 4 men (28.5%) in the US have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime. Nearly 1 in 10 women in the US has been raped by an intimate partner in her lifetime. One in ten children will experience sexual abuse before the age of eighteen. Sexual assault often has a devastating impact on the quality of a victim's life. Research indicates that sexual assault survivors can experience considerable psychological trauma that often results in depression, suicide attempts, obsessive-compulsive symptoms, and feelings of helplessness and powerlessness. The fear and anxiety, loss of self-esteem, and physical injury caused by sexual assault can affect every aspect of the victim's life, creating impediments to forming and/or sustaining healthy relationships and interfering with the ability to sustain a healthy and meaningful life. Sexual assault impacts not only the primary victim, but also diminishes the quality of life of parents, coworkers, friends, partners, and children. Given the significant potential impact on victims, it is essential that comprehensive services are available to assist survivors with healing from sexual trauma.

The Sexual Assault Center provided comprehensive services to 378 victims of sexual assault during FY 2013. Professional staff and trained volunteers currently provide direct services to victims of sexual assault including a 24-hour hotline, medical and police accompaniment, court advocacy, information and referral, and individual and group counseling. This additional funding would support specialized group therapy for youth who are victims of sexual assault and their non-offending family or household members and funding for staff development and training.

FISCAL IMPACT: The CY 2014 budget for this grant is \$9,317, with no matching funds required. The grant period is January 1, 2014 - December 31, 2014.

The City is responsible for the normal administrative costs associated with this grant. These costs include financial and reporting oversight provided by the administering agency, the Office of Management and Budget and the Finance Department. It should be noted that there are no monies available in the City budget to continue these activities once the grant funds are expended.

ATTACHMENTS: None

STAFF:

Debra R. Collins, Deputy City Manager

Mike Gilmore, Department Director, Department of Community & Human Services (DCHS)

Deborah Warren, Director, Center for Economic Support, DCHS

Jim Fleming, Fiscal Officer III, DCHS

Claire Dunn, Division Chief, DCHS