



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 7, 2015

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MARK B. JINKS, ACTING CITY MANAGER /s/

DOCKET TITLE:

Consideration of a Grant Application to the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) for Rape Prevention Education.

ISSUE: Consideration of a grant application to the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) for funding to develop and expand the Department of Community and Human Services' (DCHS) sexual assault prevention services. The initial period of the contract is March 1, 2015 through January 31, 2016. The contract may be renewed for up to four 1-year periods, contingent on funding

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- 1) Authorize the submission of an application to VDH for funding in the amount of \$46,151 to be used to develop training to give professionals strategies to prevent the perpetration of sexual violence in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) communities; and, to provide information on sexual assault prevention to all youth in the City's schools and youth-serving organizations;
- 2) Approve the increase from a 0.50 FTE to 1.0 FTE to deliver evidence-based sexual violence prevention programming to youth.

Grant funding is expected to be ongoing. Nevertheless, the individual who fills this grant-funded position will be notified that the position may terminate if grant funds become unavailable in the future. The employee will also be required to sign an agreement of understanding about this as a condition of employment at the time they are hired. If grant funding becomes unavailable in the future, outcome data will be analyzed to determine the project's effectiveness and may be used to search for alternative funding and/or to reprioritize current DCHS funding to support the program's continuation. If, however, grant funding becomes unavailable and alternative ongoing funding cannot be secured, the position will be eliminated.; and

- 3) Authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary documents that may be required.

BACKGROUND: DCHS staff was notified on December 19, 2014 of a competitive ongoing funding opportunity from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) for Sexual Assault Centers. The application is due on January 22, 2015.

Sexual violence is a significant public health problem in Virginia due to its impact on the physical, mental and emotional health of those who have been victimized. According to the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS), conducted by the CDC in 2010, the lifetime prevalence of rape by any perpetrator among women was 11.4%, or an estimated 354,000 victims (Black et al., 2011). Furthermore, the NISVS found that 20.9% of men in Virginia had been victims of sexual violence other than rape. According to national data from the same survey conducted in 2011, most perpetrators of rape were male, regardless of the gender of the victim (Breiding et al., 2014). Additionally, the CDC also found that, for the majority of victims of sexual violence, the perpetrators are known to them prior to the episode of violence, as intimate partners, friends, or acquaintances.

Sexual violence, including rape, is preventable. Recognizing this, Congress passed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 1994. This landmark legislation established the Rape Prevention and Education (RPE) program at the CDC. The goal of the RPE program is to strengthen sexual violence primary prevention efforts at the local, state, and national level.

DISCUSSION: This application addresses a critical need for prevention education with an emphasis on adolescents in our community. Almost half of the rapes in the United States are committed against victims under the age of seventeen. Many adolescent rape survivors experience considerable trauma that often results in a variety of psychological problems including depression and eating disorders, which can continue into their adult years. Additionally, young victims often find it difficult to concentrate on their schoolwork and experience feelings of helplessness and powerlessness. The Sexual Assault Center currently employs a part-time (.50 FTE) Outreach/Prevention Specialist to provide sexual violence prevention programming in the City's schools and in youth-serving agencies. This grant, if awarded, would increase the position to full-time which will allow the Sexual Assault Center to increase the number of sessions and youth served. The Sexual Assault Center will also develop training to give professionals strategies to prevent the perpetration of sexual violence in LGBT communities. Further, this grant would enable the Sexual Assault Center to implement community education initiatives regarding sexual violence and its causes.

FISCAL IMPACT: The funding request in this grant application totals \$46,151. There is no match requirement. If grant funding becomes unavailable and alternative ongoing funding cannot be secured, the position will revert to its part-time status.

The City is responsible for the normal administrative costs associated with this grant. These costs include financial and reporting oversight provided by DCHS, the administering agency. Existing administrative staff will provide these functions.

ATTACHMENTS:

None

STAFF:

Debra R. Collins, Deputy City Manager

Kate Garvey, Director, DCHS

Deborah Warren, Director, Center for Children and Families, DCHS

Jim Fleming, Fiscal Officer III, DCHS

Claire Dunn, Division Chief, DCHS