



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 6, 2023

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: JAMES PARAION, CITY MANAGER /s/

FROM: KATE GARVEY, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND HUMAN SERVICES

DOCKET TITLE:

Acceptance of the Grant Award from the Office of Violence Against Women for the Grants to Prevent and Respond to Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Sex Trafficking Against Children and Youth Program.

ISSUE: City Council's acceptance of the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) grant award for the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) to provide prevention services for domestic violence and sexual violence.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That City Council:

1. Authorize the acceptance of the grant award for funding to DCHS in the amount of \$500,000 for the duration of thirty-six months (36) with no match required; for a grant award to provide domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking prevention programming in the City of Alexandria.
2. Approve the addition of one full-time Human Service Specialist II position (1 FTE) and a Prevention Coordinator Consultant to oversee the prevention program consultant that will be fully supported by grant revenues if the competitive request is successful; and
3. Authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary documents that may be required.

BACKGROUND: The funding notice for this grant opportunity was issued by the Department of Justice (DOJ) on February 25, 2022. The Department's Sexual Assault Center (SAC), Domestic Violence Program (DVP) staff learned of this opportunity on March 3. The grant funding supports projects that educate vulnerable children and youth between the ages of 0 and 24 to prevent domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and sex trafficking. The application was due April 7, 2022, and grant awards were announced in October 2022. DCHS has not received this funding before. This grant enables the SAC and DVP team to continue and enhance related work. The timing of DOJ's funding notice release date did not allow staff to meet the docket memorandum deadlines for City Council's March Legislative Sessions for prior approval of the submission of the grant application. City Council will be appropriating the grant funds in the final Supplemental Appropriation Ordinance docketed for introduction on June 13, 2023. This

acceptance memo provides comprehensive grant program information not typically reflected in the funding ordinance.

DISCUSSION: The SAC and DVP staff submitted the grant application requesting the maximum three-year award amount of \$500,000. The proposal included prevention strategies based on current sexual assault prevention research. Sexual and domestic violence are serious societal problems that can have lasting, harmful effects on victims and their families, friends, and communities. Interpersonal violence can and must be prevented. Primary prevention is a set of approaches that can be employed before any sexual violence has occurred to prevent initial perpetration and victimization. Primary prevention includes building an environment that encourages well-being and healthy choices. Preventing sexual and domestic violence includes:

- *Promoting social norms that protect against violence*, like encouraging young people to speak out or act when they see violence happening or the threat of violence and mobilizing boys and girls to be allies to anyone in need.
- *Teaching skills to prevent sexual and domestic violence through social-emotional learning*. In practice this means holding workshops that teach healthy, safe dating and intimate relationship skills to adolescents, promoting healthy sexuality, and empowering young people.
- *Providing opportunities to empower and support girls* through leadership and economic opportunities for girls.

The overall program goal is to provide additional adolescent development and life skills to develop strong self-esteem, healthy values and attitudes about themselves and others, critical decision-making and goal-setting skills, and stress management strategies, resulting in the ability to reduce risky behaviors and impulsive decision-making.

SAC and DVP will continue to employ staff and hire additional staff to administer the project, continue to create a continuum of support and programming for youth and supervise the paid Youth Peer Advocate positions.

Consistent with one of the grant conditions, SAC and DVP will continue existing community-based partnerships to provide evidence-based prevention programs. The partners are:

- *Capital Youth Empowerment Program* - currently serves primarily Black/African American and Latino Youth from Alexandria City High School (ACHS) Main Campus, ACHS Satellite Campus, Community Lodgings, Dunbar Alexandria-Olympic Boys and Girls Club, Department of Recreation, Park and Cultural Activities, Shelter care Program of Northern Virginia, Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Center, Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority and the Seaport Foundation

Safe Space NOVA - currently serves Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) youth from Alexandria City High School (ACHS) Main Campus, ACHS Satellite Campus, Community Lodgings, Dunbar Alexandria-Olympic Boys and Girls Club, Department of Recreation, Park and Cultural Activities, Shelter care Program of Northern Virginia, Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Center, Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority and the Seaport Foundation

This grant application is consistent with both the City Council Strategic Plan (Thriving Children and Youth) and the Alexandria Children and Youth Community Plan 2025 (Goal One).

FISCAL IMPACT: The budget for this grant is \$500,000. The grant period is October 1, 2022, to October 1, 2025, with no required matching funds. 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.

Grant funding will be used for personnel, program facilitation by partner organizations, grant-required training, and supplies/materials. The individuals who fill these grant-funded positions will be notified that the positions may terminate if grant funds become unavailable in the future.

ATTACHMENTS: None.

STAFF:

Kendel Taylor, Interim Deputy City Manager

Federico Gutierrez, Assistant Director, Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS)

Morgan Routt, Director, Office of Management and Budget

Barbara Paulson, Director, Center for Children and Families, DCHS

Raphael Obenwa, Fiscal Officer III, DCHS

Nancy Sarpong, Fiscal Officer II, DCHS

Debra Evans, Division Chief, Sexual Assault Center and Domestic Violence Program, DCHS

Erika Callaway Kleiner, Consultant, DCHS