

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE**  
District Attorney's Office  
Inter-Office Communication

File No. 16-309

Date: May 4, 2016

To: Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman, County Board of Supervisors

From: District Attorney's Office

Subject: Permission to Apply for Additional VOCA Grant Funding and to Accept the Grant if Awarded

We are requesting, pursuant to section 56.06(1) of the county general ordinances, permission to apply for additional Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding of \$140,908 (\$112,727 federal funds + \$28,181 local match) from the Wisconsin Department of Justice, and to accept the additional VOCA grant funding if awarded.

The district attorney's office has a longstanding VOCA grant program that provides funding for some training expenses and the salaries and fringe benefits of 6.0 FTE employees – 3.0 FTE sensitive crime victim advocates in the sensitive crimes unit, 2.0 FTE victim/witness advocates in the crisis response unit, and 1.0 FTE victim witness advocate in the domestic violence unit at the Sojourner Family Justice Center. VOCA funds 80 percent of program expenses with a 20 percent local match requirement.

The Wisconsin Department of Justice, Office on Crime Victims Services, recently announced a competitive round of additional VOCA funding, with an application deadline of May 18, 2016, to provide up to \$15 million in additional VOCA funding to enhance services to crime victims in Wisconsin. Successful applicants will be awarded a VOCA grant for a one-year period, from October 1, 2016, to September 30, 2017, with the possibility of two additional years of continuation funding.

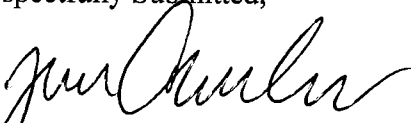
This VOCA grant funding, if awarded, will provide additional funding of \$140,908 (\$112,727 federal funds + \$28,181 local match), from October 1, 2016, to September 30, 2017, consisting of approximately \$138,444 for the salary and fringe benefits of two new district attorney positions - a victim/witness advocate in the domestic violence unit, located at the Family Justice Center, and a new sensitive crimes victim advocate in the sensitive crimes unit - and approximately \$2,464 in computer equipment for the new positions.

In February 2016, the district attorney's office established an office in the Sojourner Family Justice Center to review domestic violence cases and provide services to victims of domestic violence. Supplemental VOCA grant funding provided funding for a new district attorney victim advocate at the Family Justice Center. Legistar File Nos. 15-736 and 16-64. The number of victims served by district attorney staff has increased approximately 32 percent since the Family Justice Center opened, requiring the creation of an additional position of victim/witness advocate at the Family Justice Center to manage the increased caseload and enhance the quality and continuity of services provided to victims of domestic violence.

Several years ago, the courts responded to the increasing number and complexity of homicide and sexual assault cases by adding a fourth court for homicides and sexual assaults, but no new position of sensitive crimes victim advocate was created for the fourth violent crimes court. Currently, 5.0 FTE sensitive crimes victim advocates provide direct victim services in the four courts and during case intake. One position coordinates the work of the unit and represents the office on other community sexual assault response collaborative efforts, reducing the direct victim service this position provides. Human trafficking cases and other complex cases with multiple victims require multiple advocates assigned to a single case to meet the needs of these victims. An additional position of sensitive crimes victim advocate is required to strengthen services to victims of sexual assault during case review and court proceedings in the four violent crimes courts.

Acceptance of this additional VOCA grant funding, if awarded, will have no tax levy effect because the district attorney's office will absorb the local match expenses of approximately \$7,415 within its 2016 operating budget. No appropriation of funds is required in 2016. The district attorney's office will ask the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to include funding for the 2017 portion of this VOCA project in the district attorney's 2017 operating budget.

Respectfully Submitted,



John T. Chisholm  
District Attorney