



LEGISLATIVE MEMORANDUM

TO:	Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
FROM:	Suzanne Sherman, City Manager
THRU:	Mariano Augello, Chief of Police
DATE:	April 4, 2024
RE:	Consideration of submitting an application for Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Victims of Crime Act grant funds.

SUMMARY:

On March 4, 2024, the Office of the Attorney General for the State of Florida announced the notice of availability for the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding from the U.S. Department of Justice. The purpose of the VOCA grant is to support the availability of services to victims of crimes through a reimbursement program. Services are defined as those efforts that respond to the emotional and physical needs of crime victims, assist victims of crime to stabilize their lives after victimization, assist victims to understand and participate in the criminal justice system, and provide victims of crime with a measure of safety and security. Eligibility to apply for VOCA funds is limited to victim assistance programs administered by state or local government agencies or not-for-profit corporations registered in Florida. For over 20 years, the Palm Bay Police Department has been a recipient of VOCA funding for the Victim Service Unit.

For the 2024-2025 grant application the Police Department is eligible to apply for a continuation grant through a condensed application process with up to \$65,259 to cover salary, taxes, and retirement costs for two Victim Advocates (each position covered at 50% VOCA funding). This request also includes \$10,000 in operating expenses for the program. Under the new application process, the Police Department will be able to apply for a budget modification during the 2024-2025 cycle to re-allocate additional funding to salaries and training needs for the program as well as request additional funding that may be needed due to positional changes. The funding cycle for this VOCA grant funding is October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025.

This year's funding cycle opened March 15, 2024 and closed on March 29, 2024, which did not provide enough time for staff to review the application and submit a legislative memo requesting Council authorization to apply. In an effort to avoid missing the opportunity, staff submitted an application on behalf of the City, and are requesting retroactive approval from City Council to move forward with this grant.

REQUESTING DEPARTMENTS:

Police

FISCAL IMPACT:

The estimated fiscal impact is a potential revenue of up to \$65,259 in General Fund Account #001-0000-331- 2005 for partial reimbursement of annually budgeted salaries (001-5025-521-1210), taxes (001-5025-521-2110), retirement (010-5025-521-2210) as well as operating expenses to the 5025 (Victims Services) division (as needed). This impact will not occur until Fiscal Year 2025. There is a potential 25% reduction due to funding limitation, as stated in the notice of funding documentation, if we are impacted necessary budgetary impact documentation will be provided.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Motion to retroactively approve the submission of an application for the Victims of Crime Act grant for 2024-2025.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2024-2025 Notice of Availability
2. Application Draft