

**SEMINOLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

SUBJECT: US Department of Justice, Violence Against Women

DEPARTMENT: Sheriff's Office **DIVISION:** _____

AUTHORIZED BY: Sheriff Don Eslinger **CONTACT:** Penny Fleming **EXT.** 6617

Agenda Date 1/23/2007 **Regular** **Consent** **Work Session** **Briefing**
Public Hearing – 1:30 **Public Hearing – 7:00**

MOTION/RECOMMENDATION:

Board approval for the Sheriff's Office to execute and submit a grant application to the US Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women and authorize the Sheriff to sign future documents relating to the grant.

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of the Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies, and Enforcement of Protection Orders Program is to encourage communities to adopt a coordinated community response and treat domestic violence as a serious violation of criminal law. Victim advocates, police officers, pre-trial service personnel, prosecutors, judges and other court personnel, probation and parole officers, faith based organizations and community leaders are encouraged to work together to create solutions to domestic violence.

Statistics indicate that domestic violence leads to the death of the victim at a high rate. The Seminole County Sheriff's Office is seeking a means to enhance how the criminal justice system addresses violence against women, specifically, the delivery of services to victims, enhancing offender accountability, promoting training for practitioners, and encouraging more informed decision making by judges. We propose to meet these goals through a newly established multi-jurisdictional initiative.

This grant will provide up to \$400,000 for a 24-month project period. This project would include the addition of two to three additional staff members. There are no matching funds required for this program.

Reviewed by:
Co Atty: _____
DFS: _____
Other: _____
DCM: _____
CM: [Signature]
File No. CSO1

Abstract

Seminole County Domestic Violence Initiative

Seminole County is not immune to the tragic problem of Domestic Violence. In 2006 alone, 8 of the County's 17 homicides were a result of Domestic Violence. Between October 2005 and October 2006 alone, there were 2,484 reported Domestic Violence-related events, in Seminole County, with 477 different locations of repeat calls for service.

The Law Enforcement agencies in Seminole County are comprised of a Sheriff's Office and seven local police departments. Coordination and information sharing of domestic violence cases can prove to be challenging as there is no one point of centralization, tracking, follow-up and coordination of these cases. In order to prevent life-imperiling injuries and homicides, in addition to "breaking the cycle of violence" and the effect domestic violence has on a family and a community, this proposal supports enhancing the response of the Seminole County justice system with vigorous policing, to include more physical arrests for domestic violence and less capias request filings, and a heightened proactive approach to violations of protection orders and conditions of pretrial release. This proposal would seek to coordinate efforts and enhance collaborations between the judiciary, prosecution, probation, child protective services, CIT teams, domestic violence service providers and the community.

The Seminole County Domestic Violence Initiatives' primary goal will be to identify and promote an effective manner in which to address domestic violence, in Seminole County, and mitigate the devastating effects it has on the family and community, by developing a coordinated county-wide multi-disciplinary approach of responding to and addressing needs associated with family violence. Enhancing how the criminal justice system responds to and addresses domestic violence would include implementation of the following objectives:

Coordination of effective and efficient delivery of services to domestic violence victims,
Increase offender accountability by enhanced monitoring,
Enhance effective information-sharing tools and technologies to connect all agencies to vital victim/offender information.

Update educational components of domestic violence training to include the 'cycle of violence', underlying issues that contribute to domestic violence, community resources available to domestic violence victims, in addition to intervention techniques, and make this training available to all Seminole County law enforcement agencies and stakeholders.

Hold quarterly forums to encourage open communication and dialogue among the county's private, public and governmental agencies to develop viable solutions to overcoming the problems and needs created by domestic violence in Seminole County.

These objectives will be achieved through successful initiation of collaborations and partnerships with Seminole County's private, public, and governmental agencies.

Proposed Positions for Grant

Domestic: Violence Initiative Coordinator contracted position to be dissolved after the 2 years of the grant (\$27,102 - \$47,424), Non-sworn

Domestic Violence Investigative Analyst (\$23,420 - \$40,996 annually), Non-sworn

Domestic Violence Criminal Investigator (\$33,987 - \$59,477 annually) Sworn

During the grant period, we will be looking at the success of the positions and program to determine if we will request additional grant funds to continue program and if none is available, we will then determine if we will request General Fund to provide funding during the normal budget process. The amount of the General Fund request for the two positions is \$117,955

The Domestic Violence Initiative Coordinator (\$27,102 - \$47,424 contracted position to be dissolved after grant) will be utilized to coordinate data and stats related to the execution of the domestic violence initiative project. The Coordinator will be housed in the Safehouse of Seminole Outreach offices, where he/she will maintain involvement in establishing and maintaining professional contacts and partnerships with public, private and governmental entities providing services to victim and families of domestic violence incidents. The Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating quarterly meetings with all Seminole County law enforcement, probation, and community agencies working in the domestic violence arena, to serve as a forum for listening, communicating, identifying problems and sharing ideas that will result in new responses to ensure victim safety and offender accountability. The coordinator, in partnership with Safehouse of Seminole, will develop a training curriculum for law enforcement officers that addresses the underlying dynamics commonly occurring within domestic violence situations including: the cycle of violence, Duluth model power and control wheel, mechanism for determining aggressors in conflict, lethality assessments, interview techniques, in addition to emphasis the importance of providing community resource information for referral. The team will also develop an educational presentation for communal understanding of domestic violence issues, and use this presentation at locations and communities within Seminole County determined by the Active Impact Monitoring Analyst to be "hot

The Domestic Violence Investigative Analyst ((\$23,420 - \$40,996 annually) position will be developed to be a receptacle for tracking, centralization, and coordination of all law enforcement cases throughout the county. Through the efforts of the "AIM" analyst, violent offenders on pre-trial release can be monitored through the county probation department, on an active monitoring system. The "AIM" analyst will also be able to develop emerging trends or domestic violence geographical "hot spots" for the community educational component of this initiative, and since the analyst will have

access to all county law enforcement agency reports, will be able to identify repeat offenders, regardless of jurisdictional boundaries, more expeditiously. The "AIM" analyst will also be responsible to update the Computer Aided Forms Entry (CAFÉ) system, an online system developed by the Seminole County Sheriff's Office, available to and utilized by all seven municipalities, the State Attorney's Office, and Probation Departments, with information concerning domestic violence persons of interest, such as repeat offenders, probationers, injunction violators and families with children in need of services, as a result of domestic violence environments. The CAFÉ' system person of interest program is a system that will immediately display this pertinent information on mobile CAD (computer aided dispatch) and will be utilized as a tool to monitor and share information among law enforcement, probation, and our judicial partners. By sharing information, tracking and monitoring offenders, potential threats to domestic violence victims, and the community in which they live should be decreased.

As a result of almost one-third of all Seminole County domestic violence cases being transferred to the State Attorney's Office in the form of Capias/Summons request, the **Domestic Violence Criminal Investigator** (\$33,987 - \$59,477 annually) position will perform follow-up investigations on non-arrest cases, to encourage arrest in domestic violence cases, complete arrest case packages by securing additional case evidence, to include progression photographs, 911 tapes, medical records, witness interviews, and the completion of a lethality review. The investigator will also be responsible for reviewing department arrest cases for clarity and completeness, in addition to developing follow up procedures and protocols for capias/summons cases to include collaborating with the State Attorney's Office, Domestic Violence Unit, on high lethality cases, and reduce capias/summons processing time. The Domestic Violence Criminal Investigator will initiate a task force to assist the State Attorney's Office and all Seminole County law enforcement agencies in developing uniform protocols to strengthen and standardized investigation and evidence collection techniques, in domestic violence cases. Additionally, the Domestic Violence Criminal Investigator will be deputized, thereby giving him/her the ability to handle all multi-jurisdictional cases. Also, since some domestic violence incidents have indications of mental health issues, or persons with mental health issues not taking prescribed medications, the Criminal Investigator will assign a CIT (mental health crisis intervention team) officer/deputy to families to develop rapport and intervention strategies.

MEMORANDUM: ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

1703-07-01

TO: Lisa Spriggs, Director of Fiscal Services

FROM: Penny J. Fleming, Chief, Administrative Services

DATE: January 4, 2007

SUBJECT: Grant to Encourage Arrest Policies and Enforcement of Protection Orders

The Seminole County Sheriff's Office is requesting the Board of County Commissioners approval for the Chairman to approve the Sheriff's Office to execute and submit a grant application to the Office of Violence Against Women and authorize the Sheriff to sign future documents relating to the grant.

It is respectfully requested that the approval to apply for the Grant to Encourage Arrest Policies and Enforcement of Protection Orders through the Office of Violence Against Women be placed on the agenda for the Board of County Commissioners meeting on Tuesday, January 23, 2007.

If you have any questions regarding this agenda item, please contact Chief Penny Fleming at 407-665-6617 or Elizabeth Vergara at 407-665-6742.

C: Cindy Coto
County Manager

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