

FY 2026-2027 BUDGET QUESTION
Response to Request for Information

DEPARTMENT(S): Austin Police;

CBQ NO.: 122

REQUESTED BY: (District 3) José Velásquez

DATE REQUESTED: Thursday, July 30, 2026 4:53 PM

DATE POSTED: Tuesday, August 4, 2026

REQUEST:

There's a \$190K cut to Victim Services. What is being cut within this program and how do you expect this to impact victims? (p.402 Volume I)

RESPONSE: The reduction in the Victim Services budget is primarily related to minor changes in personnel and benefits based on attrition and hiring within these positions. The Victim Services budget remains fully budgeted for 50 Victim Services Counselor positions, 1 Community Engagement Specialist, 1 Equity & Inclusion Liaison, 2 Case Managers, and 1 Administrative Senior position. The Victim Services Division continues to provide 24/7 crisis response, trauma-informed advocacy, and ongoing support to victims of crime while maintaining strong partnerships with law enforcement, prosecutors, and community partner agencies. The Division remains committed to ensuring victims have timely access to crisis intervention, safety planning, referrals, criminal justice support, and resources that promote recovery throughout the community.

As part of the proposed social services grants reduction, the Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) project budget was reduced from \$50,000 to \$29,274. This innovative program uses City funding to train 38 community-based mental health therapists in evidence-based trauma treatment and EMDR. As a condition of participation, each therapist commits to providing 50 pro bono therapy sessions for victims of crime in the City of Austin, creating a sustainable network of trained providers while expanding access to specialized trauma treatment at no cost to survivors.