

FY 2023-2024 BUDGET QUESTION
Response to Request for Information

DEPARTMENT(S): Austin Police Department

CBQ NO.: 018

REQUESTED BY: Alter (D10)

DATE REQUESTED: 05/23/2023

DATE POSTED: 07/21/2023

REQUEST: Please confirm that the positions within the Victim Services Division supporting sex crimes, domestic violence, and crisis response, including those funded by soon-to-be expired grants, retain funding with no loss of existing FTEs.

RESPONSE:

The Victim Services Division expects to maintain all existing City funded positions in FY 2023-24.

The Victim Services Division has 10 Counselor positions that are funded through a Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) grant. The grant funded positions are assigned to the Victim Services sex crimes, domestic violence, homicide, and crisis response teams. The current grant project period ends on September 30, 2023. APD submitted a request for an FY24 new VOCA grant project that, if fully funded, would cover salary and benefits for five Victim Services Counselor positions. APD is not expected to be notified about the FY24 grant award until sometime in late August or early September. Because APD could not request funds for a VOCA continuation project, the five positions would have a slightly different scope of work than the existing grant funded counselors. Due to this change, these five positions would continue their work assisting violent crime victims, survivors and their families recover from the effects of victimization while also documenting processes to improve domestic violence call outcomes.

If the grant project for FY24 is awarded by the Governor's Office Criminal Justice Division, 5 counselors funded by the current grant could maintain employment by transferring into these new grant funded positions. The additional 5 positions would need to be absorbed by the City in order for them to maintain employment. There is expected to be \$329k in the FY24 Victim Services budget that can be used to absorb Victim Services grant funded positions if the City allocates three FTEs. Based on an average of current salaries, \$329k would cover salary and benefits for three positions. This would leave the two remaining grant funded positions without funding. If city funding were not secured, those positions would be eliminated.

APD is not expected to be notified about the FY24 grant award until sometime in late August or early September. If awarded, the grant start date would be October 1, 2023. Because there are numerous agencies competing for VOCA funding, it is not guaranteed that APD will receive a full or even partial award for FY24.

