



Recommendation for Action

File #: 23-1343, **Agenda Item #:** 14.

3/23/2023

Posting Language

Authorize an amendment to a contract for continued forensic analysis of biological evidence with Signature Science LLC, to increase the amount by \$617,955 for a revised total contract amount not to exceed \$6,469,955.

[Note: This contract is exempt from the City Code Chapter 2-9C (Minority Owned and Women Owned Business Enterprise Procurement Program); therefore, no subcontracting goals were established].

Lead Department

Financial Services Department.

Client Department(s)

Forensic Science Department.

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$617,955 is available from the State of Texas, Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division, Evidence Testing Grant Program, and the Sexual Assault Evidence Testing Project, for the project period September 1, 2022 - August 31, 2023.

Purchasing Language:

Contract Amendment.

Prior Council Action:

February 16, 2013 - Council approved the original contract, item 27, on an 11-0 vote.

April 25, 2019 - Council approved an amendment, item 30, on an 11-0 vote.

For More Information:

Inquiries should be directed to Jo Gutierrez, at 512-974-2829 or Jo.Gutierrez@austintexas.gov [<mailto:Jo.Gutierrez@austintexas.gov>](mailto:Jo.Gutierrez@austintexas.gov).

Additional Backup Information:

The proposed amendment will allow for the addition of contract authority for the Forensic Science Department to complete grant funded deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) testing of reference samples to compare to suspect DNA identified by the Combined DNA Index System and additional evidence to aid in casework investigations.

The interim solution for DNA services provided by the Department of Public Safety operated Capital Area Laboratory does not have the full capacity to meet all casework demands of the City. The outsourcing of DNA services to contractors is necessary to continue to achieve the following:

- Provide timely response to DNA analysis requests
- Prevent accumulation of DNA backlogs
- Reduce risk to chain of custody and integrity of evidence during transfer

- Maintain compliance with applicable laws to ensure that sexual assault kits are submitted within 30 days to accredited laboratories with the capacity to analyze them within 90 days
- Avail the City and its residents, access to local rush DNA services to address acute public safety events
- Provide local expert consultation to investigators and Case Management Unit
- Provide local, Texas-licensed DNA analysts for affordable and efficient trial preparation and expert testimony

If the proposed amendment is not approved, the City will not meet current DNA caseload demand within the State mandated timeframe for sexual assault kits, the City will forfeit a significant portion of the awarded \$617,955 grant funding for Sexual Assault Evidence Testing, and investigations and/or trial preparations dependent on DNA evidence will be impeded.

Contract Detail:

<u>Contract Term</u>	<u>Length of Term</u>	<u>Current Contract Authorization</u>	<u>Requested Additional Authorization</u>	<u>Revised Total Authorization</u>
Initial Term	2.5 yrs.	\$2,000,000		\$2,000,000
Contract Amendment	5 yrs.	\$3,852,000		\$3,852,000
Proposed Amendment		\$ 617,955	\$617,955	\$ 617,955
TOTAL	7.5 yrs.	\$6,469,955	\$617,955	\$6,469,955

Note: Contract Authorization amounts are based on the City's estimated annual usage.

Strategic Outcome(s):

Safety.