



# County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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June 25, 2021

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair  
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Janice Hahn  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Fesia A. Davenport  
Chief Executive Officer

## **PROTECTING VICTIMS' RIGHTS AND STRENGTHENING VICTIM SERVICES (ITEM NO. 42-E, AGENDA OF FEBRUARY 23, 2021)**

On February 23, 2021, the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed County Counsel, in consultation with the Chief Executive Office (CEO), the District Attorney's Office (DA), and the Sheriff's Department, to provide a legal analysis of the Victims' Bill of Rights Act of 2008 and any other victim-related California laws and a summary of the corresponding County policies and procedures to adhere to said laws; the legal analysis should also consider the impact of pending court cases, if any, including the recent California Supreme Court case, *In re Humphrey*, on victims' rights. Additionally, the CEO was directed to work with the DA to conduct a thorough review of existing resources available to victims, such as the Unclaimed Restitution funds allocated to the DA's Bureau of Victims Services (BVS) and resources from the State's Victims Compensation Board with an aim towards both increasing the number of victim advocates and exploring other ways to enhance the current capacity to provide trauma-informed and multi-disciplinary services in a culturally competent and linguistically appropriate manner. The above information was to be provided in a single report and was granted an extension from the original due date to give a more comprehensive report. County Counsel completed the legal analysis under a confidential Board memo that was submitted under a separate cover.

## **EXISTING RESOURCES AND OPTIONS FOR ENHANCING CAPACITY**

The DA's BVS provides essential services to crime victims and witnesses. Victim Services Representatives (VSR) work in courthouses and police stations and assist victims of crime with crisis intervention, emergency assistance, counseling referrals, court escort and orientation, restitution assistance, returning property, assistance with employers, and case status notification. BVS personnel work with prosecutors and are specially trained to help children, elders, people with disabilities, and victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, and gang crime who have specialized needs.

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 budget for the BVS is \$20.3 million, offset by \$13.8 million in various grant funding as summarized in Attachment A. Attachment B provides a comprehensive report from the DA that details the sources and uses of the \$13.8 million in funding used to support victims' services and outline efforts to explore other potential resources to enhance the DA's current capacity. The report also identifies areas of victims' services that face challenges and provides recommendations on possible solutions to alleviate the strain on victims' services.

The following highlights the recommended next steps and opportunities to enhance the current capacity of victims' services:

- **Fill Vacant Positions in BVS:** BVS currently has 24.0 VSR vacancies that are critically needed positions. These vacancies are a result of ongoing challenges with hiring, onboarding, and retention. The DA will submit, for CEO's consideration, hiring freeze exceptions for these positions. Filling these vacancies will increase capacity and improve BVS's ability to facilitate timely access to services for victims in communities throughout the County, particularly the underserved. The DA will monitor the fiscal impact of any hiring and promotions to ensure that its salaries and employee benefits remain within budget.
- **Evaluate Recruitment and Retention:** Address recruitment and retention issues with the VSR positions by working with CEO to review the qualifications required to serve as a VSR and conduct a classification study. The DA's mission with regard to victims is to emphasize trauma-informed care and services by VSRs that requires a broader review and assessment of the number of positions, qualifications, responsibilities, and level necessary to effectively achieve the DA's objectives. Understanding these elements will be important in addressing the existing recruitment and retention challenges.

- **Unclaimed Victim Restitution Fund (URF):** The URF is funded by unclaimed restitution collected by the County's Probation Department. The balance of the URF is approximately \$600,000. Annual revenue deposits into this fund range from \$3,000 to \$225,000, with a four-year average of \$102,000 annually. Due to the unstable and limited nature of the URF revenue, these funds may be considered a source of one-time funds to support victims. BVS's updated policies, as approved by the Auditor-Controller in April 2020, expanded the expenses covered by the UVRF. CEO will continue to work with the DA to ensure newly implemented policies result in the use of these one-time funds to cover expenses for victims and victims' next of kin for funeral and burial, relocation, food, costs for basic necessities, and security expenses. The DA will also continue to work with the Probation Department to identify, budget, and automatically transfer to the UVRF future unclaimed restitution funds received.
- **AB 109 Funding Request:** In the FY 2021-22 Supplemental Budget phase, the DA will submit a funding request that seeks to strengthen and expand victims' services programs, including restitution collection assistance. The budget request will be evaluated by CEO for recommendation to the Board based on the priorities established in the updated Community Corrections Partnership Plan and available funding levels.
- **Other Grant Opportunities:** BVS will continue to research grant opportunities as Requests for Proposal are released.
- **Collaboration with Other County Departments to Leverage Resources:** BVS recognized the importance of working with other County departments to enhance victim services. Last year, the BVS Director reached out to several County departments to collaborate on providing streamlined victim-focused services and support. Subsequent meetings with the County departments were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is recommended that the BVS resume and institutionalize recurring meetings with relevant departments, including the Department of Mental Health, Department of Health Services, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, Department of Children and Family Services, Department of Public Health, Department of Public and Social Services, Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, and other relevant stakeholders to actively engage interagency cooperation and leverage County resources in order to broaden and strengthen services provided to victims.

CEO will continue to work with the DA to evaluate the hiring and promotion requests to fill critical vacancies in the area of victims' services. Also, given the current economic environment, CEO recommends that the DA further evaluate the ability to reallocate/shift

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funding to victims' services programs from programs that have been eliminated or downsized due to the current policy and program directives of the DA. Any funding considerations to expand victim's programs will be made during the FY 2021-22 Supplemental Budget within the context of the overall budget and numerous competing priorities and requests.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact me or Rene Phillips, Public Safety Cluster, at (213) 893-1478 or [rphillips@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:rphillips@ceo.lacounty.gov).

FAD:JMN:MM  
SW:RP:AP:cg

#### Attachments

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
County Counsel  
District Attorney

Los Angeles County  
District Attorney  
Existing Resources Available for Victims' Services

Program	Funding Agency	Which Bureau?	Description	Grant Performance Period	FY17-18 Annual Funding	Grant Performance Period	FY18-19 Annual Funding	Grant Performance Period	FY19-20 Annual Funding	Grant Performance Period	FY20-21 Annual Funding
County Victim Services Program (XC)	California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)	Bureau of Victims Services (BVS)	XC Grant is to fill gaps in the current provision of victim services by distributing funds to established community-based organizations (CBOs) providing victim assistance to some of the most vulnerable victims – abused children and victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.	07/01/2016 to 06/30/2018	\$5,362,382	07/01/2018 to 12/31/2019	\$3,895,147	01/01/2020 to 12/31/2020	\$3,387,187	01/01/2021 to 12/31/2021	\$2,765,032
Elder Abuse (XE)	California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)	Bureau of Victims Services (BVS)	XE Program is to enhance the safety of elder and dependent adult victims of crime by providing direct services to victims and bridging the gap between elder justice service providers and victim service providers.	Grant started in 2019		01/01/2019 to 12/31/2019	\$200,000	01/01/2020 to 12/31/2020	\$200,000	01/01/2021 to 12/31/2021	\$206,000
Human Trafficking Advocacy (HA)	California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)	Bureau of Victims Services (BVS)	HA Program is to provide funding to Victim Witness Assistance Centers, as defined in the California Penal Code Section 13835.2, to provide dedicated, specialized staff and support services to identify and provide comprehensive services to victims of human trafficking.	10/01/2017 to 12/31/2018	\$187,500	01/01/2019 to 12/31/2019	\$150,000	01/01/2020 to 12/31/2020	\$150,000	01/01/2021 to 12/31/2021	\$154,500
Unservd/Underserved Victim Advocacy and Outreach Program (UV)	California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)	Bureau of Victims Services (BVS)	UV Program will provide direct, comprehensive services and outreach to the underserved victims who are the surviving family members and next of kin of gang homicide victims in the Central County area.	04/01/2018 to 06/30/2019	\$247,914	07/01/2019 to 12/31/2019	\$58,336	01/01/2020 to 12/31/2020	\$175,000	01/01/2021 to 12/31/2021	\$182,442
Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP)	California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)	Bureau of Victims Services (BVS)	VWAP has been the major provider of comprehensive services to victims of crime since 1977. This program was established to create a decentralized, prosecution-based victim assistance program throughout Los Angeles County to assist victims of all types of crime.	10/01/2017 to 09/30/2018	\$5,363,581	10/01/2018 to 09/30/2019	\$6,381,574	10/01/2019 to 09/30/2020	\$6,380,902	10/01/2020 to 09/30/2021	\$6,550,399
Criminal Restitution Compact (CRC)	California Victim Compensation Board (Cal VCB)	Bureau of Victims Services (BVS)	Provides services to ensure appropriate restitution orders are in place of all offenders at the time of sentencing in criminal court, and helps crime victims determine their unreimbursed losses for court dates of direct restitution to the victim.	7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018	\$331,155	7/1/2018 to 6/30/2019	\$331,155	7/1/2019 to 6/30/2020	\$331,155	7/1/2020 to 6/30/2021	\$331,155
Claims Verification Program (CVU)	California Victim Compensation Board (Cal VCB)	Bureau of Victims Services (BVS)	The objective of the Claims Verification Program is to provide services to victims of crime, process compensation claims filed by victims, pay funeral/burial expenses for families of victims of crimes and pay relocation costs for victims of domestic violence on behalf of the State.	7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018	\$2,316,228	7/1/2018 to 6/30/2019	\$2,316,228	7/1/2019 to 6/30/2020	\$2,316,228	7/1/2020 to 6/30/2021	\$2,316,228
Unclaimed Victim Restitution	Probation	Bureau of Victims Services (BVS)	Under Government Code section 50050, restitution collected by the County on behalf of victims which remains unclaimed (1) for a period of three years and (2) after the Treasurer-Tax Collector has published required notice (hereinafter referred to as Unclaimed Restitution), reverts to the County and may be used for victim services. This Board has recognized the District Attorney's Bureau of Victim Services as the major provider of comprehensive services to victims in the County with its Victim Witness Assistance Program.								\$612,836 *
Restitution Enhancement Program (REP) (AB 109)	County	Bureau of Victims Services (BVS)	Restitution Enhancement Program (REP) support prosecution efforts to obtain restitution orders. Paralegals assigned to REP assist victims with compiling information and documentation to determine their crime-related losses for the court order.	7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018	\$697,000	7/1/2018 to 6/30/2019	\$663,000	7/1/2019 to 6/30/2020	\$700,000	7/1/2020 to 6/30/2021	\$710,000
TOTAL ANNUAL FUNDING					\$14,505,760		\$13,995,440		\$13,640,472		\$13,828,592

NOTE:  
\* Reflects balance as of March 8, 2021.





## **LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**

# **Protecting Victims' Rights and Strengthening Victims' Services**

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**George Gascón  
District Attorney**

**PROTECTING VICTIMS' RIGHTS AND STRENGTHENING VICTIMS' SERVICES****Prepared by:****Los Angeles County District Attorney  
George Gascón, District Attorney**

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**Introduction:**

The Los Angeles County Office of the District Attorney is committed to supporting victims in their journey to become survivors. The expansion of victim services is a priority for the District Attorney. This emphasis on victim services includes extending support to victims and families regardless of immigration status; extending support to families of individuals killed by police; and working to create a Victim Emergency Fund to assist survivors impacted by violent crime with expenses not covered by the California Victim Compensation Board, and to do so without requiring cooperation as a condition of offering services.

Turning this victim-centered priority into a reality requires Victim Services Representatives (VSRs) with trauma-informed training to assist an expanded group of victims and an amount of VSRs that is necessary to serve a County of over ten million people. It also requires shoring up current resources and programs that support victims and enable victims to recover for their crime related losses. The critical first steps to attain this objective are to fill existing personnel vacancies, increase the number of personnel to support expanded victims' services, obtain additional funding, and explore other changes to help personnel keep pace with the needs of an expanded group of victims. This should include integrating personnel with social work experience into our victim services program to assist with addressing the complex traumas experienced by many victims and the vicarious trauma experienced by VSRs.

Presently, other than the recovery for crime related losses afforded by the California

Victim Compensation Board (CalVCB) or via an order of restitution by a court upon completion of a criminal case, victims of crime have few avenues to turn for financial assistance to cover the services they need as they recover from crime related trauma and to cover their crime related expenses and costs.

A victim of crime, whether a personal or a property crime, may be impacted in the short term or long term because crime is also a financial event. Recovery from these crimes can be challenging and significantly impact the financial well-being of victims, especially when the losses were substantial, but also when the victims' losses were minimal. Victims of crimes who lack insurance or similar resources can rely mainly on two major resources for financial support.

First, victims can rely on financial support, if eligible, from CalVCB, which manages the State Restitution Fund, for up to a maximum assistance amount of \$70,000. The restitution fine is the chief source of funds for the State Restitution Fund which helps victims and survivors cover economic losses incurred as a direct result of crime. Decreases in this fund due to waivers of the restitution fine or reduced collections translate into a reduction in the State Restitution Fund available to assist victims. Eligibility of victims for CalVCB assistance is conditioned upon victim cooperation, and reimbursement for property losses is generally disallowed. CalVCB also does not allow assistance to families of individuals killed by law enforcement unless it is determined that a crime was committed.

Second, when there are no allowable victim compensation funds, or compensation funds are inadequate to cover victims' losses, after a suspect is apprehended, charged and convicted, victims may obtain an order of restitution, which if it is collected, will provide them monetary relief to make them whole. For AB109 victims alone, since 2015, the restitution orders have totaled approximately \$178,669,053, primarily for property-related



crimes. Under these conditions, seeking alternative funding sources to assure services to an expanded group of victims, and to ensure support for victims' recovery of crime-related losses through restitution orders, assume a greater importance.

A) Existing Programs and Resources Available to Victims

1. **County Victim Services Program (XC)**: The purpose of the XC Grant is to fill gaps in the current provision of victim services by distributing funds to established community-based organizations (CBOs) providing victim assistance to some of the most vulnerable victims – abused children and victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The total grant award for 2020 was \$3,387,187 and was funded by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). The District Attorney's Office (DA) administers the grant and serves as a pass-through organization between CalOES and the CBOs, providing programmatic and fiscal support to the CBOs through the Bureau of Victim Services (BVS) and Bureau of Administrative Services (BAS). The CBOs include 16 Domestic Violence Centers, 7 Rape Crisis Centers, and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA). These CBOs were selected by the XC Victim Services Steering Committee in 2016. BVS renewed this grant for the 2021 calendar year. The grant award was \$2,765,032, allocated as follows: Domestic Violence Centers – \$82,000 per Center; Rape Crisis Center - \$108,000 per Center; CASA – \$307,797; LADA Personnel – \$309,235; and Los Angeles County Restitution Information System (LACRIS) Maintenance Costs – \$80,000.
2. **Elder Abuse (XE)**: The purpose of the XE Program is to enhance the safety of elder and dependent adult victims of crime by providing direct services to victims

and bridging the gap between elder justice service providers and victim service providers. The total grant award for 2020 was \$200,000 and was funded by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). The funding primarily goes to staffing of two Victim Services Representatives (VSRs), specifically assigned to serve the elder abuse population. In 2020, VSRs provided services to 195 victims of elder abuse and/or neglect. Services included information and referral; personal advocacy/accompaniment; emotional support or safety services; shelter/housing services; and criminal/civil justice system assistance. XE VSRs work closely with the District Attorney's Victim Impact Program (VIP), Los Angeles County Elder Abuse Forensic Center, law enforcement agencies, Adult Protective Services, Los Angeles Public Guardian, mental health agencies, social service agencies, financial institutions, medical professionals, local churches, universities, colleges and other community agencies to promote coordinated public and private community efforts to identify, assist, and provide elder abuse victims services in their areas. BVS renewed this grant for the 2021 calendar year. The grant award was \$206,000.

3. **Human Trafficking Advocacy (HA)**: The purpose of the HA Program is to provide funding to Victim Witness Assistance Centers, as defined in the California Penal Code Section 13835.2, to provide dedicated, specialized staff and support services to identify and provide comprehensive services to victims of human trafficking. The total grant award for 2020 was \$150,000 and was funded by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). The funding primarily goes to staffing of two Victim Services Representatives (VSRs), specifically assigned to serve the human trafficking population. In 2020, VSRs provided services to 98

victims of sex trafficking and 18 victims of labor trafficking. Services included information and referral; personal advocacy/accompaniment; emotional support or safety services; shelter/housing services; and criminal/civil justice system assistance. HA VSRs identify human trafficking victims through introducing the program and themselves to service providers, prosecutors, law enforcement, taskforces, and other government and community-based agencies involved in human trafficking in each service area. BVS renewed this grant for the 2021 calendar year in the amount of \$154,500.

4. **Unservd/Underserved Victim Advocacy and Outreach Program (UV):**

The UV Program provides direct, comprehensive services and outreach to the underserved victims who are the surviving family members and next of kin of gang homicide victims in the Central County area. The total grant award for 2020 was \$175,000 and was funded by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). The funding primarily goes to staffing of three Victim Services Representatives (VSRs), specifically assigned to serve the underserved population in gang homicide cases. In 2020, VSRs provided services to 873 underserved victims of gang homicide. Services included information and referral; personal advocacy/accompaniment; emotional support or safety services; shelter/housing services; and criminal/civil justice system assistance. UV VSRs maintain close communication with law enforcement agencies and other direct service providers to coordinate the delivery of victim services. The UV program raises public awareness about the service needs for family members of gang homicide victims through presentations to community groups, service clubs, and schools. BVS renewed this grant for the 2021 calendar year. The grant award was also \$182,442.

5. **Victim Witness Assistance Program (VW)**: The VWAP has been the major provider of comprehensive services to victims of crime since 1977. This program was established to create a decentralized, prosecution-based victim assistance program throughout Los Angeles County to assist victims of all types of crime. The grant performance period for this grant is different from the aforementioned grants: it is October to September. The total grant award for performance period October 2019 to September 2020 was \$6,380,902 and was funded by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). The funding primarily goes to staffing of 55 Victim Services Representatives (VSRs), assigned to serve the victims of crime not specifically listed above. During the recent performance period, VSRs provided services to 25,374 victims of crime. Services included information and referral; personal advocacy/accompaniment; emotional support or safety services; shelter/housing services; and criminal/civil justice system assistance. VW VSRs identify victims of crimes through prosecutors, law enforcement, and other government and community-based agencies in each service area. BVS renewed this grant for the grant performance period of October 2020 to September 2021. The grant award was \$6,550,399. BVS will apply again to renew this grant upon release of the Request for Proposal (RFP) by CalOES.
6. **Criminal Restitution Compact (CRC)**: The purpose of the compact is to provide services to ensure appropriate restitution orders are in place for all offenders at the time of sentencing in criminal court, and helps crime victims determine their unreimbursed losses for court dates of direct restitution to the victim. The compact follows the County's fiscal year – July to June. The total funding for FY2019-2020 was \$331,155 and was funded by the California Victim Compensation Board

(CalVCB). Of note, the total expenditure for that fiscal year was \$617,688. The total funding for the current FY2020-2021 is \$331,155. The funding primarily goes to staffing of 5 paralegals assigned to BVS's Restitution Enhancement Program (REP). The paralegals assisted prosecutors with obtaining 208 restitution orders for CalVCB in the amount of \$1,850,932.61. The paralegals work on approximately 60 cases per week at various stages of the criminal proceedings.

7. **Claims Verification Program (CVU)**: The objective of the Claims Verification Program is to provide services to victims of crime, process compensation claims filed by victims with the State, such as to pay funeral/burial expenses for families of victims of crimes and to pay relocation costs for victims of domestic violence. The program follows the County's fiscal year – July to June. The total funding for employee salaries and benefits for FY2019-2020 was \$2,316,228. This amount was funded by the California Victim Compensation Board (CalVCB). The funding primarily paid for a staff of 35 employees, including 20 Victim Services Representatives (VSRs), assigned to BVS's Claims Verification Unit (CVU). During FY2019-2020 year, CVU processed 15,677 applications for victims of crime, which translated into compensation awards of \$21,582,553 to victims in Los Angeles County.
8. **Unclaimed Victim Restitution Fund (URF)**: Under Government Code section 50050, restitution collected by the County on behalf of victims of crime which remains unclaimed (1) for a period of three years and (2) after the Treasurer-Tax Collector has published required notice (hereinafter referred to as Unclaimed Restitution), reverts to the County and may be used for victim services. This Board has recognized the District Attorney's Bureau of Victim Services (BVS) as the major

provider of comprehensive services to victims in the County with its Victim Witness Assistance Program. The purpose of this fund is to assist victims of crime, as defined by the California Constitution and statutes, with financial losses and expenses not otherwise available elsewhere.

The URF is funded by unclaimed restitution collected by the County's Probation Department. This fund is an accumulation of one-time funds over multiple years. The fund includes the Board's January 19, 2016 directive that transferred approximately \$426,000 of unclaimed victim restitution funds from the Probation Department to the Unclaimed Restitution Fund. Annual revenue deposits into the fund range from \$3,000 to \$225,000, with a 4-year average of \$102,000 per year. Due to the unstable and limited nature of the revenue that supports the Unclaimed Restitution Fund, these funds may be considered a source of one-time funds to support victims.

The current balance is \$612,836. A pilot plan for the funds originally permitted their use to cover expensive parking fees for victims and witnesses summoned downtown to court. Funds continued to outpace the minimal demand. Thereafter, BVS created a protocol, approved by the Auditor-Controller in April 2020, which expanded the expenses that could be covered by the fund. To date, approximately \$90,000 of the funds have been allocated to cover expenses for victims and victim's next of kin for funeral and burial expenses, relocation expenses, food, costs for basic necessities, and security expenses.

9. **AB109 Funding:** FY 2020-21 final base adopted budget allocated \$710,000 to fund five paralegals to support prosecution efforts to obtain restitution orders. The paralegals are assigned to the BVS's Restitution Enhancement Program



(REP). They assist victims with compiling information and documentation to determine their crime-related losses for the court order.

Once the paralegal determines the crime-related losses, the paralegal shares the information to the assigned prosecutor, who then communicates the amount to the defense attorney and the court. Each paralegal works on approximately 80 cases per week at various stages of the criminal proceedings.

#### B) Other Potential Resources to Enhance Current Capacity

1. **Fill Vacant Victim's Services Representatives (VSR's):** There are 24.0 vacant positions in BVS which are critically needed positions, and 7.0 more that were lost in the County's curtailments that need to be restored – that if filled, are estimated to provide assistance to 30 cases/victims per VSR at any given time. These vacancies are a result of ongoing challenges with hiring, onboarding, and retention. Filling these vacancies will improve BVS's ability to facilitate timely access to BVS's services for victims in communities throughout the County. There are regional courthouses, Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) stations, and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) stations that lack VSRs and that would benefit from a VSR on site. More importantly, highly impacted trauma centers treating victims of violent crime are presently underserved and would benefit from a VSR on site to help meet the service needs of the underserved population. These sites include the following medical facilities, among others: Los Angeles County/USC Hospital; Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Hospital; and Harbor UCLA Medical Center.

In addition, on March 31, 2020, the Board approved a hard-hiring freeze, excluding

critical health and safety positions, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Central oversight of hiring practices is necessary to implement countywide cost containment measures and uniformly monitor expenditures across departments. The current economic contraction and potential further reductions in available funding require the County to take precautions and limit spending.

The ongoing hiring freeze requires departments to obtain the CEO's approval on a case-by-case basis to fill vacancies or promote staff. This improves fiscal control and encourages departments to submit for consideration only those critical staffing requests that are supported by strong business rationale.

The DA will work with CEO to: 1) evaluate hiring exceptions of critical positions that support victims' programs within DA's existing budget; and 2) review the qualifications required to serve as a VSR and conduct a classification study of the VSR position for increased compensation.

2. **AB 109 Funding**: In April 2011, the California Legislature passed the Public Safety Realignment Act (AB 109), which transferred responsibility for non-violent, non-serious, and non-sex offenders from the State to its counties. Victim services programs also qualify for AB 109 Community Corrections Subaccount funding under the statutorily prescribed definition of Public Safety Services, which includes but is not limited to "employing and training public safety officials," "providing adult protective services," "preventing child abuse," "providing mental health services to children and adults," and "preventing, treating, and providing recovery services for substance abuse." The Chief Executive Office evaluates departmental funding requests during the Supplemental Changes budget phase. As such, the DA intends to submit an AB 109 funding request to strengthen victims' services programs during the Supplemental Changes budget phase, which will be evaluated by the

Chief Executive Office for recommendation to the Board of Supervisors given the priorities established in the updated Community Corrections Partnership Plan and available funding levels.

3. **Other Grant Opportunities:** BVS continues to research grant opportunities as Request for Proposals are released and determine whether BVS qualifies for a grant.

4. **Collaboration with Other County Departments to Leverage Resources:**

BVS recognized the importance of working with other County departments to enhance victim services. Last year, the BVS Director reached out to several County departments to collaborate on providing stream-lined victim-focused services and support. Subsequent meetings with the County departments were derailed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. BVS plans to resume this interagency cooperation to leverage County resources in order to broaden and strengthen services to victims.

## **Conclusion**

The Bureau of Victim Services remains committed to serving victims and expanding victims' services to help them become survivors. However, in order to do this, it is vital that additional victim services positions are filled and created, and that the funding to support victims' services is increased.