

Strengthening Victim Services in Los Angeles County

On February 23, 2021, the Board of Supervisors approved a [motion](#) directing County Counsel, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer (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 in addition to any other victim related laws.

The Board also directed the CEO to work with the DA to conduct a thorough review of existing resources available to victims in order to increase the number of victim advocates and explore other ways to enhance the current capacity to provide trauma informed and multi-disciplinary care to victims of crimes.

The DA’s Bureau of Victim Services plays a vital role in the Los Angeles County’s (County) justice system through its delivery of essential services to crime victims including counseling, court escort and orientation, return of property, emergency assistance, and case status notification—to name a few— to assist victims in becoming survivors.

MOTION

MITCHELL _____

KUEHL _____

HAHN _____

BARGER _____

SOLIS _____

On June 25, 2021, the CEO submitted a report back titled: “Protecting Victims’ Rights and Strengthening Victim Services” which identified existing resources and options to enhance capacity for victims’ services. These included filling vacant positions in the Bureau of Victim Services; evaluating recruitment and retention strategies; expanding expenses for the Unclaimed Victim Restitution Fund, AB 109 funding request seeking to strengthen and expend victims services programs, exploring additional grant opportunities, and collaboration with other County departments to leverage resources.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE the Board of Supervisors adopt the recommendations contained in the June 25, 2021, report entitled “Protecting Victims’ Rights and Strengthening Victim Services,” specifically to fill vacant positions in the Bureau of Victim Services; evaluate recruitment and retention strategies; expand expenses for the Unclaimed Victim Restitution Fund; facilitate the transfer of eligible unclaimed restitution funds from the Probation Department to the District Attorney; explore AB 109 as a funding stream for victims’ services; explore additional grant opportunities; and collaborate with other County departments to leverage existing resources and take the following additional steps to further strengthen victim services.

I, FURTHER, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors instruct the Chief Executive Officer, working with the District Attorney’s Office, and the Probation Department to take the following additional actions in order to accomplish the recommendations set forth in the June 25 report:

1. Report back to this Board in 14 days on the progress to exempt the Bureau of Victim Services from the hiring freeze in order to fill the 24 critically needed

Victim Services Representatives;

2. Report back to this Board in ~~60~~90 days on the review of the qualifications required to serve as a Victim Services Representative and a classification study. The study should include an analysis of the qualifications, responsibilities, and level necessary to effectively achieve the District Attorney's objective of trauma-informed care and services provided by Victim Services Representatives;
3. Ensure newly implemented policies result in the use of one-time Unclaimed Victim Restitution Funds to cover expenses for victims and victims' next of kin for funeral and burial, relocation, food, costs for basic necessities, and security expenses; and,
4. ~~Submit a funding request for~~ Report back to the Board during the FY 2021-22 2022-23 Supplemental Recommended Budget phase that will seek with funding to expand victim's services programs, including restitution collection assistance.

I, FURTHER, MOVE, that the Board of Supervisors request the District Attorney's Bureau of Victim Services to:

1. 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 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, and submit quarterly progress reports of these efforts to the Board; and,
2. Continue to research grant opportunities to augment funding needs.

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