

**MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL**

November 18, 2025

**Increasing the Family Assistance Program Reimbursement Cap**

On July 9, 2019, the Los Angeles County (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) approved the motion, *Supporting Families Following an In-Custody Death or Fatal Use of Force*,<sup>1</sup> to establish the Family Assistance Program (FAP) under the Department of Mental Health (DMH). FAP was designed to provide compassionate, trauma-informed support to families grieving the loss of a loved one who died while in custody or following an encounter with personnel from the County Sheriff's Department.

As part of the pilot, FAP deployed trained family advocates to assist during next-of-kin notifications by offering immediate crisis intervention, mental health first aid, and guidance in navigating complex systems of care. These advocates also connected families to County and community-based resources. Additionally, at the request of families, FAP provided up to \$7,500 in financial assistance to help offset burial expenses, thereby easing some of the financial burden that often compounds the emotional trauma of unexpected and tragic loss.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/137723.pdf>

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**MOTION**

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In April 2022, the Board approved the motion titled, *Permanent Funding and Implementation of the Family Assistance Program*,<sup>2</sup> establishing FAP as a permanent program. In July 2023, FAP was restructured and relaunched under the Department of Public Health's Office of Violence Prevention (DPH-OVP) to strengthen its mission of providing coordinated, compassionate support to impacted families.

Under DPH-OVP, a team of licensed clinical social workers provide crisis intervention, bereavement support, system navigation, and linkage to County and community resources in coordination with partner departments. To date, the team has served 95 families and, when requested, has provided up to \$7,500 toward burial and funeral expenses.

This amount was initially set to match the California Victim Compensation Board (CalVCB) reimbursement cap, which remained at \$7,500 for decades. However, in recognition of rising funeral and burial costs, CalVCB increased its reimbursement maximum to \$12,818 in the 2022–2023 fiscal year<sup>3</sup>.

Despite this increase, DPH-OVP's FAP reimbursement cap remains at the outdated \$7,500 level, creating unnecessary financial hardship for grieving families who often must cover substantial burial expenses out-of-pocket.

Data from DPH-OVP demonstrates that while nearly half of families opt for cremation—which generally remains within the current cap—those choosing traditional burials with internment face expenses that far exceed the current cap, leaving them without sufficient resources during an already devastating time. Aligning the County's burial assistance amount with the current CalVCB standard will ensure more equitable, and realistic support, consistent with the County's commitment to dignity, compassion and trauma-informed care for all families served. It also ensures that County support keeps pace with the actual costs that grieving families bear.

Funding for this increase is available through the existing AB 109 allocation designated for funeral and burial assistance within the DPH-OVP FAP budget. Given

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<sup>2</sup> <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/168232.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://victims.ca.gov/news-releases/new-state-funding-increases-benefits-for-crime-victims/>

current spending patterns—including the high proportion of families opting for cremation—no additional funding will be required to implement this change.

**I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

1. Direct the Executive Director of the Department of Public Health's Office of Violence Prevention (DPH-OVP) to increase the Family Assistance Program's reimbursement cap from \$7,500 to \$12,818 to align with the current California Victim Compensation Board reimbursement standard, using existing AB 109 funds allocated for funeral and burial assistance.
2. Instruct the Executive Director of DPH-OVP to update all related protocols, procedures, and outreach materials to reflect the revised reimbursement cap amount and ensure that families are informed of the change.
3. Direct the Executive Director of DPH-OVP to report back to the Board in writing in six months on the implementation status, including any fiscal or administrative impacts associated with this adjustment, and the efforts of DPH-OVP Social Workers to inform and connect eligible families to this benefit.

(YV/VG)