



MEMORANDUM

To: Galveston County Commissioners' Court
From: Betsy Thomas, Grants Administrator
Court Date: February 3, 2025
RE: District Attorney's Office
FY 2026 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Grant Application
Violence Against Women Prosecutor and Protective Order Attorney

BACKGROUND

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) offers grant programs to promote coordinated, multidisciplinary approaches to improving the criminal justice systems to respond to violent crimes against women, including domestic violence, commercial sex trafficking, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking.

Since 2009, Galveston County has operated a Violence Against Women Prosecutor Program through the District Attorney's Office. This program designates a specific prosecutor position to handle cases involving violence against women. Although this position is not the only prosecutor who handles this type of cases, the grant program provides the County an opportunity to have a position specifically for this type of case.

In 2017, Galveston County added a Violence Against Women Protective Order Attorney to elevate the three-month backlog. By adding this position, the County was able to expedite the process to obtain Protective Orders for Galveston County residents.

Congress allocates funding to each state for VAWA programs and the Office of the Governor's Public Safety Office – Criminal Justice Division administers the funds for the state. Funds are distributed to the local Councils of Government (COGs) such as the Houston-Galveston Council (HGAC) here in our region, who regulates the grant caps and prioritizes applications for funding recommendations through their Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC). The CJAC has raised the grant request cap from \$80,000 to \$150,000.



SUMMARY

In FY 2025, Galveston County combined two VAWA grants into one as required and funded the program at a 50/50 match to account for the more than 10% increase in our application.

For 2026, staff recommends a 54/46 match to meet the funding need for both position and the HGAC Regional VAWA application cap of \$150,000.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Grant	Grant Amount	Match Amount	Total Project Cost
FY 2024 VAWA Prosecutor	\$99,284.50	\$42,550.50	\$141,835.00
FY 2024 PO Attorney	\$99,592.61	\$39,682.56	\$132,275.17
FY 2024 TOTALS	\$198,877.11	\$82,233.06	\$274,110.17
FY 2025 Combined VAWA Application	\$138,276.00	\$138,276.00	\$276,552.00
FY 2026 Combined VAWA Application	\$150,000.00	\$126,159.00	\$276,159.00

RECOMMENDATIONS

Professional Services requests the Court to consider approval to submit the FY 2026 VAWA grant application to the Office of the Governor’s Public Safety Office – Criminal Justice Division and authorize the County Judge to sign supporting resolution.

ATTACHEMENTS FOR WET SIGNATURE

- FY 2026 VAWA Application Resolution