

**COUNTY OF SONOMA
AGENDA ITEM
SUMMARY REPORT**

Clerk of the Board Use Only
Meeting Date **Held Until**
 / / / /
Agenda Item No: **Agenda Item No:**
 _____ _____

Department: District Attorney, Sheriff-Coroner, Health Services, Human Services

() **4/5 Vote Required**

Contact:
Sally McCarthy

Phone:
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Board Date:
4/21/09

Deadline for Board Action:

AGENDA SHORT TITLE: National Crime Victims' Rights Week

REQUESTED BOARD ACTION:

Resolution proclaiming April 26, 2009 through May 2, 2009 as National Crime Victims' Right Week in Sonoma County

CURRENT FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT

EXPENDITURES

ADD'L FUNDS REQUIRING BOARD

Estimated Cost \$

Contingencies \$
(Fund Name:)

Amount Budgeted \$

Unanticipated Revenue \$
(Source:)

Other Avail Approp. \$
(Explain below)

Other Transfer(s) \$
(Source:)

Additional Requested: \$

Add'l Funds Requested: \$

Explanation (if required):

Prior Board Action(s): Resolutions approved proclaiming National Crime Victims' Rights Week for each of the past five years.

Alternatives - Results of Non-Approval: N/A

Background:

On behalf of the many public and private agencies working together to improve services, and to prevent and respond to crime in our community, four departments – the District Attorney, the Sheriff’s Department, the Human Services Department and the Department of Health Services – have come together to seek a proclamation declaring April 26-May 2, 2009 as National Crime Victims’ Rights Week in Sonoma County.

The week of April 26, 2009 through May 2, 2009 has been designated as National Crime Victims’ Rights Week. For the past twenty-eight years, communities across America have joined together annually to recognize the needs and rights of crime victims and survivors. In an effort to provide recognition to crime victims, Sonoma County is joining other counties and states throughout the nation in showing a commitment to community awareness events.

Sonoma County District Attorney’s Office

Historically, victims of crime have been under served in a system geared to prosecute and protect the rights of the criminal. During the mid-seventies, the state of California began realizing that the trauma and financial loss experienced by victims should be acknowledged and began developing programs to address the problem. The California Legislature mandated that counties establish programs to assist crime victims who suffer the ill effects and trauma of crime. Section 13835.2 of the California Penal Code mandates the scope of services that must be offered. The Sonoma County Victim Assistance Center was established in 1978 to serve victims of crime. In 1982, the people of California approved an initiative that mandated The Victims’ Bill of Rights.

The Office for Victims of Crime within the United States Department of Justice awarded a grant of \$5,000 to the Sonoma County District Attorney’s Office in 2004 to promote public awareness for victims of crime. Sonoma County was one of only 60 jurisdictions across the nation to receive this federal grant.

Attachments: Resolution

On File With Clerk:

CLERK OF THE BOARD USE ONLY

Board Action (If other than "Requested")

Vote:

Background: (Continued)

The District Attorney's Office, in conjunction with the Probation Department, the Sheriff's Department, law enforcement agencies throughout the county and our county, and community partners, including Health Services, Human Services, the YWCA, and UASA offer a wide variety of services to crime victims in Sonoma County. The victims are offered help from the time that the crime occurs until they no longer need assistance. This support system provides financial, emotional, and physical assistance. These services help in the healing process.

Sonoma County Sheriff's Department

The Sonoma County Sheriff's Department receives approximately 36,000 911 calls for assistance a year, which results in thousands of victim contacts. The Sheriff's Department provides services to these victims such as emergency first aid, criminal investigation, assistance with criminal justice process, and referrals to victim assistance resources. The Department believes strongly in developing partnerships with other government agencies and community organizations to offer a support network for the benefit of the victim. There are currently several programs that the Sheriff's Department offers to a victim, and with the developed partnerships a variety of avenues are available which will benefit their recovery.

Sonoma County Department of Health Services

The Department of Health Service's Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) was created in 1995. SART provides specialized, coordinated services to the people of Sonoma County in a caring, supportive, collaborative and professional manner. SART is a multidisciplinary team of trained professionals. The department provides medical oversight and trained forensic examiners 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Department staff works closely with the Human Services Department, the District Attorney's Office, local law enforcement, and community partners, such as the YWCA of Sonoma County and United Against Sexual Assault (UASA), to provide services to victims and families through recovery.

Sonoma County Human Services Department

In February 2009, 776 children and 264 adults received support from the Human Services Department because they were victims of abuse or were at substantial risk for abuse. Child and dependent adult victims of abuse suffer physical abuse, sexual abuse or emotional abuse. Dependent adults may also suffer from financial exploitation. For both children and dependent adults, HSD staff coordinate a comprehensive spectrum of services to ensure stable and nurturing homes, a supportive environment including counseling, education, and healthcare, and a sense of personal empowerment and hope.

REQUESTED BOARD ACTION:

Approve resolution proclaiming April 26, 2009 through May 2, 2009 as National Crime Victims' Right Week in Sonoma County