



AGENDA SUBMITTAL TO SOLANO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

ITEM TITLE		BOARD MEETING DATE	AGENDA NUMBER
Adopt a resolution authorizing the transfer from the Probation Department to the District Attorney's Office of 5.0 FTE in the Office of Family Violence Prevention effective June 26, 2011 to facilitate OFVP's relocation to the District Attorney's Office		June 14, 2011	14
Dept:	Probation	Supervisorial District Number ALL	
Contact:	Isabelle Voit		
Extension:	4803		
Dept:	District Attorney		
Contact:	Don duBain		
Extension:	3016		
Published Notice Required?		Yes _____	No <u> X </u>
Public Hearing Required?		Yes _____	No <u> X </u>

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Chief Probation Officer and District Attorney recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt a resolution authorizing the transfer from the Probation Department to the District Attorney's Office of 5.0 FTE in the Office of Family Violence Prevention effective June 26, 2011 to facilitate OFVP's relocation to the District Attorney's Office.

SUMMARY:

The Office of Family Violence Prevention (OFVP) was created by the Board of Supervisors in 1998 and was developed as a program under the County Administrator's Office. On December 14, 2004, the Board approved a recommendation to transfer the OFVP to the Probation Department. On July 1, 2005, the OFVP completed its move to the Probation department and has operated as a stand-alone division within the Probation Department. Although the OFVP and Probation Department interact with many of the same agencies and both have a family violence victim focus, the Probation Department primarily assists victims through offender accountability and restitution collection while the OFVP provides direct victim services. The Probation building is ill-suited to meet with victims as offenders are regularly waiting in the lobby and there is always a chance that the victim and offender could be in the lobby at the same time. Although the Probation lobby is staffed with security personnel, it is not ideal to have victims and offenders together in a small space.

The District Attorney's Office is situated such that OFVP staff can meet with clients confidentially and safely with little chance that the offender would also be present. The District Attorney (DA) and Chief Probation Officer believe that the mission of the OFVP better aligns with the DA than with Probation and that the Solano Family Justice Center (SFJC) would benefit from being under the authority of the DA. Adding the OFVP to the District Attorney's Office presents the opportunity for strengthening the DA's victim advocacy efforts.

FINANCING:

Moving costs for this transfer will be absorbed within OFVP's FY2010/11 budget. The FY2011/12 Supplemental Budget for OFVP includes \$14,103 for the cost of occupancy of 2,331 square feet of space in the District Attorney's office during FY2011/12. The District Attorney's Office budget was reduced by an equal amount to reflect the transfer of occupancy from District Attorney operations to OFVP operations. The OFVP budget is not integrated with the Probation Department Budget and this Item is not intended to integrate the OFVP budget with the District Attorney's budget. OFVP's Recommended Budget for FY2011/12 totals \$894,178, with a Net County Cost of \$351,160 and non-General Fund revenue of \$543,018.

DISCUSSION:

On December 14, 2004, the Board of Supervisors approved placing the OFVP under the administrative authority of the Chief Probation Officer. The reason for this move included a belief that the OFVP would dovetail with other programs provided by the department. The discussion included the fact that the Probation Department, as an agent of the Court, assures availability of treatment programs for offenders including those with domestic violence histories. It was believed that the involvement of the OFVP with the Court and other criminal justice and social service agencies placed the Chief Probation Officer in the best position to assure coordination among these agencies and providers. On July 1, 2005, the OFVP completed its move to the Probation Department. Since that time, the OFVP has operated as a stand-alone division within the Department and despite attempts to integrate functions, it is clear that the OFVP and Probation have different approaches that do not necessarily dovetail effectively. As stated previously, Probation primarily assists victims through offender accountability and restitution collection while the OFVP provides direct victim services. Due to the very nature of Probation's work, offenders must wait in the lobby to meet with their assigned Probation Officer. This makes it impossible for OFVP staff to meet with victims in the Probation building because there is always a chance that victims and offenders could be in the lobby at the same time.

Beginning in late 2006, the OFVP has been the lead agency in conducting a feasibility study and subsequent strategic planning for a Solano Family Justice Center (SFJC). The District Attorney and Chief Probation Officer have taken leadership roles in SFJC planning efforts as the strategic planning group sought to model other successful Family Justice Centers (FJC's) in California and across the Nation. Two of the most successful California FJC's are Alameda County, run by the District Attorney's Office; and the San Diego FJC, which is not only the National Model, but was started under the auspices of the City Attorney's Office.

The District Attorney has indicated his strong support for a violence prevention approach within the DA's Office. The DA clearly recognizes the significant fiscal savings that can be realized by reducing violence, reducing crime and reducing the need for prosecuting potentially highly involved cases, such as homicides that require significant resources. The OFVP has particular expertise in family violence prevention and can inform, train, collaborate and consult with DA staff in prevention approaches.

The District Attorney's Office currently supervises the Victim Witness Unit (VWU). Many of the cases handled by the VWU involve family violence and the VWU works with many of the same victims and OFVP staff. Additionally, in SFJC strategic planning sessions, the District Attorney has indicated a desire to collocate the VWU with the OFVP staff at the SFJC so that resources can be shared, cases can be streamlined and better outcomes can be achieved – for successful prosecutions and for victims. Current funding levels for both the VWU and the OFVP are creating unique challenges for serving the ever increasing number of victims seeking services. By moving

the current acceleration toward full implementation of the SJFC, it is recommended that the transfer of administrative authority over the OFVP take place as soon as possible.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board of Supervisors could choose:

- [1] Not to approve the transfer of the OFVP to the District Attorney's office. This is not recommended as the proposed move presents opportunities for strengthening victim advocacy efforts and the Solano Family Justice Center project would benefit from being under the authority of the DA; and/or
- [2] Direct the OFVP to move to a different department. This is also not recommended as the mission, vision and goals of the OFVP and the DA's Office are closely aligned. Unlike other county departments, both the DA and the OFVP share the dual role of supporting victim safety and offender accountability.

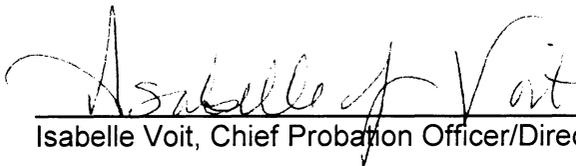
OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The County Administrator's Office has reviewed this submittal and Human Resources has reviewed and approved the resolution to amend the position allocation list to move OFVP staff to the DA's Office. The Department of Human Resources consulted with SEIU, the affected bargaining group, and they are in agreement with this change.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENT
RECOMMENDATION

DEPARTMENT HEAD SIGNATURE:



Isabelle Voit, Chief Probation Officer/Director of Probation



Don du Bain, District Attorney