



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** R-1819-68, **Version:** 2

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**RESOLUTION R-1819-68:** A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, APPROPRIATING \$14,021 FROM THE GENERAL FUND BALANCE TO BE USED AS MATCHING FUNDS BY THE NORMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR THE HIRING OF A VICTIM ADVOCATE (AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT) AS REQUIRED BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE/OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS (DOJ/OJP) VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT (VOCA) GRANT.

**BACKGROUND:** On September 11, 2018, the City of Norman accepted a grant in the amount of \$56,082 from the United States Department of Justice/Office of Justice Programs (DOJ/OJP) through the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) and authorized through the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) for the purpose of hiring a Victim Advocate and purchasing associated equipment.

This funding (Sub-Grant No. **2018-VOCO-NORMAN CI-031**) allows the Norman Police Department to ensure that necessary referrals are made and that these essential services are provided during the initial phase of an investigation at a time when the trauma is acute and the need is pressing. The focus is to reach out to those victims who are not child-victims, domestic violence/stalking/sexual assault victims, and to those with cases that either are never prosecuted, or may take months before the case is turned over to the District Attorney. Our goal is to ensure that every victim of a violent crime has access to services, is given assistance from the earliest opportunity, and has a voice throughout an investigation.

While funding in an amount of up to \$56,082 has been awarded, it requires a 25% City of Norman match, or \$14,021.

**DISCUSSION:** As stated in the initial grant application, by accepting the grant award the City of Norman agreed to match up to \$14,021 of the associated costs with hiring a Victim Advocate. At the time of acceptance the Norman Police Department did not recommend appropriating general revenue funds for this purpose as we had not yet finalized the grant or initiated the hiring process.

We anticipate having the Victim Advocate position filled in mid-January and have already started to prepare a dedicated workspace with the necessary office equipment. General funds are necessary as we move forward with the grant and seek re-imburement through the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) for expenditures associated with this hire.

While VOCA funding may be renewed each year with the demonstration of program achievement, this funding source should be considered temporary. We anticipate having access to this level of funding for approximately 3 years. After that time the City of Norman should be prepared to either continue with the position using VOCA funds (if available) or creating a permanent position.

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended that \$14,021 be appropriated from the General Fund Unreserved Fund Balance account (010-0000-253-2000) into and expended from the following accounts:

- Employee Salaries (account 010-6021-421.20-01): \$11,456;
- Benefits (account 010-6021-421.29-01): \$876;
- Telecommunications Equipment / Computers (account 010-6021-421.53-02): \$425;
- Telecommunications Equipment / Software (account 010-6021-421.53-04): \$401;
- Maintenance and Supplies / Telecommunications (account 010-+6021-421.32-08): \$95;
- Employee Travel / Workshops and Seminars (account 010-6021-421.46-04): \$768.