
Issue Brief – Domestic Violence Shelters

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

DHS-09-19

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTERS

The Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) requests \$409,500 from the General Fund (\$288,200 ongoing and \$121,300 one-time) for an increase to cover operating expenses at Domestic Violence Shelters and to replace discontinued grant funding for the Domestic Violence Information Line for FY 2009. The Analyst recommends that \$45,000 from the General Fund be placed on the priority list for the Domestic Violence Link or the highest priority identified by the Division of Child and Family Services and the Utah Domestic Violence Council. It is further the recommendation of the Analyst that the Division of Child and Family Services receive an additional appropriation of \$70,900 from the Domestic Violence Restricted Account for Domestic Violence services. The Analyst does not recommend the request for operating expenses be placed on the priority list because of the lack of supporting documentation.

OBJECTIVE

One of the purposes of DCFS is to provide domestic violence services in accordance with federal law (UCA 62A-4a-103 (3)).

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

There are 16 domestic violence shelters in operation providing a safe short-term refuge for victims of domestic violence. The services available vary from 24-hour crisis hot line, 24-hour mobile crisis teams, adult and child support groups, rape crisis intervention, education and training, assistance with protective orders, court advocacy, household goods assistance, bilingual services, transportation, child care and information and referral services. DCFS operates three shelters in rural communities and contracts for services with 13 others. In FY 2007, 3,985 clients were served in domestic violence shelters.

This request is comprised of two components: a request for inflationary increases in operating expenses; and funding to replace grant funding that was discontinued for the Domestic Violence Information Line.

Domestic Violence Operating Expenses

According to the budget request, Domestic Violence Shelters are experiencing inflationary increases in utilities, insurance and transportation. In addition, due to the growth in services provided, the cost of client care and training has increased.

The Analyst requested documentation to support the budget request for increases in operating expenditures. The Domestic Violence Shelters were unable to provide sufficient documentation.

Domestic Violence Information Line

The Domestic Violence Link connects victims of domestic violence with available services. Between January and June of 2007, 2,446 people accessed the link system. This system operates 24/7 and until October 1 of 2007 was funded with a grant through the Attorney General's Office which is no longer available. DCFS is requesting \$45,000 in General Fund for FY 2009 to continue the information link system.

Domestic Violence General Fund Restricted Account

The Domestic Violence General Fund Restricted Account receives 4.5 percent of surcharges paid on all criminal fines, penalties and forfeitures. A portion of the collections (0.5 percent) goes to the Attorney General's Office for training. Four percent of funds go to DCFS for services to victims of domestic violence. This account can be adjusted by \$70,900 based on projections of revenues for FY 2009.

RECOMMENDATION

The Analyst recommends that \$45,000 from the General Fund be placed on the priority list for the Domestic Violence Link or the highest priority identified by the Division of Child and Family Services and the Utah Domestic Violence Council. It is further the recommendation of the Analyst that the Division of Child and Family Services receive an addition appropriation of \$70,900 from the Domestic Violence Restricted Account for FY 2009 for Domestic Violence services. The Analyst does not recommend the request for operating expenses be placed on the priority list because of the lack of sufficient supporting documentation.