


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 27, 2011
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 
SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF GRANT APPLICATION TO THE ALLSTATE FOUNDATION FOR A PROGRAM FOR SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS

ISSUE: Consideration of Grant Application to the Allstate Foundation for a Program for Sexual and Domestic Violence Survivors

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council authorize the City Manager to:

1. Submit the grant application to the Allstate Foundation in the amount of \$20,000 (Due July 29, 2011); and
2. Execute all documents that may be required.

BACKGROUND: Alexandria is home to many people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning. According to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, 2.93% of the households in the City of Alexandria are lesbian or gay. Since "household" was used instead of population, the actual percentage of LGBTQ persons in Alexandria is unknown and likely much higher. Research estimates that 25% to 33% of LGBTQ relationships are abusive, which is the same percentage as in heterosexual relationships. These abusive relationships more frequently go undetected and unreported. Further, people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning are just as likely as people who identify as heterosexual to experience sexual violence from a family member, acquaintance, partner or stranger. A survivor may be afraid to get help because they may be worried that service providers will be insensitive to their concerns.

To address these concerns, the Alexandria Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Programs applied for and received funding from the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) in calendar years 2007 and 2008 to improve services and outreach to survivors who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning. A LGBTQ Victim Services Advisory Board comprised of committed community members and City staff was established so LGBTQ survivors receive informed and respectful treatment and feel more comfortable requesting services. The project has continued through additional grant funding. An application was made to DCJS in October 2010, approved by City Council, but the grant was not funded due to insufficient funding. An application for FY 2012, which was submitted to the Family and Children's Trust Fund and approved by City Council on January 25, 2011, has been awarded in the amount of \$15,000 to partially fund the project through June 30, 2012.

To date, more than 1,500 service providers, most of them City employees, have been trained on how to create a safe and inclusive environment for LGBTQ clients, including: the Alexandria Police Department, Office of the Sheriff, the former Department of Human Services and Office on Women, the Fire Department, Community Services Board, and other City and non-profit agencies. School personnel, including teachers, administrators, nurses, and social workers have also been trained. The leaders of nearly all of these agencies are incorporating LGBTQ cultural competency training in their departmental new employee curriculum.

Staff collects evaluations at all trainings, and the overwhelming response is positive. Nine out of ten of these participants said that after training they were more aware of how to create a safe and inclusive environment for LGBTQ clients. In every training service providers comment on how important the material is, that they have never had access to such training, and that this makes them a more competent service provider.

DISCUSSION: The Sexual and Domestic Violence Programs are seeking funds for a part-time Outreach and Prevention Specialist (OPS) for a one-year project to institutionalize training for allied professionals serving sexual and domestic violence survivors who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning. This program, with the guidance of the LGBTQ Victim Services Task Force, will 1) expand training for allied professionals working with LGBTQ survivors and conduct "train the trainer" workshops; and 2) conduct outreach about sexual and domestic violence services.

GRANT PERIOD: The 12-month grant period is October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012. The grant application is due July 29, 2011.

FISCAL IMPACT: Award of up to \$20,000 for the one-year program. No local match is required. The program will end in one year and no additional City funds have been committed to continue the program.

STAFF:

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