**File #:** 21-5444, **Version:** 1

**Department:** Justice Administration Department
**Department Head/Elected Official:** Dr. Ana Yáñez Correa

**Regular or Supplemental RCA: Regular RCA**
**Type of Request:** Policy

**Project ID (if applicable):**
**Vendor/Entity Legal Name (if applicable):**
**MWDBE Participation (if applicable):**

**Request Summary (Agenda Caption):**
Request for discussion and approval of the Harris County U-Visa certification model policy.

**Background and Discussion:**

On November 10, 2020, Commissioners Court approved a motion made by Commissioner Adrian Garcia instructing the Justice Administration Department (JAD) to produce a model policy for law enforcement agencies to use when processing Form I-918B (i.e., U-Visa certification) requests and promoting said procedure to local law enforcement agencies. On March 30, 2021, a model policy and report were presented to Commissioners Court.  During that Court, JAD was instructed to meet with advocates to get their feedback to the policy and make changes to the policy incorporating this feedback.  JAD has updated the U-Visa Report and the Model U-Visa Policy following meetings with victim service advocates to receive their feedback and ensure Harris County's approach is survivor-centered.

**Expected Impact:**

If the policy is approved as the Harris County U Visa Certification Model Policy, this can perhaps provide more consistency within the County around U-Visa certification.  Harris County agencies could adopt this more survivor-centered policy for the completion of Form I-918B.

By approving this policy, Commissioners Court will show their commitment to Harris County residents who are immigrant survivors of crime and to make the U-Visa certification process better within the County.

Additionally, establishing a model policy would increase efficiency in data collection and allow JAD to begin collecting the necessary data to establish a county-specific U-Visa data dashboard.

**Alternative Options:**

Not to adopt the policy (and keep the current inconsistencies and challenges that are a concern around U-Visa certification in Harris County).

**Alignment with Goal(s):**

 X_ Justice and Safety
 _ Economic Opportunity
 _ Housing
 _ Public Health
 _ Transportation
 _ Flooding
 _ Environment
 _ Governance and Customer Service

**Prior Court Action (if any):**

| Date | Agenda Item # | Action Taken |
|---|---|---|
| 3/30/2021 | 224 | Report and policy were presented during this Court session.  JAD was instructed to meet with survivor advocates and incorporate their feedback and proposed changes to the model policy and report. |

**Location:**
Address (if applicable):
Precinct(s): Countywide

| Fiscal and Personnel Summary | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Service Name** | - | **FY 21-22** | **Estimates** | |
| | | | **FY 22** | **Next 3 FYs** |
| **Incremental Expenditures** | | | | |
| Labor Expenditures | | - | - | - |
| Non-Labor Expenditures | | - | - | - |
| **Total Incremental Expenditures** | | - | - | - |
| **Funding Sources** (General Fund, PIC Fund, Debt or CP, Grants, or Other - Please Specify) | | | | |
| Existing Budget | - | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - | - |
| Total Current Budget | | - | - | - |
| Additional Budget Requested | - | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - | - |
| | - | - | - | - |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total Additional Budget Requested | - | - | - |
| **Total Funding Sources** | - | - | - |
| **Personnel** (Fill out section only if requesting new PCNs) | | | |
| Current Position Count for Service | - | - | - |
| Additional Positions Requested | - | - | - |
| **Total Personnel** | - | - | - |

**Anticipated Implementation Date:**  As soon as possible.  We plan to meet with Harris County agencies to discuss the policy and why they should adopt it as their own.  We will also work with them on implementation and any challenges resulting from this.


**Emergency/Disaster Recovery Note:** Not an emergency, disaster, or COVID-19 related item

**Contact(s) name, title, department:** Dr. Veronyka James, Survivor of Crime Researcher, Justice Administration Department, Dr. Ana Yáñez Correa, Interim Director, Justice Administration Department


**Attachments (if applicable):**  U-Visa:  A Critical Tool for Law Enforcement to Support Survivors of Crime and Build Community Resiliency Report  (policy is Appendix E)