

2021 Annual Report



VIOLENT CRIME AND DRUG CONTROL COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Florida Violent Crime and Drug Control Council, in partnership with state, county and local law enforcement, continues to play an integral role in supporting criminal investigations, helping ensure the safety and security of Florida's communities and visitors. Since its inception in 1993, the Council has initiated and supported legislation to improve the overall quality of life for Florida's citizens and visitors.

The Council oversees four individual funding categories: violent crime investigations, drug control and money laundering investigations, criminal gang investigations, and victim/witness protection reimbursement. Due to budgetary constraints, the Council has only funded victim/witness protection reimbursement requests since September 2008.

In 2021, the Legislature continued authorization for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) to use trust funds to support victim/witness protection reimbursement requests. The Council funded nine victim/witness protection and relocation reimbursement requests totaling \$38,334.08 in 2021. These totals decreased compared to 2020 funding of 13 victim/witness protection reimbursement requests totaling \$43,311.88.

FDLE did not submit a FY 2022-23 legislative budget request to fund reimbursement grants for the upcoming fiscal year. It has not been determined if FDLE will be able to fund the victim/witness protective services for FY 2022-23 to reimburse state and local agencies for expenses that meet the criteria set by the Council.

Overview of Funding and Council Meetings

Pursuant to Florida Statutes, the Council held one open conference meeting in September 2021 to address the future of the Council and victim/witness protection reimbursement cases funded.

The Council's six-member Victim and Witness Protection Review Committee held two closed conference meetings in June and September of 2021. The Committee approved nine reimbursement funding requests for a total of \$38,334.08.

FDLE continues to maintain the Council's website as a valuable source of information for the public and law enforcement community. The website contains information on Council membership, upcoming meetings, regional contacts, online forms and applications, and step-by-step application procedures.

The website address is <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/VCDCC/VCDCC-Home.aspx>.



VIOLENT CRIME AND DRUG CONTROL COUNCIL

General Membership

Pursuant to Section 943.031, Florida Statutes, the Council is comprised of 14 members. Eight are standing members by virtue of their positions and six (two sheriffs, two police chiefs, one state attorney and one medical examiner) are appointed by the Governor. Council members receive no compensation, but are reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses. Standing members serve as long as they remain employed in the same capacity that served as the basis for their appointment and members appointed by the Governor serve two-year terms. FDLE continues to provide the support necessary to assist the Council in the performance of its duties.

Eight Standing Members (per statute)

- Chief Financial Officer
Honorable Jimmy Patronis – Designee: Director Simon Blank
- Attorney General
Honorable Ashley Moody – Designee: Deputy General Counsel Rachel Kamoutsas
- Commissioner of Education
Richard Corcoran – Designee: Program Specialist Julie Collins
- Public Safety Policy Coordinator, Executive Office of the Governor
Melissa Smith
- Secretary of Juvenile Justice
Josefina Tamayo – Designee: Inspector General Robert Munson
- Secretary of Corrections
Mark S. Inch – Designee: Director of Institutional Operations & Intelligence Hope Gartman
- President of the Florida Network of Victim/Witness Services or designee
This organization no longer exists.
- FDLE Commissioner
Richard L. Swearingen – Designee: Special Agent in Charge Mike Phillips

Six Governor Appointed Members:

- Sheriff A.J. “Tony” Smith – Franklin County Sheriff’s Office
- Sheriff William Snyder – Martin County Sheriff’s Office
- State Attorney - Vacant
- Police Chief Robert Hicks – Leesburg Police Department
- Police Chief – Vacant
- Medical Examiner Russell Vega – District 12 Medical Examiner’s Office



Status of Membership

All of the members listed below continue to serve, even though their terms have expired. Applications for new members and those wishing to continue to serve currently reside in the Governor's Gubernatorial Office awaiting approval.

- State Attorney – Vacated in January 2021
- Medical Examiner Dr. Russell Vega, District 12 Medical Examiner's Office – *term expired on 6/30/2017*
- Police Chief –Vacated in 2017
- Police Chief Robert Hicks, Leesburg Police Department – *term expired on 6/30/2019*
- Sheriff A.J. "Tony" Smith, Franklin County Sheriff's Office – *term expired on 6/30/2019*
- Sheriff William Snyder – Martin County Sheriff's Office – *term expired on 6/30/2019*

2021 FISCAL SUMMARY

Florida Statutes require all agencies awarded Council funds to complete a report on all active/open violent crime and drug funded cases every six months. The completed report, which is provided to FDLE by the receiving agency, must detail the expenditure of Council funds during the reporting period. If a previously open/active case is closed during the reporting period, the agency must submit a final report and closing letter to FDLE. All unspent funds must be returned to the State of Florida. There were no open/active violent crime or drug cases in 2021.

The chart below summarizes the 2021 victim/witness protection reimbursement activity.

Victim/Witness Protection Reimbursement Funding (January 1 - December 31, 2021)		
June 2021 Awards	6	\$ 29,178.14
September 2021 Awards	3	\$ 9,155.94
Total Awards for 2021	9	\$ 38,334.08

