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**STATE OF VERMONT**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S ATTORNEYS & SHERIFFS

May 20, 2020

**MEMORANDUM TO THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE REGARDING  
EMERGENCY FUNDING NEEDS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S  
ATTORNEYS AND SHERIFFS**

The COVID-19 global pandemic has propelled the world into a time of uncertainty, establishing that whatever visions of the future we had were myopic and, perhaps naive. Nevertheless, we now face extraordinary challenges in almost every facet of society, which require an immediate response. Vermont's criminal justice system is part of that non-exclusive group.

The criminal justice system must return to operation as soon as possible to ensure the safety of our communities and to protect the constitutional rights of the accused. To do so, we must quickly adapt a delivery system that responds to the new norm of "social distancing." We should embrace the use of known and emerging technology so that we are in a position to resume day-to-day operations in an expedited fashion.

The needs that we outline below are the bare essentials not only to address the judicial backlog that has been created since the adoption of Administrative Order 49, but also to put in place the structural conditions that will allow the criminal justice system to function in this new "COVID" reality.

Goals of this proposal:

- Leverage opportunities for greater court efficiency and automation across the criminal justice system
- Reduce person-to-person contact for non-essential functions
- Improve data security within the current system
- Improve the quality and utilization of shared data in the justice system
- Strengthen collection and reporting of data
- Address concerns in maintaining and protecting the court record
- Use technology for notification and public communication

In closing, SAS would like to thank the Judiciary Committee for its continued commitment to Vermont's criminal justice system.

VT Dept. of State's Attorneys & Sheriffs				
	FY20 One-Time Expense	FY21 July-December Proposed CRF Expenses	FY21 (1/1-6/30) - possible CRF funding if available, or FY21 BAA	Explanation/Details
<b>Depositions, Jury Trials and Social Distancing</b>				
Conference Room Reconfiguration for COVID-remote hearings, depositions, etc	25,000	200,000		Purchase and installation of safety/health protective requirements in SA conference rooms being utilized as virtual courtroom/deposition, conference spaces. Depending upon timing, some of the work may split between now and end of FY20 and first month(s) of FY21
<b>Remote Technology for Other Court Proceedings:</b>				
Cisco Video Endpoints for 25 conference rooms	375,000			375k for purchase of current Cisco endpoints to enable attorneys and clients to join remote court proceedings with multiple parties, handle remote depositions, and remote video conferencing. Depending upon timing, some of the work may split between now and end of FY20 and first month(s) of FY21.
Increased costs for phones for telework, remote court hearings		17,000	17,000	Costs related to telework & remote work arrangements due to COVID. Deputy State's Attorneys do not have department-issued cell phones at this time but security and privacy issues relating to teleworking is prompting this expenditure request.
Computing Interface (laptops, VDI, etc.)	65,000			Replace desktop workstations and prosecutor laptops that are "expired" by ADS standards, thus considered to be greater security risks, and/or will not integrate with Judiciary's new technology
Computing support peripherals (electronic submission requiring scanners)	8,000			One time funds to purchase desktop scanners to handle increased digitization of paperwork. The Courts are not accepting paper copies.
Existing CMS Integration - API Build and Integration	45,000			Hardware costs are for criminal and civil cases integration with Judiciary Case Management System
Tyler Odyssey Case Management Transition - proposal supported by State ADS	300,000	400,000	400,000	Case Management System Integration with the Judiciary, and potentially with other criminal justice groups. \$300k for data conversion, and \$900k for project work/completion. Current SAS case management system will not integrate with Judiciary, raising critical security issues. New CMS includes native data interface with Judiciary's CMS that we do not have; it will increase security of data; increase speed of casework/trials, reduce staff time handling paper; and eliminate nearly all person-to-person/physical transfer of files. We gain economies of scale/cost-savings.
<b>Staffing: Personal services for limited duration IT Support</b>				
Non-permanent position for technical support for simultaneous WebEx based hearings		700,000	700,000	Establishing non-permanent position for the SA offices to support remote proceedings, depositions, evidence presentations, and meetings with defense counsel, law enforcement, victims, investigators, expert witnesses, caseworkers, state agencies, court staff, etc. with the Cisco Endpoints.
<b>Staffing: Response to Judiciary's Plan to add 8 retired judges to clear backlog</b>				
Short-term COVID attorney-contractors		660,000	660,000	In response to Judiciary's hiring to clear backlog, SAS will need to up-staff to respond to increased workload.
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>818,000</b>	<b>1,977,000</b>	<b>1,977,000</b>	