



# Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs

Vermont Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs

FY26 Budget Presentation

Special Investigations Units

# Vermont Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs

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## Special Investigations Units SIU FY26 Budget Narrative

**Mission:** Under 24 V.S.A. § 1940, Special Investigation Units (under the Dept. of SAS) were created in counties to provide specialized investigations into: child abuse of serious bodily injury; lewd or lascivious conduct with child; human trafficking; voyeurism; sexual exploitation of children; sexual assault; sexual abuse of a vulnerable adult; and may investigate other incidents whereby a child suffers bodily injury, death or cruelty, and incidents involving domestic violence and crimes against vulnerable adults.

**Operation and Funding:** SIU's operate independently as 501(c)(3) organizations, and are generally connected to Vermont Child Advocacy Centers. The SIU's receive grant awards from SIU funds under the Dept. of SAS, Vermont CCVS (through VOCA funds), town appropriations, private donations, fundraising. The administrative and fiscal oversight is performed by the Department of SAS through its SIU Grants Program Administrator. Applications for program support and law enforcement support are solicited in the Spring of each year, with allocations being divided into two allocations in order to allow adjustments in the second half for unexpended funds (such as vacancies) or requests for changes in budget needs, or for reversion of unexpended funds.

**What is Funded:** Under the statute, there is a Special Investigative Unit Grants Board and a SAS Grants Program Administrator to oversee and monitor the performance of unit duties as well as unit operating costs for rent, utilities, equipment, training, and supplies. Grants under this section are subject to approval of the SIU Grants Board, not to exceed 50 percent of the yearly salary and benefit costs of the employees of the unit. By statute, preference is given to applications which demonstrate collaborations among state agencies, law enforcement, municipalities, community partners and victim advocacy groups. Consistent practices and procedures are promoted, and the SIU's, under their accreditation by the National Children's Alliance, are provided with support and guidance.

**Who We Serve:** The SIU's are statutorily established to assist - through investigations, support and referrals - children and vulnerable adults who are the victims of abuse/serious bodily injury, lewd or lascivious conduct, human trafficking, voyeurism, sexual exploitation and assault.

**Operations:** The SIU staff members, working in 12 regional/county sites, report to their local SIU Boards for supervision and direction. The SIU Directors are also responsible to report their fiscal expenditures to their funding agencies, such as SAS, CCVS, their municipalities, etc. Most SIU's have two staff members, (Director and an Administrative Assistant, but sometimes a separate position for a Forensic Interviewer). The SIU Grants Board has requested that the staff work in-office or, at a minimum, a hybrid remote. The SIU Director is responsible for scheduling work, including the meetings of the Multi-Disciplinary Team which reviews the cases and progress of the investigation, support and potential prosecutions. The SAS SIU Grants Program Administrator assists in the review of budget and performance based upon grant terms.

**Budget Issues and Pressures for FY26:** If the SIU's suffer a loss of federal funding in their USDOJ/VOCA grants, they will likely seek additional funding from the SIU grant money from SAS, and/or will need to engage in more fund-raising at the local level, and as non-profit organizations, they can solicit funding from other philanthropic entities.

## **Page 2. Special Investigations Unit FY26 Budget Narrative**

### **Recommendations for Programs/Work to be Shifted from SAS to Other Agencies / Delivery of Services**

If the SIU's suffer a loss of federal funding in their USDOJ/VOCA grants, they may need to transfer over the forensic interviewing to the State DCF or their law enforcement forensic investigators who are most often a part of the local SIU Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT), and could potentially absorb that work.

### **New Initiatives:**

Training on alternatives to compelling victim testimony in trauma-induced cases such as those the SIU's address.

Assisting in recruiting law enforcement officers to work with the SIU's and as members of the MDT's, through increased engagement with the local law enforcement leadership.

### **Programs/Issues Posing Most Significant Challenges:**

While the SAS SIU Grant money is 100% State General Fund, for the SIU's themselves, a potential loss of federal funds will be a significant problem for the SIU's.

Securing SIU-dedicated law enforcement officers because of the nationwide and statewide problems in recruiting individuals into law enforcement careers, and local LE agencies not having enough staff to be able to provide staff / hours to the SIU's.

### **What Work has been done to Address These Challenges?**

Discussions with VCJC regarding investigation of the crimes listed herein vis-à-vis level of certification.

The SIU's will need to seek other options for grants and fund raising to supplement any loss of their own federal funding.

### **Significant Financial Changes:**

Increased costs in staffing and operations.

SAS SIU Grant money is 100% State General Fund, but a potential loss of their own federal funds will be a significant problem for the SIU's.

### **Source of Federal Funding:**

The SAS SIU Grant money is 100% State General Fund, but the SIU programs themselves have USDOJ VOCA and other funds.

### **Internal Performance Goals:**

Increase the case intakes and investigations, reduce case backlogs, and support the victims through advocacy and potential prosecutions.

Strengthen the work and participation of the MDT.

Secure legislative support for more SANE support in each hospital.

Benchmarks: Clearance rates, backlog numbers, referrals to support services, successful disposition of case.

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**Vermont Special Investigations Units  
Statistical Data Form - FY24**

CASE ACTIVITY	Addison	Bennington	Caledonia	Chittenden	Franklin	Lamoille	Orange	Orleans	Rutland	Washington	Windham	Windsor	TOTALS
New Clients	79	92	92	113	131	123	51	69	117	101	194	127	1289
Children Served	45	86	83	74	117	0	36	65	107	76	169	98	1061
Adults Served	10	6	9	39	14	0	4	3	10	25	25	29	192
<b>Clients by Age Groups</b>													
Age 0-6	19	15	7	14	26	33	10	13	17	12	48	15	229
Age 7-12	20	22	20	17	25	42	14	24	27	17	61	29	318
Age 13-17	30	49	50	43	66	30	16	27	64	47	60	54	536
Age 18-21	4	7	5	12	3	0	2	0	5	8	10	7	63
Age 22+	6	5	4	27	11	18	2	5	4	17	16	22	137
<b>Known Offenders</b>	56	95	64	88	122	106	28	70	112	75	169	116	1101
Child Victim	46	90	57	54	109	89	23	67	102	56	153	99	945
Adult Victim	10	5	7	34	13	17	1	5	9	19	16	17	153
<b>Unknown Offenders</b>	3	0	22	25	9	7	1	0	8	1	25	24	125
Child Victim	3	0	18	17	6	7	1	0	6	1	20	13	92
Adult Victim	0	0	4	8	3	1	2	0	0	0	5	11	34
<b>Offender Relationship</b>													
<b>Child Victim</b>													
Parent	29	31	18	13	33	52	7	17	21	18	63	30	332
Parent boy/girlfriend	7	1	1	2	5	10	3	5	9	4	12	4	63
Step-parent	2	6	1	1	6	0	0	3	7	1	5	3	35
Other relative	6	6	7	7	19	14	5	1	15	6	18	19	123
Other known person	20	47	15	31	35	22	13	22	57	25	55	39	381
Unknown relationship	1	4	8	0	12	2	0	0	4	3	22	13	69
<b>Adult Victim</b>													
Parent	2	1	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	4	13
Parent boy/girlfriend	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Step-parent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other relative	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	2	1	0	0	8
Other known person	6	3	0	28	6	11	0	0	7	11	18	13	103
Unknown relationship	1	1	6	6	3	4	0	0	1	6	6	11	45

**Vermont Special Investigations Units  
Statistical Data Form - FY24**

CASE ACTIVITY	Addison	Bennington	Caledonia	Chittenden	Franklin	Lamoille	Orange	Orleans	Rutland	Washington	Windham	Windsor	TOTALS
<b>Offender Ages</b>													
Not indicated	3	14	15	4	7	5	0	6	3	0	20	17	94
12 & <	3	4	2	0	5	3	2	0	21	3	21	6	70
13-17	11	23	12	18	23	13	11	2	21	14	13	31	192
18+	52	52	35	67	87	88	15	12	69	62	145	77	761
<b>Offender Ages</b>													
<b>Child Victims</b>													
Not indicated	3	14	12	2	5	4	0	2	1	1	5	13	62
12 & <	3	4	2	0	5	3	2	1	19	3	20	7	69
13-17	11	21	12	18	15	13	11	7	21	14	11	31	185
18+	45	51	35	34	76	72	15	30	62	38	104	63	625
<b>Offender Ages</b>													
<b>Adult Victims</b>													
Not indicated	0	0	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	1	5	7	20
12 & <	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	12	0	14
13-17	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	9	0	14
18+	10	2	1	33	11	16	0	1	6	18	24	21	143
<b>Referrals/Services</b>													
<b># Referral - Child</b>													
Allegation of Abuse	99	96	83	75	108	117	33	84	113	42	192	96	1138
Other	35	16	17	7	1	16	2	24	11	0	35	13	180
Physical Abuse	36	6	3	8	21	61	1	19	11	7	51	12	236
Sexual Abuse	34	74	62	42	86	40	27	38	97	37	103	71	711
Human Trafficking	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	6
Other Direct Services	3	3163	3	1	9	0	6	0	0	21	3	18	3227
Other Indirect Services	6	46	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	14	0	2	72
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3305</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>4419</b>
<b># Referral - Adult</b>													
Allegation of Abuse	12	8	10	39	12	17	2	6	10	17	28	29	190
Other	1	2	0	1	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	3	11
Physical Abuse	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	0	12
Sexual Abuse/Assault	5	6	9	28	12	14	2	5	10	17	24	26	158
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Direct Services	0	16	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	20
Other Indirect Services	0	49	0	0	1	2	0	0	5	7	0	0	64
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>259</b>
<b>Medical Exam/Trtmnt</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>121</b>
Children	0	3	13	13	0	9	6	0	2	9	22	14	91
Adults	0	1	0	12	1	3	0	0	0	3	2	8	30

**Vermont Special Investigations Units  
Statistical Data Form - FY24**

CASE ACTIVITY	Addison	Bennington	Caledonia	Chittenden	Franklin	Lamoille	Orange	Orleans	Rutland	Washington	Windham	Windsor	TOTALS
<b>Counseling/Therapy</b>	19	0	18	0	0	0	0	2	0	46	16	127	228
Children	19	0	18	0	0	0	0	2	0	30	12	98	179
Adults	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	4	29	49
<b>Referral to Counseling</b>	42	57	30	0	3	19	9	4	46	27	59	14	310
Children	34	54	30	0	3	17	9	4	45	21	53	11	281
Adults	8	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	6	6	3	29
<b>Forensic Interviews</b>	33	59	65	19	48	45	30	50	82	58	113	98	700
On-site Interviews	17	66	55	13	31	31	21	45	60	50	94	73	556
Off-site Interviews	16	17	10	7	17	14	9	5	22	8	22	26	173
Children	20	56	59	11	48	42	30	42	76	51	101	80	616
Adults	7	3	6	8	0	3	0	0	6	7	12	18	70
<b>Courtesy Interviews</b>	0	5	1	0	0	0	6	0	0	1	2	4	19
<b>DCF Dispositions</b>	39	50	26	32	6	103	19	0	42	26	53	139	541
Substantiated	23	5	9	10	2	25	9	0	13	9	23	20	135
Unsubstantiated	18	6	8	22	4	78	13	0	23	14	21	45	263
Assessments	8	0	4	0	0	0	3	0	5	3	9	12	33
Case Not Accepted	0	0	1	0	0	0	12	0	0	5	10	54	85
Other - Not Specified	1	39	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	0	8	60
<b>LE Cases w/ Charges</b>	23	10	10	7	23	28	4	1	15	8	18	15	170
Child Victim	25	9	10	6	21	17	4	1	14	6	10	10	133
Adult Victim	6	1	0	1	2	25	1	0	1	2	8	5	52
<b>LE Cases/No Charges</b>	20	2	25	45	23	41	18	0	35	17	19	86	331
Child Victim	16	1	25	29	16	31	15	0	33	19	18	62	265
Adult Victim	4	1	0	16	7	3	3	0	2	2	8	24	70
<b>Offender Confessions</b>	0	0	1	4	5	0	4	0	7	0	1	8	30
Child Victim	0	0	1	4	4	0	2	0	6	1	1	4	23
Adult Victim	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	6
<b>Unfounded Reports</b>	31	0	6	15	50	35	12	0	36	3	2	0	190
Child Victim	25	0	6	8	36	26	9	0	31	3	2	0	146
Adult Victim	6	0	0	7	14	9	3	0	5	0	0	0	44
<b>Prosecution</b>													
Youthful Offenders	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
<b>CASE ACTIVITY</b>	<b>Addison</b>	<b>Bennington</b>	<b>Caledonia</b>	<b>Chittenden</b>	<b>Franklin</b>	<b>Lamoille</b>	<b>Orange</b>	<b>Orleans</b>	<b>Rutland</b>	<b>Washington</b>	<b>Windham</b>	<b>Windsor</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>

**Vermont Special Investigations Units  
Statistical Data Form - FY24**

Prosecution													
Cases Accepted	15	6	4	5	17	12	5	0	9	2	8	11	94
Cases Declined	8	2	8	17	33	13	3	0	2	9	8	28	131
Accepted-Child Victim	9	7	4	7	24	10	5	0	8	3	8	20	105
Accepted-Adult Victim	8	1	6	5	8	10	3	0	3	7	3	6	60
Prosecutor-Resolutions	4	2	3	4	0	23	4	0	9	2	2	22	75
Plea - Convictions	2	2	4	0	0	18	4	0	6	3	1	18	58
Trial - Convictions	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	5
Acquittal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Charges Dropped	0	1	0	3	0	2	2	0	1	3	0	2	14
Child Victim	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
Plea - Convictions	2	2	3	0	8	21	2	0	4	2	0	12	56
Trial - Convictions	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	4
Acquittal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Charges Dropped	0	1	0	3	8	3	2	0	1	5	0	1	24
Adult Victim	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
Plea - Convictions	0	0	0	0	3	4	0	0	2	1	0	5	15
Trial - Convictions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Acquittal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charges Dropped	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Clients by Racial Group													
White	41	37	54	66	83	88	34	19	89	54	137	86	788
Black/African American	20	26	26	18	46	25	16	6	21	36	35	34	309
Hispanic/Latino	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	9	2	18
Native Am/Alaskan	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	6
Asian/Pacific Islander	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Other/Not Entered	15	20	3	14	0	8	2	0	3	2	10	2	79
Children													
White	22	36	48	45	78	76	31	19	81	39	125	68	668
Black/Afr Amer	16	25	23	8	39	19	15	1	20	26	29	27	248
Hisp/Latino	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	8	0	13
Nat Amer/Alaskan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3
Asian/Pac Islander	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Other/Not Entered	4	12	3	10	0	8	18	0	3	2	6	1	67
Adults													
White	6	1	6	21	7	10	3	2	8	15	12	18	109
Black/Afr Amer	4	1	3	10	7	6	1	0	1	10	8	7	58
Hisp/Latino	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	3
Nat Amer/Alaskan	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Asian/Pac Islander	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Other/Not Entered	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	8



## FY26 Special Investigations Units Budget

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- FY26 Gov Recommend: \$2,291,219
  - 2.7% Increase – GF (no other funds support SIU)
  - 12 SIU Program Grants: \$1,343,507 for program support; \$793,000 for law enforcement support
  - FY26: Transitioned SIU Grants Program Administrator from contract to permanent position, no budget impact to FY26 or foreseeable outyears
- BUDGET and STAFFING PRESSURES:
  - Greater transparency and accountability needed in grants award and spending, in both Program Support and Law Enforcement grant funds.
  - Concerns about staffing for law enforcement support – agencies not able to provide dedicated staff, or enough hours, to fully support programs, due to their own staffing problems. More support to law enforcement agencies is a goal in FY26.