

1. What is Discretionary Funding?

Discretionary funding is a duly-appropriated sum of money in the Town's expense budget allocated to an eligible not-for-profit organization by the Selectboard and approved at Town Meeting.

2. What Types of Organizations May Receive Discretionary Funds?

Discretionary funds may only be allocated to not-for-profit; community-based social services providers. In order to receive discretionary funds directly, an organization must be incorporated as a not-for-profit and registered with the State of Vermont, unless exempt and have a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN).

3. What Types of Organizations May Not Receive Discretionary Funds?

For-profit entities may not receive discretionary funds, except when the primary nonprofit contractor subcontracts with a for-profit entity as part of the delivery of services. Such subcontracts, however, must be only an ancillary part of the program to be funded, not the primary basis for the discretionary award, and must be approved by the contracting agency.

4. What are the Restrictions on the Use of Discretionary Funds?

All public funds, however awarded, must be used for a Town purpose. In general, a Town purpose is defined as an activity or service that is open to all members of the public, regardless of race, creed, gender, religious affiliation, etc., without restriction, and which does not promote a particular religion.

Programs and services provided by religious or religiously-affiliated organization must be able to demonstrate that the program is open to non-members, is not a religious program, and does not promote the religion.

Closed membership groups, which are those to which membership is restricted or subject to eligibility based upon prohibited factors, may generally not receive funding.

Groups that serve a particular population, for example, those age 65 and above in a particular community; are not considered a closed membership group, as long as the program is open and accessible to all seniors in the community. Similarly, tenant organizations in public housing may also receive funding, as long as they provide equal access to all residents of the public housing units they serve.

Funds may only be allocated for a public purpose and may not support political activities and private interests.

5. How to Apply for Discretionary Funding?

All organizations that wish to receive discretionary funding must submit a "Request for Special Appropriations" application to the Town Manager. The application elicits information about an organization's experience, qualifications, and integrity, and the project or service for which the organization is requesting support. The form is available on the Town website by clicking on BOARDS & MEETINGS > SELECTBOARD then scroll down to FY26 Budget and "FY26 Discretionary Funding Policy-for applicants" or by emailing Duncan Wardwell, Assistant to the Town Manager, at:

dwardwell@richmondvt.gov.

Deadline for submission is the end of the day, October 7, 2024.

Town of Richmond

Request for Special Appropriations

Request for Fiscal Year: 2026

Organization's Name: Chittenden Unit for Special Investigation

Address: 50 Cherry St, Suite 102

City, State, Zip: Burlington, Vermont, 05401

Website

address: <https://ccaccusi.squarespace.com/>

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Program Name: Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations

2. Contact Person/Title: Tara Gonthier – Executive Director

Telephone Number: 802-652-6800

E-mail address: tgonthier@bpdvt.org

3. Total number of individuals served in the last complete fiscal year by this program:

147

4. Total number of the above individuals who are Town residents: 2

Please, attach any documentation that supports this number. **Please see attached Annual Report**

Percent of people served who are Town residents:

.01%

5. Amount of Request: \$6,853

6. Total Program Budget: \$1,123,844.23 Percent of total program budget you are requesting from the Town of Richmond:

1.3%

7. Please state or attach the mission of your agency: Please see attached Annual Report

8. Funding will be used to:

Maintain an existing program Expand an Existing Program
 Start a new program

9. Has your organization received funds from the Town in the past for this or a similar program?

Yes

If yes, please answer the following:

a. Does the amount of your request represent an increase over your previous appropriation? If yes, explain the reason(s) for the increase.

Expenses have gone up, rent has gone up therefore our budget was higher due to increased costs .

b. Were any conditions or restrictions placed on the funds by the Selectboard? _____
If yes, describe how those conditions or restrictions have been met.

No

B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1. Statement of Need: Identify the issue or need that the program will address (use statistical data to justify the need for the program). To what extent does this need, or problem exist in the Town of Richmond? **CUSI is a county wide task force established in 1992. We investigate all sexual assaults, human trafficking, child/infant deaths and severe child abuse cases. For FY24 we were able to provide services for 2 cases out of Richmond.**

2. Program Summary:

a. Identify the target/recipients of program services. Specify the number of Town residents your program will serve during the fiscal year and explain the basis upon which this number is calculated. Indicate any eligibility requirements your program has with respect to age, gender, income or residence. **CUSI investigates as many cases as the town presents which fall under our design regardless of their age, gender, income or residence.**

b. Identify what is to be accomplished or what change will occur from participating in the program. How will people be better off as a result of participating in the program? Describe the steps you take to make the project known to the public, and make the program accessible and inclusive? **CUSI will be able to continue to send highly trained specialized detectives and Department of Children and Familie servies to**

investigate all allegations referred to our department. Having this highly trained unit will help serve the people of Richmond better and provide them wrap around services during their difficult time.

3. Program Funding:

a. Identify how Town funds, specifically, will be used (i.e., funds will provide “X” amount of units of service.) Town funds will be used in our day-to-day operation. It will also help send members of our unit to specialize trainings to keep our staff current. This is vital to continue to provide the most efficient, less traumatizing and time effective help to our victims.

b. List the other agencies to whom you are submitting a request for funds for this program and the amount requested. How would this program be modified should revenues be lost? Requests are sent to every town in Chittenden County that does not have an in-kind detective donation. Loss of funding would be devastating to CUSI. We would not be able to maintain a specialized unit and it would fall back on local and state agencies who are not as well trained in these types of investigations.

C. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

1. Describe your agency’s capability to provide the program including its history, previous experience providing this service, management structure and staff expertise. __

CUSI has been operating since 1992. We currently have 8 detectives (including a Lieutenant who is the Director of CUSI and a worker from DCF and victim advocate all on-site. We are unique as we are the only SIU unit in Vermont to be co-located with DCF, advocate and detectives. Staff attend multiple trainings per year to make sure they are up to date and qualified to investigate the specialized cases that we receive.

2. How will you assess whether/how program participants are better off? Describe how you will assess program outcomes. Your description should include: what (what kind of data), how (method/tool for collecting the data), from whom (source of data) and

when (timing of data collection). We use our specialized training to interview victims, get them connected with mental health providers, collaborate with schools, UVM Medical Center to make sure that the victim has wrap around services as they navigate this difficult time. We utilize the Chittenden Children's Advocacy Center (CCAC) NCATrak computer system to keep track of cases, data is collected of hospital visits, referrals to medical, mental health, prosecution, DCF outcomes, interviews. They require quarterly reports that must be submitted to track our data and cases. Funding on our CCAC requires that we collect data for our cases.

3. Summarize or attach program and or service assessments conducted in the past two years. Please see attached FY24 Annual Report

4. Does your organization have a strategic plan and a strategic planning process in place? No - If yes, please attach your plan.

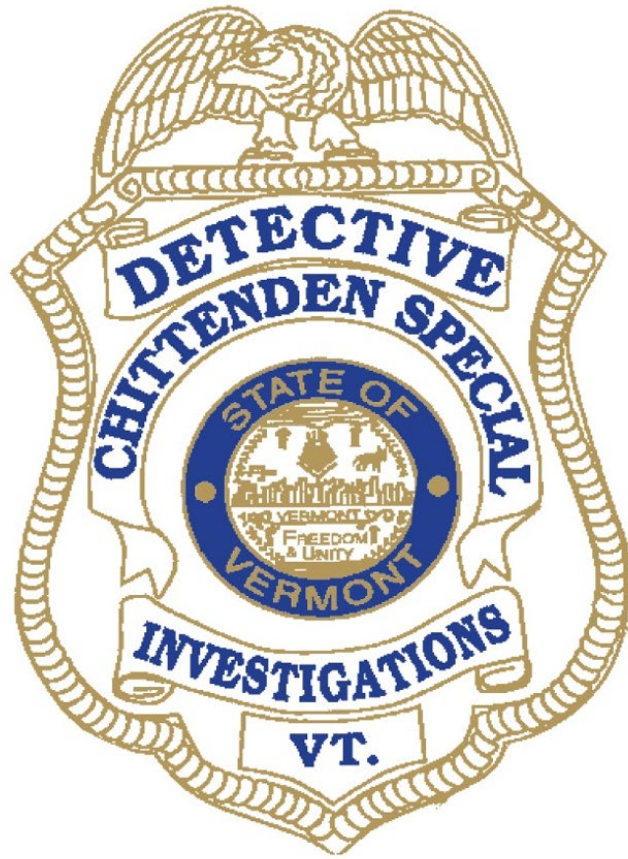
The strategic plan should include a mission statement, goals, steps to achieve the goals, and measures that assess the accomplishments of the goals.

5. What is the authorized size of your board of directors? Up to 15
How many meetings were held by the board last year? 8

I, the undersigned, confirm the information contained herein is accurate and can be verified as such. I understand and agree that if the requested funds are approved, the disbursement of funds are subject to all conditions established by the Richmond Selectboard.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Print Name of Applicant and Title



2024

Annual Report

CHITTENDEN UNIT FOR SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS

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TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

Our Mission

Our mission is to protect and support all children, families, and adults by strengthening our community's response to abuse through investigation, prosecution and intervention while fostering professional collaboration to promote education and advocacy regarding the prevention of abuse.

Who We Are

The Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations (CUSI) is a multi-agency task force dedicated to providing criminal response to reports of sexual assaults, serious child abuse and child fatalities. For 30 years, the primary focus has been to protect and support all children, adults, and families. CUSI defined what is now known as a multidisciplinary team (MDT) approach to investigating crimes of this nature. The multidisciplinary team is the heart of CUSI and is composed of six police detectives, a unit director, a victim advocate, an in-house investigator with the Department for Children and Families (DCF), and a dedicated prosecutor from the Chittenden County State's Attorney's Office. We work jointly with mental health and medical providers, as well as with the Department of Corrections.

In addition, CUSI is co-located and partners with the *Chittenden Children's Advocacy Center (CCAC)*. CCAC collaborates with CUSI to emphasize the coordination of investigations and intervention. The CCAC is funded separately by local, state and federal grants.

The CCAC provides many benefits including:

- Prompt follow up to reports of abuse
- Consistent and compassionate support to the child and family and adults
- A family friendly environment designed to create a sense of safety and security for children and adults
- Referrals to professionals with expertise in specialized disciplines
- Fewer victim interviews
- Increased successful prosecutions
- Victim Advocacy support on site

The Chittenden Children's Advocacy Center continues as an accredited member of the National Children's Alliance with the latest re-accreditation occurring in November 2024. We are also excited to announce that we have created a new website. We are very excited to provide another avenue to provide information to our communities. You can visit our website at <https://www.chittendencac.com/>

Current Staffing

Det. Lt. Richard Weinisch, CUSI Director, Burlington Police Department
Tara Gonthier, Executive Director of the Chittenden Children's Advocacy Center
Daniel Boyer, Case Coordinator of the Chittenden Children's Advocacy Center
Det. Justin Wagner, Vermont State Police
Det. Eric Dalla Mura, Burlington Police Department
Det. Joanna Morse, South Burlington Police Department
Det. Nicole Peatman, Essex Police Department
Det. Tom Chenette, Burlington Police Department
Det. Elizabeth Fell, Colchester Police Department
Elizabeth Dziobek, Victim's Advocate, Chittenden County State's Attorney's Office
Meghan Swan, Family Services Worker, Vermont Department for Children & Families
Det. Barrie North, University of Vermont who is part-time with us currently

What We Do

The fundamental goal of CUSI is to conduct the highest quality criminal investigations for these types of crimes while meeting the emotional needs of victims and families. CUSI and CCAC investigate crimes in Chittenden County which consists of a population of approximately 171,857 residents. On average, CUSI investigates over 160 cases a year. 70% of those cases involve child victims. In recent years we have noticed an increase in the complexity of cases given the substantial increase in computer usage, social media, mobile devices and drugs.

We currently have two detectives that coordinate the Chittenden County Sex Offender Registry Compliance Check. Per the Vermont Sex Offender Registry, <https://vcic.vermont.gov/sor> searching by County, there are approximately 254 sex offenders in Chittenden County. CUSI maintains information pertinent to sex offender compliancy checks in Chittenden County and works with VCIC sex offender registry, US Marshalls, Probation and Parole and all law enforcement agencies in Chittenden County.

CUSI Case Incidents & Sex Offenders by Location

July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024

| Town of Incident | CUSI Case Count | Sex Offenders |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Bolton | 0 | 0 |
| Burlington | 27 | 71 |
| Charlotte | 0 | 3 |
| Colchester | 14 | 22 |
| Essex | 9 | 45 |
| Hinesburg | 2 | 4 |
| Huntington | 0 | 4 |
| Jericho | 4 | 4 |
| Milton | 14 | 27 |
| Richmond | 2 | 7 |
| Shelburne | 1 | 10 |
| South Burlington | 12 | 18 |
| St. George | 1 | 0 |
| Underhill | 0 | 5 |
| University of Vermont | 2 | 0 |
| Westford | 1 | 2 |
| Williston | 7 | 10 |
| Winooski | 8 | 22 |
| Out of County Assist | 9 | - |
| Out of State Assist | 1 | - |
| Unknown | 9 | |
| Community Service/SANE Kits | 24 | - |
| Total | 147 | 254 |

OUR COLLABORATORS

The Chittenden Children's Advocacy Center, collaborating with CUSI, is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit entity offering a range of services to children and families affected by these crimes. The primary goal of *The Chittenden Children's Advocacy Center* is to ensure that children are not further traumatized by the intervention system intended to protect them. This program has many benefits, with an approach that allows for faster follow-up to child abuse reports, more efficient medical and mental health referrals, fewer child interviews, more successful prosecutions, and consistent support for child victims and their families. It is our goal to support them and meet their emotional needs.

CUSI works closely with the statewide *Internet Crimes against Children Task Force (ICAC)*. ICAC expertise is frequently used during cases of computer-facilitated exploitation or when computer-generated evidence may strengthen a CUSI case. CUSI detectives work with the ICAC team and have received extensive training in computer forensics and online undercover operations.

CUSI may also work with *HOPEWorks*, and the *Forensic Nursing Program* at the University of Vermont Medical Center, including the *Childsafe Clinic*. We continue to work with other collaborative partners throughout the county and our state as well.

FUNDING

The *Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations* maintains a specialized approach of improved protection and services for victims in our community. This Unit promotes cooperative efforts between the various agencies that are involved in the prevention, investigation, advocacy, medical, therapeutic treatment, and prosecution of cases to better protect and serve victims and their families. Part of that cooperative effort includes contributions from towns in Chittenden County to help sustain this specialized unit. The contributions help pay for space for this specialized unit to all be under the same roof, training, specialized forensic testing and help run our day-to-day operations. CUSI is unique as it is the only Special Investigations Unit in Vermont that is all under the same roof. We are very fortunate. Being able to do this helps cut down on retraumatizing the victim and their families.

The current funding formula is based on population and excludes those communities that contribute one or more full-time detectives to the CUSI operation. Town contributions are determined by the budget required to fund the CUSI organization for the year allocated proportionally to communities not contributing in kind services based on total population. CUSI is able to remain a successful unit due to the continued support of town contributions and without it we would not be able sustain this specialized unit and where it is located which would be a huge detriment to the community.

CUSI Director's Year In Review

2024 was another big transition year for CUSI that continues to promote positive change for the organization. We onboarded three new detectives for CUSI that replaced the two of the most senior detectives in the unit that had a combined 10 years of experience at CUSI. This change has given the opportunity for new CUSI detectives to expand their professional careers with this important role and they get to attend some of the best specialized trainings available that would not otherwise be possible without the funding that is available to our organization.

I'm pleased to say that the new additions to CUSI are doing very well and leave me feeling very optimistic about the future of our organization.

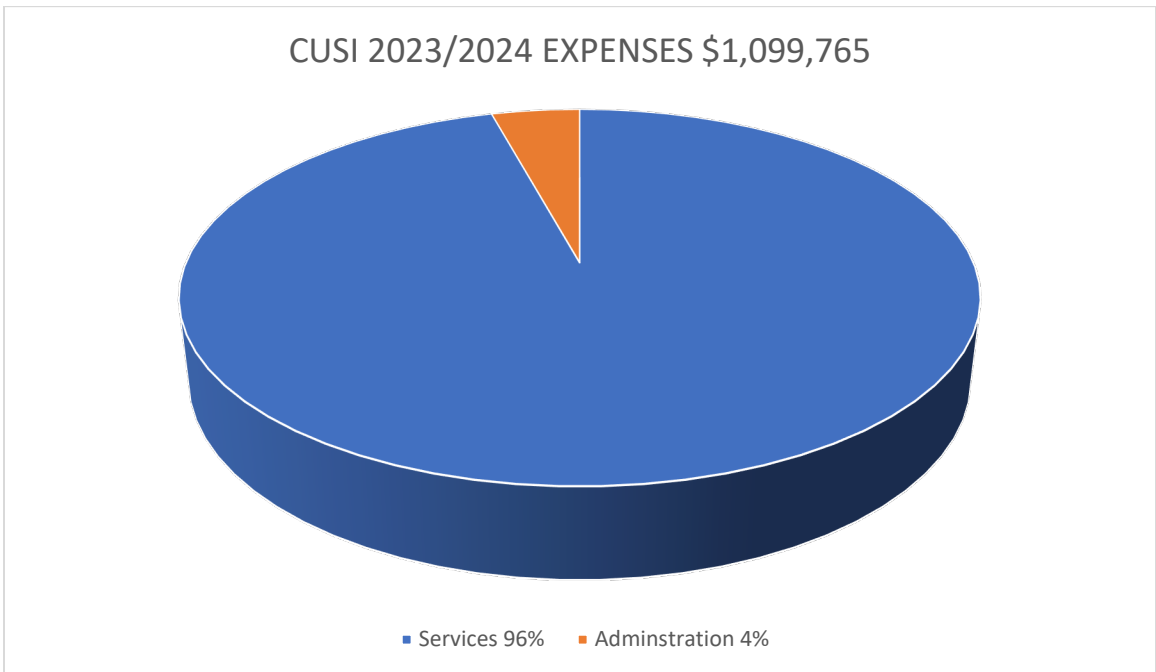
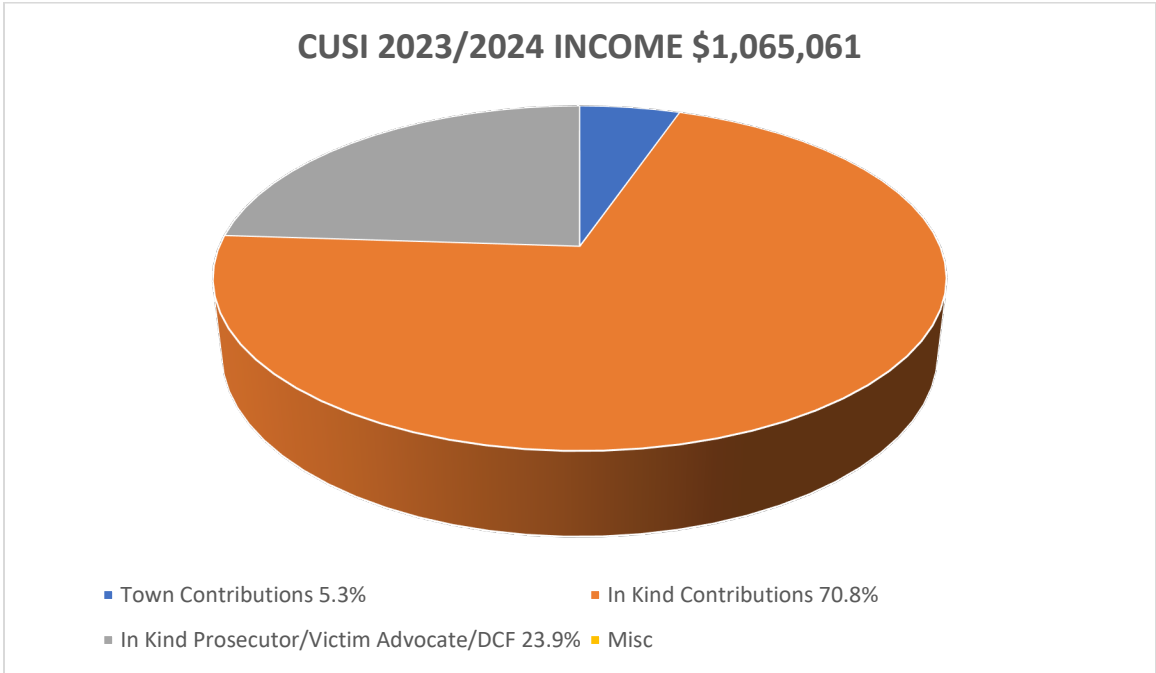
The University of Vermont Police Department has once again provided a detective to the Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations, one a part-time basis currently. This has been very helpful because the Colchester Police Department took their detective back half-way through the year for uniformed patrol functions, and she will not be back until sometime next Spring.

The team at CUSI is continuing to update and upgrade our workspace to ensure that we maintain the comforting space for victims, professional partners, and everyone that uses our workspace. This includes amongst other things, new furniture, repainting rooms, updated children's play space, etc.

Finally, CUSI has underwent quite a bit of technological advancements by transitioning to an IT company that specializes in Criminal Justice Information Security (CJIS). This ensures that our organization is CJIS compliant and are well protected from potential cyber-attacks and other

information threats. Recent equipment upgrades include the transitioning our desktop computers to a laptop docking station setup and much needed server maintenance and upgrades.

CUSI Annual Financial Report



We did have a loss this year. There were IT items that were bought from reserves that were approved by our Policy Board. We transitioned to a new IT company that will help with making sure we are compliant and protected against cyber attacks and any other information threats and few other upgrades that were mentioned in Lt. Weinisch report above. We are trying to keep costs that went over budget down in the future and made adjustments to the budget to accommodate the increases in the future.

We are proud and committed to our work and to the communities we serve. We thank you for your continued support.



CUSI

Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations

50 Cherry Street, Suite 102

Burlington, VT 05401

Phone: (802) 652-6800

Fax: (802) 652-4167

Town of Richmond
PO Box 285
Richmond, VT 05477

Attn: Duncan Wardwell and Select Board

FY 26 Cash Payment Due: \$6,853.00

The above amount was calculated based on the participating towns paying 100% of its share of the operating cost for CUSI, based on the town's percentage of population.

We appreciate all your continued support.

Payments should be made payable to CUSI and mailed to:

**Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations
50 Cherry Street Suite 102
Burlington, VT 05401**

Attn: Tara Gonthier

Thank you very much!