Address Confidentiality Program (ACP)

Description of issue and how recommending the agency's request furthers the agency's mandates

The Arizona Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) is a statutorily required public safety program administered by the Arizona Secretary of State's Office (the Office) that helps protect victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, and other qualifying crimes from individuals who may attempt to locate and harm them by discovering their residential address. Established by the Arizona Legislature in 2011, Arizona became the 27th state to create an address confidentiality program, and ACP began serving participants on June 4, 2012. In 2021, the legislature made the program permanent.

ACP enables eligible participants to use a legally designated substitute address in place of their residential address, including when interacting with state and local government agencies. The program also provides confidential mail forwarding, allowing survivors to safely register to vote, obtain a driver's license or Arizona identification card, enroll children in school, participate in court proceedings, access government services, and rebuild their lives without compromising their physical safety. By protecting participants' residential addresses from public disclosure, ACP helps prevent abusers from using public records to locate, harass, intimidate, stalk, or further victimize survivors. As of Aug. 1, 2026, 462 eligible ACP participants were registered to vote through the program's secure voter registration process.

When the legislature established ACP, it also created the Address Confidentiality Program Fund to support program operations through a $50 assessment imposed on certain criminal convictions involving domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. At the time, it was anticipated that this dedicated revenue source would provide sufficient funding to operate the program without ongoing General Fund support.

Over time, however, that funding model has proven insufficient. Revenue deposited into the Address Confidentiality Program Fund has not kept pace with the actual cost of administering the program. For several years, the Office supplemented program operations with federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant funding administered through the Arizona Department of Public Safety. Those grants were temporary and have since expired, leaving ACP without a sustainable long-term funding source.

Recognizing this structural funding shortfall, the Office has requested increased ongoing General Fund support for ACP in every executive budget request since FY2024. The legislature has recognized the program's immediate financial need by providing one-time deposits of $400,000 into the Address Confidentiality Program Fund in both FY2026 and FY2027. Those investments were essential and allowed the Office to continue providing services without interruption. However, one-time funding cannot sustainably support a permanent statutory program with recurring personnel, postage, supplies, technology, and operating expenses. Despite repeated requests, ACP has not received the ongoing funding increase necessary to address this structural imbalance.

At the same time, demand for ACP continues to grow. Between SFY2022 and SFY2025, program enrollment increased 35 percent, with enrollment growing by a median of approximately 10 percent annually. As awareness of ACP has expanded among victim advocates, prosecutors, courts, law enforcement agencies, domestic violence shelters, and other community partners, more eligible Arizonans are seeking the protections the program provides.

Each additional participant increases the Office’s operational responsibilities, including eligibility verification, participant enrollment, confidential mail processing and forwarding, records management, participant assistance and safety planning, and coordination with hundreds of participating state and local government agencies and application assistants. The program’s workload therefore increases directly with enrollment.

Program growth has also resulted in corresponding increases in operating costs. The FY2028 request reflects higher personnel and employee-related expenses, professional and outside services, office supplies, in-state travel, and other operating costs. Most significantly, confidential mail volume has increased 35 percent since 2022, while the cost of a first-class stamp has increased from 60 cents in July 2022 to 82 cents in July 2026. Because confidential mail forwarding is one of ACP's core statutory responsibilities, the combination of increased enrollment, increased mail volume, and rising postage rates has become a significant recurring cost driver.

The Office also requires two additional full-time specialists to keep pace with increasing enrollment and workload. One position will primarily support confidential mail processing and forwarding, while the second will focus on participant communication, assistance, education, and coordination. These positions will help ensure the Office can continue providing prompt, secure, and confidential services while expanding education for application assistants and government agency employees throughout Arizona.

The FY2026 and FY2027 one-time appropriations have enabled the Office to continue fulfilling its statutory responsibilities while avoiding reductions in program quality. However, because those appropriations are being used to support recurring operating expenses, they will eventually be exhausted. Without a permanent increase in recurring funding, the Office will continue facing the same structural funding shortfall each fiscal year.

A permanent statutory public safety program should not depend upon temporary appropriations to fund recurring operations. Accordingly, the Office requests $700,00 in ongoing General Fund support to establish a sustainable funding source for ACP. This request will replace reliance on one-time appropriations, support increasing program participation, address rising operating costs, provide two additional positions, expand education for ACP application assistants and government employees, and ensure Arizona can continue providing this critical public safety program to victims and survivors who rely upon it.

Proposal

Appropriate an additional $700,000 from the state General Fund in FY2028 and each fiscal year thereafter to establish a sustainable funding source for the ACP.

The requested funding will:

- Establish a permanent funding source to address the structural shortfall between Address Confidentiality Program Fund revenues and recurring operating costs.
- Replace reliance on one-time appropriations and expired federal grant funding.
- Support confidential participant enrollment, eligibility verification, mail processing and forwarding, participant assistance, records management, and coordination with participating government agencies.
- Address increasing operating expenses associated with personnel, employee-related expenses, professional and outside services, office supplies, travel, postage, and other program operations.
- Fund two additional specialists necessary to maintain service levels and accommodate continued growth in program participation.

Alternatives considered and reasons for rejection

The Office considered continuing to rely upon existing Address Confidentiality Program Fund revenues, periodic one-time appropriations, and future federal grant opportunities to support program operations. These alternatives were rejected because none provides the stable, recurring funding necessary to administer a statutorily required public safety program with increasing participation and ongoing operational responsibilities.

The Office also evaluated reducing services, delaying enrollment of new participants, or limiting program participation as available funding declines. These alternatives were rejected because they would undermine the legislature's intent in establishing ACP and could reduce protections available to eligible victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and other qualifying crimes.

Providing ongoing General Fund support represents the most stable, predictable, and fiscally responsible approach to ensuring Arizona continues meeting its statutory obligations.

Impact of not funding this fiscal year

Without additional ongoing funding, the Office will continue relying upon temporary one-time appropriations to support recurring operating expenses. Once those funds are exhausted, the Office may be forced to reduce services, delay enrollment of new participants, postpone processing of confidential mail, limit outreach efforts, or defer investments necessary to protect confidential participant information.

As enrollment continues to grow, insufficient recurring funding will reduce the Office's ability to provide timely participant assistance, confidential mail forwarding, and coordination with participating government agencies. Continued reliance on temporary funding also creates uncertainty that complicates staffing, operational planning, and long-term administration of the program.

Most importantly, failure to establish a sustainable funding source could reduce access to critical protections for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, human trafficking, and other qualifying crimes at a time when demand for these services continues to increase.

Statutory reference

- A.R.S. Title 41, Chapter 1, Article 3 (Address Confidentiality Program)
- Other applicable provisions of Arizona law governing victim protection and public records.

Equipment to be purchased

Funding will support ongoing program operations, confidential mail processing, information technology, data security, postage, supplies, and other operating expenses necessary to administer the ACP. No major capital equipment purchases are anticipated.

Classification of new positions

Address Confidentiality Program Specialist (2)

These positions will support participant enrollment, eligibility verification, confidential mail processing and forwarding, participant assistance, records management, outreach, and coordination with participating government agencies. The additional staffing is necessary to maintain service levels as participation and operational workload continue to increase.

Annualization

$700,000 in FY2028 and thereafter.