

U.S. Department of Justice Solicitation
Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program
FY 2023 Local Solicitation-- CFDA #16.738
DeKalb County, Georgia

Program Narrative



With a population of 757,718, according to most recent Census data, DeKalb County (DeKalb) is the fourth most populated county in the State of Georgia. The population was 691,893 in 2010 indicating a substantial increase in a brief time. As Atlanta and its suburbs increase in population, DeKalb County has become more urban. DeKalb County is designated as a Metropolitan area and is also included in the Georgia Metropolitan Statistical

Area (Atlanta, Sandy Springs, and Marietta). DeKalb County's population resides within a total area of 268.3 square miles. The census data shows an estimated 70% of the population as being minority. Data shows 14% of the overall population living below the federal poverty level and 5.1% unemployment rate in DeKalb County, both significantly higher than the state average in the United States.

Preceded by Fulton and Gwinnett, DeKalb County is the third largest county (square miles) in Georgia, constituting 7.5% of the state's population. It consists of 10% of the city of Atlanta (the East Atlanta portion is in DeKalb County), Decatur (County Seat), Avondale Estates, Brookhaven, Chamblee, Clarkston, Doraville, Lithonia, Pine Lake, Dunwoody, and Stone Mountain. Other census-designated neighborhoods include; Belvedere Park, Candler-McAfee, Druid Hills, North Atlanta, North Decatur, North Druid Hills, Panthersville, Redan, Scottdale, and Tucker. Additionally, within DeKalb County and its relative proximity are two (2) airports, several major water work systems, and numerous major highway systems.

The DeKalb County Board of Commissioners (BOC) established the local JAG Committee made up of government agencies whose primary role was law enforcement and criminal justice. The authority of the JAG Committee is to determine law enforcement needs on behalf of the BOC, as the experts in field of criminal justice, and ensuring compliance with the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) parameters. As such, the DeKalb County's FY 2023 JAG allocation of \$299,193 will support a broad range of activities to prevent and

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control crime based on DeKalb County's needs and conditions. The JAG funds will support all components of the criminal justice system, including prevention, community engagement and education, policing, indigent defense, alternatives to prosecution, and courts. JAG funded projects address crime through the provision of services directly to individuals and/or communities and by improving the effectiveness and efficiency of criminal justice systems, processes, and procedures. The 2023 JAG funds will be used for local initiatives, training, personnel, equipment, supplies, and contractual support for criminal justice activities that will improve or enhance the purposes areas as stated in the solicitation. The funds will be distributed as follows:

Agency	Purpose Area	JAG allocation	Project Title
District Attorney	Prevention, Community Engagement, Prosecution, Investigations, Training	\$37,399	Prosecution Enhancements and Community Engagement
Juvenile Court	Prevention, Education	\$37,399	Juvenile Court Education Enhancement Program
Marshal's Office	Leadership, Officer Safety, Training, Law Enforcement	\$37,399	Executive Training and Supplies Enhancements
Police	Officer Safety and Effectiveness. Community Safety.	\$37,399	Law Enforcement Activities Enhancement
Public Defender	Indigent Defense and Training	\$37,399	Indigent Defense Enhancement
School System	Prevention, Education, Substance Abuse Prevention, Conflict Resolution Training	\$37,399	Expanded Day Programs
Sheriff's Office	Law Enforcement and Inmate Safety, Less than Lethal, Officer Wellness	\$37,400	Wellness and Safety Program
Solicitor-General	Prevention, Counseling, Officer Safety, Diversion Programming	\$37,399	Diversion Programming
		\$299,193	

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Project Descriptions and Data Collection Plans

District Attorney's Office

Project Description:

The purpose of this project is to enhance special investigations and prosecution units, and expand community engagement in a post-Covid era.

Funding will be used to provide training and supplies for D.A.'s special prosecution units, the Victim Assistance Program, Crime Strategies and Community Partnership Unit, special investigations, and alternatives to prosecution programs. Additionally, funds will be utilized for materials for community education and engagement forums. Goals of the project are to allow for increased contacts with members of the community through crime prevention activities and community education, greater effectiveness of deferred prosecution programs, and increased training and resources for specialized program staff.

Need

The District Attorney's Office has no additional budgetary options to absorb these non-personnel items.

Capabilities and Competencies

The District Attorney's Office is extremely well-versed in managing projects, grants, and community events.

Activities

Funding will be used for supplies for community events and special prosecution and victim assistance. Funds will be used for specialized training for these units.

Goals

- To protect and educate the community
- To enhance training received by specialized units.
- To allow the District Attorney's Office to conduct effective community education, engagement, and crime prevention activities.

Metrics

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Outcome measures will be number of community contacts, number and type of community events, numbers of trainings and staff satisfaction with the trainings, and clients served by the special units who receive enhanced supplies.

Target

Articulate benefit and knowledge gained by all staff attending training. Greater # of both community contacts and community events over prior year. High satisfaction surveys of special unit staff utilizing enhanced supplies.

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Metrics

Outcome measures will be the number of community events and citizen contacts, and the impact of trainings provided to special units' staff.

Prevention and Core Competencies

The District Attorney's is consistently recognized locally and nationally as conducting best practices on criminal justice reform, community engagement, and alternatives to incarceration. The programs to be touched by this funding will further enhance the office's prevention endeavors.

Juvenile Court

Project Description

The DeKalb County Juvenile Court (DCJC) Education and Programs Enhancement Initiative will utilize the awarded funds to sustain educational programming for youth and families and to provide travel services to and from programming. Additionally, the funds will enhance instructional training and resources for facilitators, thereby aiding youth in attaining educational goals in a creative, innovative, structured alternative educational setting.

Need

In 2021, DCJC processed 2558 delinquency cases and 698 CHINS (Children in Need of Services) cases, which brought numerous youth and families to DeKalb County Juvenile Court (DCJC) -- many of whom have been adversely affected by COVID-19, violence, abuse, neglect, mental health, substance abuse, homelessness, poverty, unemployment, and academic challenges. Data reported by the DeKalb County School District (DCSD) indicates the four-year graduation rate for the Class of 2021 was 75.41, based on data released from the Georgia Department of Education. As a result of our substandard national average graduation rate, there remains a need to address the illiteracy issues and educational deficiencies of at-risk youth, especially youth involved in the juvenile justice system in DeKalb County. A significant number of youth have been withdrawn, suspended, or expelled from school resulting in falling further behind in studies and not being able to graduate with their peers. It is imperative that we shift how we address youth in the county who are in need of educational services and consider the many challenges their families have endured and provide a solution. This can be accomplished by providing an alternative educational setting with smaller classes, deeper student/instructor connections, intentional social and emotional interventions, and increased resources. The educational program will assist youth to increase their ability to lead crime-free lives by increasing opportunities that would not be available without an education and will reduce the likelihood of youth continuing into our state's criminal justice system.

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There is a significant need for transportation services to facilitate youth's consistent, safe, and timely attendance at court appearances and court programming. Many of the youth served lack transportation and are unable to access public transportation or ride-share programs. The Court will utilize the funds to contract with a charter van service to provide round trips to the youth enrolled in court programs. A contracted transportation service earmarked for court programming will allow the Court to address attendance gaps and to increase overall success in program completion.

Capabilities and Competencies

The DeKalb County Juvenile Court's annual budget includes funding from various state and federal granting agencies, which support services and programs for the reduction of juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, mental health, and recidivism. There are currently thirteen grant funded programs and several other services within the court. DCJC is highly qualified to deliver effective programs and services through grant funding, as well as to provide administration, progress reporting, and fiscal structure of awards. The court has more than 18 years of experience applying for and receiving grants, and extensive knowledge in developing programs that reduce juvenile risk factors. In addition, the court consistently analyzes community trends and data in the continued effort to develop programs that benefit the county's youth and offender populations

Goals

The goals of the DeKalb County Juvenile Court Education and Programs Enhancement Initiative are to 1) provide alternative education solutions, such as GED preparation classes, for youth who come in contact with the court and are either over-age and underperforming in the traditional school setting or have dropped out of school and wish to obtain a diploma through alternative means; (2) to provide academic support (tutoring) to youth who are struggling in school or serving a suspension or expulsion to keep them on track in school; 3) to provide the tools and supplies necessary for GED preparation, testing, and other academic supports; and 4) to provide contracted transportation services for youth to attend court programming and to engage court services.

Activities

Provide instructors for youth enrolled in the educational program (tutoring and GED instructors).
Provide resources for youth enrolled in the educational program (vouchers and supplies).
Provide contracted transportation /travel services for the Juvenile Court youth programs.

Metrics

Customer/youth satisfaction surveys
Outcomes of the previous JAG grant

Targets

- The number of youth attending in-person classes and via the virtual platform
- The number of youth who have increased their reading or math levels

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- The number of youth provided with vouchers to take the official GED exam
- The number of youth attending programs using the contracted transportation
- The number of youth participating in the court's programs

Prevention

The DeKalb County Juvenile Court Education and Programs Enhancement Initiative directly supports at-risk and Court-involved youth completing their educational goals. Probation officers and program administrators actively work with youth and their families to provide a holistic approach to meeting their needs. Juvenile Court maintains many community partners to assist youth and families with counseling, employment, financial literacy, food, housing, and other supports. Youth will receive personal and professional development and foundational principles of education to assist them in gaining the tools needed to transform their lives. Youth's access to reliable transportation to programming and services will help to prevent poor performance and unsuccessful outcomes.

Marshal's Office

Project Description

The DeKalb County Marshal's project will include: 1) Executive training for the command staff
2) Specialized training for sworn deputies and line level supervisors 3) Replace technology equipment in field deputies patrol units.

Need

The specialized leadership training and updated technology is needed to enhance our agency's command staff with the skills to manage personnel, increase departmental capabilities, ensure compliance with our assigned duties, promote officer safety and to recognize and/or prevent departmental liability situations.

Capabilities and Competencies

The Marshal's Office has employed a Fiscal Assistant who will be responsible for the management of the project. The command level staff will ensure the supervisors are attending the required training and will ensure the competencies of the project are adhered to.

Goals

The mission of the DeKalb County Marshal's Office is to enforce all orders and directives of the DeKalb County State and Magistrate Courts. 1. Our Goal is to provide the command staff with executive training that will enhance knowledge and provide advance leadership training. The training will enhance the ability for the command staff to give oversight to the agency. 2. Another goal relates to sworn staff and the line level supervisor. The goal is to provide specialized training for the law enforcement personnel that will enhance their

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job performance. 3.The last goal relates to updated technology equipment, the goal to the replace outdated equipment in the deputies' patrol units.

Activities

The Marshal's office will reach these goals through specialized training for the executive staff. The staff will be scheduled according to their level of command and area of responsibility. The Fiscal Assistant alongside executive staff will oversee the installation and training of the new technology.

Metrics

Measuring training effectiveness of our staff is vital to our organization success. Our goals will be measured by 1)Self-assessment questionnaires to identify individual and departmental needs, 2) Plan and facilitate as needed based training among staff, 3) Evaluation of applied learning assignments as it relates to leadership and negotiating skills, 4) Evaluate task and decision-making competency, 5) Increase mentorship from executive staff.

The Fiscal Assistant will keep record of all equipment, installation, and schedule training for staff to ensure working knowledge of the new system.

Targets

The success of the project will be measured by the agencies culture. After the executive and specialized training, the overall decision making, liability concerns, and the complaints should decrease. The officers' productivity and stats should improve with the installation of the new equipment.

Prevention

This project will aid and assist the Marshal's Office in its effectiveness by gaining additional training on leadership competencies that will allow the command staff to employ supervisory measures that will evoke teamwork and productivity. This will give the agency tools and measures that will reduce overall agency liability.

Police Department

Project Description

This project aims to enhance public safety with strategies to reduce crime and violence.

Funds will be used to purchase supplies and tools to support the uniform and criminal investigation divisions (homicide/assaults, special victims, auto theft, gangs) to effectively perform duties that will lead to the apprehension of assailants who commit violent crimes, leading to successful prosecution. The supplies will provide safety to officers and safe and secure interview rooms. by reducing fatalities and personal injury when officers respond to calls. It will also provide safe and secure interview rooms when conducting interviews with persons suspected of committing criminal acts.

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Need

JAG funding will assist the DeKalb County Police Department in reducing violent crime, protecting the public, and maintaining officer safety. The supplies funded will be used to reduce fatalities and personal injury when officers respond to incidents by providing them with tools that will increase visibility on the scene of calls and providing them with supplies needed when performing dangerous actions initiated by officers, such as approaching aggressive and impaired drivers and investigating incidents of road rage. As an integral component in apprehending violent criminals, investigating crime is critical for ensuring that offenders are identified and arrested for the community's safety. DCPD has experienced a 13% increase in business burglaries, a 7% increase in stolen vehicles, a 19% increase in homicides, and a 75% increase in aggravated assault. Having to interview individuals who commit these violent crimes, the chairs, tables, and the sound-dampening wall will provide a safer and more secure interview room.

Interview rooms are also used when obtaining witness statements and providing critical assistance to victims of violent crime. The supplies will ensure the officers, detectives, and the public are safe when reporting crime.

Capabilities and Competencies

DeKalb Police maintain various partnerships with local jurisdictions to include Rockdale County, Gwinnett County Police, and City of Atlanta Police Department.

Goals

- To enhance officer safety when responding to calls
- To provide safer and more secure interview rooms for the Criminal Investigations Division (CID) and other specialty units.

Activities

To provide officers and detectives with the necessary tools and supplies to perform daily and critical duties effectively and the ability to thoroughly investigate detainees accused of committing violent crimes. To purchase the outlined supplies:

- Progress Chair
- Pax Armless Chair
- Leg-Style Table
- Sound-dampening wall
- Bolt down kits
- Installation of supplies
- Window breaker/seat belt cutter

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- High visibility gloves

Metrics

Outcome measures will be the number of officers who utilize supplies and the decrease in the number of incidents related to the safety and security of the interview rooms.

Target

100% of items purchased as outlined in budget.

Public Defender's Office

Project Description

The purpose of our project is to provide adequate and up to date resources and training to allow our staff to continue to provide excellent representation to our clients.

Need

Our staff requires resources, supplies and training to meet the needs and mandates of representing clients in accordance with the Sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Our office promotes equal justice, fairness and respect for all people in the legal system through effective and excellent representation. Through our advocacy and partnership with other judicial agencies, we work to reduce recidivism.

Capabilities and Competencies

We have an office coordinator who ensures our staff has the resources and supplies to effectively perform their work. Additionally, we have a professional development team that coordinates in house trainings and helps locate and identify outside trainings to keep up to date on innovative and best practices.

Goals

Our goal is to continue to provide excellent representation and promote equal justice through innovation, training, and partnerships.

Activities

Training helps better prepare our lawyers and staff to meet the varied needs of our clients and their cases. Technology continues to evolve and the discovery we receive in cases is primarily in a digital format, we file all court documents, and our case management system is electronic. Our staff needs the equipment and

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supplies to examine and maintain these digital documents.

Metrics

We will document the impact of trainings and having updated equipment and supplies from staff.

Prevention

By providing holistic legal representation, the Public Defender's Office works to reduce recidivism and promote public safety.

School System

Project Description

The Expanded Day programs, including GRIP (Growing Responsibly and Increasing Possibilities) and SAFE (Student and Family Engagement) Centers focuses on increasing nonviolent conflict resolutions skills, improving communication, decreasing office referrals, and providing programming that creates a safe environment for school-age youth. Students who have disciplinary infractions can be referred to the GRIP program and SAFE Center as an alternative to suspension, which keeps the youth engaged in school. Participation in the GRIP requires that both the youth and parent attend a Saturday program to learn about conflict resolution, the importance of interpersonal skills, alternatives to violence, and substance abuse prevention. SAFE Center programming may utilize vendors to facilitate these programs as well.

Need

Minority students are more likely to be impacted by poverty and are disproportionately suspended from school, which leads to a high drop-out rate. Students that drop out of school are more likely to have lower paying jobs and become involved with the legal system. The GRIP program was developed to serve as a preventative safety net for students who are exhibiting concerns related to violence or substance use and equip students and families with alternative skills to address and resolve conflict.

Capabilities and Competencies

To ensure success of the project, the System is equipped with knowledge of the project as well as personnel and performance competence.

Goals

The goal of the program is to decrease suspension and alternative school placement, maintain student engagement in a traditional school setting, improve communication and interpersonal skills while decreasing the occurrence of violence. The budget will be utilized to pay facilitators to implement the GRIP Program with

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students and families, provide ongoing training to facilitators and create identified spaces within the local school to serve as a de-escalation room.

Activities

To obtain the program goal, which is to decrease out of school suspension, the program must be marketed effectively to obtain referrals from school leaders. Students and their parents will participate in a six-hour training, taught by certified social workers and counselors, where they will learn de-escalation techniques, improve communication skills and the impact of substance abuse.

Metrics

The program data collection will include surveys from students and parents, financial records, and some suspension record reviews.

Target

500 students. Indicators will include the following: complete development of a safe space for students; utilization of the GRIP program; the number of students who participate in the program and remain enrolled in a traditional setting as opposed to being placed in an alternative program and a decrease in suspension.

Prevention

Violence prevention, conflict resolution and deterring substance abuse are the basic tenets of the project. Dekalb County School District will also develop Expanded Day programs, e.g., SAFE Centers in identified high schools which will serve as a specific area for students to de-escalate in a nurturing environment with adult support.

Sheriff's Office

Project Description

The project aims to provide public safety agencies and local government organizations with comprehensive risk management solutions through Lexipol's offerings. These solutions include policy management, accreditation, online training, wellness resources, grant assistance, and access to industry news. Additionally, G.L.O.V.E. access will be expanded to further grow officer and inmate safety.

Need

Public safety agencies and local governments face challenges in staying updated with legislative changes, best practices, and risk reduction strategies. Lexipol addresses these challenges by providing expertise in public

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safety law, policy, accreditation, training, mental and physical wellness, and grants. The dynamically changing landscape requires a proactive approach to ensure personnel safety, risk reduction, and community service.

Goals

To promote officer wellness and inmate and officer safety.

Activities:

Purchase of the following elements of a comprehensive law enforcement wellness platform and avail and train on usage all DKSO staff:

- Budget Item: Cordico Law Enforcement Wellness Solution
- Budget Item: Cordico app development and integration
- Budget Item: CrisisAlert® feature implementation
- Budget Item: Therapist Finder implementation
- Budget Item: Dr. Gilmartin Survival Videos inclusion
- Budget Item: Holistic wellbeing resource

Additionally, several additional sets of G.L.O.V.E. less than lethal inmate monitoring devices will be purchased.

Metrics

Data collected from app usage, engagement with wellness resources, utilization of peer support and chaplain services, therapist appointments, and feedback from personnel accessing the app. Data will be maintained on G.L.O.V.E. usage.

Target

Project success will be evaluated based on increased utilization of wellness resources, positive feedback from personnel, higher engagement with peer support and chaplain services, improved access to therapists, and enhanced mental and emotional wellbeing of public safety personnel. G.L.O.V.E. projected outcome is fewer incidents of over prior periods of time in taser usage or threat of usage and officer reports of greater ease of de-escalation.

Prevention

The project's prevention components include proactive mental and behavioral health support, accessible peer and chaplain services, crisis assistance, therapist access, expert emotional wellbeing content, and holistic wellness resources. These components collectively aim to prevent burnout, mental health issues, and crisis situations among public safety personnel.

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Solicitor-General's Office

Project Description

The Diversion Unit oversees programs designed to hold Defendants accountable for their crimes while addressing the behavior that led to their interaction with the criminal justice system. This overall objective is achieved by providing participants with life skills, supervision, therapeutic assistance, clinical intervention, and other support mechanisms as appropriate. By successfully completing one of our seven Diversion Programs, participants can avoid prosecution and a criminal conviction on their record.

G.O .A. L.S. (Gaining Opportunities and Life Skill s) "B" - presents opportunities and life skills to non-violent offenders between the ages of 17 and 21 with some criminal history.

Phoenix - supports women who have been charged with prostitution who do not have any violent felony convictions.

The JAG funded project will increase resources between our offices and partnering agencies to continue providing essential services to victims and the community at large. As well , it will ensure participants of any of our programs or other services receive professional, evidence-based programming.

Need

All states and the federal government have passed laws to establish a set of victims' rights and the prosecution of offenders. In general, these laws require that victims have certain information, protections, and a role in the criminal justice process. Victims' rights depend on the laws of the jurisdiction where the crime is investigated and prosecuted . Criminal justice and victim advocate professionals all cite resource limitations as the most common factor for being unable to improve the provision of victims' rights. This holds true for our County as well.

Capabilities and Competencies

The DeKalb County Solicitor-General's office has the necessary staff, professional services contractors and systems in place to provide for and manage this project. Our Diversion unit will implement and track the projects progress, while our Grants Coordinator will collect and maintain all relevant backup and financial documents, as well as submit all quarterly reports.

Goals

It takes a coordinated community response to provide victims of crimes with the comprehensive services they need and bring offenders to justice. Our mission is to prosecute misdemeanor crimes committed in DeKalb County in a diligent, fair, just, and efficient manner while maintaining the highest ethical standards and ensuring

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that justice prevails for victims, defendants, and citizens of DeKalb County. Our goal is to enhance special victims and diversion program services and promote community prosecution.

Activities

The Solicitor-Generals Office will partner with and utilize the expertise of social service, mental health, trauma-informed, and victim service professionals to deliver evidence-based practices within our programs.

Metrics

Diversion Programs are strictly voluntary. In fact, if one begins a Diversion Program and later changes their mind, they are free to withdraw. However, we strive to encourage everyone who is eligible, to participate in our programs. We will measure the success of our Diversion Programs by the graduation rates of participants who successfully complete each program. This data will be collected in our various court case systems.

Target

Our office anticipates that increasing resources will similarly increase the number of participants that are eligible for, and will take advantage of, the Diversion Programs offered, which in turn will help boost graduation rates.

Prevention

"Not in My DeKalb" is our office initiative that collaborates with police and victim service providers to develop a unique take on what other agencies may view as a "task force" or "specialized unit". The initiative aims to provide the resources, manpower, and policy implementation necessary to prevent and reduce crimes against women on a much broader scale. It equips our agency with tools to help victims more efficiently, holds offenders accountable the first time, and reinforces the importance of successfully prosecuting misdemeanor offenses, ensuring that victims of crimes are safe and not subjected to ongoing or escalated threats.