

**U.S. Department of Justice Solicitation
Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program
FY 2022 Local Solicitation-- CFDA #16.738
DeKalb County, Georgia**

Program Narrative



With a population of 755,287, 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 making sure projects were in compliance with the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) parameters. As such, the DeKalb County's FY 2022 JAG allocation of \$303,670 will support a broad range of activities to

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prevent and 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 2022 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	\$37,958	Prosecution Enhancements and Community Engagement
Juvenile Court	Prevention, Alternatives to Prosecution and Sentencing, Education	\$37,958	Juvenile Court Education Enhancement Program
Marshal’s Office	Leadership, Officer Safety, Training, Prevention	\$37,958	Executive Training
Police	Officer Safety and Effectiveness	\$37,958	Law Enforcement Activities Enhancement
Public Defender	Indigent Defense and Training	\$37,958	Indigent Defense Enhancement
School System	Prevention, Education, Substance Abuse Prevention, Conflict Resolution Training	\$37,964	Expanded Day Programs
Sheriff’s Office	Law Enforcement and Inmate Safety	\$37,958	Body Worn Cameras-Detention Officers/Jail Emergency Services Team
Solicitor-General	Prevention, Counseling, Officer Safety, Diversion Programming	\$37,958	Special Investigations/Diversion Programming
		\$303,670	

Program Narrative

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.

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.

Outcome measures will be number of community contacts, numbers of trainings and staff satisfaction with the trainings, and clients served by the special units who receive enhanced supplies. 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 special prosecution programs, and increased training and resources for specialized program staff.

Program Narrative

Metrics

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

Prevention

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 Juvenile Court Education Enhancement Program will allow the court to continue an in-person and virtual education program implemented during COVID-19. Additionally, it will provide instructors and resources needed for youth to receive assistance in reaching their educational goals in a creative, innovative, yet 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 below national average graduation rate, there remains a need to address the literacy and educational deficiencies of at-risk youth and 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 them further falling behind in their 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 take into account the many challenges their families have endured and provide a solution. This can be accomplished by providing an alternative education 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.

Program Narrative

Goals

- 1) to provide alternative education solutions, such as GED preparation classes, for youth who come in contact with the court who are either over-age and underperforming in the traditional school setting or who 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, 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 academic support

Activities

Provide instructors for youth enrolled in the education program. (Tutoring and GED instructors)
Provide resources for youth enrolled in the education program (Vouchers and Supplies)

Metrics

- 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.
- The number of youth provided with vouchers to take the official GED exam.

Targets

1. Twenty (20) youth will enroll in the in-person or virtual GED platform.
2. Fifteen (15) youth will increase their reading or math levels by one level.
3. Five (5) youth will be provided vouchers to take the official GED exam.

Prevention

The DeKalb Juvenile Court Education Enhancement Program directly supports at risk and adjudicated youth completing their education. 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 that families can be referred to for counseling, employment, financial literacy, food and housing support and many other issues that may arise. Youth will receive personal and professional development and foundational principles of education to assist their lives and thrive despite the negative impact of COVID-19 while decreasing the likelihood they will enter the justice system or gain additional charges.

Marshal's Office

Project Description

Program Narrative

Marshal's Office executive staff will participate in four specialized leadership training conferences at the Southern Police Institute Alumni Association and the Georgia Command College

Need

The specialized leadership training 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

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 and to provide public safety services to the citizens of DeKalb County in a safe, professional, and courteous manner. The goal of this project is to provide command staff with specialized leadership training that will examine innovative partnerships and new models of collaborative governance and provide a balance of traditional and hands-on learning experiences to help seasoned public officials meet changing needs to their constituents and communities and enhance officer safety.

Activities

The Marshal's Office will reach these goals through specialized training for the Executive Staff. The specialized training is comprised of a diverse group of colleagues in leadership which enables our command staff to learn and exchange ideas.

Metrics

Measuring training effectiveness of our staff is vital to our organization's success. Our goals will be measured by: 1) Self-assessment questionnaires to identify individual and departmental needs, 2) Plan and facilitate needs-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, 6) Implement quarterly and annual plans to define and support continuous learning paths which enable staff to remain on an upward bound track.

Targets

Our target for each metric is 100% participation among the Marshal's Office staff to produce immediate and long-term positive results.

Prevention

The specialized leadership training will help prevent and detect possible liability issues and bring a holistic approach to operating.

Program Narrative

Police Department

Project Description

Focus area: reducing violent crime

Funds via this project will purchase of supplies to enhance and support the Neighborhood Enforcement Team's (NET) ability to respond to crime in a safer manner while protecting citizens. The supplies will provide tactical safety and augment on-site/on scene identification of people suspected of criminal activity.

Need

Funding from JAG will assist the DeKalb Police Department in solving chronic criminal activity, protecting the public, and maintaining officer safety. The supplies funded through this grant will be used by officers to address criminal activity in providing safe entry to buildings and cover for open areas when deployed to violent crime incidents. The fingerprint scanner will aid in providing timely identification of persons whom officers interact with during calls. The timely identification of persons interacting with law enforcement is essential to officer safety, as this person may have a violent history. This purchase will allow greater accessibility to this technology by each watch at all precincts.

Goals

- Enhance officer safety when responding to calls.
- Obtain supplies for emergency responses.
- Increase tools available to the Neighborhood Enforcement Team (NET) and other specialty units.

Activities

Purchase of outlined supplies and software:

- Mighty Mite X Entry Shield 18X30 W/3 Position Handle
- Level IIIA PASGT Ballistic Helmet
- Ballistic Shield Decals
- Mobile All-In-One Evolution FAP-30
- DATAWORKS Plus Verizon Data Plan Bundle for Evolution

Metrics

100% of items purchased as outlined in budget.

Program Narrative

Public Defender's Office

Project Description

The purpose of our project is to provide excellent and comprehensive legal representation, and to provide equal justice for marginalized communities. A goal of our office is to reduce recidivism by connecting our clients with services, advocating for diversion and accountability courts, and offer alternative sentencing options. The trainings will provide attorneys with the necessary skills to provide this quality legal representation to our clients. We are still experiencing a large case backlog due to COVID-19 and the software will enhance our ability to increase efficiency in reviewing video and audio evidence. This type of evidence is important for maintaining accountability and promoting trust between communities and law enforcement. The additional supplies and computers will increase our efficiency in representing our clients.

Need

A person charged with a crime has the constitutional right to counsel. The Public Defender Office provides legal representation to those unable to afford an attorney in all criminal cases. Not only do we want to ensure that we provide excellent service and representation to our clients, but we also try and reduce recidivism, which promotes public safety. We work with clients to identify what led them to the criminal legal system, and we create plans to address these issues. We work collaboratively with other agencies on programs that improve the criminal legal system and reduces crime in our community. This funding will help provide us with the necessary resources and training to promote excellence in our office.

Goals

To provide excellent legal representation for our clients and to promote equal justice, fairness, and respect for all people in the legal system.

Activities

- Provide staff with the necessary training to ensure we provide quality legal representation to all clients
- To alleviate some challenges with the large case backlog due to COVID-19 by providing supplies, technology upgrades and software that will increase our efficiency in resolving cases.

Metrics

Improved outcomes for clients, including case dispositions.

Program Narrative

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 and Safe Centers focuses on increasing nonviolent conflict resolution skills, improving communication, decreasing office referrals and providing programming that creates a safe environment for youth. Students who have a disciplinary infraction can be referred to the GRIP program as an alternative to suspension, which keeps the youth engaged in school. Participation in the GRIP program 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.

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.

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 students and families, provide ongoing training to facilitators and create identified spaces within the local school to serve as a de-escalation room. Additionally, utilization of the kiosk will be placed in schools with mindfulness and behavior management software to assist students self-regulate their emotions.

Activities

In order 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 6-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.

Program Narrative

Metrics and Target

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. Target is 500 students.

Prevention

Violence prevention, conflict resolution and deterring substance abuse, and greater educational success 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 mission of the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office Jail Division is to operate the jail for the safety and security of the community while providing for a safe, humane, and secure environment for both staff and inmates. The Sheriff is the official jailer of the county and is responsible for the health, safety, and welfare of all inmates. This project will aid in increased security in the jail and other locations inmates gather for medical, education and recreational activities.

Need

Body worn cameras offer both audio and visual documentation of interactions and between officers and inmates. It provides unaltered documentation of incidents that is critical during investigations. Footage serves to support officer reports and can be key in litigation.

Goals

The **goal** is to purchase body cameras for use by detention staff working in the jail as security officers and other duties with a large number of inmates present.

The **objective** of this project is to provide recorded documentation of incidents in the jail as well as provided an added safety feature for officers and inmates. The mere presence of the cameras is expected to decrease inmates' attacks on officers and other inmates. The decrease in use of force incidents will increase safety for inmates, officers, and other staff.

Program Narrative

Activities:

Purchase of body worn cameras for detention officers assigned as Jail Emergency Services Team (JEST) personnel in the jail. These cameras will be used to get an up close visual and audio recording as officers respond to incidents.

Metrics

We will account for all incidents through proper documentation and reporting enabling our agency to measure the effectiveness of this technology and our officer training. DKSO will utilize our internal data system and data from body cameras to determine if the number of use of forces involving inmates/staff is decreasing and/or increasing compared to previous years. In addition, DKSO will measure how effective verbal judo/deescalating training and policy compliance by conducting random/weekly video footage reviews of body cameras worn by staff.

Prevention

DKSO plans to discourage unwanted/unwarranted behavior by both staff and the inmates. The body cams will assist in resolving inmate complaints / investigations, as well as providing legal assistance if needed.

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 Skills) "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 do the following:

- Increase resources between our offices and partnering agencies in order to continue providing essential services to victims and the community at large.
- Provide additional trainings and other professional development avenues to staff.
- Ensure participants of any of our programs or other services receive professional, evidence-based programming.

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- Increase staff resources related to equipment and supplies
- Promote public awareness and education in the areas of crimes against women.

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 limited 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 at the State and local levels were asked for their suggestions for improving the provision of victims' rights. Their responses basically fell into three groups: increased funding, increased training, and increased enforcement of victims' rights. Resource limitations were cited by officials as the most common reason for being unable to fulfill their legal responsibilities and it rings true for our County.

Gaps in services to victims and increased offender accountability fall largely on the inability to create, implement, and sustain resources due to lack of funding. Resources include man-power, updated technology, and access to professional development. Each area of need that is addressed in this application is addressed because our agency needs assistance in creating better processes for our organization and better outcomes for the families, women, and community we serve. The proposed program enhancements will significantly increase agency capacity and increase coordinated responses to crime throughout DeKalb. This grant can be what propels the needle forward in our efforts.

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 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 by increasing the program's resources for training, contractual services, equipment, and supplies.

Activities

The Solicitor's Office will partner with and utilize the expertise of social service, mental health, trauma-informed, and victim service providing professionals to deliver evidence-based practices within our programs and trainings. In order to increase staff trainings, our office must make trainings available and worthwhile. Trainings will be comprehensive and will be provided in-house as well as off-site. Facilitators for our diversion program will be contracted with our office to deliver services. Trainings will fall under the "training & conference" category.

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Metrics

Diversion Programs are strictly voluntary. In fact, if one begins a Diversion Program and later change their mind, they are free to do so. While we do not measure by participant progress while they matriculate through the program, we do keep track of how many diversion cases we close (whether due to successful completion and graduation or the defendant ending up back in court). This data is collected in our various court case systems.

Our offices' primary responsibility to the county is to hold misdemeanor offenders accountable for their actions. We strive to decrease the offenses, particularly those that are frequently repeated. Our office anticipates that increasing resources for victim-witness programs and services and promoting department-wide training initiatives will assist in increasing prosecution of misdemeanor crimes within the county; increasing victim satisfaction in the judicial process and handling of cases from beginning to end; and increase staff professional development, capacity, and sustainability

Prevention

Not In My DeKalb proposes to address the aforementioned community problem on a multifaceted level. Our Office will collaborate 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 project is important because the County needs a solicitor-general's office that shows its constituents it is capable of handling and successfully prosecuting misdemeanor offenses; ensuring that victims of crime are safe and not subjected to ongoing or escalated threats. The proposed project is essential to providing the resources, man-power, and policy implementation necessary to prevent and reduce crimes against women on a much broader scale and truly equipped our agency with tools to help victims more efficiently and hold offenders accountable the first time. With crime at an all-time high in the County, residents need to know that they have a criminal justice system that is competent and effective in the work it is set out to do.