

**INSURANCE COMMISSIONER
OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

GRANT AWARD AGREEMENT
Fiscal Year 2022-23
Automobile Insurance Fraud Program

The Insurance Commissioner of the State of California hereby makes an award of funds to **Fresno County**, Office of the District Attorney, in the amount and for the purpose and duration set forth in this grant award.

This grant award consists of this agreement and the application for the grant and made a part hereof. By acceptance of the grant award, the grant award recipient agrees to administer the grant project in accordance with all applicable statutes, regulations and the grant application.

Duration of Grant: The grant award is for the program period, **July 1, 2022** through **June 30, 2023**.

Purpose of Grant: This grant award is made pursuant to the provisions of California Insurance Code §1872.8 and shall be used solely for the purposes of enhanced investigation and prosecution of automobile insurance fraud and economic car theft cases.

Amount of Grant: The grant award agreed to herein is in the amount of **\$388,337**. This amount has been determined by the Insurance Commissioner. However, the actual total award amount for the county is contingent on the collection and the authorization for expenditure pursuant to the Government Code §13000 et seq. The grant award shall be distributed pursuant to §1872.8 of the Insurance Code and to the California Code of Regulations Sub-Chapter 9, Article 4, §2698.65.

<p>Lisa Smittcamp District Attorney</p> <p>DocuSigned by: <i>Stephen Rusconi</i> 4FB8272BEB4E4FE...</p> <p>_____ Authorized Official</p> <p>Name: Stephen Rusconi Title: Business Manager</p> <p>Date: <u>12/21/2022</u></p>	<p>RICARDO LARA Insurance Commissioner</p> <p>_____ Authorized Official</p> <p>Name: George Mueller Title: Deputy Commissioner</p> <p>Date: _____</p>
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I hereby certify upon my own personal knowledge that budgeted funds are available for the period and purposes of this expenditure.

Crista Hill, Division Chief/Budget Officer,
Financial and Business Management Division, CDI

Date

Application Report



Applicant Organization:

Fresno

Project Name: 22-23 AUTO Fresno

Application ID: App-22-35

Funding Announcement: FY 22-23 Automobile Insurance Fraud Program

Requested Amount: \$584,911.00

Project Summary: Fresno Auto RFA FY2022-23

Authorized Certifying Official: Stephen Rusconi srusconi@fresnocountyca.gov -

Project Director/Manager: Traci Fritzler-Kirkorian tfritzler-kirkorian@fresnocountyca.gov (559) 600-4412

Case Statistics / Data Reporter: Dustin Kirby dkirby@fresnocountyca.gov -

Compliance/Fiscal Officer: Stephen Rusconi srusconi@fresnocountyca.gov -

Section Name: Overview Questions

Sub Section Name: General Information

1. Applicant Question: Multi-County Grant

Is this a multi-county grant application request? If Yes, select the additional counties.

Applicant Response:

No

2. Applicant Question: Estimated Carryover

Enter the estimated carryover funds from the previous fiscal year. If none, enter "0".

Applicant Response:

\$0.00

3. Applicant Question: Contact Updates

Have you updated the Contacts and Users for your Program? Did you verify the Contact Record for your County's District Attorney?

- o **Contacts** are those, such as your elected District Attorney, who need to be identified but do not need access to GMS.
- o **Users** are those individuals who will be entering information/uploading into GMS for the application. **Confidential Users** have access to everything in all your grant applications. **Standard Users** do not have access to the Confidential Sections where Investigation Activity is reported. Typical Standard Users are budget

personnel.

Applicant Response:

Yes

4. Applicant Question: Program Contacts

Identify the individuals who will serve as the Program Contacts. These individuals shall be entered as a User or Contact in GMS.

On the final submission page, you will link these individuals' contact records to the application.

Project Director/Manager is the individual ultimately responsible for the program. This person must be a Confidential User.

Case Statistics/Data Reporter is the individual responsible for entering the statistics into the DAR (District Attorney Program Report). This person should be a Confidential User.

Compliance/Fiscal Officer is the individual responsible for all fiscal matters relating to the program. This must be someone other than the Project Director/Manager. This person is usually a Standard User.

Applicant Response:

Program Contacts	Name
Project Director / Manager	Traci Fritzler
Case Statistics / Data Reporter	Dustin D. Kirby
Compliance / Fiscal Officer	Steve Rusconi

5. Applicant Question: Statistical Reporting Requirements

Do you acknowledge the County is responsible for separately submitting a Program Report using the CDI website, DA Portal?

To access the DAR webpage on the CDI website: right click on the following link to open a new tab, or copy the URL into your browser.

<http://www.insurance.ca.gov/0300-fraud/0100-fraud-division-overview/10-anti-fraud-prog/dareporting.cfm>

Applicant Response:

Yes

6. Applicant Question: Required Documents Upload

Have you reviewed the Application Upload List and properly named and uploaded the documents into your Document Library?

To view/download the Application Upload List: go the Announcement, click View, and at the top of the page select Attachments. Items must be uploaded into the Document Library before you can attach them to the upcoming questions.

Applicant Response:

Yes

Sub Section Name: BOS Resolution

1. Applicant Question: BOS Resolution

Have you uploaded a Board of Supervisors (BOS) Resolution to the Document Library and attached it to this question?

A BOS Resolution for the new grant period must be uploaded to GMS to receive funding for the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year. If the resolution cannot be submitted with the application, it must be uploaded no later than January 2, 2023. There is a sample with instructions located in the Announcement Attachments, 3b.

Applicant Response:

No

2. Applicant Question: Delegated Authority Designation

Choose from the selection who will be the person submitting this application, signing the Grant Award Agreement (GAA) in GMS, and approving any amendments thereof.

The person selected must be a Confidential User, who will attest their authority and link their contact record on the submission page of this application. A sample Designated Authority Letter is located in the Announcement Attachments, 3a. CDI encourages the contact named as Project Director/Manger be the designated authority, should that be your selection.

Applicant Response:

Designated Person named in Attached Letter

Attachment:

[22-23 AUTO Fresno Delegated Authority.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

Section Name: County Plan

Sub Section Name: Qualifications and Successes

1. Applicant Question: Successes

What areas of your automobile insurance insurance fraud program were successful and why?

Detail your program's successes for ONLY the 20-21 and 21-22 Fiscal Years. It is not necessary to list every case. If a case is being reported in more than one insurance fraud grant program, clearly identify the component(s) that apply to this program. If you are including any task force cases in your caseload, name the task force and your county personnel's specific involvement/role in the case(s). Information regarding investigations should be given a reference number and details provided only in the Confidential Section, question 1.

Applicant Response:

Successes in Fiscal Year 2020-2021

In Fiscal Year 2020-2021, the Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit filed twenty-six cases against twenty-nine defendants. Twenty-two cases were applicant fraud cases. Four cases were economic auto theft cases, with three cases involving a false claim of theft, and one involving a chop shop. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit also secured seven felony convictions and twelve misdemeanor convictions. The majority of criminal cases were resolved after full restitution was made. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit collected and dispersed \$19,747.41 in restitution to victims.

One notable case involved a burned vehicle and a defendant who reported her car stolen and subsequently filed an insurance claim. Examination of the defendant's phone records showed calls around the time frame of her vehicle being burned. The evidence of her phone records contradicted her prior statements about where she had been during the relevant time frame, instead placing her close to the site where the vehicle was recovered. The defendant pled to a felony insurance fraud charge. The defendant agreed to pay \$3,330.12 in restitution comprised of investigative costs to the insurance company.

Another case of note involved a tip about a possible chop shop. The location was investigated, with several dismantled vehicles noted in the rear of the property. Two males were detained on scene. Eventually, nine dismantled stolen vehicles were tallied. One defendant admitted to people bringing stolen cars to the residence, while the other denied knowing anything about stolen cars. The defendant that confessed pled to a felony chop shop charge, and received two years in local prison, while the other defendant was in custody on a different chop shop charge, as well as violations of probation.

Successes in Fiscal Year 2021-2022

In Fiscal Year 2021-2022, the Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit filed twelve cases against thirteen defendants. Ten cases were applicant fraud, and two were economic auto theft involving a chop shop. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit also secured four felony convictions and eleven misdemeanor convictions. The majority of criminal cases were resolved after full restitution was made. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit collected and dispersed \$30,019 in restitution to victims.

One notable case involved a chop shop discovered after a joint investigation that involved Fresno County's Help Eliminate Auto Theft (HEAT) Team and Fresno County's Ag Task Force. A stolen vehicle had been traced to a property in Fresno County's rural area. After the property owner consented to a search, that vehicle and an additional five other stolen vehicles were discovered throughout the property in various states of disrepair. Additionally, there were several cherry pickers, hand-held electric saws, and other miscellaneous tools that are generally used for disassembly and associated with chop shops scattered throughout the property. The defendant (the property owner) claimed that he did not know that any of the vehicles were stolen. In contrast, however, he also told officers that people would bring vehicles to him, he did not pay any money for them, he did not register them, and he disassembled the vehicles to sell the scrap metal for money. The defendant was convicted of a felony for operating a chop shop. It is anticipated that at sentencing he will be placed on probation for a period of two years.

Another notable case involved a defendant that submitted falsified receipts for services at a chiropractic care office and a massage therapy business resulting from a traffic collision. Although the defendant was not at fault in the collision, she submitted receipts purportedly for chiropractic care and massage treatment. It was later discovered that some of the receipts for chiropractic care, and all of the receipts for massage treatments, were forged or falsified. Additionally, the defendant had a prior felony conviction for forgery. The defendant in this case was convicted of a felony violation of automobile insurance fraud.

2. Applicant Question: Task Forces and Agencies

List the governmental agencies and task forces you have worked with to develop potential automobile insurance fraud cases.

Applicant Response:

The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit works with all local law enforcement agencies including CDI; the California Highway Patrol Investigative Services Unit; the Help Eliminate Auto Theft team (comprised of CHP officers, a DMV investigator, and local law enforcement); Fresno Police Department's Career Criminal Auto Theft Team; Fresno County's Agricultural Crimes Task Force (a specialized team consisting of Fresno County Deputy Sheriffs and a CHP officer); Bureau of Automotive Repair; and California Department of Motor Vehicles Investigations. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit also works with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Social Services and other local police agencies from the surrounding communities when investigating cases.

Currently, there are open chop shop cases that overlap with the Help Eliminate Auto Theft team and Fresno County's Agricultural Crimes Task Force.

3. Applicant Question: Unfunded Contributions

Specify any unfunded contributions and support (i.e., financial, equipment, personnel, and technology) your county provided in Fiscal Year 21-22 to the automobile insurance fraud program.

Applicant Response:

The Fresno County District Attorney's Office assigns a Budget Analyst, Chief Deputy District Attorney, and a Commander of the Bureau of Investigations to oversee the Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit. The District Attorney's Office is currently providing a Legal Assistant who handles operations for the Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit.

4. Applicant Question: Personnel Continuity

Detail and explain the turnover or continuity of personnel assigned to your automobile insurance fraud program. Include any rotational policies your county may have.

Applicant Response:

The Fresno County District Attorney’s Office has continually staffed the Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit with dedicated and experienced investigators and prosecutors. These prosecutors and investigators are given the tools and resources they need to develop the specific expertise to effectively investigate and prosecute automobile insurance fraud, including complex cases that require additional time. The District Attorney’s Office prioritizes continuity of staff in specialty assignments whenever possible.

The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit is staffed by Deputy District Attorney Dustin Kirby. Deputy District Attorney Kirby is a seasoned prosecutor with significant trial experience, having previously handled assignments including Violent Crimes and Juvenile Justice. Deputy District Attorney Kirby has been a prosecutor for over six years.

Deputy District Attorney Kirby joined the Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit in July of 2021. Since joining the Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit, he has taken advantage of training opportunities specific to automobile insurance fraud. Deputy District Attorney Kirby attended the 2021 CDAA Fraud Symposium. Deputy District Attorney Kirby also attended the 2022 Anti-Fraud Conference. Additionally, Deputy District Attorney Kirby has demonstrated a passion for prosecuting insurance fraud and has personal hope to be a member of the Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit for the foreseeable future.

Senior District Attorney Investigator Jody Flores joined the Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit in February of 2020. He has nearly 20 years of law enforcement experience, both as a District Attorney Investigator and as a Deputy Sheriff with the Fresno County Sheriff’s Office. He worked as a Deputy Sheriff from 2002 until 2014, and thereafter has been with the Fresno County District Attorney’s Office. He has handled assignments including the investigation of robberies, assaults, criminal street gangs, narcotics, and homicides. He has received extensive training in computer forensics, criminal investigations, interview and interrogation techniques, and evidence collection. He has earned three specialty certificates from the Robert Presley Institute of Criminal Investigations, including Robbery Investigation, Homicide Investigation, and Computer Crime Investigations.

Senior Investigator Flores attended the 2021 CDAA Fraud Symposium and the 2022 Anti-Fraud Conference. He is a member of the Western States Auto Theft Investigators organization, and regularly attends their trainings. He also participates in bi-monthly CDI-sponsored Special Investigations Unit roundtables when they are being held.

5. Applicant Question: Frozen Assets Distribution

Were any frozen assets distributed in the current reporting period?

If yes, please describe. Assets may have been frozen in previous years.

Applicant Response:

No

Sub Section Name: Staffing

1. Applicant Question: Staffing List

Complete the chart and list the individuals billed to the program, including prosecutor(s), investigator(s), and support staff. Include any vacant positions to be filled.

For each, list the percentage of time devoted to the program and the start and end dates the individual is billed to the program.

Applicant Response:

Name	Role	Start Date	End Date (leave blank if N/A)	% Time
Dustin D. Kirby	Deputy District Attorney	07/11/2021		100
Jody Flores	Senior Investigator	02/25/2020		100
Krystina Bailey	Legal Assistant	04/18/2022		50

2. Applicant Question: FTE and Position Count

Complete the FTE and Position Chart, summarizing the positions listed in the previous question.

The chart should match what you will be entering in the budget. The budget entry will roll over into Post Award.

Applicant Response:

Salary by Position	# of Positions	FTE (1.00 = 2080 hours/year)
Supervising Attorneys		
Attorneys	1	2080
Supervising Investigators		
Investigators (Sworn)	1	2080
Investigators (Non-Sworn)		
Investigative Assistants		
Forensic Accountant/Auditor		
Support Staff Supervisor		
Paralegal/Analyst/Legal Assistant/etc.	.50	1040
Clerical Staff		
Student Assistants		
Over Time: Investigators		
Over Time: Other Staff		
Salary by Position, other		
	Total: 2.50	Total: 5,200.00

3. Applicant Question: Organizational Chart

Upload and attach to this question an Organizational Chart; label it "22-23 AUTO (county name) Org Chart".

The organizational chart should outline:

- *Personnel assigned to the program. Identify their position, title, and placement in the lines of authority to the elected district attorney.*
- *The placement of the program staff and their program responsibility.*

Applicant Response:

[22-23 AUTO Fresno Org Chart.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

Sub Section Name: Problem Statement & Program Strategy

1. Applicant Question: Problem Statement

Describe the types and magnitude of automobile insurance fraud (e.g., applicant, medical/legal provider, staged collisions, insider fraud, fraud ring, capping, and economic vehicle theft) relative to the extent of the problem specific to your county.

Use local data or other evidence to support your description.

Applicant Response:

CDI received and reviewed 33 Suspected Automobile Insurance Fraud claims in Fresno during Fiscal Year 2021-2022. Applicant fraud, vehicle arson, fraud rings, and economic car theft continue to greatly impact the residents of Fresno County.

Applicant Fraud

Fresno County is the tenth largest county in California based on its estimated population of 1,013,581 as of July 1, 2021, per the United States Census Bureau. Fresno County is also home to the fifth largest city in California based on population size, the city of Fresno. Fresno County's unemployment rate in Fiscal Year 2020-2021 has ranged from 9.4% in July of 2021, to a low of 6.0% in April of 2022, according to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. This is compared to a statewide unemployment rate in California of 4.6% as of April of 2022, and 3.6% nationally as of May 2022.

Per the United States Census Bureau, the median household income in the city of Fresno from 2016 to 2020 was \$53,368, compared to a higher statewide median household income of \$78,672. In Fresno County, 17.1% of people lived below the poverty line from 2016 to 2020. The rate of people living below the poverty line increases to 23.5% if one were to look at the city of Fresno only. These rates are substantially above the poverty rates during the same time period of 11.5% for California, and 11.4% for the United States as a whole.

Fresno County's economy remains highly dependent on agriculture. Like everywhere else, it was also affected by the Covid pandemic, with unemployment peaking shortly before the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year at 17.10% in April of 2020. Since then, the unemployment rate had dropped, holding at about 10% in the first few months of 2021. However, analysis of the recent data has posited that the reason for the recent drop in the unemployment rate in California was partly from thousands of people dropping out of the workforce entirely, rather than having found employment.

Meanwhile, the Consumer Price Index (which is a measure of the average change over time in the prices paid by urban consumers for a market basket of consumer goods and services), rose 4.2% from April 2020 to April 2021. This was the largest increase over a 12-month period since a 4.9% increase for the year ending September 2008, per the U.S. Bureau

of Labor Statistics.

The above issues could potentially lead to individuals and families, squeezed on lower incomes and rising expenses, to forego automobile insurance, repairs on their vehicles, or falling behind on auto loans or leases, and ultimately resorting to applicant-type insurance fraud when involved in a car accident, or owner give-ups that are reported as thefts to insurance companies.

There are also many uninsured, unlicensed drivers in Fresno County. Typically, they obtain older, less expensive vehicles which are more easily stolen for parts, thus creating an environment for increased auto theft, chop shop operations, and insurance fraud.

Vehicle Arsons

Vehicle arsons are commonly committed for insurance fraud purposes, but they are difficult to prosecute. The insured has the vehicle burned, which is then deemed a total loss by the insurance company. Vehicle arsons are labor intensive to investigate. Due to lack of investigative resources to properly examine the vehicle at the time of recovery, valuable evidence is often lost. When fraud is ultimately suspected, it is frequently too late to conduct the proper investigation. Often the vehicle is recovered long after the arson has been committed due to Fresno County's vast farmlands where vehicles are easily disposed of with no witnesses.

Fraud Rings

Local automobile theft task forces focus on businesses, both legitimate and illegitimate, that promote economic car theft and automobile insurance fraud by dealing in stolen vehicles, stolen vehicle parts, and billing insurance companies for work not performed and parts not supplied to consumers. These businesses include metal recyclers, auto body repair shops, and auto parts shops. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit has filed cases in the past involving fraud rings comprised of the owners, employees, and customers of these businesses. The Bureau of Automotive Repair has in the past submitted cases where automobile repair shops are committing fraud by billing insurance companies for unperformed work on the customer's vehicles.

Economic Car Theft

Fresno County has an auto theft rate of 444.7 auto thefts per 100,000 people, according to statistics released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the 2019 calendar year, compared to 358.8 per 100,000 people in California, and 219.9 per 100,000 people nationally.

Despite efforts to educate the public, many drivers continue to leave their cars running while unattended, to either cool down in the summer or warm up in the winter. This creates easy opportunities for automobile theft.

A large part of Fresno's economic car theft problem revolves around chop shops. The local auto theft task forces investigate many cases where suspects are stealing vehicles, including older vehicles, and stripping them for parts. Many do so for profit, while others use the parts for their own vehicles. Investigations of chop shops have uncovered numerous owner give-up cases, as well as stolen vehicles.

The various law enforcement agency automobile theft task forces are fighting automobile theft crime every day. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit receives numerous cases from these task forces every year. The task force efforts and aggressive prosecution by prosecutors specializing in automobile theft cases do make an impact. Unfortunately, auto

thefts increased in Fresno County from 2019 to 2020 by 5.3%. During the same time period, 6.9% more vehicles were recovered. It is imperative to continue funding experienced prosecutors and investigators dedicated to insurance fraud and economic car theft to provide for aggressive, specialized prosecution.

Medical Provider Fraud

Medical providers who commit billing fraud may cross over from the workers' compensation insurance arena into the automobile insurance fraud arena. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit recognizes the importance of investigating medical provider fraud and is committed to investigating these cases. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit continues to work closely with all local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to combat medical provider fraud in Fresno County.

2. Applicant Question: Problem Resolution Plan

Explain how your county plans to resolve the problem described in your problem statement. Include improvements in your program.

Information regarding investigations should be given a reference number and details provided only in the Confidential Section, question 2, and marked "Problem Resolution".

Applicant Response:

Applicant Fraud

The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit maintains excellent open communication with our various referral sources. Staff will continue to network and coordinate training with the Special Investigations Unit managers for the automobile insurance industry. These trainings for claims examiners focus on applicant fraud red flags and evidentiary requirements for successful criminal prosecutions as well as obtaining feedback on how we can better assist in case evaluations. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit continues to assist CDI with joint investigation as needed.

Fraud Rings

The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit investigates all fraud ring referrals, including those involving large numbers of suspects and incidents. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit will continue to network with insurance companies in identifying and investigating all suspected fraud rings. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit maintains its commitment to prosecuting fraud ring cases, with the current goal to accelerate prosecution of fraud ring cases that stalled during the Covid pandemic.

Economic Car Theft

The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit will continue to work closely with local law enforcement agencies, CDI, and Special Investigations Unit staff to prosecute chop shop cases, career automobile thieves, and owner give-ups masquerading as thefts. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit will continue to prosecute these cases as efficiently as possible.

Medical Provider Fraud

The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit will work with the Workers' Compensation Insurance Fraud Unit, CDI, and the National Insurance Crime Bureau, as well as other law enforcement agencies, in investigating and combating medical provider fraud. Combating medical provider fraud is important due to its impact on the cost of automobile insurance for the consumer. Reducing medical provider fraud reduces insurance costs for consumers.

Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit Design

Fresno County is requesting sufficient funding to assign the following full-time positions: one Deputy District Attorney, one Senior District Attorney Investigator, and one half-time Legal Assistant.

It is essential to have a Senior District Attorney Investigator who can review referrals closed by CDI due to insufficient resources. The Senior District Attorney Investigator will conduct all requested pre-trial follow up investigations, serve subpoenas, prepare and execute search warrants, maintain evidence, and perform other required tasks to support the prosecutor.

The Deputy District Attorney will ensure that criminal cases, the success or failure of which has a significant impact on the program's mission, are successfully prosecuted. The Deputy District Attorney will appear in court for Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit cases, including Mandatory Supervised Release hearings, probation violation hearings, and restitution hearings.

The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit Legal Assistant will maintain the database of restitution payments and help in the grant application process. The Legal Assistant will help prepare court documents, correspondence, and provide any other support for Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit staff as necessary.

The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit continues to collect and track restitution ordered by the court. With the database, staff can collect restitution, forward payments to victims, and maintain contact with those defendants who fail to make restitution payments quickly and efficiently.

The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit is responsible for outreach presentations to law enforcement and insurance industry personnel. The staff regularly meets with local law enforcement and private carriers as part of outreach efforts to discuss potential referrals.

Program Improvement Goals for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit will work toward filing high impact cases such as sophisticated fraud rings that will provide the greatest deterrent effect. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit will also aggressively pursue arson-related insurance fraud. It is a goal of the Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit for the next fiscal year to tackle the backlog of cases that are currently working through the courts due to the congestion caused by Covid related closures and continuances.

3. Applicant Question: Plans to Meet IC Goals

What are your plans to meet the announced goals of the Insurance Commissioner?

If these goals are not realistic for your county, please state why they are not, and what goals you can achieve. Include your strategic plan to accomplish these goals. *Copies of the Goals can be found in the Announcement Attachments, 4g.*

Applicant Response:

The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit will continue to actively pursue cases with high fiscal impact. Staff is committed to reinforcing the message that automobile insurance fraud will not be tolerated in Fresno County.

The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit is committed to providing continuity of staff. Continuity will allow expertise to grow and improve the performance of the Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit. This improvement will assist in addressing the serious fraud problem in Fresno County and thereby reduce the overall cost to insurance companies and the public.

The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit will continue to provide outreach to the law enforcement community, the insurance industry, and the public. Staff remains committed to assisting with case evaluations and training. The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit will continue to participate in Specials Investigations Unit roundtables once they reconvene, Western State Auto Theft Investigators meetings, and local law enforcement task forces.

4. Applicant Question: Multi-Year Goals

What specific goals do you have that require more than a single year to accomplish?

Applicant Response:

Establishing and maintaining open communications with law enforcement agencies and insurance companies is an ongoing goal. The successful prosecution of complex cases often takes more than a year to investigate and prosecute. Additional funding and resources would allow for more complex investigations such as those showcased during training sessions at the 2021 CDAA Fraud Symposium. For example, undercover operations were highlighted that displayed owners of auto body shops coaching customers regarding what to say to insurance companies to have pre-existing damages covered and to commit other forms of auto insurance fraud.

5. Applicant Question: Restitution and Fines

Describe the county's efforts and the district attorney's plan to obtain restitution and fines imposed by the court to the Automobile Fraud Account.

Applicant Response:

The Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit contacts victims to determine the amount of restitution and to have the amount fixed at the time of sentencing. In those cases where the restitution is unable to be paid upfront, the Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit will continue to monitor payments by individuals to ensure that full restitution is paid. The Legal Assistant will monitor restitution payments and will send reminder letters to those defendants who are delinquent on scheduled restitution payments. Where restitution is not being made and no extenuating circumstances apply, the prosecutor will actively seek judicial enforcement through probation violation hearings. As a matter of practice, Deputy District Attorney Kirby has made an emphasis on restitution being paid prior to resolution of appropriate cases.

6. Applicant Question: Restitution Numbers

Provide the amount of restitution ordered and collected for the past five fiscal years.

If this information is not available, provide an explanation.

Applicant Response:

Fiscal Year	Restitution Ordered	Restitution Collected
2021-22	\$42,047.88	\$30,019.75
2020-21	\$61,663.00	\$19,622.00
2019-20	\$26,892.00	\$15,102.00
2018-19	\$11,631.00	\$36,149.00
2017-18	\$195,488.00	\$36,149.00
	Total: \$337,721.88	Total: \$137,041.75

7. Applicant Question: Utilization Plan

Your budget provides the amount of funds requested for Fiscal Year 22-23.

Provide a **brief narrative description of your utilization plan for the Fiscal Year 22-23 requested funds.**

If an increase is being requested, please provide a justification. Any information regarding investigations should be given a reference number and details provided only in the Confidential Section, question 2, and marked "Utilization Plan."

Applicant Response:

\$ <u>584,911</u>	\$ <u>416,732</u>	\$ <u>168,179</u>
FY 2021-2022	FY 2020-2021	FY 2021-2022
Grant REQUEST	Grant AWARD	Increase Requested

Utilization Plan:

An increase in funds is requested to pay salary and benefit increases for Automobile Insurance Unit fraud staff and enable continuity within the program.

Sub Section Name: Training and Outreach

1. Applicant Question: Training Received

List the **insurance fraud training received by each county staff member in the automobile fraud unit during Fiscal Year 21-22.**

Applicant Response:

Name	Training Date	Provider	Location	Topic	Hours Credit
CDAА Fraud Symposium	10/19/2021	CDAА	Carlsbad, California	Auto Insurance Fraud	18.25
Anti-Fraud Conference	04/13/2022	Anti-Fraud Alliance	Monterey, California	Insurance Fraud, generally	18

2. Applicant Question: Training and Outreach Provided

Upload and attach the Training and Outreach Provided form in Excel; label it "22-23 AUTO (county name) Training and Outreach Provided"

If, in the form, you listed any "Other, Specify" provide a brief explanation here; other additional comments are optional. The blank form is located in the Announcement Attachments, 1a.

Applicant Response:

Label attachment "22-23 AUTO (County) Training and Outreach"

Attachment:

[22-23 AUTO Fresno Training and Outreach Provided.xlsx](#) - EXCEL DOCUMENT

3. Applicant Question: Future Training and Outreach

Describe what kind of training/outreach you plan to provide in Fiscal Year 22-23.

Applicant Response:

Once regular in person contact is resumed, the Automobile Insurance Fraud Unit's plan is to resume attending roundtable meetings with the Department of Insurance and Industry Special Investigative Units, as well as continue to explore different avenues to inform the public about automobile insurance fraud. The plan will also include resumptions of regular meetings with auto theft task forces working in the jurisdiction.

Sub Section Name: Joint Plan

1. Applicant Question: Joint Plan

Upload your AUTO Joint Plan and label it "22-23 AUTO (county name) Joint Plan".

Each County is required to develop a Joint Plan with their CDI Regional Office, to be signed and dated by the Regional Office Captain and the Prosecutor in Charge of the Grant Program. Additional information is in the Announcement Attachments, 3c, and also copied into the attached instructions to this question.

Applicant Response:

Confirm signed and dated by all parties.

Attachment:

[22-23 AUTO Fresno Joint Plan.pdf](#) - PDF FILE

Section Name: Investigation Case Reporting

Sub Section Name: Investigation Case Information Relating to Questions

1. Applicant Question: County Plan Investigation Information

Regarding the County Plan, Qualifications and Successes, Question One: include here any investigation case information. *The reference number/citation used in the question narrative response should be repeated here. If no investigation information was referenced, mark the N/A response. Task Force cases should specifically name the task force and your county personnel's specific involvement/role in the case.*

Applicant Response:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

2. Applicant Question: Program Strategy Investigation Information

Regarding the Problem Statement & Program Strategy: Include here any investigation case information.

Be sure you include the reference number/citation used in the question narrative response again here. If no investigation information was referenced, mark the N/A response. Task Force cases should specifically name the task force and your county personnel's specific involvement/role in the case.

Applicant Response:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

Sub Section Name: Reporting on All Investigations

1. Applicant Question: Investigation Case Activity

Upload, mark Confidential, and attach the completed 22-23 AUTO (county name) Investigation Case Activity.

*This document requires information regarding each investigation case that was reported in FORM 7, DAR, Section III C (Investigations). Two of the three reporting components are case counts only. The total of the case counts in Part 1 and Part 2, along with the number of case entries in Part 3, should equal your total investigation case count reported in the DAR Section III. **Do NOT substitute descriptions in Part 3 in lieu of case counts for Part 1 and Part 2.** Further details are provided in the instructions attached to this question. The blank form is located in the Announcement Attachments, 1bii.*

Applicant Response:

[22-23 AUTO Fresno Investigation Case Activity.docx](#) - WORD DOCUMENT

Sub Section Name: New Investigation Information for Cases in Court

1. Applicant Question: Cases in Court Investigation Case Activity

Do you have NEW Investigation Information for cases that started the year in prosecution that you want to include? This section is optional.

*If you do have cases to report, download Announcement Attachment 1c, label it "**22-23 AUTO (county name) Cases in Court Investigation Case Activity**" **upload and mark confidential**, then attach to this question.*

Other than current status, no prosecution case information should be included.

Applicant Response:

Not Applicable

Applicant Comment:

Not Applicable

Org 1104
Fund 0060
Subclass 17204
Revenue 3575