



# Board Agenda Item 29

DATE: August 11, 2026

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: John Zaroni, Sheriff-Coroner-Public Administrator

SUBJECT: Retroactive 2026 Coverdell Forensic Grant Application and Award

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

1. **Approve and adopt Resolution authorizing the Sheriff-Coroner-Public Administrator, or his designee, as the official designated to execute a Grant Application/Agreement, including Certificate of Assurance and Subrecipient Grants Management Assessment forms for the 2026 Paul Coverdell grant from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Program, including any Amendments, extensions, or other required documents, which assists forensic laboratories to improve their efficiency and effectiveness to provide forensic science services through improvement of the quality and timeliness of forensic science and medical examiner/coroner services, effective retroactive to July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027 (\$50,834); and**
2. **Adopt a Budget Resolution increasing the FY 2026-27 appropriations and estimated revenues for Sheriff-Coroner-Public Administrator Org 3111 in the amount of \$50,834 (4/5 vote).**

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. The non-competitive grant application (2026 Coverdell Forensic Grant) was exclusively issued to thirty-one crime laboratories in California, which includes the Fresno County Sheriff's Office, contingent on your Board's approval. Divisions of the Department of Justice (DOJ), such as the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) working through Cal OES, have awarded this grant to assist local forensic laboratories in improving the quality and timeliness of forensic services. The Sheriff's Office (Department) will use the grant funds to provide continuing education and training in technical and professional skills to the laboratory's forensic scientists, and, additionally, to fund the purchase of two microscopes, a bullet trap, and miscellaneous computer and office supplies. The Department is requesting your Board to authorize the Sheriff or his designee as the designated official to submit this documentation, including any amendments, extensions, and modifications. Once the Grant Subaward Face Sheet, Certification of Assurance of Compliance, and Subrecipient Grants Management Assessment with Cal OES are signed by the Sheriff or his designee, the award documentation becomes the final agreement between the County and Cal OES. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

If this item is not approved, it will result in the loss of the Cal OES grant funds with an associated decrease in the professional training opportunities for forensic staff.

RETROACTIVE AGREEMENT:

The recommended grant application and award is retroactive to July 1, 2026 due to the temporary Federal government shutdown which delayed the release of funds and the start date of the grant.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. The award includes \$50,834 for the 2026 Coverdell Forensic Grant. There is no match requirement for receipt of the funds. Approval of the third recommended action will increase the FY 2026-27 appropriations and estimated revenues for Sheriff-Coroner-Public Administrator Org 3111 in the amount of \$50,834 to provide continuing education and training to the laboratory's forensic scientists, two microscopes, a bullet trap and miscellaneous computer and office supplies.

DISCUSSION:

The 2026 Coverdell Forensic Grant funding, offered and administered through Cal OES, will be used to address current needs in the forensic crime lab. The grant period will run for one year, from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027; however, the funds have not been received or spent. The grant funds will be used to provide continuing education and training in technical and professional skills to the laboratory's forensic scientists in order to improve their level of expertise, ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of laboratory work, and in turn maintain quality and reduce case turnaround time. The grant would be used to purchase a bullet trap which is required to safely contain bullets during firearms test firing, miscellaneous computer and office supplies, and two microscopes used to examine and compare evidence, supporting analysis, and documentation. Revenue from these funds shall be used exclusively to fund costs incurred by criminalistic laboratories, such as for the purchase and maintenance of lab equipment and for continuing education. Your Board approved the prior 2024 Coverdell Forensic Grant on February 25, 2025, 2023 Coverdell Forensic Grant on February 20, 2024, and 2022 Coverdell Forensic Grant on March 28, 2023. Due to the significant delay in Federal funding, Cal OES delayed the release of funds and start date in the fiscal year, such that the 2025 Forensic Coverdell grant is now called and considered 2026 Forensic Coverdell Grant.

In addition to the standard State and Federal certifications included in the Board of Supervisors' Administrative Policy No. 47, the 2026 Coverdell Forensic Grant also requires the certification summarized here: the County must approve a Certification of Assurance of Compliance-FSIA, which includes details regarding Federal Grant Funds; Equal Employment Opportunity Program (EEO); California Environmental Quality Act; Civil Rights Compliance; and Special Conditions (as listed in the Certification of Assurance) for the Subaward Eligibility Requirement Certification; and Proof of Authority from the Board of Supervisors. Additionally, Cal OES requires the County to sign a Certification as to External Investigations agreeing to an external investigation in the case of an alleged misconduct or serious negligence substantially affecting the integrity of forensic results by an employee or subcontractor of the Fresno County Sheriff.

Additionally, all sub-recipient grantees of the grant are required to obtain a Resolution that states that the Authorized Agent, in this case, the Sheriff, or his designee, is in fact authorized to execute the agreement including any amendments and extension. The authorization for execution of all necessary documents will facilitate implementation of the grant. The Authorized Agent is limited in that the Authorized Agent cannot enter into any future executable documentation that in any way alter, amend, or add to or reduce, the County's fiscal obligation, the length or term of the agreement, or other material terms of the agreement. The Authorized Agent is the designee of the Sheriff for the execution of documents related to this grant.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI # 28, March 28, 2023  
BAI # 20, February 20, 2024  
BAI # 20, February 25, 2025

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Application with Cal OES  
On file with Clerk - Resolution of Authorization  
On file with Clerk - Budget Resolution (Org 3111)

CAO ANALYST:

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