



County of Fresno

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Legislation Text

File #: 18-1140, **Version:** 1

DATE: December 4, 2018
TO: Board of Supervisors
SUBMITTED BY: Margaret Mims, Sheriff-Coroner
SUBJECT: Retroactive 2018 DNA Backlog Reduction Grant Application; Acceptance and Agreement

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

- 1. Retroactively authorize the Sheriff-Coroner's previous submittal of a grant application to the National Institute of Justice, Department of Justice, for the 2018 Forensic DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction Program Grant;**
- 2. Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute and accept the grant award agreement from the National Institute of Justice, Department of Justice, for the 2018 Forensic Casework DNA Backlog Reduction Grant for the period of January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2020 (\$258,389);**
- 3. Adopt Budget Resolution increasing FY 2018-19 appropriations and estimated revenue for Sheriff-Coroner's Org 3111 in the amount of \$101,200 (4/5 vote); and**
- 4. Authorize the Sheriff-Coroner, or her authorized representative, to sign claims for reimbursement and activity reports for the above grant award.**

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with these actions. Divisions of the Department of Justice (DOJ) have awarded this grant to assist local forensic laboratories that conduct DNA analysis with reducing casework backlog. Currently, it can take an average of 74 days for DNA cases to be processed. This grant continuation will fund the purchase and replacement of laboratory equipment, laboratory staff forensic training, DNA case analysis, and a dedicated Criminalist position to assist the Sheriff-Coroner's Forensic Laboratory in reducing this turnaround time. The competitive application was submitted on May 2, 2018 to the National Institute of Justice, DOJ, to meet the application deadline. The Sheriff-Coroner's Office was notified on August 31, 2018, that the application was accepted for funding, contingent on your Board's approval.

It should be noted that once the Grant Award Face Sheet is executed by the Chairman and the DOJ, the award documents become the final agreement between the County and the DOJ. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

If the recommended actions are not approved, the grant award will be withdrawn. This will result in backlogged DNA cases in the Sheriff-Coroner's Office Forensic Laboratory continuing to take an average of 74 days to be processed.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with these actions. The award includes \$258,389 for the 2018 Forensic DNA Backlog Reduction Grant with no match requirement. The Resolution will increase FY 2018-19 appropriations and estimated revenues for the Sheriff-Coroner's Org 31116338 DNA Backlog Reduction in the amount of \$101,200 for the purchase and replacement of specific laboratory equipment. Year two of the grant will fund continuing Salaries and Benefits in the amount of \$141,734 for the dedicated Criminalist position, Service and Supplies in the amount of \$3,733 for the outsourcing of DNA casework, and \$11,722 for laboratory staff to attend forensic training workshops. Year two allocations totaling \$157,189 will be included in future recommended budgets. The Sheriff-Coroner's Office anticipates expending the full amount of the grant prior to December 31, 2020.

DISCUSSION:

The Sheriff-Coroner's Office Forensic Laboratory has been awarded the 2018 DNA Backlog Reduction and Capacity Enhancement grant through the National Institute of Justice. Currently, a dedicated Criminalist position funded by the current 2017 DNA Backlog grant has been working DNA cases and reducing the backlog. However, it takes an average of 74 days to process, record, screen, and analyze a forensic biology/DNA case from submission to delivery of results to the submitting agency.

The grant funds in the amount of \$258,389 will be used to further reduce or eliminate backlogged DNA casework. Attachment "A", issued by the DOJ, is a description of the DNA Backlog Reduction program including parameters for the use of funds. The Sheriff-Coroner's Office is recommending the purchase and replacement of specific laboratory equipment as well as forensic training workshops for laboratory staff, outsourcing of DNA cases, and, continued funding of the Criminalist position to decrease the 74 day turnaround time for the analysis of sexual assault, homicide and other requested DNA analysis that are received by the laboratory from various crimes. This includes the processing of sexual assault kits and autopsy kits received from within Fresno County.

The 2018 Forensic DNA Backlog Reduction Grant funds will be utilized in the following way:

Well block for Thermo Cycler	\$ 3,300
Temperature kit for Thermo Cyclers	\$ 6,500
PCR Thermo Cycler (2)	\$ 18,400
Real Time PCR Instrument	\$ 73,000
Travel costs for staff to attend Forensics Training Workshop(s)	\$ 11,722
Outsourcing DNA casework to private accredited fee-for-service vendors	\$ 3,733
Continued funding of dedicated Criminalist position	\$141,734

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #17, December 12, 2017
BAI #25, December 6, 2016

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Agreement with National Institute of Justice
On file with Clerk - Budget Resolution (Org 3111)
On file with Clerk - Attachment "A" Program Information

CAO ANALYST:

Jeannie Z. Figueroa