



# County of Fresno

Hall of Records, Rm. 301  
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Fresno, California  
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## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 21-1062, **Version:** 1

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**DATE:** November 16, 2021

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**SUBMITTED BY:** Margaret Mims, Sheriff-Coroner, Public Administrator

**SUBJECT:** Agreement with Serological Research Institute for DNA Forensic Services

### RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

- 1. Make a finding that it is in the best interest of the County to waive the competitive bidding process consistent with Administrative Policy No. 34 for unusual or extraordinary circumstances for the solicitation of Forensic DNA services for the Fresno County Sheriff-Coroner, Public Administrator's Office; and**
- 2. Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute Agreement with Serological Research Institute, to provide grant-funded and overflow Forensic DNA services effective December 1, 2021 through November 30, 2026, which includes a three-year base contract and two optional one-year extensions, (\$200,000 annually), total not to exceed \$1,000,000 over the five-year term.**

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with these actions. The Fresno County Sheriff's Office receives DNA Backlog Reduction grants for the outsourcing of DNA cases that are considered backlogged. The recommended agreement will allow the Sheriff's Forensic Laboratory to use the awarded grant funds to decrease the DNA backlog and provide better investigative leads on cases that involve DNA analysis. Serological Research Institute (SERI) is the only DNA testing company in California accredited to perform DNA casework for law enforcement agencies that is within close driving distance of the Sheriff's Office. This service will be provided on an as needed basis covering the period of December 1, 2021 to November 30, 2026. This item is countywide.

### ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Non-approval of these recommended actions will result in an increase of the backlogged DNA cases in the Sheriff's Office Forensic Laboratory, and the return of funds of the DNA Backlog Reduction grant.

### SUSPENSION OF COMPETITION/SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT:

The Department requests the Board to waive the competitive bidding process consistent with Administrative Policy No. 34. The Sheriff's Office has a current contract with SERI, which is the only DNA testing company located in California within driving distance of Fresno accredited to perform DNA casework for law enforcement agencies that will accept cases on a piece-by-piece basis. There are no other vendors that meet this need. The ISD-Purchasing concurs with the Department's request to suspend the competitive bidding process.

### FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with these actions. The DNA fees for the service are funded via the DNA Backlog Reduction Grant and are included in the Sheriff's Org 3111 FY 2021-22 Adopted Budget. The services covered by the recommended agreement will be provided on an as-needed basis, and shall not exceed \$200,000 per year, including the standard DNA overflow analysis. Appropriations and estimated revenues for subsequent years will be included in the Sheriff's requested budgets.

**DISCUSSION:**

For the previous three years, the Sheriff-Coroner's Office has been awarded DNA grants to assist the Forensic Laboratory in reducing or eliminating the DNA case backlog. The Sheriff's Office requires a vendor that can handle cases that will be tested under the terms of these grants. The Sheriff's Office also needs the vendor to be located in California, as, depending upon the case, certain time constraints require immediate testing. SERI is the only accredited DNA laboratory in California that can perform the needed services, and is within driving distance of the Sheriff's Office. SERI is the only private vendor in California that has a proven track record with over 30 years in business and is accredited, which is required by the terms of the DNA Backlog Reduction Grant.

The Sheriff's Office Forensic Laboratory has been working with SERI for 25 years. SERI was instrumental in the initial training of the original Criminalists in the Laboratory. They have been an asset to the department when validating new systems within the Forensic Laboratory. The current Agreement, approved by the Board on December 6, 2016, has been in place for five years, and is due to expire on November 30, 2021.

**REFERENCE MATERIAL:**

BAI #24, December 6, 2016

**ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:**

Suspension of Competition Acquisition Request  
On file with Clerk - Agreement with Serological Research Institute, Inc.

**CAO ANALYST:**

Yussel Zalapa