



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

President's Commission on
Law Enforcement and the
Administration of Justice

Grant Programs

April 30, 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Agenda	3
Jennifer Brinkman Biography	4
Jennifer Brinkman Testimony	5-10
AJ “Andy” Louderback Biography	11
AJ “Andy” Louderback Testimony	12-13
Chief Keith Kauffman Biography	14
Chief Keith Kauffman Testimony	15-19

Grant Program Hearing Teleconferences – Week of April 27th, 2020

- **Thursday, April 30th, Grant Programs, 2:00pm to 3:00pm, Eastern Time – Perspectives from the Field**
 - Jennifer Brinkman, Director, Criminal Justice Programs, Tennessee Department of Administration and Finance
 - A.J. Louderback, Sheriff, Jackson County (Texas) Sheriff's Office
 - Keith Kauffman, Chief of Police, Redondo Beach (California) Police Department



Jennifer Brinkman

Director, Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs in the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration



Jennifer brings her expertise working in the field of victim services to the Department of Finance and Administration, Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP), with over twenty years of professional experience working in the grants management and criminal justice field. As the Director of OCJP, Tennessee's State Administering Agency, she is responsible for obligating over \$65 million in federal funds for criminal justice initiatives, annually. Her office oversees 11 different federal grant programs, including the Department of Justice Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG), the Victims of Crime Act grant Program (VOCA), and the Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Grant Program (RSAT), the Office on Violence Against Women STOP and SASP Grant Programs, and the Department of Health and Human Services Family Violence Prevention Services Grant Program.

She has been with the state for over ten years. Before coming to OCJP, Jennifer's work with the Tennessee Board of Probation and Parole gave her the opportunity to implement evidence-based programming for offenders under the supervision of the Board. Jennifer started at OCJP to work on projects which were a part of Governor Haslam's Public Safety Action Plan, which focused on violent crime and domestic violence. She brings her past experiences and knowledge of the criminal justice system to OCJP strategic planning by the identification of gaps and available resources to meet those gaps. She accomplishes this through the coordination of local government, state government, and community agencies across the state to leverage available resources to better serve the citizens of Tennessee.

In her time at OCJP, Jennifer has been responsible for implementing initiatives to decrease crime in the state. Her work includes: coordinating and implementing Tennessee Targeted Community Crime Reduction Projects statewide, increasing the number of family justice centers from 2 in 2012 to 13 in 2020; implementing a statewide lethality assessment program with law enforcement; and coordinating statewide stakeholder meetings on violence against women, and implementing pilot pre-trial assessment projects. As a part of Governor Lee's Executive Order #6 establishing the Tennessee Criminal Justice Investment Task Force, Jennifer attends committee meetings of the Education, Workforce Development and Re-entry Subcommittee and worked with stakeholders on the Victim Services Roundtables to gather information on the needs of crime victims. Her work in multiple levels of the criminal justice system demonstrates her commitment to improving outcomes for all the citizens of this State.



Federal Grants & Recommendations

Prepared By:

Jennifer Brinkman, Director
Tennessee State Administering Agency
Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs
Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration



Department of
Finance &
Administration

Leveraging Federal Grant Funds in Tennessee to Improve Criminal Justice and Victims Services

The State of Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP) is the State Administering Agency (SAA) for 11 different Federal grant programs. These programs include: The Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG), Project Safe Neighborhood (PSN), Victims Of Crime Act (VOCA), Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT), National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP), NICS Act Record Improvement Program (NARIP) , Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program (COVERDELL), Family Violence Prevention Services Act (FVPSA), Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP, STOP Violence Against Women (STOP) and now the Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding Program (CESF). In State Fiscal Year 2020, OCJP obligated over \$67 million in Federal grant funds, totaling 351 grants to 201 state and local grantees. OCJP prides itself on our primary function as stewards of these federal funds, and the staff work to ensure that all requirements for these funds are met. The Office programmatically and fiscally monitors grantees, regularly initiates site visits, and provides training and technical assistance.

Tennessee is grateful for the Federal grant programs it administers, which allow the State to innovate and collaborate at both the State and local level with criminal justice and victim services practitioners, whether through the several state formula grants that OCJP oversees, or the many competitive, discretionary single-focused grants that come to Tennessee each year. The funds allow communities in Tennessee to try out new best practices and implement new collaborations to test alternate ways of addressing complex criminal justice issues to better the lives of our citizens. These funds allow us to build evidence for what works. Federal funds are integral for introducing new ideas in the state and then, if successful, educating other practitioners in the state on the success, thus expanding innovation. Tennessee regularly sees success in using federal grants as pilot funds, and then having the innovation picked up across the state.

Two examples are the TN Byrne JAG Targeted Community Crime Reduction Program (TCCRP) and the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP). One of the eight TCCRP implemented a Day Reporting Center in Johnson City. This project demonstrated great success throughout its 3-year project, and had partnered closely with the courts, jail and local and state probation. Because of its success, the Tennessee Department of Correction (TDOC) absorbed this JAG pilot project and initiated six more Day Reporting Centers across the state. All seven are supported by TDOC.

The second example is the implementation of Maryland's successful Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP). OCJP used STOP funds to train law enforcement and to develop an innovative app for trained law enforcement officers to use when conducting the assessment. The app makes it easier for law enforcement to complete and score the assessment and then sends the results directly to the partner victim services agency. This app was originally developed and used by the Cookeville Police Department with STOP funding. At this point over 60 law enforcement agencies across the state have been trained in the LAP and of these 60, seven (7) law enforcement agencies are using or piloting the app. Federal funds supported the development of the app and collaborations with the Tennessee Chiefs of Police Association, Tennessee Sheriffs Association and Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy, which helped push this innovation forward.

Best Practices

OCJP has leveraged the law enforcement/criminal justice and victim services grants to create a multi-disciplinary collaborative response across the state. One example of this approach is the Tennessee Family Justice Center (FJC) Initiative. In six years, this strategic model of leveraging federal and local funds has

increased the number of FJCs in the state from two to nine, with four additional centers planning to open in Spring 2021 (for a total of 13 operational Tennessee FJCs).

The family justice center (FJC) is a community-wide collaboration of public and private agencies in a centralized location that serves domestic violence victims and their families. The core concept is to provide one place where families can go to receive services to promote their safety and well-being. It is often called a “one-stop shop” for domestic violence and other victims of crime seeking assistance.

As part of Tennessee’s FJC initiative, Federal Byrne JAG grant funds are first used for planning grants. Local “site coordinators” are hired for three years to cultivate multi-disciplinary teams and educate them on the efficacy of coordination between agencies and best practices for law enforcement/criminal justice and victim services when responding to cases of family violence. At the end of three years, local governments are tasked with identifying other funds for the site coordinator and with costs for the location. Once these teams are established, additional Federal, State and local funds are leveraged to produce a stronger, more efficient community approach to serving victims and holding offenders accountable. Examples of additional grant-funded positions, that round out the FJC model include: STOP-funded DV Investigators in local law enforcement agencies; STOP-funded District Attorney’s Office ADAs and VOCA-funded Victim Witness Coordinators; VOCA-funded Civilian Victim Service Coordinators (attached to law enforcement); and VOCA-funded civil legal attorneys, DV and SA advocates, SANE nurses & SANE coordinators.

In addition to leveraging these Federal funds from OCJP, other Federal funds that pass through the Tennessee Department of Human Services, Tennessee Department of Health, and the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse are being leveraged to provide services and resources to the victims that go to the FJC for services.

The increased real-time coordination among law enforcement and other community partners, combined with on-site co-location within the FJC, produces several optimal outcomes: 1) Providing opportunities to better understand the function and purpose of agencies builds trust and encourages cooperation from partners, victims/witnesses and communities in general; 2) Providing victims with consistent supportive services yields stronger reporting and testimony, increased rates of victim/witness participation within justice system and fewer recantations; 3) Formal coordination with partner agencies, such as on-site referral and case review, garners stronger investigations and prosecutions; and 4) Regular communication among partner agencies bridges dangerous system gaps previously exploited by offenders (e.g. parole violations, handgun dispossession, drug offenses).

FJCs serve as leaders in a community’s efforts toward enhanced service provision and systems-improvement. Examples of the best practices that FJCs have found most effective include: Coordinated Community Response (CCR); Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP); Domestic Assault Response Team (DART); and Sexual Assault Response Team (SART).

Complexity of Federal Grants

Make application process less complex

Many smaller, local law enforcement agencies struggle with the actual application process for direct federal awards. Most rely on the SAA for access to funds to meet these needs through the formula grant programs. To assist these smaller agencies without grant writers, OCJP has created a process to assist them when applying for state formula Byrne JAG grants that includes a simplified fillable application, training prior to the application being due, and training after awards are made on grant requirements and

reporting. OCJP has also been known to complete the Byrne JAG Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) for the local agencies because of the complexity of the PMT reporting system. The complexity of the federal application process and PMT reporting system inhibits smaller agencies from applying for direct federal awards, and therefore rely on the SAA to access formula awards.

Reduce unnecessary special conditions

Over time, Federal grants have increased in the number of steps and special conditions required to access and administer the funds. The SAA is required to pass thru all special conditions to grantees. Feedback from grantees has been that, while grateful for the funds and opportunity, managing the grants are more work than they anticipated. The Uniform Guidance and Special Conditions, as well as programmatic requirements specific to each fund source can be overwhelming for grantees and very often means deputies are pulled off the street to fill out paperwork. This needs to be minimized as much as possible. OCJP has had local grantees request to terminate grants after they have fully understood all that is required.

Special conditions have increased dramatically over the years. These special conditions require the SAA to ensure they have a process for oversight internally and then the special conditions must be passed down to each grantee who must ensure compliance. See the chart below for the number of special conditions that have increased over the last five years of awards for the OCJP grants:

Federal Award	# 2015 Special Conditions	# 2019 Special Conditions
JAG	47	72
VOCA	30	41
RSAT	29	46
NCHIP/NARIP	39	51
Coverdell	33	47
SASP	44	51
STOP	52	56

Allow greatest flexibility possible

Federal grant programs contain many complex, often unnecessary, requirements on how the funds must be dispersed and reported that inhibit innovation. All grants should have as much flexibility as possible to fit the needs of each State and potential subgrantee. For example, STOP funding to Tennessee is around \$3 million annually, but requires five splits between projects (law enforcement, prosecution, victim services, court and discretionary) and then two overlays (culturally specific is 10% of victims services and sexual assault is 20% of the total award across at least two categories). The annual reporting is a cumbersome PDF document that is not provided in a format from which data can be extracted.

Our office had to create a system where OCJP program managers manually type data into an Excel spreadsheet to make the data useable for monitoring and planning. Byrne JAG and VOCA funding are the most flexible of the Federal grant programs, but still have nuances that can impede innovation. For instance, Byrne JAG has three project areas that must meet certain funding requirements and VOCA has four. Both Byrne JAG and VOCA have a PMT that must be reported in quarterly, and the data is output-oriented, thereby providing little assistance with strategic planning or program evaluation.

Reduce unnecessary delay in awarding and releasing funds

Congress has not completed the annual appropriations bills before the start of the new fiscal year in over a decade. This means delay in the funds reaching the field. In addition, the federal awarding agency has placed more requirements on accessing the funds once the award has been sent to the SAA, further delaying investment of the funds. Historically, the awards were received in late summer or early fall so

that the grantee could plan to allocate the funds as the award start date approached. The majority of Federal grant programs overseen by OCJP are at least one year behind in when the funds are available to the state. Once the award is returned by the recipient, there is now an extensive process for the removal of Grant Adjustment Notices (GANs) that must be endured before the funds are available to award to local grantees. While the Federal awards are backdated, it would be bad fiscal practice to allocate these funds before the funding is in hand. As an example of the delay and its impact, the FY19 Byrne JAG award contract start date was dated October 1, 2018. It was received for signature on September 26, 2019. All GANS were lifted and the funds were made available to the State in March 2020. Therefore, Tennessee (and every state) is 1.5 years into an award cycle before the funds are available to use.

Reject penalizing federal grant dollars for unrelated policy goals

When Federal grants are penalized for failing to comply with unrelated and unfunded policy mandates it punishes local grantees and sub-grantees, who lose the access to much-needed funding. Not only that, but it means that successful programs currently operating in the community will not have access to those funds in order to pay a penalty that is unrelated to the purposes of that program.

Correspondingly, if financial incentives are given to create compliance of some policy mandate it tends to have the effect of giving more money to the states who are already complying and have state funds available to implement the new policy. Federal grants help build capacity and enable new policy. They should be readily and equally available to all communities in need.

SAA as a Partner

State Administering Agencies are uniquely situated to be partners with the Federal departments on oversight and implementation of Federal grant programs. The SAAs are involved in strategic planning for their states, and regularly attend meetings and gather information from key stakeholders. This information would benefit Federal departments when developing discretionary grant programs or deciding on priority areas for funding. Collaboration, at the Federal, state and local levels is the most important component to the success of any grant program. When Federal administrators work with the state administrators, programs can better meet the needs of the local recipients. It is well known that no grant is forever and, at some point, the Federal money will end. SAAs are well situated in their states to assist with building collaborations that may sustain the project, and in finding other possible funding in the state to sustain the project when local agencies cannot.

Role of SAA in training for subrecipients

OCJP knows our grantees need assistance navigating the complicated requirements of federal grants, and it is our job as the SAA to provide this assistance. To assist grantees, OCJP has developed a robust training and technical assistance program for those agencies that receive Federal grants from OCJP, which includes:

1. An annual grant management training for all new grantees. The training is tailored at compliance with the Uniform Code, with break outs for the specific requirements of each fund source the office administers.
2. Online training videos to assist subrecipients with how to complete an application, as well as fund source-specific video trainings, financial management trainings and how to complete an application for funding.
3. Regular site visits with grantees to support project development and answer questions. Program managers are in the field regularly attending meetings with communities and learning about

successes and needs. We aren't all based in Nashville. I have staff remotely located in both East and West Tennessee to be closer to our subrecipients.

4. Annual stakeholder strategic planning meeting that is comprised from leaders across the criminal justice and victim services spectrum.
5. Distributing funding and training announcements from federal agencies.

Importance of training by national membership associations

Peer-to-peer training is critical to building the capacity and competency of justice professionals at the state and local levels. SAAs and our justice system peers need to hear, and learn, from our colleagues who we know face similar challenges. With this in mind, OCJP works closely with state and national membership organizations, including the National Criminal Justice Association, to conduct training, lift up best practices, and share lessons learned across their communities. These organizations are trusted by their members, act as a liaison with the Federal agencies, assist us in training on federal grant requirements, strategic planning, quality program design, implementation and evaluation, and support grantees in developing sustainability plans for when the Federal grant ends.

In that regard, it is important to lift the onerous restrictions on Federal grant fund support for in-person trainings. Starting in 2011, the Department of Justice restricted the ability of grantees and their national membership associations to provide learning through in-person trainings and conferences. This has impeded the ability to attend important trainings and peer-to-peer learning.

Summary of Recommendations:

- **Reduce requirements on grant programs where possible.** SAA and local agency staff spend a significant amount of time overseeing special conditions, the Uniform Guidance and other specific requirements of various grant programs.
- **See the SAA as a partner who can foster the collaboration, strategic planning and sustainability planning in local communities.** SAAs have a unique position. They are at the State level, but they work daily in local communities across their states to address gaps in resources and foster collaboration and strategic planning. When federal discretionary funds end, it is often the SAA that the local communities reach out to for sustainability. Engaging with SAAs on local projects can foster better sustainability plans and stronger collaborations.
- **Bring back conferences so that as much as possible, the sharing of lessons learned and promising practices statewide can occur.** Grant-funded programs deliver lessons all the time, but then wilt in that local when the grant is over. Require the grantee to develop a sustainability plan within the state or locality's strategic plan, submit a brief final report with lessons learned, and find ways to routinely share information up to the state and across to other communities.
- **Allow the SAA to continue to coordinate the Federal, State and Local funds and make it easier to do so.** Leveraging of funds and avoiding supplanting of Federal funds remains on everyone's mind. Without the SAA and the Federal system of transparency it would be difficult to determine if the Federal funds received are being used to support or supplant State and local funds already in place. We would urge continued work on ensuring direct Federal grants be limited and details of the grant be made readily available to the SAA.
- **Streamline the application and reporting processes across Federal agencies and Federal grant programs where possible.** Additional work needs to be done on reviewing both processes to weed out inefficiencies and over-reaching. Simplification would assist local law enforcement agencies and their partner agencies in applying for and overseeing more Federal grants.

AJ “ANDY” LOUDERBACK

JACKSON COUNTY SHERIFF



AJ “Andy” Louderback is a fifth generation Texan and forty-year law enforcement professional, serving his fourth term as Jackson County Sheriff. Apart from his service in the Air Force, Louderback has spent his entire career serving the people of Jackson County, Texas. In January of 2020, Louderback was asked by the Trump Administration to represent Texas on the President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice, as Chairman of the Grants committee. He has led the charge on U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s 287(g) program in the Coastal Bend region. Louderback represents the National

Sheriffs’ Association as a member of the National Institute of Justice’s Special Technical Committee on Law Enforcement Firearms. He is actively involved in the Sheriffs’ Association of Texas, serving as president from 2014 to 2015 and legislative chairman from 2015 to 2019. Louderback currently serves as Chairman of the Regional Homeland Security Advisory Committee, on the board of directors for Hope of South Texas child advocacy center and as Jackson County’s representative on the Gulf Bend Community Collaborative. He is the Chairman of Texas Lt. Governor Dan Patrick’s Law Enforcement Advisory Committee. Louderback is actively involved with the Texas Legislature, advancing and defending important law enforcement issues. Louderback is currently working closely with the Trump Administration and federal law enforcement partners to secure our southern border.



JACKSON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

A.J. "ANDY" LOUDERBACK, *Sheriff*

115 W. Main Street • Edna, Texas 77957 • 361-782-3371 • Fax 361-782-7574

BACKGROUND

Federal Grants have long been a critical aspect of Law Enforcement in the U. S. Without this lifeline, many basic necessities would never be purchased. Without the grant process rural Law Enforcement agencies would suffer fundamental loss in everyday activities. Any type of special service would not occur and in many agencies, basic services can and do suffer.

PROCESS AND IMPROVEMENT: ADDRESSING THE ISSUES

SIMPLIFY

Grant Applications should be simplified in order to meet the needs of smaller rural Law Enforcement Agencies that often times rely on outside funding. The current process requires extensive Grant Writing experience, which most smaller agencies do not have the personnel with the knowledge and experience required. Small rural agencies employees have multiple job functions and do not have the ability to dedicate one employee with the sole function of managing grants. Once a grant has been awarded, the reporting and documentation requirements are extensive with little or no training provided to the awarded recipient on how to maneuver thru the reporting site. There is a need to consolidate the Grant Application process to one set of checklists with no PDF attachments. Currently Grants Dot Gov requires 4-5 attachments, conversion to PDF files requiring a scanner and some technology expertise, which not all rural agencies have the ability to do. A smaller to the point application would be beneficial; if agencies were able to apply for a grant with a simple justification of the needs of their agency instead of the current multi page redundant application that is beyond the abilities of rank and file Law Enforcement Officers you would see more applications from the small rural agencies that do not have the funds to pay a grant writer. Simplifying the grant application process will allow small rural agencies to apply for these grants; resulting in awards being given out evenly amongst all Law Enforcement Agencies, instead of the current system which seems to favor larger Urban agencies.

INNOVATION

I also advocate that new and innovative ideas benefiting Law Enforcement across the nation are struggling with presenting our ideas to the Federal government and lack the ability to be heard. Our grant system should consider putting in place a grant structure that prompts forward thinking from selected areas in the United States that are attempting to innovate new concepts and practices for law Enforcement in the future

TIMELY FUNDING

From the time a grant opens up to the time it is awarded can be a very lengthy process. Agencies have the need to know what funds they will have available so they can structure their annual budgets accordingly.

COMPLEXITY

The current grant application process is very complex, causing many rural agencies to decline participation.

Example: School Violence Prevention Grant

- *The purpose of this grant was to make funds available to all Law Enforcement agencies enabling them to collaborate and train together with school districts in their jurisdictions providing a safe environment for our children and educators. For this particular grant, Grants Dot Gov was*

required with an additional requirement which included a second process on a completely different website, making it so complex most rural agencies did not even apply; leaving rural counties vulnerable. One grant process on one website would have enabled more agencies to apply for this particular grant which in turn would have made available funds to those that are most vulnerable, instead of favoring larger urban agencies that already have the manpower and resources to respond to an active shooter situation, or any other emergency situation that may arise and require Law Enforcement presence.

EQUIPMENT

It is vital that we reestablish grants that include equipment. All too often we see most small to medium sized agencies are not adequately funded by the local government. Rural agencies have the same need for specialized equipment that Urban agencies do, we just do not have adequate funds available for purchasing those high-ticket items. We do see most of the same type crimes that Urban agencies see, just not the same volume; but the need to respond and investigate is the same. We should consider and research ways to help local governments respond to Law Enforcement grants positively and within their own budgets. We should also consider notification of grant availability, sometimes those notifications do not trickle down to smaller agencies.

LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD

For many years rural agencies did not compete well with larger urban agencies with more resources dedicated to grant writing, let's strive to level the playing field, and establish consistency in funding all law enforcement in a fair and equitable approach.

This can be enhanced by regular visits to the field by DOJ. A return to regular visitation outside of DC will prove to be a tremendous to Law Enforcement in the U.S, and allow DOJ officials to see and recognize the needs of both rural and urban agencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Simplify and shorten grant application
- Create grants promoting innovation in the Law Enforcement Field
- Timely funding-Consider a 30-60 days for emergency grants< IE: Terrorism/Covid
- Remove complex steps and redundancy
- Reestablish grants for Equipment
- Level the playing field for all agencies
- Reestablish field visitation

Chief Keith Kauffman

Redondo Beach (California) Police Department



Chief Kauffman started his career with the Hawthorne Police Department in 1994 after completing the Orange County Sheriff's Academy; Class 115. He received the Medal of Valor in 1995 and again in 1996 while assigned as a patrol officer. Keith worked a variety of assignments including gangs, narcotics, training officer and SWAT where he remained for 10 years and made his way up to the team commander. Chief Kauffman promoted to sergeant in 2000 and to Lieutenant in 2005 where he and was responsible for running the Aero Bureau, writing grants and overseeing all of the civilian operations within the police department. In 2008 he was promoted to Captain where rotated commands between Support Services and Operations.

In 2011, the Hawthorne Police Department was looking for better ways to build trust in the community and they started showing up unannounced at local coffee shops, McDonalds, Starbucks, or Donut shops. They would sit and talk with community about whatever came up; no agenda, no barriers, no stress of the town hall type meeting. They used coffee as the vehicle to open up the dialog and start the conversation. Sound familiar? They called it "Coffee with a Cop." When Sgt. Chris Cognac published an article about the concept, interest started to grow. They partnered with the University of Illinois to write a grant and were awarded \$400,000 to take the program across the U.S. 'Coffee with a Cop' is now in all 50 states, 15 different countries, and is arguably the most widely used and effective community policing program in the United States.

After flying all over the country teaching hundreds of agencies how to do Coffee with a Cop, Keith left Hawthorne after 22 years was hired as the police chief in his home town of Redondo Beach in 2015. Chief Kauffman has a BA degree from UCLA in Spanish Literature and a MS degree from Cal State University Dominguez Hills in Negotiation and Conflict Management. Keith graduated from Command College in 2014 and received the Dorothy Harris Award for his published article. Keith is the past president (2019) of the Los Angeles County Police Chiefs' Association, and now serves as the Los Angeles County Region Representative to the California Police Chiefs Association. When he is not promoting community policing, Keith can be found spending time with his wife and two children, or somewhere in the Pacific Ocean.



President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice



April 30th, 2020

BACKGROUND

My experience in the field of federal grants began around the year 2000 when I authored my first couple of applications as young sergeant in Hawthorne, CA. The experience gained by becoming the department's de facto grant writer would help propel me throughout my career, so for that I am very grateful. On the contrary, this experience has also followed me like a cloud, casting a shadow over my career that has constantly pulled me away from my day to day law enforcement duties, mostly to save another soul from having to work through the angst, time, and administrative pain necessary to learn and navigate the grant system in the United States.

Over the years, I have written and received millions of dollars in grant funding. I'd say the vast majority of those funds were federal in nature, but I've also worked on state level grants, and grants from private foundations. In the busy city of Hawthorne with a population of about 90,000, nestled in south Los Angeles County, I remember having up to 17 grants active at one time and during one point in my career, I felt more like an administrative grant analyst, than a police Captain. The truth is, successful grant writing and funding is one of the best ways that an agency can provide the absolute best service to their community, yet many of the smaller to medium size agencies will opt out of grant funding because of the complexity and administrative time that they require. Larger police agencies have full time grant writers and analysts that find, write, secure and procure, while smaller agencies may rely on a sworn officer that manages grants as an ancillary duty, or a civilian administrative assistant that is asked to apply for the funding. This fact alone causes inequity in the system.

When I was hired as the police chief in Redondo Beach in 2015 and joined the Los Angeles County Police Chiefs' Association, it only took a meeting or two for people in the room that knew me to ask that

I sit on the task force and approval authority for Homeland Security grant funding. Having already been involved for years, I accepted the position but quickly discovered that the work of getting approximately 22 L.A. agencies to submit and follow through on Homeland Security grants was a daunting task, ultimately causing more time and effort in the end. For that reason, my analyst and I find it easier and more efficient to make 22 individual submissions and manage the process for the group until such time as the subrecipient agreements are sent to each individual city. I will speak more on the complexity and inefficiency of Homeland Security grants in the paragraphs to follow.

TECHNOLOGY AND USABILITY

Over the past 20 years, there have been major changes to the way the federal grants are applied for and administered. From my perspective, it appears that each grant authority has used technology to their advantage, but that it is all proprietary. Although many assume www.Grants.gov and its supporting app are the one stop shop for all things federally funded, that couldn't be further from the truth. It is true that you can go to the website and find the grant that fits your needs, but prepare yourself to get that same feeling you have when you walk into a Home Depot to look for a cotter pin and nobody is there wearing an orange apron. In navigating federal grants, you need to know where to find what you are looking for, and once located, how to apply and finish the project via one of the many other grant websites. Every one of us has probably joked or laughed at one time or another at the overuse of government acronyms, but when grants are concerned, it's so bad it's not even funny. SAM, DUNS, MPIN, OJP, OMB, GMS, PMT, BJA, JAG, COPS, EHP, GPRS, etc., etc.. Getting into the weeds on what each means and does, and how one acronym works with another, would probably cause you to tune me out. So, let me be perfectly clear, you can't just log into Grants.gov, find what you are looking for, apply, receive a reward, manage and close out a federal grant. You have to learn the language.

Many of the user's frustrations begin long before the application is made. For example, we recently applied for a federal Port Security grant. To do so, you login to grants.gov and "open a workspace." Problems begin when people that have long transitioned out of the agency or assignment are former "workspace owners." This become more burdensome when you are asked to enter your SAM (systems for awards management) number. That's another website, so you go to SAM.gov to do the annual update and then you get asked for your MPIN (marketing partner identification number) and of course nobody at the agency knows what that is or who has it, so you are told to contact the entity administrator. In my particular example, the entity administrator was my assistant city manager. He didn't know the MPIN either, so when we called the help desk at grants.gov and finally got through, they would only talk to the assistant city manager. He called a couple of times over the next few days but got tired of being on hold and gave up. My analyst finally called and was placed on hold for two hours. When she finally got through, she called the assistant city manager and patched him through so that we could finally get things worked out.

When applying for BJA (Bureau of Justice Assistance) grants, or a specific COPS (Community Oriented Policing Services) grants, things have become much easier. One of the areas they get it right, is with their level of customer service offered to the applicant. In the case of Redondo Beach, my analyst raves about the help she receives from Elaine Vanlandingham who she knows by name and has frequent

contact with. Elaine takes the time to help my analyst navigate the many interfaces and teach her the nuanced tricks required to successfully manage a BJA grant. Without that level of customer service however, our successful management and completion of a grant program could be frustrating.

The user must utilize the GMS (grants management system) to apply and then conduct financial reporting. Depending on what we are doing, we have four GMS user names and passwords. To report on the quarterly progress of grant, the user must go the PMT (performance measurement tools). One thing that exemplifies the redundancy of the systems is when you are required to download a .pdf file of a document in PMT, save it to your computer, and then upload it back into the GMS. To drawdown funds, one goes to the GPRS (grant payment request system). It had been a while since I had done this personally, so in preparation for this testimony I asked my analyst to login to GPRS. She did so, but strict security measures in the system asked her to provide her mother's middle name. My analyst entered "none" because her mom doesn't have a middle name, and she was immediately locked out of the system. Once inside these systems they function very well, but it still takes multiple systems to handle one grant.

If this is not frustrating enough, this next example still drives me crazy to this day. Federal grant reporting cycles coincide with the October 1st start date of the federal fiscal year. The day we are awarded (usually in February) any of the BJA grants associated with the aforementioned systems, our email is flooded with messages about failing to report on the grant. Alright, we get it, it's a glitch and all we have to do is go back into GMS and PMT and enter zeros for all of the quarterly reports now past due from the previous quarters before we ever had the grant. The real problem is, these emails go to everyone on the grant like the mayor and city manager. Although I already got them myself, they undoubtedly will forward them to me and say, "you might want to look into this." Every year I explain to them the glitch as I have explained it to you, but I'm pretty sure they still think I'm slacking. It is imperative that the federal government *Standardize and Streamline the Federal Grant Making Process and Systems*.

PASS-THROUGH GRANTS

Different issues arise for some of the larger Homeland Security Grants that pass through the states (Cal OES – office of emergency services in my case), and then through the counties, and then down to the city. Closer examination of who is responsible for the massive delays and layers of bureaucratic red tape is warranted to better fix this system, but what I do know is that my city has rules, the county has rules, the state has rules, and the feds have rules. Every time someone adds a rule it can cause delay, require additional training, or additional administrative costs that eventually when totaled together, start to outweigh the benefit of even receiving the grant in the first place. I have heard many chiefs say, "it's just not worth our time." Not only are there major delays in processing these grants, procurement is becoming so complex and time consuming, chiefs will avoid applying for things they really need because they don't want to deal with prompting something like FEMA's Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) reporting. Even with Homeland Security grant cycles lasting three years, many chiefs and grant analysts will stick to just purchasing equipment rather than the funding of personnel to run a multiyear program or initiative. It's much easier to close out a grant after an equipment purchase

than it is to deal with the administrative time it takes to track personnel hours. The irony being that personnel hours and especially those associated with training, can be some of the most valuable funding law enforcement needs.

As I mentioned in the background section of the testimony, Los Angeles County chiefs have opted to create our own efficiencies by communicating prior to the release of the Homeland Security grant cycle, and deciding what are funding priorities are. Those may be consistent across the County, or even broken down by region within the County. Nonetheless, my analyst and I submit individual grants for every eligible city. This takes some effort to ensure that the primary point of contact or the chief has not changed, but we help remove the burden of the County trying to track everyone down. In the 2019 and 2020 grant years, Cal OES required that the County submit the grant workbooks to them prior to release of the federal grant. Translation: all of the police chiefs in L.A. County must decide what they want to fund based on the approximate amount of what was funded the year prior, and submit our projects to the County so that they can inform the state what we need, before the grant funds are announced from the feds.

To make matters worse, by the time these cities receive what are called “subrecipient agreements” from the County, we may not even have the same needs that we had at the time of application. This causes modifications and further delays. If you remember anything from this part of the testimony, please remember this: *The City of Redondo Beach has yet to receive reimbursement for Homeland Security grants from 2017, 2018, 2019, or 2020.* How is it possible for the federal government to secure the nation against our many agile enemies and the everchanging threats they pose, when we are still waiting for money from a 2017 grant we used to buy portable radios that is now almost four years in the rear? It is imperative that the federal government ***Creates a System that Works with the States, Counties, and Cities, to Expedite Grant Funding.***

TRAINING

Grants have become so complex and the systems so convoluted, now we see the required training for grant managers and financial points of contact increasing every year. If it is not the feds requiring a webinar and an in-person training in Washington, DC for a body worn camera grant, it’s the County requiring training on the procedures they have had to put in place to get their grants approved by the state. Training is great, but additional training because of a flawed system, is time consuming and expensive. I may go so far as to say, training may prove unnecessary if the grant system is revamped. I once sat in a meeting with a bunch of chiefs who began badgering the CEO of a very techy records management software company about training. “How much training will my officers need, how much time will it take, how much will it cost?” The CEO pulled an iPhone out of his breast pocket and asked, “do you have one of these?” He said, “did you receive training on this complex computer or did you just turn it on and start pushing buttons?” Even the most complex systems that have the right level of intuitive software, can train the user as they go. While standardizing and streamlining the federal grant system, it is imperative that the federal government ***Creates a System that is User Friendly and does not Require an Expert to Use.***

FUNDING

When the COVID-19 crisis hit the nation, I knew that there was one thing I was going to need to be able provide the best for my agency and maintain a high level of service to the community; money. I went online and filled out a two-page grant describing the need. The following day, I was on a conference call explaining my position and they voted right then to fund the \$35,000 grant. The next day, we were set up with access to an account to spend the money as needed. As a result, we were one of the few agencies in America that quickly had access to COVID-19 testing for every employee, symptomatic or not, and antibody testing for anyone that wants it. It sounds like a great model, and it is, but that grant was written to the Redondo Beach Police Foundation. I would never expect a federal grant to be so simple, but it's an important contrast to make. If a new federal system has already vetted my agency and profile, why can't it be that simple in an emergency? Besides the time it takes, part of the issue with federal grants is having to front the money and then wait for reimbursement. Yes, some BJA grants have a rather simple drawdown system in the GPRS (grant payment request system), but others require 25% or up to 100% in matching funds. Many cities cannot afford to front thousands and wait for a reimbursement and many cannot afford the match. It is imperative that the federal government ***Examine the Funding Models and Improve Accessibility by Removing the Need for Matching Funds or Extended Reimbursement Times.***

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. ***Standardize and Streamline the Federal Grant Making Process and Systems.*** Consolidate the various websites and system into one platform. Rather than have to know what you are looking for, the city or entity should be able to enter a profile of things like populations, crime rates, issues in the community, programs, agency demographics, etc, and then prompted by the system to look at the grants that fit their needs. As new grant programs come to fruition, the applicant should be notified that there is a new funding opportunity that fits their profile.
2. ***Create a System that Works with the States, Counties, and Cities, to Expedite Grant Funding.*** If grants must pass-through states, counties and cities, create system accountability that expedites the process. Remove the delays that are making some grants obsolete by the time they are fully reimbursed to the applicant.
3. ***Create a System that is User Friendly and does not Require an Expert to Use.*** Look to the private sector to assist with intuitive software that trains the novice as they go, yet allows the expert to act swiftly and efficiently. Develop a subsequent app that makes the grant process mobile and facilitates real time reporting and managing.
4. ***Examine the Funding Models and Improve Accessibility by Removing the Need for Matching Funds or Extended Reimbursement Times.*** Not every city or county can afford to front the money for a grant only to experience delays in reimbursement. Not every city can afford a 25% -100% in order to be awarded funding. The power of funding quickly should not be underestimated.