

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

***United States Attorney
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For Immediate Release

WHITE HOUSE, DEPT. OF JUSTICE ANNOUNCE LAW ENFORCEMENT GRANTS FOR HIRING OF VETERANS SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA TO RECEIVE \$750,000 AS PART OF NATIONWIDE INITIATIVE

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY – June 25, 2012

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) today announced funding awards to over 220 cities and counties, aimed at creating or saving approximately 800 law enforcement positions. The grants will fund over 600 new law enforcement positions and save an additional 200 positions recently lost or in jeopardy of being cut due to local budget cuts. All new law enforcement positions funded in the COPS 2012 Hiring Program must be filled by recent military veterans who have served at least 180 days since September 11, 2001.

More than \$111 million is being awarded to local public safety agencies across the country. The list of this year's grantees includes the City of Chula Vista, which will receive a total award amount of \$750,000. The COPS Office will work with transition centers across the country to connect veterans with the new grant-funded law enforcement opportunities. For the entire list of grantees and additional information about the 2012 COPS Hiring Program, visit the COPS website at www.cops.usdoj.gov.

"Today, we step up our support for recent veterans by offering them the chance to pursue meaningful careers in law enforcement," said Attorney General Eric Holder. "At a time of budget shortfalls, these grants will provide opportunities for much-needed, highly-trained professionals – with a proven commitment to service - to continue their careers in communities all across the country."

“This new opportunity for veterans is a commitment to support those who are coming home from their tour of duty,” said Bernard Melekian, COPS Office Director. “We sincerely hope this effort encourages our veterans to continue to protect and serve the United States through new law enforcement careers.”

U.S. Attorney Laura Duffy praised the award, stating that “the COPS program is a creative approach to reintegrating veterans in civilian life. It provides our returning vets, who have unparalleled skills and experience, a meaningful way to transition from service. And it puts more officers on the street in Chula Vista, which will benefit greatly from additional crime-fighting resources. For all involved, the grant is a win-win situation.”

“The Chula Vista Police Department is grateful and excited to be one of the 2012 COPS Hiring Program recipients. The COPS grant will fund additional officers over a three year period, enhancing community policing efforts in Chula Vista,” said Chief of Police David Bejarano

The COPS Hiring Program makes grants to state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies to hire or rehire community policing officers. The program provides the salary and benefits for officer and deputy hires for three years. Along with the pledge to hire military veterans, grantees for the 2012 Hiring Program were selected based on fiscal need and local crime rates. An additional factor in the selection process was each agency’s strategy to address specific problems such as increased homicide rates and gun violence.

In his State of the Union Address, President Obama called for a new Veterans Jobs Corps initiative to help put veterans back to work on a range of projects that leverage skills developed in the military, including first responder jobs. In February, the President announced that preference for this year’s COPS and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grants would be given to communities that recruit and hire post-9/11 veterans to serve as police officers and firefighters.