

FY 2022 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant

City of Hattiesburg and Forrest County

Project Narrative

Description of the Issues

The City of Hattiesburg is applying on behalf of the City of Hattiesburg and Forrest County for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program FY 2022 Local Solicitation. The City of Hattiesburg and Forrest County are seeking to use funds for the purchase of equipment to improve the existing capabilities of the Hattiesburg Police Department and Forrest County Sheriff's Department.

The Hattiesburg Police Department (HPD) will use funds to purchase three items that will increase their performance specifically in active shooter situations. A night vision device will be purchased, to be used as a clip-on for weapons or a hand-held device, that will aid in long-range identification at night. Throat microphone headsets, accessories for existing radios, will be obtained and will consist of a throat microphone and earpiece that will allow for private, clear, and hands-free communication in situations where traditional audio accessories may not be suitable or ideal. The throat microphone does not interfere with masks or other protective equipment. Additionally, the design of the throat microphone eliminates most background noise, transmitting audio more clearly in noisy situations. This hands-free device will help officers stay more engaged with their surroundings, increasing officer safety and efficiency in life-threatening situations. Finally, HPD will purchase bleeding management kits that will include essential medical supplies to save a life in the event of immediate, life-threatening bleeding—to be used in the field before medical personnel arrive. These kits will include items such as tourniquets, trauma dressing, gauze, shears, and medical gloves. The balance of the items not covered by grant funds will come from the city's general fund.

The Forrest County Sheriff's Department is currently seeking to provide equipment upgrades to their interview room by replacing the current camera, microphone, and supporting equipment—which are approaching end-of-serviceable life. Their request consists of a new interview room system that will include a camera and associated equipment for recording interviews, as well as provide the capabilities for live streaming and digital evidence management. Their purchase will include a hardware, accessory, and implementation package—as well as a subscription fee that will provide for unlimited cloud-based storage of digital evidence for a term of 5 years. The balance of the cost of the items not covered by grant funds will come from the county's general fund.

The following project identifiers are associated with the proposed project activities: Equipment – Tactical, Equipment – Video/Audio, Officer Safety, Policing, Equipment – General; Violence – Violent Crime.

Project Design and Implementation

The Hattiesburg Police Department guides its priorities and funding strategy through an evaluation of the needs of the department. The need that is most pressing is the one that is addressed first, while under the direction of the City of Hattiesburg Mayor and City Council.

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Forrest County Sheriff's Department under the direction of the Forrest County Board of Supervisors and Planning Department coordinate priorities during the budget review process and outline long range plans.

Capabilities and Competencies

The Hattiesburg Police Department works with other local and state agencies on criminal justice and juvenile justice efforts. Forrest County Sheriff's Department has collaborative partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions within the county (City of Hattiesburg and City of Petal) along with agencies such as the 12 Net Narcotics Team, DEA and other law enforcement entities.

Plan for Collecting the Data Required

The City of Hattiesburg Grant Coordinator will gather, track and document the data required for performance measures. This individual will also enter all the data into BJA's Performance Measurement Tool. The City of Hattiesburg Accounting Division will gather the financial information for reporting purposes.