



Cornerstone for Justice: How Colorado Uses Byrne JAG Funding to Protect Public Safety and Prevent Crime

The cornerstone of federal support for state and local justice systems, the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant program (Byrne JAG) is a federal-state-local partnership enabling communities to target resources to their most pressing local needs.

Byrne JAG is used broadly for law enforcement, prosecution, indigent defense, courts, prevention and education, corrections and community corrections, drug treatment and enforcement, planning evaluation and technology, mental health services, and crime victim and witness programs. This breadth and flexibility means states and local communities can use Byrne JAG to balance resources and address problems across the entire criminal justice system, and to react quickly to urgent challenges and changing circumstances. Many innovative criminal justice practices demonstrated using Byrne JAG funds have been replicated nationwide, such as drug courts, opioid prevention and addiction response, methamphetamine lab reduction, anti-gang strategies, reentry programs and information sharing protocols.

Byrne JAG in Colorado:

In 2016, the Colorado Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice invested in numerous successful initiatives. Some examples include:

- The Office of the Independent Monitor (OMI) Youth Outreach Parent Track Project. Project Parent Track has three primary goals: (1) to improve youth's confidence and ability to have positive interactions with law enforcement by giving parents tools to support their children, including training on proper police practice, common laws related to youth and constitutional rights; (2) to increase parental trust of law enforcement; and (3) to increase Denver police officers' understanding of community concerns through facilitated dialogue with parents. The Youth Outreach Project serves over 1,000 youth, community members, and officers per year.
- The It Takes a Library (ITAL) project is a partnership between Denver Human Services (DDHS), Denver Public Library (DPL), and Colorado Mental Wellness Network (CMWN). Through this collaboration, peer navigators support DPL's social workers in outreach, assessments

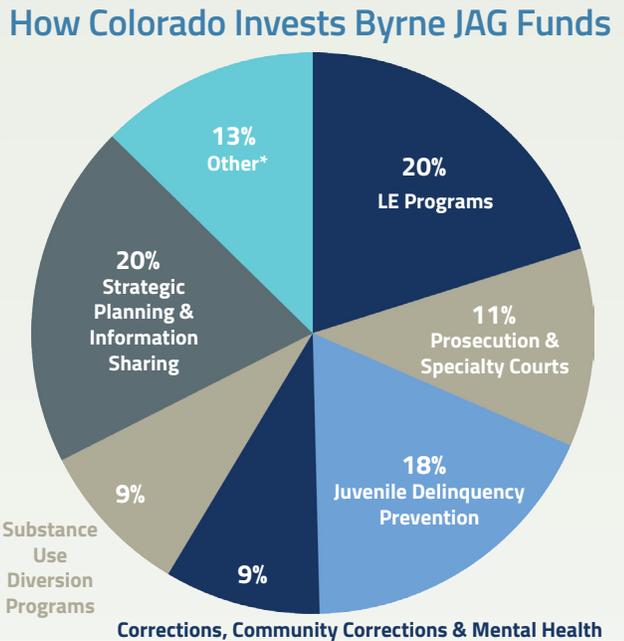
and human services referrals for customers traditionally at risk of entering or re-entering the criminal/juvenile justice system either as victims or perpetrators, based on factors such as income level, homelessness and mental health. This program increases access to mental health/human services and supports the reduction of crime, delinquency and recidivism using evidence-based best practices of peer support and library social work models.

Byrne JAG funding keeps citizens safe, prevents crime and victimization, and provides services to individuals in the justice system so when they return to their communities they are better equipped with the tools and skills they need to build productive lives.

Colorado's Investment By Purpose Area

Total Investment = \$2,606,955





* Other includes: Victim Services and Support; Training (other than law enforcement); Indigent Defense initiatives; Substance Abuse assessment/screening/treatment; and crime prevention programs.

Additional Examples:

- Byrne JAG funds support Project Wellness, a diversion opportunity offered by the 1st Judicial District Juvenile Mental Health Court. This program serves high-risk, high-need juveniles who are involved in justice system and have been diagnosed with a serious and persistent mental illness. Project Wellness works to reduce recidivism by using a multidisciplinary approach and allowing a designated coordinator to ensure adherence to evidence based practices.
- Byrne JAG funds support the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) technician backlog reduction effort. NIBIN allows spent cartridge cases to be searched through a database to associate shooting incidents to each other or a specific firearm to a shooting incident.
- Byrne JAG funds support the Aurora Police Department (APD) in implementing a gang prevention project under Aurora's Gang Reduction Impact Program. The project decreases the attractiveness of gangs by building positive relationships between target area youth/parents and the APD, reducing risk factors for gang members and increases protections.

- Byrne JAG is used to support the 10th Judicial District's Addict 2 Athlete (A2A) Program which utilizes an innovative approach to reducing recidivism. A2A is based on the core principles of pro-social services by active engagement of individuals in a structured eight-week exercise and learning program that includes substance abuse education, cognitive restructuring, life skills, and development of biological, sociological, and environmental strategies essential in helping individuals abstain from self-damaging behavior.

How Byrne JAG Funding is Awarded:

Sixty percent of the overall Byrne JAG grant is awarded to the state criminal justice planning agency (known as the State Administrating Agency or SAA), which, in turn, awards the funding, to local governments and non-profit service providers; the remaining 40 percent goes directly from the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance to local communities based on population and crime data.

Funding is authorized at \$1.1 billion annually. At its peak in FY02, Congress appropriated \$830 million. In subsequent years, funding held steady at about \$500 million. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in FY09 provided a one-time boost of \$2 billion. Since FY10, funding has dropped by about one-third. In FY17 the program was funded at \$335 million.

Byrne JAG supports the federal government's crucial role in spurring innovation and testing and replicating evidence-based practices nationwide. States and local communities use Byrne JAG funds to address needs and fill gaps across the entire justice system. This funding touches nearly every city and town in America through projects funded and investments made in the state and local justice systems.

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