



## Cornerstone for Justice: How Texas 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 Texas:

In 2016, the Texas Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division invested in numerous successful initiatives. Some examples include:

- Border security initiatives: The proximity of the Texas/Mexico international border has left many rural counties in Texas dealing with a large influx of human, drug, and sex trafficking crimes committed by large transnational criminal organizations. Texas seeks to support regional, multi-disciplinary approaches that coordinates law enforcement agencies to combat transnational organized crime activities.
- The expansion of reentry programs that include individualized treatment and coordinated case management services. Successful reintegration is costly and challenging as high-risk individuals attempting to reintegrate into the community continue to bounce back and forth between disconnected service providers, with little coordination, leading to an increased risk of reoffending.

Byrne JAG 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 and not return to the criminal justice system.

### Texas's Investment By Purpose Area

Total Investment = \$10,332,680

70%



Law Enforcement

3%



Drug Treatment & Enforcement

7%



Prevention & Education

12%



Planning, Evaluation & Technology

7%



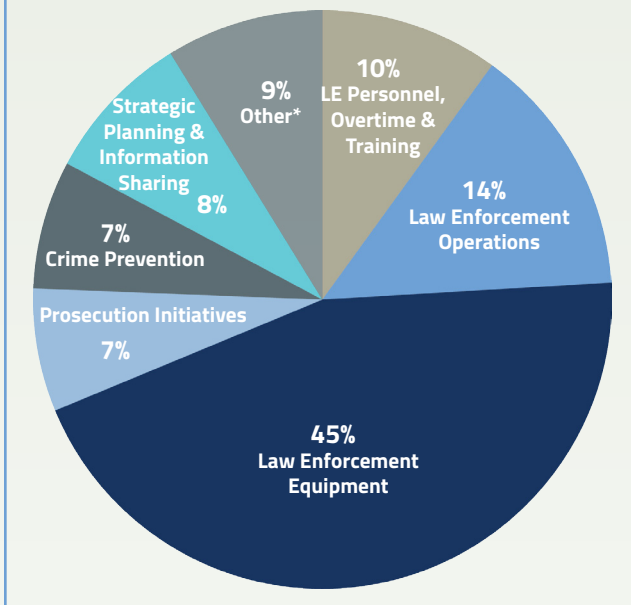
Prosecution & Courts

1%



Corrections, Community Corrections & Reentry

## How Texas Invests Byrne JAG Funds



\* Other includes: Reentry initiatives; Taskforce Operations and Personnel; Mental Health and Substance Abuse screening, assessment and treatment; and Diversion programs.

- Byrne JAG funds support training for law enforcement officers who are assigned the responsibility of processing crime scenes. These officers perform a critical role as their investigations are the underpinnings of criminal casework that determine verdicts of guilt or innocence.

Funding helps to support a pilot program, started in partnership with Texas A&M University, which provides essential forensic investigation training to peace officers. The project has developed a comprehensive, forensic science training certification program which provides science-based, application intensive training to effectively identify, document, collect, and process evidence found at crime scenes.

## 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 Administering 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.

## 2016 Byrne JAG Spending Study:

Financial estimates and program examples were gathered as part of the 2016 Byrne JAG Spending Study conducted by the National Criminal Justice Association. Financial data was submitted by and qualitative interviews were conducted with all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

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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