



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT



July 16, 2024

ITEM TITLE

Grant Acceptance and Appropriation: Accept a Grant from California Governor's Office of Emergency Services for Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Program and Appropriate Funds

Report Number: 24-0199

Location: No specific geographic location

Department: Police

G.C. § 84308: No

Environmental Notice: The activity is not a "Project" as defined under Section 15378 of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines; therefore, pursuant to State Guidelines Section 15060(c)(3) no environmental review is required.

Recommended Action

Adopt a resolution accepting \$56,552 in grant funds from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services and appropriating the funds to the Police Grants Section of the Federal Grants Fund for the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Program. **(4/5 Vote Required)**

SUMMARY

The Police Department has been awarded \$56,552 in grant funding from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services for the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Program. The goal of this program is to improve the quality, timeliness, and credibility of forensic science services over current operations.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Director of Development Services has reviewed the proposed activity for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has determined that the activity is not a "Project" as defined under Section 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines because it will not result in a physical change in the environment; therefore, pursuant to Section 15060(c)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Thus, no environmental review is required.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Not applicable.

DISCUSSION

The Paul Coverdell Forensic Sciences Improvement Program (Coverdell Program) is administered by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and provides federal funding to accredited crime laboratories throughout California. Coverdell Program funds can be used to provide education and training in both technical and personal skills to California's forensic scientists to ensure that they can effectively perform their laboratory assignments. In order to receive these funds, the crime laboratories must verify their accreditation status with a Forensic Crime laboratory organization or appropriate certifying body. The crime laboratories must also certify that they have a plan in place to conduct an independent external investigation into allegations of serious negligence or misconduct by laboratory employees or contractors.

The Police Department has been awarded \$56,552 for the 2023 Coverdell Program, covering a grant period of April 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. This funding will be used to provide training and equipment used by crime laboratory personnel.

Employee training funded by Coverdell grant funds include Crime Scene Investigations Workshop, Courtroom Testimony, Fundamentals of Crime Scene Photography and Fingerprint Evidence Processing. The Crime Scene Investigations workshop will teach proper techniques for processing a crime scene. Courtroom Testimony training will provide instruction on proper testimony techniques to forensic science professionals. Fundamentals of Crime Scene Photography and Fingerprint Evidence Processing training will enhance the ability to process latent prints and respond to crime scenes.

Additionally, the grant funding will cover the costs of a Faraday tent, Faraday bags, blocker lockers, and a creative pen display tablet. The Faraday tent, Faraday bags, and blocker lockers will ensure that phones are protected from remote wiping while stored as evidence. The creative pen display tablet will allow latent print analysts to examine and mark prints on a digital display using stencils, resulting in a more efficient and paperless process.

DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT

Staff has reviewed the decision contemplated by this action and has determined that it is not site-specific and consequently, the 500-foot rule found in California Code of Regulations Title 2, section 18702.2(a)(11), is not applicable to this decision for purposes of determining a disqualifying real property-related financial conflict of interest under the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov't Code § 87100, et seq.).

Staff is not independently aware, and has not been informed by any City Council member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision maker conflict of interest in this matter.

CURRENT-YEAR FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this resolution will result in a one-time appropriation of \$56,552 in grant funds, offset by appropriations of \$28,552 to the supplies and services category and \$28,000 to the capital category of the Police Grant Section of the Federal Grants Fund. The table below outlines the spending plan for the Coverdell Program grant funds.

DESCRIPTION	FY 2024-25
Training Costs for Crime Lab Personnel	\$9,932
Creative Pen Display Tablet	\$3,020
Faraday Bags	\$5,600
Faraday Tent	\$28,000
Blocker Lockers	\$10,000
TOTAL COVERDELL FUNDING	\$56,552

Funding from the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services will completely offset these costs, resulting in no net fiscal impact to the General Fund.

ONGOING FISCAL IMPACT

There is no ongoing fiscal impact as a result of this action.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

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