



**COMMISSIONERS COURT
COMMUNICATION**

COURT ORDER NUMBER _____

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DATE: 11/5/2024

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION TO ACCEPT FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE FORMULA DNA CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT AND BACKLOG REDUCTION GRANT AWARD FOR THE TARRANT COUNTY MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE

***** CONSENT AGENDA *****

COMMISSIONERS COURT ACTION REQUESTED

It is requested that the Commissioners Court consider the acceptance of FY 2024 Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Formula DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction (CEBR) grant award for the Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office TCMEO.

BACKGROUND

The Formula DNA CEBR program furthers the Department of Justice's mission by funding states and units of local government with existing crime laboratories that conduct DNA analysis with two (2) main program objectives:

1. Increase the capacity of laboratories to process Combined DNA Index System (CODIS)-eligible crime scene samples in accredited, publicly funded forensic DNA laboratories through the use of DNA technology;
2. Increase laboratory efficiency for processing CODIS-eligible crime scene samples analyzed in accredited, publicly funded forensic DNA laboratories through the use of DNA technology.

On May 7, 2024, the Commissioners Court, through Court Order #143044, approved the submission of the FY 2024 BJA CEBR grant application to continue the forensic biology/DNA section of the TCMEO in the amount of \$530,000.00.

With approval, TCMEO will use the awarded grant funds in the amount of \$516,863.00 for the DNA analysis of forensic samples for inclusion in CODIS and increasing efficiency in the laboratory by utilizing grant-funded personnel and supplies, purchasing equipment, continuing education for personnel, and procurement contract for validation of equipment.

The grant term is twenty-four (24) months, starting on October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2026.

The Budget and Risk Management Office has reviewed the statement of grant award. The grant award has been approved as to form by the Criminal District Attorney's Office.

SUBMITTED BY	Budget and Risk Management	PREPARED BY:	Rand Otten
		APPROVED BY:	Robert Cone



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FISCAL IMPACT

The grant award is for \$516,863.00. There are no matching funds or operating subsidy required. Indirect costs can be charged to this grant.

Award Letter

September 27, 2024

Dear Tim O'Hare,

On behalf of Attorney General Merrick B. Garland, it is my pleasure to inform you the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) has approved the application submitted by TARRANT COUNTY for an award under the funding opportunity entitled 2024 BJA FY24 Formula DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction (CEBR) Program. The approved award amount is \$516,863.

Review the Award Instrument below carefully and familiarize yourself with all conditions and requirements before accepting your award. The Award Instrument includes the Award Offer (Award Information, Project Information, Financial Information, and Award Conditions) and Award Acceptance. For COPS Office and OVW funding the Award Offer also includes any Other Award Documents.

Please note that award requirements include not only the conditions and limitations set forth in the Award Offer, but also compliance with assurances and certifications that relate to conduct during the period of performance for the award. These requirements encompass financial, administrative, and programmatic matters, as well as other important matters (e.g., specific restrictions on use of funds). Therefore, all key staff should receive the award conditions, the assurances and certifications, and the application as approved by OJP, so that they understand the award requirements. Information on all pertinent award requirements also must be provided to any subrecipient of the award.

Should you accept the award and then fail to comply with an award requirement, DOJ will pursue appropriate remedies for non-compliance, which may include termination of the award and/or a requirement to repay award funds.

Prior to accepting the award, your Entity Administrator must assign a Financial Manager, Grant Award Administrator, and Authorized Representative(s) in the Justice Grants System (JustGrants). The Entity Administrator will need to ensure the assigned Authorized Representative(s) is current and has the legal authority to accept awards and bind the entity to the award terms and conditions. To accept the award, the Authorized Representative(s) must accept all parts of the Award Offer in the Justice Grants System (JustGrants), including by executing the required declaration and certification, within 45 days from the award date.

To access your funds, you will need to enroll in the Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) system, if you haven't already completed the enrollment process in ASAP. The Entity Administrator should have already received an email from ASAP to initiate this process.

Congratulations, and we look forward to working with you.

Brent J. Cohen
Acting Assistant Attorney General

Office for Civil Rights Notice for All Recipients

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) enforces federal civil rights laws and other provisions that prohibit discrimination by recipients of federal financial assistance from OJP, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), and the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW).

Several civil rights laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, require recipients of federal financial assistance (recipients) to give assurances that they will comply with those laws. Taken together, these and other civil rights laws prohibit recipients from discriminating in the provision of services and employment because of race, color, national origin, religion, disability, and sex or from discriminating in the provision of services on the bases of age.

Some recipients of DOJ financial assistance have additional obligations to comply with other applicable nondiscrimination provisions like the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion in addition to race, color, national origin, and sex. Recipients may also have related requirements regarding the development and implementation of equal employment opportunity programs.

OCR provides technical assistance, training, and other resources to help recipients comply with civil rights obligations. Further, OCR administratively enforces civil rights laws and nondiscrimination provisions by investigating DOJ recipients that are the subject of discrimination complaints. In addition, OCR conducts compliance reviews of DOJ recipients based on regulatory criteria. These investigations and compliance reviews permit OCR to evaluate whether DOJ recipients are providing services to the public and engaging in employment practices in a nondiscriminatory manner.

For more information about OCR, your civil rights and nondiscrimination responsibilities, how to notify your employees or beneficiaries of their civil rights protections and responsibilities and how to file a complaint, as well as technical assistance, training, and other resources, please visit www.ojp.gov/program/civil-rights-office/outreach. If you would like OCR to assist you in fulfilling your civil rights or nondiscrimination responsibilities, please contact us at askOCR@ojp.usdoj.gov or www.ojp.gov/program/civil-rights-office/about#ocr-contacts.

Memorandum Regarding NEPA

NEPA Letter Type

OJP - Programmatic Environmental Assessment (EA)

NEPA Letter

The activities the recipient has proposed to conduct under this award fall within the scope of a Programmatic EA that complies with the NEPA. These activities have been determined not to have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment.

Throughout the term of this award, the recipient agrees to comply with all Federal, State, and local environmental laws and regulations applicable to the development and implementation of the activities to be funded under this award. Further, the recipient agrees that for any activity that to be funded under this award, it will inform OJP of-- (1) any change(s) that it is considering making to the previously assessed activity that may be relevant to environmental impact; or (2) any proposed new activities or changed circumstances that may require assessment as to environmental impact, such as new activities that involve the use of chemicals or involve construction or major renovation. The recipient will not implement a proposed change or new activity until OJP, with the assistance of the recipient, has determined whether the proposed change or new activity (or changed circumstances) will require additional review under NEPA. Approval for implementation will not be unreasonably withheld as long as any requested modification(s) is consistent with eligible program purposes and found acceptable under an OJP-conducted environmental impact review process.

Questions about this determination may be directed to your grant manager or Orbin Terry, Environmental Coordinator for the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

NEPA Coordinator

First Name

Orbin

Middle Name

Last Name

Terry

Award Information

This award is offered subject to the conditions or limitations set forth in the Award Information, Project Information, Financial Information, and Award Conditions.

Recipient Information

Recipient Name

TARRANT COUNTY

UEI

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Street 1

100 E WEATHERFORD ST

Street 2