

**Attachment #1**  
**FY 2023 JAG Program Narrative**

The FY 2023 Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) award will be administered by Franklin County serving as the fiduciary and administrative agent on behalf of the cities of Reynoldsburg, Columbus and Whitehall, Ohio. Initiatives selected for funding support will align with the Franklin County Criminal Justice Strategic Plan CY 2020 – 2024, the Columbus and Franklin County Addiction Plan 2020 – 2024 (CAFCAP), the Franklin County Community Health Improvement Plan 2023-2026, and/or the Franklin County Rising Out of Poverty Blueprint. The JAG award and corresponding sub-recipient awards will be administered in accordance with local, state and federal guidelines and statutes.

The Franklin County Criminal Justice Planning Board is composed of the elected and appointed officials having critical roles within the criminal justice system (Judges, Sheriff, Police Chief, Safety Director, Probation, Corrections, Community, Faith-based, Victim, Public Defender, Prosecutor). The Board develops, adopts and updates the Comprehensive Strategic Justice Plan every four years, to support prevention and response to justice related community conditions and emerging trends and conditions.

The Criminal Justice Planning Board is staffed by the metropolitan criminal justice planning agency (Office of Justice Policy & Programs (OJPP)) which represents all 42 local political subdivisions in Franklin County and is responsible for system-wide strategic justice planning, technical assistance, and efficient and effective application of local, state and federal grant funding. Staffing from OJPP has extensive grants and project management experience overseeing large-scale, multi-agency and multi-disciplinary initiatives. OJPP is well versed in required local, state, and federal financial guidelines, OMB Cost Principles and Auditing standards, and procurement requirements. This award will be used to continue successful projects and/or implement new projects in alignment with the Franklin County Comprehensive Strategic Justice Plan, the Columbus and Franklin County

Addiction Plan (CAFCAAP), the Franklin County Community Health Improvement Plan and/or the Franklin County Rising Out of Poverty Blueprint (reference Strategic Justice Plan for CY2020 - 2024)

FY 2023 JAG funds will be coordinated with multiple local, state and federal funding streams to leverage other available resources addressing the priorities identified in the planning documents referenced above. All projects funded will be tracked for fiscal and programmatic compliance and required to report fiscal and programmatic activity quarterly.

Franklin County and the cities of Reynoldsburg, Columbus and Whitehall are deemed disparate by the Bureau of Justice Assistance and have historically filed a joint application. Because the Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs (OJPP) serves as the regional planning unit for the metropolitan area and is the administrative agency of the Franklin County Criminal Justice Planning Board, of which the cities of Columbus and Whitehall have board representation, each of the jurisdictions has agreed to designate OJPP as the applicant and fiscal agent for the JAG grant. Upon notice of award, the cities of Reynoldsburg, Columbus, and Whitehall will each receive sub-awards based on the funding plan approved via the Memorandum of Understanding.

In developing the FY 2023 Justice Assistance Grant application, the following conditions were identified as key priority areas:

Issue #1:

**GUN VIOLENCE:** In 2022, 90% of the 140 homicides committed in Columbus involved a gun and in CY2021, 190 of 205 homicides involved a gun. CY2023 is on pace to be a record year

involving gun deaths. These numbers are staggering and reflect a disproportionate impact on our African American residents according to the Franklin County Coroner's Office. Per Coroner Dr. Nathaniel Overmire, African Americans are 10x's more likely to be victims of homicide by firearm than their white counterparts.

Violent crime in the cities of Columbus, Reynoldsburg and Whitehall has increased considerably over the past three years. The violent crime rate for Whitehall, OH in 2021 was 985 per 100,000 residents, 356 per 100,000 residents in Reynoldsburg, and 596 per 100,000 residents in Columbus,

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OH. (2021 Calendar Year Data Released by the FBI) as compared to the state of Ohio violent crime rate in 2021 of 336 per 100,000. In Cy2022, the referenced Cities arrested and slated more individuals than the remaining 34 arresting agents, cities, and villages combined. Columbus Police arrested and booked 8,448 individuals, the Franklin County Sheriff's Office booked 4,270 individuals, Whitehall booked 1,619 and Reynoldsburg booked 543 individuals into the Franklin County Correctional Center.

Issue #2:

**FENTANYL OVERDOSE DEATHS:** Similar to other large urban areas around the country, Franklin County continues to experience an unprecedented number of deaths related to overdose from opioids, more specifically fentanyl. During CY 2022, data from the Franklin County Coroner's Office reported 790 overdose deaths with a majority (80%+) attributed to fentanyl. The far reaching consequences of this public health crisis have taxed our first responders, devastated families, overwhelmed our social services and filled our jails.

Issue #3:

**DISPROPORTIONATE INCREASE IN OPIOID OVERDOSE RATES AMONG AFRICAN AMERICANS:** While the raw data in CY2022 indicates white people accounted for 57% of Franklin County's overdose deaths, compared to Black people, who accounted for 35.3%, the overdose death rate paints a different picture. The overdose death rate for individuals identifying as Black was 89.61 per 100,000 people, compared to 53.2 for white people and 53.5 for Hispanics. Regardless of race, ethnicity or socioeconomic background, the data indicates most overdoses happen in areas of our County that have fewer resources to address community conditions like education, affordable housing, childcare, food insecurity, transportation, and employment.

Issue #4:

**REENTRY and HOMELESSNESS:** Pervasive barriers continue to prevent successful re-integration of justice-involved individuals returning to Franklin County from local, state and/or federal incarceration. Despite significant strides gained over the past five years, barriers still include high under/unemployment rates, lack of affordable housing, high poverty rates, behavioral health challenges, and physical health concerns. Of the CY2022 bookings in the Franklin County Jail, 1,512 individuals reported being homeless, a 33% increase from CY2021 bookings.

Issue #5:

**OUTDATED ACCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS EQUIPMENT:** The Columbus Division of Police reported 21,471 car accidents during CY2022. Of those, 117 were fatal, 499 involved serious injuries, and 3,883 had minor injuries. The current equipment used to document crash scenes in Columbus is outdated, has required multiple repairs over the past year and is inconsistent in its performance.

Issue #6:

**Outstanding Warrants:**

As of 7/13/23, the Franklin County Municipal Court reported 56,292 outstanding warrants for individuals charged with criminal, traffic, and environmental cases.

**Program Description**

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To address the identified issues above, FY 2023 JAG funding will support the following criminal justice related initiatives:

**A. Overdose Epidemic**

- A significant number of individuals booked into the Franklin County Jail are screened for an opioid use disorder (OUD). Individuals identified as at risk for OUD may visit the Rapid Resource Center upon release for treatment linkage, assignment to a Peer Support Specialist, assistance with benefits applications, vouchers to procure a birth certificate and/or state ID and to secure personal hygiene and warm weather clothing. Funding through JAG will specifically support Peer Support staff contracted by Franklin County to work with individuals identified as at risk for overdose. Harm reduction supplies including Narcan and fentanyl test strips and basic wound care will be made available to those screened as at risk.

**B. Stepping Up and Reentry Related Initiatives**

- Contracts with Peer Support Specialist(s) to assist justice-involved individuals in transition planning and early recovery management. Peers will be positioned in the Franklin County Rapid Resource Center to ensure immediate linkage to individuals as they are released from the Jail.
- Supportive services funding to include transportation services from the Franklin County Jail, the purchase of bus passes for dissemination to justice involved individuals in need of transportation assistance to and from treatment appointments, and funds to support securing of necessary identification documents like birth certificates and state identification cards.
- On any given day, upwards of 20 or more homeless individuals are released from the Franklin County Jail with no clothing, personal hygiene items or protection from inclement weather. Kits will be created and distributed to inmates indicating homelessness. Kits will include Narcan (purchased with other funding), basic

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toiletry items, under garments, and harm reduction information. Tents and air mattresses will be available on a limited basis.

- JAG funding will support the printing and distribution of resource materials sent to inmates incarcerated with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction and slated to return to Franklin County within the following three months.
- Support of the annual Restored Citizen's Summit in Franklin County hosted by the Ohio Restored Citizens Collaborative in collaboration with the Columbus Coalition of the Homeless.

### **C. Law Enforcement Technology and PPE**

- Purchase of specialized software by the city of Columbus to document traffic crashes and accurately reconstruct automobile accidents by the Columbus Division of Police Accident Investigations Unit.
- Purchase of personal protective equipment for law enforcement including ballistic shields, precision tripods, and office furniture for expand Accident Investigations Unit.

### **D. Community Corrections**

- The Municipal Court Pre-trial and Probation Department will contract with a provider to conduct risk/needs assessments of individuals placed on probation with the goal of decreasing the length of time between disposition and probation officer assignment.
- FY2023 JAG funding will support specialized batterer's intervention for probationers identifying as LGBTQI and unable to pay for services. The Franklin County Municipal Court Pre-trial and Probation Department intends to contract with Equitas Health for the provision of these services.

### **E. Crime Prevention**

- The city of Whitehall will utilize FY 2023 JAG grant funding to continue support of their Youth Violence Crime Reduction Initiative which allows their police department to deploy both uniformed and undercover officers throughout the city of Whitehall to increase youth safety and curb the incidence of juvenile crime and delinquency.

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- The city of Reynoldsburg will utilize FY 2023 JAG grant funding to expand their bicycle unit through the purchase of police bicycles. The bike unit will increase the visibility of the officers and offer easier access to law enforcement by community members.

#### **F. TAP IN Center and Warrants Enforcement**

- The Franklin County Sheriff's Office will continue to allocate funding to overtime to support dedicated enforcement of outstanding felony criminal warrants.
- Franklin County intends to partner with multiple justice and community-based organizations, including the local library to establish a TAP IN Center modeled after the St. Louis, MO program. Individuals visiting the TAP In Center will get immediate access to services and supports including legal assistance intended to resolve outstanding warrants. Funding will be allocated to hire a lead agency to serve as the Primary Coordinator and provider of wrap around services.

#### **G. Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC)**

- FY 2023 JAG funding will continue to support overtime for the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force which joins ten law enforcement jurisdictions in identification and investigation of internet crimes targeting youth. Funding also supports a subscription for digital forensic software and the ability for task force members to attend relevant annual training.

#### **H. Training and Education**

- Recognizing the value of on-going training and information sharing/networking with other local public safety jurisdictions, funding will be allocated to support travel, registration fees, training and related costs for public safety, community corrections, reentry personnel, prosecution and victim services personnel.

Anticipated Conference and Training Events include the following:

- National Criminal Justice Association annual forum (NCJA and BJA sponsored)
- National Conference on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC)
- NatCon National Council for Behavioral Health
- National Children of Incarcerated Parents Conferences (BJA)
- International Institute for Restorative Practices World Conference (held in US)

#### **I. Management and Administration**

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The Office of Justice Policy & Programs, (the Regional Planning Unit) will utilize

administrative funds totaling 10% of the direct allocations to Franklin County and the city of

Columbus. M&A funding will support the following:

- Grants administration of the JAG program including relevant planning, training, fiscal and programmatic oversight, assessment, performance data collection and reporting.
- Timely data collection in compliance with a performance-based system aligned with the BJA performance measures. Individual projects will report quarterly to the Office of Justice Policy & Programs (Administrative Agent)
- Analysis and reporting of individual and aggregate level data for reporting to internal and external stakeholders and the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

**Proposed Outcomes:**

In addition to collecting quarterly data in support of the performance metrics required by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the following outcomes will be monitored for program impact:

- 1) Increased access to harm reduction education, peer support, and supportive services like state ID and birth certificate vouchers, transportation, hygiene supplies, etc.. It is anticipated a minimum of 800 justice-involved individuals will receive support in their transition from a carceral setting to the community;
- 2) Reduced incidents of violent and property crime involving youth in Whitehall as measured by increased law enforcement engagement, the number of youth arrested for serious property and violent crimes, the number of youth enrolled in a diversion program operated by the Juvenile Court and the number of recovered juveniles reported missing;
- 3) Increased presence by law enforcement bicycle patrols at large scale and community events;
- 4) Increased investigative capacity of the Columbus Division of Police Accident Investigations Unit as a result of updated crash scene software;
- 5) Increased number of outstanding warrants resolved through launch and implementation of a Franklin County TAP In Center;
- 6) Increased identification, investigation and prosecution of individuals committing internet crimes against children;
- 7) Increased apprehension of individuals charged with violent crime with outstanding active warrants;

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- 8) Increased treatment compliance by individuals identifying as LGBTQ and court-ordered to receive specialized batterers' intervention services and education;
- 9) Decreased delay in probation assignment of probationers sentenced by the Franklin County Municipal Court as a result of increased capacity to perform screening and assessments utilizing a validated risk instrument.
- 10) Increased number of justice practitioners able to attend specialized training and education events including attendance at Department of Justice and the National Conference for Mental Wellbeing sponsored annual conferences.

### **Plan for Data Collection**

FY 2023 sub-award recipients, including the cities of Reynoldsburg, Columbus and Whitehall will be required to submit quarterly programmatic and fiscal reports to the Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs. Both types of reporting will be submitted electronically to the identified Grants Specialist and Finance Administrator. The Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs (OJPP) will be responsible for review of quarterly reporting and aggregating of JAG supported efforts and entry into the Bureau of Justice Assistance Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) portal quarterly and Department of Justice's JustGrants system semi-annually. OJPP will monitor sub-award recipient progress and conduct field visits on a regular basis. Quarterly desktop monitoring will be conducted to reconcile funding to the sub-recipient approved budget and application. OJPP staff are available to provide technical assistance as requested and/or necessary and will host an annual virtual workshop to review financial and programmatic reporting requirements and timelines. To address delinquent submission of reporting by sub-recipients, OJPP will utilize a progressive response that includes notifications by telephone, email and form letter regarding delinquent reporting. If late reporting continues, a meeting will be scheduled with the authorized representative of the agency to review reporting requirements. In the event reporting continues to be delinquent, the sub-award may be terminated for cause.