

FY25 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program – Local Formula

City of Bridgeport - Proposal Narrative

Description of the Issue

The City of Bridgeport is seeking to address a critical public safety need by strengthening the operational capacity of the Bridgeport Police Department's Emergency Services Unit (ESU) through targeted investment of Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) funds. ESU is responsible for responding to the most high-risk and time-sensitive incidents within the jurisdiction, and oftentimes surrounding areas, including armed encounters, barricaded subjects, hostage situations, and other critical threats that require specialized tactics, equipment, and training.

The City's ESU growth has created gaps in the availability of modern, mission-critical equipment needed to ensure effective incident response, member safety, and successful resolution of high-risk incidents. Within the past three months, approximately four new members have been added to the ESU, bringing the total team size to approximately 25 personnel. While this expansion strengthens the City's emergency response capacity, it also creates an immediate and critical need for additional equipment to ensure that all members are properly outfitted and able to operate safely and effectively in high-risk environments. The lack of updated equipment and technology reduces operational efficiency, tactical capabilities, and increases risks for officers tasked with responding to these incidents.

JAG funding will directly support the procurement of essential equipment and resources to enhance the ESU's readiness, response capabilities, and overall effectiveness. This investment will improve situational awareness and support de-escalation and safe resolution strategies

during critical incidents. The project also promotes law enforcement effectiveness, improving officer safety, and advancing strategies that reduce violent crime and enhance community safety.

Additionally, Bridgeport's ESU provides mutual aid assistance to neighboring jurisdictions, extending the impact of these resource enhancements beyond the City of Bridgeport. Addressing these capability gaps will not only strengthen local response capacity but also contribute to a more coordinated and resilient regional public safety framework.

Through this initiative, the City of Bridgeport will address identified deficiencies in critical equipment and operational resources, improve performance outcomes in high-risk scenarios, and support the overall goal of delivering effective and safe police services.

Project Design and Implementation

The requested JAG funding will directly address the acquisition of essential resources, including ballistic shields, upgraded body armor, and specialized breaching tools. These items are fundamental to officer protection and operational success, enabling ESU personnel to safely approach and manage extremely dangerous environments and reduce exposure to life-threatening situations. Ensuring that both existing and newly assigned ESU members are equipped with modern protective and tactical gear is essential to maintaining operational readiness.

This project is fully aligned with the purpose of the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and JAG program priorities by supporting law enforcement effectiveness and advancing strategies that reduce violent crime and protect the public. Bridgeport's ESU frequently coordinates its activities with federal law enforcement agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco,

Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), and the United States Marshals Service in its initiatives to apprehend violent criminals, an effort directly supported by JAG funding. The proposed investment in updated equipment will directly contribute to improved field performance, enhanced decision-making under critical conditions, and a reduction in risk for both officers and community members. Additionally, the availability of modern equipment supports de-escalation efforts by providing officers with greater flexibility and control when managing urgent situations.

JAG funds will be carefully coordinated with existing state and local justice funding sources to ensure a strategic and complementary use of resources when applicable. Municipal funding sourced from the City's budget will continue to support personnel costs and general operational needs, while JAG funds will specifically target gaps in specialized equipment and capabilities. The City of Bridgeport will also coordinate this effort with any future or existing state-funded public safety initiatives and regional mutual aid partners to ensure alignment of resources, promote interoperability, and maximize the overall impact of funding investments. This approach ensures that JAG funds will be used to build the ESU in a sustainable capacity and enhance existing efforts without duplicating other ongoing efforts.

Over the four-year grant period, the proposed project will be implemented through a phased approach that is designed to maximize impact and ensure long-term sustainability. In Year 1, funding will prioritize the procurement of extremely critical equipment, including ballistic shields, advanced body armor systems, and breaching tools, to immediately address the paramount safety and operational gaps, including outfitting newly added personnel. Year 2 will focus on expanding these capabilities through additional equipment acquisition and the replacement of outdated gear. Year 3 will emphasize integration and optimization, ensuring that

all equipment is fully incorporated into ESU operations and that all members are utilizing these resources effectively in their operations. Year 4 will focus on sustainment, including maintenance, replacement planning, and ensuring continued operational readiness moving forward in alignment with emerging threats.

Throughout the grant period, the ESU will deploy these new, updated resources in response to critical incidents, with a focus on increasing officer protection, advancing tactical capabilities and operational readiness, and reducing the likelihood of injury or loss of life. The availability of modern ballistic protection and breaching capabilities will allow officers to operate more effectively in high-risk environments, improve tactical outcomes, and support safer resolutions for all parties involved. ESU also provides mutual aid to surrounding jurisdictions, extending the benefits of this investment beyond the City of Bridgeport and strengthening regional emergency response capabilities.

The project will include ongoing monitoring and evaluation to assess performance and ensure that grant objectives are met throughout the entirety of the project. Key outcomes will include improved operational readiness, increased deployment of modern protective equipment during high-risk incidents, and enhanced safety outcomes for both officers and civilians. This data-driven approach will allow the city to measure the effectiveness of the investment and make informed decisions regarding future resource allocation.

By implementing this comprehensive, coordinated, and phased strategy, the City of Bridgeport will leverage JAG funding to address critical unmet needs, support the continued growth of the ESU, enhance operational capacity, and advance the overarching goals of the JAG

program. This investment will result in a stronger, more resilient public safety infrastructure and improved outcomes in the City's response to its most critical incidents.

Capabilities and Competencies

The City of Bridgeport and the Bridgeport Police Department possess the administrative and operational capacity necessary to successfully implement and manage the proposed project in full compliance with JAG requirements. The city's Central Grants Office has successfully managed several state and federal grants. In collaboration with the Central Grants Office, the Police Department has established protocols and channels of communication to ensure proper oversight, fiscal accountability, and programmatic success, including adherence to all related grant regulations and reporting standards.

Project implementation will be led by command staff within the Bridgeport Police Department, in coordination with Emergency Services Unit (ESU) leadership. These individuals have direct operational knowledge of ESU functions and can oversee equipment procurement, deployment, applicable training, and implementation. The department follows pre-established procurement policies that comply with local, state, and federal requirements, ensuring transparency, competitive bidding processes where required, and accountability in all grant-funded purchases. All acquisitions will be tracked and documented to ensure compliance.

Through previous opportunities, the department has demonstrated its capacity to collect and report performance measure data as required by the award. Data collection will be coordinated by designated ESU member Sergeant Michael Carter, with support from administrative supervisory staff. Data will be obtained and recorded through multiple available sources, including incident reports, ESU equipment documents, and after-action reporting for

critical incidents. Performance metrics will include the number and type of ESU deployments, utilization of grant-funded equipment (frequency and type), and operational outcomes related to officer and civilian safety.

The City has a demonstrated history of meeting federal reporting requirements and will ensure all required programmatic and financial reports are completed accurately and submitted on time. As the fiscal agent, the City of Bridgeport possesses the financial infrastructure necessary to manage grant funds over the four-year project period. The City's finance department operates under established internal procedures designed to ensure full compliance with federal financial management requirements. This includes detailed expenditure tracking, procurement documentation, and invoice verification. The city's Central Grants Office also maintains procedures for ongoing grant monitoring, audit preparation, and corrective action if necessary.

The Bridgeport Police Department has a strong record of strategic planning, interagency collaboration, and regional coordination. Notably, the Department has successfully implemented a multi-jurisdictional task force composed of officers and detectives from local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. This task force focuses on investigations involving violent crime, firearm offenses, and organized criminal activity. The task force routinely collaborates with the ESU during high-risk operations, and in some instances, personnel serve in dual capacities as both task force members and ESU operators. This integrated structure enhances intelligence sharing, operational coordination, and rapid deployment capabilities during critical incidents.

In addition, the Department participates in broader regional mutual aid agreements and emergency response frameworks. These partnerships ensure interoperability with neighboring

jurisdictions and strengthen the collective capacity to respond to major incidents. ESU's role within this framework further enhances regional public safety outcomes and ensures that resources can be deployed efficiently when required.

Through its established administrative systems and demonstrated history of interagency collaboration and evidence-informed practices, the City of Bridgeport is in good standing to successfully implement this project. The proposed initiative builds upon existing capabilities and regional partnerships, ensuring that JAG funds will be effectively managed, properly documented, and used to produce measurable improvements in ESU readiness, officer safety, and overall public safety outcomes across the City and surrounding jurisdictions.