

South Carolina Department of Public Safety

Office of Highway Safety and Justice Programs

Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program

Forensic/Crime Scene Investigators

APPLICATION TOOL

**Preface**

*This document is provided for law enforcement officials who are assessing their present methods or progress in reducing case backlogs and to increase the chances for more effective forensic/crime scene investigations. It is intended to provide guidance to the applicant on the content expected in select programmatic sections of the grant application. Information provided by the applicant on each subject area should be applicable to their particular jurisdiction and should be tailored to meet the needs of the community in which the program would be implemented. However, the applicant is invited to utilize the “Standard Examples” provided in this document when applicable. The South Carolina Department of Public Safety, Office of Highway Safety and Justice Programs, supports placement of role-specific investigators in local law enforcement agencies that demonstrate a need and recommends that any agency interested in pursuing this concept seek training opportunities. If this program is implemented correctly, the Forensic Unit or Investigator can play an important role in increasing the identification and apprehension of criminals.*

**Problem Statement**

* Specific and current information from your jurisdiction must be included in this section.

The Problem Statement presents the reason that you are applying for the grant. (It ***should not*** include what you will do with the grant funds).

1) Discuss the ***actual problem that exists*** in your community.

Talk about the nature of the problem and include any background information that helps to explain the difficulties.

* Population and economic level of jurisdiction, unemployment rate, etc.
* Specific and serious criminal incidents that have recently occurred in the jurisdiction
* Include any data/statistics that support your statements (from past 2-3 yrs.)
	+ Calls for service
	+ Breakdown of department’s overall caseload (numbers, type)
	+ Breakdown of individual investigator caseloads (overtime hours worked?)
	+ Number of crimes scenes investigated, response time to scene, amount of time to process a scene
	+ Case clearance rates/number of cases lost due to inaccurate or poor forensic evidence available
* Lack of specialized training/equipment to collect and preserve evidence.

2) The second part will discuss the current resources and existing efforts being made to address the problem.

* Explain what resources (personnel/equipment) your agency is currently using to address the problems and why they are insufficient.
	+ Breakdown of department’s personnel (patrol, investigators, etc.)
* If the grant application is for a continuation grant, information should be taken from the Progress Reports to show progress of the project.
* Provide information on whether or not funding has been requested from your municipal/county government and results (i.e. partial funding received, funds not available in current budget or request denied)

**Project Purpose – Standard Example**

Broad Goal

The primary purpose of this program is to increase the identification and apprehension of perpetrators of crimes, and to enhance the collection of evidence at crime scenes by using standardized protocols to increase the number of cases prosecuted in court.

Specific Plan

The following tasks and activities will be employed to provide for the active and successful collection of evidence at crime scene locations.

1. The Forensic Unit or investigator will develop protocols for handling physical evidence and biological material that will meet the requirements of national standards and the “Preservation of Evidence Act”.

3. The Forensic Unit or investigator will develop proper chain of custody forms, personal effect inventory forms and others as indicated.

4. The Forensic Unit or investigator will attend training courses in the area of forensic evidence as funding permits.

6. The investigator will provide training to other investigators on the protocols developed and proper evidence management/preservation.

**Project Objectives – Standard Example**

1. Increase the identification and apprehension of criminal offenders in (grant county/city).

2. Establish a written, standardized protocol to ensure the quality and uniformity of evidence collection, preservation, analysis and report writing.

3. Increase the knowledge of the crime scene investigator/s.

4. Enhance the quality of forensic evidence to result in a decrease in cases resulting in dismissal/nole prossed.

5. Increase the coordination and cooperation among criminal justice agencies and the court system.

**Performance Indicators – Standard Example**

1. A detailed log will be kept of all cases in which crime scene evidence was obtained. Stats will be maintained as to which cases resulted in the identification and apprehension of a criminal.

2. Standardized reporting forms, policies, and procedures will be written and required for all evidence collection and preservation for the crime scene personnel and all other participating agencies. These systematic procedures will be required for all phases of crime scene investigations and will be logged as such.

3. A record of each grant-funded officer’s training will be kept, which will include the officer’s name, course name, date and place held, and a summary of the training.

4. Documentation will be maintained on the disposition of cases involving the Forensic Unit to show a decrease in cases resulting in dismissal/nole prossed.

5. A record will be maintained of all Mutual Aid Agreements or Memorandum(s) of Understanding(s) with all other area agencies and coordination efforts with other agencies for combining CSI services and sharing resources.

**Project Evaluation – Standard Example**

1. The evaluation of this grant will be conducted by the Project Director, who will compile information on all cases involving the Forensic Unit or investigator that occur within the grant year. Comparisons between current and past statistics will be made through this compilation of data in order to determine progress.
2. The investigator will document all training received and given.
3. The Project Director will compile and submit quarterly reports as well as the year-end evaluation report.