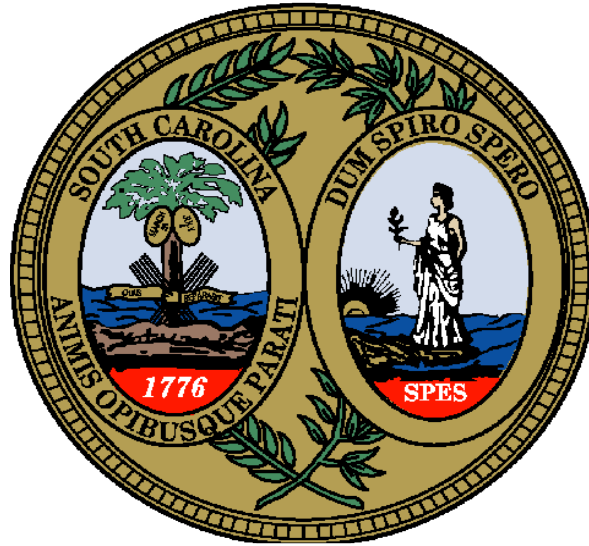


Office of the United States Attorney
District of South Carolina



**FFY 2025 Project Safe
Neighborhoods (PSN)
Solicitation**

Release Date:
Applications Due:

February 23, 2024
April 5, 2024

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY AND JUSTICE PROGRAMS

I. Introduction

The United States Attorney's Office for the District of South Carolina has been designated to receive funds for the Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) grant program. This program is designed to fund innovative projects to reduce gun violence and violent crime. The South Carolina Department of Public Safety, Office of Highway Safety and Justice Programs (OHSJP), has been designated as the fiscal agent to administer these funds in South Carolina.

This document provides potential applicants with program criteria and eligibility information so that formal application proposals may be prepared. Please contact OHSJP at (803) 896-8707 to request technical assistance.

PSN is a nationwide initiative that brings together federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement officials, prosecutors, and community leaders to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in our communities and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. PSN follows four key design elements of successful violent crime reduction initiatives: community engagement, prevention and intervention, focused and strategic enforcement, and accountability. Additional information on PSN can be obtained by visiting the official program website at <https://www.justice.gov/psn>.

Additional information and resources for PSN can also be accessed through the South Carolina Department of Public Safety website at <https://scdps.sc.gov/ohsjp/cjgp/safe-neighborhoods>.

II. Eligible Applicants

The PSN Program is open to state agencies, local units of government, tribal governments, and non-profit agencies. A "local unit of government" is defined as any city, county, town, township or other political subdivision of a state.

In addition, the following points should be noted regarding eligible applicants:

- A. Police departments, sheriffs' offices and public defender's offices are not eligible to apply directly, but would be the implementing agency for the grant. A city or county would be the legal applicant/recipient and manage grant funds on behalf of the implementing department or agency.
- B. State courts (courts of general jurisdiction) are eligible to apply for funds. However, local courts (magistrate and municipal courts) similar to police departments would have to apply through their local units of government.
- C. A solicitor's office, for grant purposes, is funded as an office within a lead county.

The lead county must meet the following requirements:

- a. Maintain the financial records for the grant
- b. Include the solicitor's office in its payroll records; and

- c. Include the financial records of the grants to the solicitor's office in its organization-wide audit.

D. Information for the following individuals will be required on the Grant Application:

- a. Project Director – Implementing Agency/Department Head, or person involved in the daily operations of the project.
- b. Financial Officer - City or County Finance Director, or state agency Chief Financial Officer.
- c. Official Authorized to Sign - Mayor, City or County Administrator, or state agency director.

III. Funding Policy

Programs funded under PSN must be 12 months in length (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025). **Note:** Continuation projects that have demonstrated success in prior years in accordance with predetermined project evaluation measures will receive priority. However, second or subsequent year funding is not guaranteed. In such a competitive environment, “need” and the use of effective data-driven strategies will be key factors for funding selections, in addition to evaluating performance results.

All subgrantees will agree to abide by all applicable guidelines, including grant terms and conditions and any special conditions.

PSN funds can be used to fund salaries and fringe benefits, necessary equipment, contractual services when applicable, travel and training costs, and other needed supplies.

Pursuant to 34 U.S.C. §§60701-05, **30 percent** of PSN funding must be used to support gang task forces in regions of the United States “experiencing a significant or increased presence of criminal or transnational organizations engaging in high levels of violent crime, firearms offenses, human trafficking, and drug trafficking.”

In the past, South Carolina has received approximately \$280,000 annually in PSN grant funding. In prior years, 2-3 projects ranging from \$38,000 to \$241,000 have been funded under this PSN grant each year.

IV. Funding Priorities

The overall goal for this initiative is to promote safe communities across the state through the reduction of gun violence and violent crime. Toward that goal, the program seeks to fund projects that will enhance progress toward the below priorities. However, innovative projects outside of these priorities, which are aimed at reducing firearm and gang violence, will also be considered.

- **Focused Deterrence:** Focused deterrence (or “lever pulling”) strategies that attempt to maximize law enforcement efforts by strategically and directly applying interventions and social service resources to individuals at high risk for recidivism. Strategies that combine strict enforcement with positive incentives by providing access to social services and support.
- **Gun and Gang Crime Investigation/Suppression:** Programs (or task forces) to target perpetrators of gun and gang-related crimes. This can include the illegal possession of firearms, the illegal sale of guns, or other crimes committed to benefit a “gang.” Multi-agency cooperation should be demonstrated (e.g., both state and federal involvement).
- **Firearms Analysis:** Programs that should enhance and provide support for state and local law enforcement agencies that analyze firearms and ballistic evidence (including NIBIN analysis and tracing of firearms).
- **Data Analysis/Research Partner:** Programs designed to assess and validate the nature and extent of gun crime, gang activity, and gang membership in South Carolina. Data analysis to identify the drivers of violent crime and assess the effectiveness of an agency’s violent crime reduction plan.
- **Prevention and Reentry Programs:** Programs dedicated to violent crime prevention and the identification of persons at high risk of offending (e.g., educational, faith-based, community-oriented, outreach, etc.). Programs dedicated to the successful reentry of offenders with housing, educational, and vocational partnerships.

V. Matching Requirement

Funding will provide for 100% of project costs. No cash or in-kind match will be required.

VI. Guidelines for the Use of Grant Funds

A. Allowable Expenses:

1. Personnel, training as a component of an overall program, equipment, and supplies are allowable expenses if they are related to the authorized program areas. All expenditures must be related to the implementation of an actual program. This program must be defined in the program narrative sections of the application.
2. All grant-funded personnel must have one hundred percent of their time dedicated to grant activities (See also all non-supplanting provisions in the Grant Terms and Conditions).

B. Unallowable Expenses:

Any expenditure that is not a part of an approved program or project is unallowable.

Grant funds may not be used to supplant existing state or local criminal justice funds. Any grant expenditures must increase the existing amount of funds available for eligible activities.

“Buy money” used in drug enforcement is an unallowable expense.

Funds may not be expended to purchase, lease, rent, or acquire ammunition, association fees, vehicle insurance, and maintenance.

C. Financial Requirements

An assurance that PSN funds will not be used to supplant local funding must be provided in the application as stated in Grant Terms and Conditions. This certification attests that federal funds will be used to supplement existing funds for program activities, not replace funds already appropriated for the same purpose. Potential supplanting will be the subject of post-award monitoring and audit. If there is a potential presence of supplanting, the applicant or subgrantee will be required to supply documentation demonstrating that the reduction in non-federal resources occurred for reasons other than the receipt or expected receipt of federal funds. Violations of this requirement can result in recoupment of monies provided under this grant in addition to possible civil, and/or criminal penalties.

VII. Suspension or Termination of Funding

The fiscal agent may suspend (in whole or in part), terminate funding for, or impose another sanction on a subgrantee for any of the following reasons:

- A. Failure to comply substantially with the requirements or statutory objectives of the PSN Grant Program guidelines issued thereunder, or other provisions of Federal law.
- B. Implementing substantial program changes to the extent that, if submitted originally, the application would not have been approved for funding.
- C. Failure to submit reports (programmatic and/or financial) in a timely manner.
- D. Filing a false certification in this application or other report or document.

VIII. Application and Funding Review Process

All applications will be reviewed by the OHSJP for technical sufficiency and will then be reviewed by the members of the PSN Selection Committee. Chosen by the USAO, the committee is comprised of individuals from across the state that represent law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies. The individuals who evaluate the applications cannot play a role in the production of all or part of any application, nor can they be employed by the federal government or by an applicant, in order to ensure that there is no conflict of interest. Once the review is completed, the PSN Selection Committee’s recommendations will be forwarded to the USAO before submission to the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) for final approval. The OHSJP and PSN Selection Committee will evaluate applications based on the following criteria:

A. Design quality of the proposal:

1. Program Definition - Any funds requested must be for the implementation of a program eligible under one of the program areas. The program must address the activities as identified in the grant area selected.
2. Project Impact - The program should be designed to address the problems and needs of the area to be served. An analysis of how these problems could be improved through the project should be shown.
3. Budgetary Review - Each application will be reviewed to ensure costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable.
4. Project Feasibility - Applicants should describe sufficiently and clearly how the project will be implemented.
5. Multijurisdictional Cooperation - Where applicable, proposals should indicate what type of coordination will be established between the applicant and other jurisdictions in the development and implementation of the project. Written agreements should be included where possible.
6. Project Evaluation - Specific, measurable objectives should be presented, and each objective **MUST** be matched with a performance indicator. The performance indicators describe how the grant's objectives will be documented or monitored. The project evaluation measures the effectiveness of your program by comparing your objectives with actual accomplishments.

B. Geographical areas of greatest need

Jurisdictions with highest reported Violent Crime Rates - While the PSN Strategy expands throughout the entire state, special emphasis will be placed on the four Target Enforcement Areas (TEAs) listed below:

- Columbia
- Charleston/North Charleston
- Myrtle Beach
- Greenville/Spartanburg

C. Jurisdictions with limited resources

D. Current or past grant performance

E. Probability of success

F. Projects whose goals are self-sufficient within three years

G. Effective utilization of resources

H. Requested grant amount

IX. Notification Process

Applicants will be notified in writing by the OHSJP whether their application has been approved or denied for funding. Notices of these decisions are tentatively scheduled for publication in September/October 2024. The FFY 2025 grant period is currently scheduled for October 1, 2024–September 30, 2025.

X. Application Process-SCDPS Grants

The grant application must be completed using the OHSJP’s web-based grants management system, SCDPS Grants. SCDPS Grants can be accessed at <https://www.scdpsgrants.com/>, as well as through the South Carolina Department of Public Safety website at <http://www.scdps.sc.gov/ohsjp/>.

IMPORTANT NOTE: NEW users must submit their subgrantee user registration requests no later than **Friday, March 23, 2024**.

The application must be fully complete and submitted via SCDPS Grants prior to the application deadline, which is **Friday, April 5, 2024**. Supporting documents, letters of cooperation, and appendices relating to the application may be uploaded as attachments to an application on SCDPS Grants.

Please be aware that SCDPS Grants will allow application submissions until 11:59 PM on the application due date. However, staff will not be available to assist with application questions after 5:00 PM.

For programmatic questions, you may contact Amy Kingston at (803) 896-4742 or via email at AmyKingston@scdps.gov. For any financial questions contact Grants-Accounting via email at GrantsAccounting@scdps.gov.

Grant Application Check List

The following items explain the standards by which each application is evaluated. Past experience has shown that projects are successful because one person or a group of people have identified a problem, developed a solution, and carefully designed a plan to arrive at the solution. The grant application leads the grant applicant through a structured approach to problem solving. Successful applicants use these pages to help the reviewer see the problem and easily understand the proposed solution. Please note that, if an application is missing any required information or documentation, that application may be automatically denied.

Budget and Description –

- Proposed expenditures are reasonable, adhere to application guidelines
- Equipment/personnel is documented as necessary
- Each expenditure is explained in detail in the budget narrative

Problem Statement –

- The problem and/or need the project will address is defined exactly as it exists in your community (focus on the needs of your area and how the project will meet those needs)
- Local information and statistics are provided to support the request for funding (do not use statewide information alone to support the development of a local level project)
- Existing efforts, current resources, and programs being utilized to deal with the problem are thoroughly addressed

Project Purpose –

- At least one distinct purpose/goal has been identified
- Project purpose/goal is S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measureable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound)

Project Objectives –

- The objectives are specific and measureable to show how the goal will be achieved
- There is at least one objective per goal listed

Performance Indicators –

- There is a performance indicator per project objective identified
- Each indicator shows how each objective will be measured and what methods will be used to evaluate progress towards achieving the objectives and goals

Training Requirement:

- A minimum of two (2) courses identified for grant-funded personnel

Project Evaluation –

- Explain who will examine the project's objectives and performance indicators
- Explain how that person will determine the extent to which the entire project has solved the stated problem
- Evaluation is supported by the performance indicators and includes a comprehensive plan to provide an overall assessment of project effectiveness

Other Relevant Requirements –

- The implementation schedule should contain information on the timing of activities
- The total project area population and number of certified officers (if applicable) must be provided and letters of support from all entities involved in multijurisdictional projects should be attached
- The name, title, address, phone, and email information must be completed on the online application for the Project Director, Financial Officer and Authorized Official. Signatures will only be required once a grant award is made.