

DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND PUBLIC

SAFETY

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DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY

100 066 1020 107 090940 SAFE AND SECURE COMMUNITIES
ACT

I. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

The Safe and Secure Communities Program is designed to provide municipalities with State funding to add law enforcement personnel and equipment vital to effective police operations and other crime reduction strategies as warranted by the needs of the community. See Safe and Secure Communities Act, P.L. 1993, c. 220 (N.J.S.A. 52:17B-159 et seq.) and New Jersey Administrative Code , 13:79-1.1 et seq.

II. PROGRAM PROCEDURES:

After the Safe and Secure legislation was adopted, a request for proposal was forwarded to all eligible local agencies in the State(see Eligibility). Due to the overwhelming volume of requests, a funding plan was developed by the Attorney General and a legislativeoversight committee. This plan funded municipalities based on thesize of the police force, police workload measured by reported crimeto police station and municipal financial need as measured byequalized property tax rate.

Each municipality was forwarded an announcement letter advising thetype of grant for which it would be eligible. The letter also requests that the town submit a budget detail and narrative based on the dollar amount and an outline of the goals and objectives of the program. Program objectives, as warranted by the needs of the community, are set forth at N.J.A.C. 13:79-2.1. The grant duration was to be no less than one year. In addition, the municipality had to provide various certifications including resolutions by the governing body authorizing the municipality to enter into a grant agreement with the Division of Criminal Justice, the provision of fringe benefit expenses, and the 25 percent cash match for an equipment grant. (see Matching) The complete grant application was reviewed by the Division of Criminal Justice staff and returned to the town along with special conditions relating specifically to the grant and two copies of the grant contract for the mayor's signature.

Personnel grants will continue into a second year of funding. The same program procedure is followed in the second year with the addition of a narrative description to the grant application outlining the grantee's first year's accomplishments. Equipment grants were offered only in State Fiscal Year 94. (see Eligibility/Level of Effort)

III. COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS:

A. Allowable/Unallowable Services

Law Enforcement Personnel Grants:

The legislation states that grant funds may be used to pay the initial salaries of additional, full-time police officers (new hires) and other law enforcement personnel deployed in a project which is designed to meet the objectives of the program. For program objectives see N.J.A.C. 13:79-2.1. The term "other law enforcement personnel" is defined as non-police employees who enhance police capacity by performing paperwork and related support services, thereby allowing police officers to devote more time to direct policing duties. Funds may also provide for the re-employment of police officers that have been laid-off by the municipality for budgetary reasons prior to March 1, 1993. Funds may not be used for payment of overtime.

As a condition of the grant award, the municipality must not reduce its regular complement of police officers and other law enforcement personnel during the grant period.

Law Enforcement Equipment Grants:

The legislation states that grant funds may be used to purchase law enforcement equipment including, but not limited to police cars, computers and peripheral equipment, police radios and other communications equipment, weapons and body armor.

B. Eligibility

Law Enforcement Personnel Grants:

Eligible municipalities are those that have a police department or force in which the number of violent and nonviolent crimes per police officer exceeds 70 percent of the statewide average for municipalities with a police department or force, as reported in the 1991 Uniform Crime Report published by the Division of State Police.

Law Enforcement Equipment Grants:

Any municipality with a police department or force is eligible to submit an application to the Division of Criminal Justice for a grant to purchase law enforcement equipment. (See Level of Effort-Continuation of grants)

C. Matching

Law Enforcement Personnel Grants:

A municipality which receives a grant for a project shall be responsible for paying the full fringe benefits of any newly hired police officers or other law enforcement personnel hired under this Program.

Law Enforcement Equipment Grants:

A municipality which receives an equipment grant must contribute a cash match of no less than 25 percent of the total grant award.

D. Level of Effort

A municipality which receives a grant for a project under this program may receive funding in subsequent years to continue that project. The program was modified in State Fiscal Year 96 to include only continuation of law enforcement personnel grants.

E. Reporting and Bookkeeping Requirements

The grantee will be required to meet the Division of Criminal Justice programmatic and fiscal reporting standards, which include submission to the Division of Criminal Justice of monthly Detailed Cost Statements/Expenditure Reports and the maintenance of a bookkeeping system, records, and separate grant files and separate grant accounts to account for all grant monies spent and all matching funds contributed to the program. See N.J.A.C. 13:79-4.3 and grant agreement for complete description.

If deviations in the approved project or grant duration occur during the grant period, the municipality must request and receive approval from the Division of Criminal Justice for the changes prior to taking any action.

In addition, the grantee must also forward to the Division of Criminal Justice any findings/exceptions pertaining to the Safe and Secure Program that are stated in a Single Audit report. See New Jersey OMB Circular 93-05.

F. Confidentiality Requirements

An application for a grant under this program and any supporting documentation are not public records for the purposes of P.L. 1963, c.73 (N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq.) These documents are confidential and shall not be released except to law enforcement personnel in connection with their official duties. See N.J.A.C. 13:79-3.1.

IV. Suggested Audit Procedures for Determining Compliance

A. Review grant agreement and special conditions.

B. Law Enforcement Personnel Grants:

Identify police officer(s) and/or other law enforcement personnel whose salaries are funded by the grant, examine timesheets in relation to submitted programmatic reports to determine their deployment in program activities.

Apply appropriate analytical procedure to determine grant funds used to pay salaries, not including overtime, and that fringe benefits are funded from non-program funds and are consistent with municipality's fringe benefits for non-program police officer and law enforcement personnel.

Determine whether municipality has reduced its regular complement of police officers and other law enforcement personnel during grant period.

C. Law Enforcement Equipment Grant:

Identify equipment purchased, determine if it is law enforcement equipment used to meet objectives of program.

Examine invoice and accounts payable to ascertain source of funds and whether purchase coincided with start of grant period or subsequent thereto.

Test to assure 25 percent match was made.

D. Determine compliance with confidentiality provisions.