



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

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REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

For business meeting on June 25–26, 2015

Title	Agenda Item Type
Trial Courts: Recidivism Reduction Fund Court Grant Program, Phase II Recommended Awards	Action Required
	Effective Date
	June 26, 2015
Rules, Forms, Standards, or Statutes Affected	Date of Report
None	June 4 , 2015
Recommended by	Contact
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Executive Summary

As part of the Budget Act of 2014, the Legislature directed the Judicial Council of California to develop and administer a competitive grant program for trial courts that incorporates practices known to reduce adult offender recidivism. Criminal Justice Services, an office within the Judicial Council's staff organization, recommends approving the Recidivism Reduction Fund (RRF) Court Grant Program funding allocation and distribution as presented in this report.

This recommendation encompasses the use of: (1) \$658,000 remaining after an initial round of awards was approved by the Judicial Council on February 19, 2015, and (2) an additional \$1.3 million RRF allocation that is included in the version of the budget adopted by both budget committees in the two houses of the Legislature and awaits action by the Governor on or before June 30, 2015. In the event that the final budget does not include the additional \$1.3 million from the RRF, staff requests time to revise the set of recommendations in this report and present an alternate approach utilizing a lesser allocation at the council's July 28, 2015 meeting.

Recommendation

In the event the final Budget Act of 2015 includes an additional \$1.3 million, Criminal Justice Services (CJS), staff to the Judicial Council, recommends that the council, effective June 26, 2015:

1. Approve awards of approximately \$1.73 million to five superior courts for the period of July 1, 2015, to April 30, 2017, from the Recidivism Reduction Fund Court Grant Program, as stated in the attached table.
2. Authorize CJS staff to work with the grantee courts to enable them to shift budgeted amounts from one fiscal year to another, modify budgets if necessary, or roll over unspent funds at fiscal year-end, provided these funds are within the courts' original award amounts.
3. Authorize staff to make small technical assistance grants for courts that seek to establish programs or practices known to reduce offender recidivism.

A table summarizing the proposed Phase II RRF Grant Funding is attached at page 4.

Previous Council Action

The Budget Act of 2014 (Sen. Bill 852; Stats. 2014, ch. 25) appropriated \$15 million from the RRF for a competitive grant program to be developed and administered by the Judicial Council with the intent to support the administration and operation of trial court programs and practices known to reduce adult offender recidivism and enhance public safety. Five percent of the funds were directed to the Judicial Council for the administration and evaluation of this program. The remaining \$14.25 million was to be distributed to the trial courts for the operation of collaborative courts for adult offenders, pretrial programs, and court use of risk and needs assessments.

At its August 19, 2014, meeting, the Judicial Council's Executive and Planning Committee (E&P) approved the RRF Court Grant Program timeline and procedures for CJS staff to administer the program while avoiding any potential conflicts of interest. In its report *Recidivism Reduction Grant Administration Procedure*, presented at the aforementioned meeting, CJS was to "be responsible for all aspects of administering the grant program, including developing the request for proposals (RFP), developing a review methodology and process for scoring [proposals], evaluating [proposals]; . . . [and] making funding allocation recommendations to the Judicial Council." CJS would "score the proposals based upon specific criteria that will be included in the RFP" and make an effort to "adequately fund as many grants as possible, emphasizing a diversity of program types throughout the state." CJS was also to submit final funding recommendations to E&P and the Judicial Council for consideration and approval.

At the Judicial Council meeting on October 27, 2014, CJS staff presented an update to the Judicial Council on the feedback provided by external experts and stakeholders during the development of the RFP, the release of the RFP on September 15, 2014, the general funding

methodology, and the proposal review process in anticipation of receiving proposal submissions by December 15, 2014.

On February 19, 2015, the Judicial Council approved the allocation of approximately \$13.65 million from the RRF to 27 superior courts and voted to allow the 6 courts that were not awarded funding through that allocation to submit revised proposals for review. On May 19, 2015, the Senate Budget Committee allocated an additional \$1.3 million of RRF money to this program. On May 21, the Assembly conformed with the Senate action. As with the first allocation, 5 percent will remain with the Judicial Council to cover administrative costs. With the amount remaining in the initial allocation, approximately \$658,000, and an additional \$1.23 million, staff estimates a total of just over \$1.89 million will be available for these activities.

Rationale for Recommendation

The Judicial Council directed CJS to submit grant funding recommendations based on the methodology developed in the initial allocation to make additional awards to courts not awarded in the first round of funding. CJS communicated with each of the eligible courts and alerted them to the new funding opportunity, provided them with reviewer comments on their initial proposals, and provided a revised RFP for the unallocated balance of the fund on March 2, 2015.

Scoring methodology and peer review process

Five courts submitted proposals totaling just over \$1.8 million in requested funding. A panel of five Judicial Council staff members reviewed the applications, following a scoring process and methodology similar to the initial process. Proposals were scored based on their responsiveness to the RFP criteria, the quality of responses to each section, and the level of detail provided.

After the proposals were scored by the reviewers individually, a reviewer panel meeting was held on May 4, 2015 that included a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal to enable the panel to resolve any areas lacking consensus regarding proposal evaluation and funding recommendations.

On May 6, 2015, staff met with the CJS office head to review and evaluate the group scores and comments for each proposal, confirm final scores and draft proposed grant allocation recommendations for consideration and approval by the Judicial Council at the June 25, 2015 meeting. We suggest amended allocations for three courts which reflect initial budget corrections made to rectify issues with allowable costs.

Implementation Requirements, Costs, and Operational Impacts

Once the courts receive their award notifications, CJS staff will work with the Judicial Council's Accounting and Business Services Unit to finalize contracts with each funded court. The Judicial Council will reimburse the courts monthly for their qualified expenses based on submission of invoices and financial documentation and contingent on the timely submission of all quarterly reports. Quarterly financial and program progress reports must be submitted along with quarterly

data submissions. CJS will compile information annually and report aggregate-level data generated by the awarded programs to the Department of Finance and the Joint Legislative Budget Committee as required in the Budget Act of 2014.

Attachments and Links

1. Summary of Recidivism Reduction Fund Proposed Grant Funding

**Judicial Council of California
Criminal Justice Services
Summary of Phase II Recidivism Reduction Fund
Proposed Grant Funding**

CATEGORY: PRETRIAL			
No.	Applicant Court	Budget Amount Requested	Approximate Proposed Grant
1	Lassen	\$318,509	\$318,509
2	San Luis Obispo	\$339,276	\$259,402
			\$577,911
CATEGORY: COLLABORATIVE COURTS			
3	Los Angeles	\$426,403	\$417,969
4	Placer	\$218,880	\$211,097
5	Stanislaus	\$527,999	\$527,999
		\$	\$1,157,065
TOTAL Proposed Grant Awards		\$	1,734,976