



## Cornerstone for Justice: How Vermont Uses Byrne JAG Funding to Protect Public Safety, Prevent Crime and Reduce Recidivism

The Byrne Justice Assistance Grant program (Byrne JAG) is the nation's cornerstone justice assistance grant program, supporting the federal government's crucial role in improving state and local justice systems by spurring innovation and by testing and replicating evidence-based practices in crime control and prevention. States, localities and tribal nations are able to deploy Byrne JAG funding against their most pressing public safety challenges, to design complete programs or fill gaps, to leverage other resources and to work across city, county and state lines.

Byrne JAG funds may be invested across the criminal justice system for prevention, diversion, enforcement, courts, prosecution and defense, corrections, victim assistance, mental health and substance use disorder treatment, and other community-based support. Byrne JAG improves the administration of justice, reduces incarceration, enhances fairness, improves outcomes for the justice-involved and saves taxpayer money.

### Byrne JAG in Vermont:

Beginning in FY17, the Trump Administration required all Byrne JAG grantees to certify compliance with certain immigration-related provisions in federal law in order to draw down their awards. A number of states and localities challenged the new conditions in court.

To date, eight states, including Vermont, have yet to accept their FY18 awards due to the ongoing litigation. The allocation figures and program examples below, therefore, summarize Vermont's Byrne JAG investments in FY16.

In 2016, the Vermont Department of Public Safety invested in numerous successful initiatives. For example:

- In Vermont, Byrne JAG funding is blended with state funds to support a statewide multijurisdictional taskforce run out the Vermont State Police.

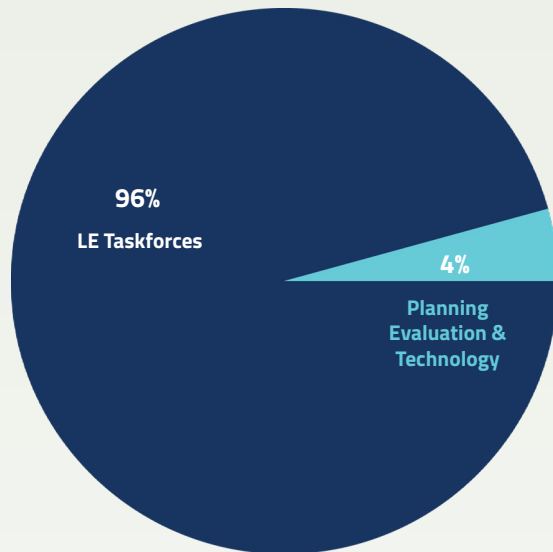
Specifically, Byrne JAG funds support one Unit Supervisor State Police Sergeant position with overtime as well

With Byrne JAG funds, state and local governments have made remarkable strides in advancing data-driven practices in criminal justice.

Grants are awarded based on a strategic plan developed in conjunction with the state's system stakeholders.

Byrne JAG funding keeps citizens safe, prevents crime and victimization, and provides services to individuals in the justice system so when they return to their communities they are equipped with the tools and skills they need to build productive lives.

## Vermont's FY16 Byrne JAG Investments by Project Type



Total Investment = \$625,118

as a local police officer who is assigned full time to the drug task force. The taskforce is composed of individuals from state and local law enforcement agencies. Task force priorities include heroin, opioids, prescription drugs and crack cocaine interdiction.

Additionally, Byrne JAG funding is used for direct task force operating expenses.

### How Byrne JAG Funding is Awarded:

Byrne JAG funds are awarded by a formula based on each state's population and crime rate. Sixty percent of a state's allocation is awarded to the state criminal justice planning agency (known as the State Administering Agency, or SAA) which, in turn, makes the funding available to local governments and non-profit service providers. The remaining 40 percent of the state's allocation is awarded by the U.S.

Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) directly to a number of local communities based on crime data.

Funding is authorized by Congress at \$1.1 billion, though annual funding has never reached that level. At its peak in FY02, Congress appropriated \$830 million. Until FY10 funding held steady at about \$500 million annually but has since dropped by about one-third. In FY18, the program was funded at \$340 million.

Byrne JAG supports the federal government's crucial role in spurring innovation and testing and replicating evidence-based practices nationwide.

States and local communities use Byrne JAG funds to address needs and fill gaps across the entire justice system.

These grants also are a catalyst for collaboration within communities and across states.

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