



Cornerstone for Justice: How Montana 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.

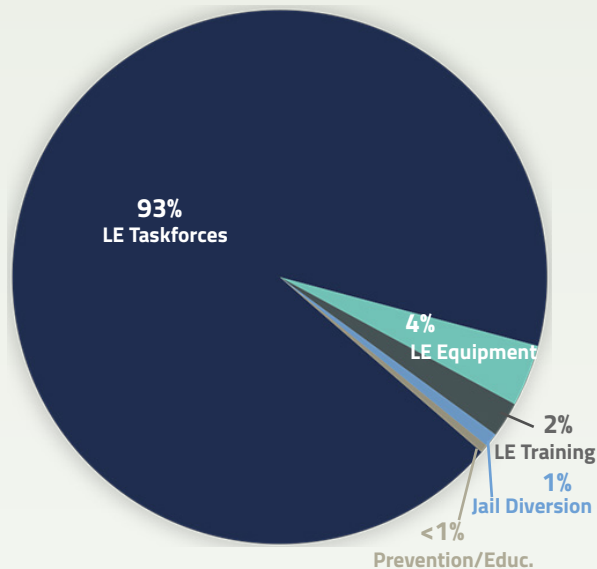
Byrne JAG in Montana:

In 2018, the Montana Board of Crime Control invested in numerous successful initiatives. Some examples include:

- Montana's 6 multijurisdictional drug task forces (MJDTF) which represent 41 counties and three tribal reservations within the state. The MJDTFs play a major role in identifying and dismantling clandestine methamphetamine labs, enforcing prescription drug laws, and removing other illegal drugs. The Montana Board of Crime Control collects uniform crime data from the MJDTFs in an effort to identify and target drug and gang interdiction, as well as identifying and providing aid to drug endangered children.
- Support for 12 law enforcement equipment grants. Funds were used to purchase tough book computers and associated software, iPads and associated software, Tasers, portable handheld radios, electronic driver feedback signs, radar units, a hazardous material storage system and an evidence fuming chamber.
- A drug prosecution coordinator position for an eastern Montana. This prosecution coordinator is tasked with addressing the challenges of drug investigations in 16 counties and on the Fort Peck Reservation in areas affected by the Bakken Oil Boom. The prosecutor serves as a statewide resource to promote consistency in the conviction of drug offenses, acts as a liaison with the U.S. Attorney's Office, and promotes drug prevention through public education.
- The purchase and installation of security cameras in six permanent driver's license offices through the Montana Department of Justice Driver's License Bureau.
- The purchase of a mass spectrometer, a gas chromatograph and other testing materials through the Montana Department of Justice Forensic Science Division (FSD). One of two forensic science labs in the state, the FSD provides services to law enforcement and court entities around the state.

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.

Montana's Byrne JAG Investments by Project Type



Total Investment = \$831,302

- Montana's Board of Crime Control used Byrne JAG funds to revamp its National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) repository. The Montana Incident-Based Reporting System is used by 99 percent of local law enforcement agencies statewide. The online repository provides a secure way for local agencies to enter or import crime data, and allows local agencies and the public to generate incident-based crime statistics. Users can see reports based on offense, offender/arrestee, victim, and property data elements or create custom reports using data back to 2005. Also, drug task force activity can be easily separated and distinguished from other law enforcement activities.
- Support for a records management improvement project within the Fergus County Sheriff's Office. Funds supported the purchase of three new work stations as well as hardware and software upgrades.
- The Whitefish Police Department enhancement of crime data reporting through the purchase of Live Scan fingerprint technology. The technology increases the efficiency of the police department and provides real-time crime data to state stakeholders.

- An architectural contractor position for programming and schematic design to complete the planning for an expansion of the Dawson County Jail.
- Equipment purchases for the Musselshell Court Compliance Program in Musselshell County. The program provides supervision for defendants found guilty for misdemeanor and felony offenses. Funds support educational programs, electronic monitoring, home detention devices and urinalysis supplies

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

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.

This document was created with the support of Grant No. 2016-DP-BX-K002 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the SMART Office, and the Office for Victims of Crime. Points of view or opinions are those of the authors.