



Cornerstone for Justice: How Utah 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 Utah:

In 2018, the Utah Commission on Criminal & Juvenile Justice invested in numerous successful initiatives. Examples include:

- The Utah Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI) is a state-wide criminal justice reform effort intended to reduce recidivism, hold offenders accountable and control corrections spending. Byrne JAG funding, in combination with other state resources, is being used to fund evidence-based supervision/transition programs and practices implemented by the county jails to reduce recidivism and the number of offenders per capita. To qualify for this funding, county jail applicants must agree to use the statewide screening instruments with everyone charged with a class B misdemeanor offense or above. In the last 18 months, roughly 62,000 jail risk and needs screenings have been completed statewide.

Currently, Byrne JAG funding for JRI screenings and screening related projects has been applied to the following counties: Emery, Sanpete, Carbon, Uintah, Washington, Duchesne, Sevier and Salt Lake.

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.

Utah’s Investment By Purpose Area



74%
Corrections,
Community
Corrections & Reentry



18%
Prevention &
Education



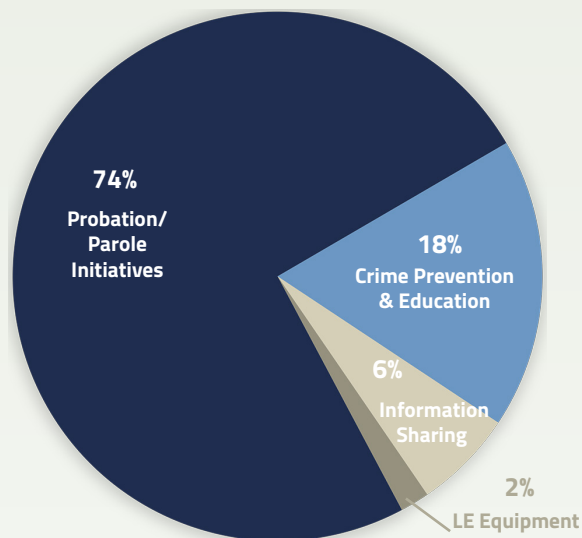
6%
Planning,
Evaluation &
Technology



2%
Law Enforcement

Total Investment = \$2,487,200

Utah's Byrne JAG Investments by Project Type



- Byrne JAG funds support the Utah Board of Juvenile Justice's Risk and Protective factor Indicator Tool (RAPIT). Through this website, users can view charts of indicators that will be useful for planning and evaluating substance abuse and delinquency prevention activities, as well as view specific risk and protective factors. Outcomes can be viewed by grade and gender or by race.
- Byrne JAG funds support equipment, training and technology purchases for 87 small and rural law enforcement agencies annually. Awards in 2016 paid for many things including: officer body-worn cameras, bullet proof vests, surveillance cameras, mobile data terminals, various training, drug test kits, Naloxone rescue kits, etc.
- Support for the Department of Public Safety's efforts to improve the Concealed Firearms Permit (CFP) screening process. Developers have written software capable of running nightly checks on CFP holders against the FBI's NICS query. This NICS search checks the NCIC Wanted Person, National Criminal History File (III), and the NICS Denied Person databases. Running nightly checks reduces the risk of issuing a CFP to individuals that have committed criminal offenses outside the State of Utah.

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.

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