



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 17-1889A, Version: 1

Subject:

Statewide Criminal Analysis Laboratory System Grant award from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement on behalf of the Pinellas County Forensic Laboratory.

Recommended Action:

Approval and execution of the Criminal Laboratory Financial Assistance Agreement to accept the Statewide Criminal Analysis Laboratory System Grant for Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18).

Strategic Plan:

Deliver First Class Services to the Public and Our Customers

5.2 Be responsible stewards of the public’s resources

5.3 Ensure effective and efficient delivery of county services and support

Summary:

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement’s (FDLE) Statewide Criminal Analysis Laboratory System Grant (Grant) supplements the Pinellas County Forensic Laboratory’s (PCFL) operating costs and reduces reliance on local general revenue support. Execution of the Criminal Laboratory Financial Assistance Agreement serves as acceptance of Grant funding.

Criminal fines collected statewide, under Sections 938.07 and 938.55 Florida Statutes, fund the Grant. FDLE disperses funding quarterly based upon the total fines collected in that quarter and a pre-determined distribution percentage. Pinellas County will receive 12.67% of the relevant criminal fines collected in FY18.

Background Information:

Section 943.32, Florida Statutes, establishes a statewide criminal analysis laboratory system that includes PCFL, a locally funded laboratory eligible for funding under Section 943.35 Florida Statutes. PCFL employs professionals that provide the County’s criminal justice system with a variety of forensic services including but not limited to DNA tests, toxicology reports, and trace evidence analysis.

The criminal analysis laboratory system is composed of FDLE laboratories and five locally-funded laboratories in Broward, Indian River, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, and Pinellas Counties. The locally-funded laboratories receive a distribution of DUI/Drug lines based on the population the lab serves as follows:

Crime Laboratory	Population Served	Percentage of Total Distribution
Broward	1,854,513	24.62005788%
Indian River	630,912	8.37583234%
Miami-Dade	2,700,794	35.85507603%
Palm Beach	1,391,741	18.47641078%

Pinellas	954,569	12.67262297%
Totals	7,532,529	100.000%

Since 2011, the number of cases submitted to PCFL has consistently increased with a 64% increase in case submissions from 2014 (1211 cases) to 2016 (1990 cases). The chemistry unit saw submissions of over 30 new drugs or new drug combinations that require significantly more testing and analytical resources. Additionally, the DNA section of the PCFL anticipated an increase in sexual assault casework with the new Sexual Assault Kit Law; however, the increase was 100% higher than expected.

The Criminal Lab Financial Assistance Agreement helps supplement the operating costs associated with this increase. Fines and fees used to fund the Grant include mandatory fines imposed for driving or boating under the influence and discretionary fines the courts may impose when a locally-funded crime laboratory provides services that are used in the prosecution of any violation included in Title XLVI, CRIMES, chapters 775-896 of the Florida Statutes.

Fiscal Impact:

In FY18, PCFL will receive 12.67% of the total criminal fines collected statewide, not to exceed 75% of PCFL's actual operation costs. The Grant is recurring annual funding. Under the Grant, the County has previously received laboratory support totaling \$282,454.92 in FY17, \$289,487.49 in FY16, \$293,542.99 in FY15, and \$273,491.16 in FY14.

An estimation of funds anticipated under this agreement is \$265,000.00 for FY18 to supplement the Medical Examiner's operating costs. These estimated revenues and expenditures are included in the FY18 Adopted Budget. The actual amount received will be based on a percentage of fees collected that will be allocated in quarterly distributions. The Agreement is effective retroactive to October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018.

Staff Member Responsible:

Lourdes Benedict, Director, Human Services

Partners:

Pinellas County Forensic Laboratory
Florida Department of Law Enforcement

Attachments:

Criminal Laboratory Financial Assistance Agreement
Intent to Apply