

October 10, 2025

Dear Eugene Brantley,

On behalf of Attorney General Pamela Bondi, it is my pleasure to inform you the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (the COPS Office) has approved the application submitted by AUGUSTA-RICHMOND COUNTY GOVERNMENT for an award under the funding opportunity entitled 2025 FY25 COPS Hiring Program. The approved award amount is \$8,683,080.

Review the Award Instrument below carefully and familiarize yourself with all conditions and requirements before accepting your award. The Award Instrument includes the Award Offer (Award Information, Project Information, Financial Information, and Award Conditions) and Award Acceptance. For COPS Office and OVW funding the Award Offer also includes any Other Award Documents.

Please note that award requirements include not only the conditions and limitations set forth in the Award Offer, but also compliance with assurances and certifications that relate to conduct during the period of performance for the award. These requirements encompass financial, administrative, and programmatic matters, as well as other important matters (e.g., specific restrictions on use of funds). Therefore, all key staff should receive the award conditions, the assurances and certifications, and the application as approved by the COPS Office, so that they understand the award requirements. Information on all pertinent award requirements also must be provided to any subrecipient of the award.

Should you accept the award and then fail to comply with an award requirement, DOJ will pursue appropriate remedies for non-compliance, which may include termination of the award and/or a requirement to repay award funds.

Prior to accepting the award, your Entity Administrator must assign a Financial Manager, Grant Award Administrator, and Authorized Representative(s) in the Justice Grants System (JustGrants). The Entity Administrator will need to ensure the assigned Authorized Representative(s) is current and has the legal authority to accept awards and bind the entity to the award terms and conditions. To accept the award, the Authorized Representative(s) must accept all parts of the Award Offer in the Justice Grants System (JustGrants), including by executing the required declaration and certification, within 45

days from the award date.

To access your funds, you will need to enroll in the Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) system, if you haven't already completed the enrollment process in ASAP. The Entity Administrator should have already received an email from ASAP to initiate this process.

Congratulations, and we look forward to working with you.

Cory D. Randolph
COPS Acting Director

Office for Civil Rights Notice for All Recipients

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) enforces federal civil rights laws and other provisions that prohibit discrimination by recipients of federal financial assistance from OJP, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), and the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW).

Several civil rights laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, require recipients of federal financial assistance (recipients) to give assurances that they will comply with those laws. Taken together, these and other civil rights laws prohibit recipients from discriminating in the provision of services and employment because of race, color, national origin, religion, disability, and sex or from discriminating in the provision of services on the bases of age.

Some recipients of DOJ financial assistance have additional obligations to comply with other applicable nondiscrimination provisions like the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion in addition to race, color, national origin, and sex. Recipients may also have related requirements regarding the development and implementation of equal employment opportunity programs.

OCR provides technical assistance, training, and other resources to help recipients comply with civil rights obligations. Further, OCR administratively enforces civil rights laws and nondiscrimination provisions by investigating DOJ recipients that are the subject of discrimination complaints. In addition, OCR conducts compliance reviews of DOJ recipients based on regulatory criteria. These investigations and compliance reviews

permit OCR to evaluate whether DOJ recipients are providing services to the public and engaging in employment practices in a nondiscriminatory manner.

For more information about OCR, your civil rights and nondiscrimination responsibilities, how to notify your employees or beneficiaries of their civil rights protections and responsibilities and how to file a complaint, as well as technical assistance, training, and other resources, please visit www.ojp.gov/program/civil-rights-office/outreach. If you would like OCR to assist you in fulfilling your civil rights or nondiscrimination responsibilities, please contact us at askOCR@ojp.usdoj.gov or www.ojp.gov/program/civil-rights-office/about#ocr-contacts.

Budget Category	Total Cost
Sworn Officer Positions	\$8,683,080
Civilian or Non-Sworn Personnel	\$0
Travel	\$0
Equipment	\$0
Supplies	\$0
SubAwards	\$0
Procurement Contracts	\$0
Other Costs	\$0
Indirect Costs	\$0
Total Project Costs	\$8,683,080

Budget Summary & Statement of Need

Budget Summary

- **Sworn Officer Positions:** \$8,683,080
- **Civilian/Non-Sworn Personnel:** \$0
- **Travel, Equipment, Supplies, Subawards, Contracts, Other Costs:** \$0
- **Total Direct Costs:** \$8,683,080
- **Indirect Costs:** \$0
- **Total Project Costs:** \$8,683,080
- **Federal Funds Requested:** \$5,000,000 (57.58%)
- **Local Match:** \$3,683,080 (42.42%)
- **Program Income:** \$0 (0.00%)

Need Justification

This project seeks funding to recruit, train, and staff 40 sworn officers to address violent crime, improve response times, and expand community policing in Richmond County, Georgia. Each position includes a base salary of \$56,369 and fringe benefits, totaling approximately \$217,077 per officer over the three-year funding period.

Due to a 4% local budget decrease in the upcoming year and prior restructuring that resulted in the forfeiture of 52 vacant officer positions to enable competitive pay for retention, the agency cannot fund this expansion independently. Federal assistance is essential to restore law enforcement capacity, reduce crime, support nuisance abatement efforts, and improve quality of life in underserved communities.

Project VISION: Violence Intervention Strategy for Improving Our Neighborhoods

The Richmond County Sheriff's Office (RCSO) will use COPS Hiring Program (CHP) funds to support Project VISION—Violence Intervention Strategy for Improving Our Neighborhoods—a comprehensive, community-based initiative aimed at nuisance abatement, quality-of-life improvement, and violence reduction in the county's most impacted neighborhoods. CHP funding will support the hiring of 40 additional sworn officers who will be assigned full-time to community-focused strategies designed to reduce crime, increase trust, and improve neighborhood conditions.

Project VISION will target chronic nuisance issues such as abandoned properties, drug loitering, illegal dumping, public intoxication, and blight, which are often linked to higher rates of violent crime. The initiative reflects growing concern from residents and community stakeholders who have consistently expressed the need for a more visible, collaborative, and solution-oriented law enforcement presence.

Our approach is both strategic and sustainable. These new officers will be assigned to a specialized Community Impact Enforcement Unit (CIEU) that will focus exclusively on nuisance abatement and quality-of-life enforcement in targeted neighborhoods. Each officer will be responsible for a specific geographic zone and will work collaboratively with neighborhood associations, housing authorities, local code enforcement, and public health agencies. The officers will lead monthly neighborhood walkthroughs, participate in community forums, and develop problem-solving action plans specific to their assigned communities.

The implementation plan includes:

- **Recruitment and Hiring (Months 1–6):** RCSO will recruit officers who reflect the diversity of our community and who have demonstrated interest in community-oriented service.
- **Specialized Training (Months 4–8):** Officers will receive training in trauma-informed policing, environmental crime prevention, de-escalation, conflict resolution, and multi-agency collaboration.
- **Deployment and Engagement (Months 6–12 and beyond):** Officers will be assigned to high-need neighborhoods based on data analysis and community input. They will work to proactively identify and abate nuisance issues before they escalate into violent incidents.

This project significantly enhances RCSO's commitment to community-oriented policing by reorienting our service model from reactive enforcement to proactive engagement.

Project VISION integrates community voice, cross-sector partnerships, and evidence-informed policing strategies. Officers will have the time and resources to develop genuine relationships, foster two-way communication, and work alongside residents to address the structural and behavioral contributors to neighborhood decline and violence.

The success of Project VISION will be measured through reductions in violent crime and nuisance complaints, improved neighborhood appearance, and increased community satisfaction. By embedding officers directly within communities and tasking them with long-term, place-based accountability, the RCSO will build trust, reduce fear, and help restore pride in our neighborhoods.

Ultimately, CHP funding will enable Richmond County to realize a safer, more resilient community where law enforcement and residents are true partners in public safety.

COPS Hiring Program Grant – Project VISION: Violence Intervention Strategy for Improving Our Neighborhoods

Areas Affected by Project

Augusta-Richmond County is the second largest city in Georgia and has a population of approximately 206,000 citizens that swells to upward of 350,000 citizens during work and leisure hours. The direct areas affected would be Richmond County including the municipalities of Augusta, Blythe, and Hephzibah. As the largest full-service Sheriff's Office in the state, Richmond County Sheriff's Office frequently assists surrounding counties (Columbia, Burke, Lincoln, Taliaferro, McDuffie, Washington, Wilkes) and across the state related to SWAT callouts, K9 tracking assistance, Bomb Squad, Gang Task Force, Opioid Task Force, and U.S. Marshall Task Force.