

Staff Report

Subject: Authorization to Use Opioid Settlement Funds for Sheriff's Office Officer Training

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Department: County Manager

Meeting Date: 05/20/2025

Item Description: Request for ECBOC approval to allocate opioid settlement funds for \$4,500.00 to cover enrolling 10 Effingham County Sheriff's Office deputies in the "Operational Readiness for Police Officers: Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)" training program.

Summary Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval to use \$4,500.00 from the County's opioid settlement allocation to fund officer training in crisis response, de-escalation, and referral strategies related to Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) and co-occurring conditions.

Executive Summary:

Effingham County has received funding from the National Opioid Settlements, which can be applied to various approved remediation uses, including law enforcement training. The Sheriff's Office has identified a high-priority training program that directly supports these objectives. The Operational Readiness for Police Officers: OUD course, offered through a partnership with the University of North Georgia and the School, is a four-hour, self-paced, online program. It provides law enforcement officers with essential skills to:

- Safely manage opioid-related crises
- De-escalate high-stress situations
- Understand legal risks and best practices
- Build community referral networks

The course costs \$450 per officer, with 10 officers proposed for enrollment, totaling \$4,500.00. The course aligns with Exhibit E of the National Opioid Settlement Agreement, which authorizes funding for law enforcement training in de-escalation techniques, naloxone use, crisis response, and harm reduction strategies.

Funding Source:

Opioid Settlement Funds are restricted for use on approved remediation strategies by the Georgia Memorandum of Understanding and Exhibit E of the national settlement agreement.

Alternatives for the Commission to Consider:

1. Approve the allocation of \$4,500.00 in opioid settlement funds for the Sheriff's Office training program.
2. Decline the funding request and continue without the specialized training.
3. Provide Staff with Direction

Recommended Alternative:

Staff recommend Alternative #1: Approval of the training expense to ensure deputies receive targeted education in accordance with approved settlement fund uses and the County's public health and safety goals.

Other Alternatives:

N/A