

**Cops Grant 2023 – Application Summary**  
**Grant ID: O-COPS-2023-171633**  
**Application A-464848**

The following information is intended to provide an overview of the general guidelines, requirements, and commitments of the 2023 Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) COPS Hiring Program (CHP) grant. This grant opportunity will provide **\$224.5 million** in funding. The COPS Office will fund as many positions as possible for successful applicants based on the availability of funding and other programmatic considerations. The grant is meant to fund a position that is not budgeted for in the current budget.

Each award will support up to **75 percent** of the cost associated with an officer or deputy entry-level, including salaries and fringe benefits for three years within a five-year period of performance. The five-year period is intended to acknowledge the time needed for recruitment and hiring. Any additional costs for higher than entry-level salaries and fringe benefits will be Pennington Borough's responsibility.

Applicants must plan to retain all sworn officer positions awarded under your COPS Office hiring award for a minimum of 12 months at the conclusion of 36 months of federal funding. The retained COPS Office-funded positions should be added to your agency's law enforcement budget with state and/or local funds thereafter.

There is a **minimum 25% local cash match** (cost share) requirement with the maximum federal share per officer position being \$125,000 over the three-year period unless a local match waiver is approved.

**Budget Summary**

Worst case scenario with benefits at 44% plus \$33K for medical

Year one	Year two	Year three	Required year four	
\$ 57,607.00	\$ 67,626.00	\$ 72,806.00	\$ 77,174.36	salary
\$ 3,571.63	\$ 4,192.81	\$ 4,513.97	\$ 4,784.81	Social Security- 6.2%
\$ 835.30	\$ 980.58	\$ 1,055.69	\$ 1,119.03	Medicare - 1.45%
\$ 32,844.00	\$ 32,844.00	\$ 34,844.00	\$ 34,844.00	Health Insurance
\$ 21,314.59	\$ 25,021.62	\$ 26,938.22	\$ 28,554.51	Retirement - 37%
\$ 3,456.42	\$ 4,057.56	\$ 4,368.36	\$ 4,630.46	Workers comp - 6%
<u>\$ 576.07</u>	<u>\$ 676.26</u>	<u>\$ 728.06</u>	<u>\$ 771.74</u>	Unemployment - 1%
<b>\$ 120,205.02</b>	<b>\$ 135,398.83</b>	<b>\$ 145,254.30</b>	<b>\$ 151,878.92</b>	<b>\$552,737.06</b>
<b>(\$41,666.66)</b>	<b>(\$41,666.66)</b>	<b>(\$41,666.66)</b>		<b>\$125,000 grant amount</b>
<b>\$ 78,538.36</b>	<b>\$ 93,732.17</b>	<b>\$ 103,587.64</b>	<b>\$ 151,878.92</b>	<b>\$427,737.08 cost to The Borough</b>

**Waiver** - Pennington Borough has requested a waiver of their portion of the costs.

**Applications will be scored according to the following weighting methodology:**

Fiscal need: 33.3%  
 Crime: 33.3%  
 Community policing: 33.3%

Agencies that do not meet a minimum community policing score, reflecting a basic commitment to community policing and a strategy to continue or enhance it, will **not** be considered for funding.

**Grant Authorized Representatives:**

Authorized Representative: Chief Pinelli  
Government official: Mayor James Davy  
Agency Representative: Elizabeth Sterling  
Agency Applicant: Mona Habiby

**Agency Details:**

Current No of sworn officers: 7 full time in the current year  
Current no of civilian positions: 1 part-time  
Population of Pennington: 2802 according to the census  
Population: 2802  
Poverty Rate: 2%  
Unemployment Rate: 3%

**Fiscal Health**

CURRENT FISCAL YEAR: 861,500  
PREVIOUS FISCAL YEAR: 785,875

If provided this grant funding, the Pennington Police Department will to enhance community policing, particularly with respect to domestic violence. 100% of funds would focus on this priority area and cannot and will not be otherwise diverted if the award is issued.

These funds will help Pennington address domestic violence, which according to the Uniform Crime Report issued by the New Jersey State Attorney General's Office, grew by 6% in 2020.<sup>1</sup>This report also attributes progress in the area of domestic violence since the enactment of the Domestic Violence Act in part to "in-service training for police." These funds would be used to further this progress by providing Pennington the resources to designate a coordinator and a direct liaison with a trusted local partner in our community, Womanspace Inc.'s Domestic Violence Victim Response Team.

Pennington has identified "Police-based Response to Persons in Crisis" as the primary focus for the grant application. The grant requires applicants to propose a community-based approach to one of four problem/ focus areas.

**The questionnaire is approximately 38 pages and addresses the following:**

- Annual IN-SERVICE training hours offered for use of force, de-escalation of conflict, cultural sensitivity, racial and ethnic bias, gender bias, LGBTQ bias and community engagement.
- Basic/recruit ACADEMY training hours addressing the same issues as above.
- Poverty / unemployment levels and size of the community
- Addressing suicide
- Crime Data
- If military type of weapons are being used

**Community Policing / Accountability**

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<sup>1</sup> [https://nj.gov/njsp/ucr/pdf/domesticviolence/2020\\_Domestic\\_Violence\\_Report.pdf](https://nj.gov/njsp/ucr/pdf/domesticviolence/2020_Domestic_Violence_Report.pdf)

The Police department must be prepared to demonstrate community policing activities and how the award funds were specifically used to enhance these activities. Minor changes during the life time of the award can be made without approval of the COPS office.

The COPS' philosophy on community policing encourages partnerships and problem solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues, such as violent crime, non-violent crime, and fear of crime. To enhance community Policing, Pennington Borough PD established a Memorandum of Understanding with Womenspace, Mercer County's Domestic Violence organization to address increased domestic violence issues that were exacerbated by the Pandemic of 2020.

### **Grant Overview**

The Pandemic of 2020 and the added stress of being confined to homes resulted in a marked increase in alcohol consumption within the community. Pennington has consequently experienced increased domestic violence and volatile domestic situations requiring special attention from the Police Department. At least 2 officers are deployed in any such instance for safety reasons. Redirection of attention of 2 officers means diverting attention away from the regular demands of the community. The safety of the remaining 4 officers is at risk due to having to log in additional overtime hours to cover the void. Burn out affects each officer's performance and judgment thereby affecting their ability to service the needs of the community in an efficient and timely manner.

### **Funding enhancements**

If awarded funds, enhancements to the Police department include the following internal changes:

- 1- Flexibility in officer shift assignments to address domestic violence related problems.  
The additional police officer will be invaluable in relieving the pressures and demands on the existing police department which is already experiencing fatigue from logging extra work hours to meet the demands of the community.
- 2 - Assignment of officers to specific neighborhoods or areas for longer periods of time to enhance customer service and facilitate more contact between police and community members.  
The addition will allow us to identify the areas of our community where repeated domestic violence issues have been occurring, provide a comforting and reassuring presence and ensure expeditious response should dangerous situations develop.

If awarded funds, enhancements to the Police department includes the following change to agency management:

- 1- The agency strategic plan will be updated to outline the goals and objectives around community policing and other departmental priorities.  
The new hire will allow the police department to effectively train more of its members to become experts in the domain of domestic violence and allow for designation of specific officers to specific areas when needed.

### **Grant Narrative 2**

Describe how your agency will use award funds to address the problem/focus area you selected (**Domestic Violence**). Describe your approach, including a long-term strategy and detailed implementation plan that reflects consultation with community groups and appropriate private and public agencies. Explain how the grant will be utilized to

reorient your law enforcement agency's mission toward community-oriented policing or enhance its involvement in or commitment to community-oriented policing.

The Pennington Police Department will use funds to assign an officer as a direct liaison with Womanspace Inc. – Domestic Violence Victim Response Team (DVVRT). Womanspace is Mercer County's domestic violence organization with which the Department has a Memorandum of Understanding to support victims of domestic violence. The newly hired officer will undergo training and attend regular meetings at the organization enabling them to make recommendations for lasting change, including updated procedures, routine training for staff and partnerships to facilitate public facing resources. Upon completion of the training, the officer will become the Pennington Police Department coordinator for the DVVRT team as outlined by the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act of New Jersey. They will be entrusted to train their colleagues, conduct orientation for community volunteers to intervene when needed to and provide support to victims in times of crises. In addition to this role, they will serve as a patrol person and assist with other Department functions, many of which have a nexus with domestic violence prevention. Having an in house expert on matters of domestic violence will enhance the effectiveness of the Department's response when additional officers are needed in situations where a backup becomes necessary when we responding to domestic violence calls. It will also ensure that each and every officer is well-versed on domestic violence matters.

### **Narrative 3 - NEED FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE**

All applicants are required to explain their inability to address the need for this award without federal assistance.

Pennington Borough is a small community with a police department consisting of 7 sworn officers. Similar to the most recent New Jersey Uniform Crime Report, in Pennington, over the course of the few past years, the Police Department has observed an increase in crime and domestic violence calls. As a result of the lack of human resources and budget constraints, the Borough has not been able to fund an additional officer. The Police Department is unable to offer domestic violence training beyond that which is mandatory. Because there is a lack of officers performing anything beyond routine duties is a challenge. As such we have not had officers available to attend domestic violence related community meetings and training sessions. An award that funds an extra officer, we would not only provide more training and community engagement but it would also allow Pennington to designate a direct liaison to a trusted community partner, Womanspace Inc. This relationship will help the victims of domestic violence to move from their initial interaction with law enforcement through to a place of healing, where future incidents are averted.