



Arapahoe County

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Board Summary Report

File #: 25-570

Agenda Date: 10/27/2025

Agenda #:

To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: Amy Padden, District Attorney

Prepared By:
Jason Siers, Chief Deputy District Attorney

Presenter: Amy Padden, District Attorney; Jacob Kremin, Chief Deputy District Attorney

Subject:
1:00 PM *Bureau of Justice Assistance FY25 Prosecuting Cold Cases Using DNA Grant - 18th
Judicial District Attorney's Office

Purpose and Request:

The District Attorney's Office requests permission from the Board of County Commissioners to apply for the federal grant to support investigation and prosecution of violent cold case crimes where suspect DNA profile is already developed through advanced DNA testing and forensic genetic genealogy. Funds will be used to support a part-time paralegal position to manage and organize cold case investigations and to pay for forensic genetic genealogy searches.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: Good Governance - Understand and respond to community needs, interests, and values.

Background and Discussion: Our jurisdiction currently has a number of cold (unsolved) cases involving violent crimes - including homicides and sexual assaults - where DNA profiles attributed to known or unknown suspects have been identified through prior forensic analysis. These cases, though long dormant, remain of critical importance to the victims, their families, and the community at large. With this funding, our goal is to reinvigorate these cases through a strategic, multidisciplinary approach that leverages both advanced forensic tools and modern investigative techniques to bring long-awaited justice to survivors and families.

Despite advances in forensic science, our office continues to face significant challenges in investigating and prosecuting violent cold case crimes, even when a suspect DNA profile has already been developed. These cases often stall due to resource limitations, lack of dedicated personnel, and the complexity of re-engaging investigations that span decades. Additionally, the passage of time presents evidentiary hurdles, such as locating witnesses, addressing chain-of-custody concerns, and contextualizing outdated forensic methods for modern juries.

Currently, our office does not have a sustained multidisciplinary process for reviewing and advancing cold cases with known or unknown suspect DNA profiles. Instead, we rely on a group of full-time employees who volunteer to work cold cases in addition to their primary job descriptions. While we possess several cases with promising forensic leads, the lack of funding, staffing, and access to

advanced testing and expert support has impeded our ability to move these cases forward effectively.

This grant would fill a critical gap by providing the resources necessary to re-prioritize these cases - ensuring that DNA evidence is fully leveraged, investigations are revived with modern tools, and prosecutorial strategies are strengthened to pursue justice for victims and their families. Without this support, many solvable cases may remain unresolved, denying closure to those who have waited far too long.

Alternatives: The alternative is to continue current practice, which may result in these cases remaining unsolved.

Fiscal Impact: Costs would be covered by the grant.

Alignment with Strategic Implementation Strategies: N/A

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends applying for the grant.

Concurrence: N/A