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WASHINGTON COUNTY AWARDED \$750,000 IN GRANT FUNDING TO IMPROVE PRE-TRIAL RELEASE PROGRAM

HILLSBORO, Ore- Washington County, Oregon applied for and has been awarded \$750,000 in grant funding to improve the County's pre-trial release program. Issued by the United States Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women, the award marks the culmination of a months-long effort by the Washington County Sheriff's Office, Washington County District Attorney's Office, Washington County, Oregon, the Washington County Circuit Court, and the Family Justice Center of Washington County.

The three-year grant will serve to improve services and increase safety for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking in Washington County while the charged offenders of these crimes are out of custody awaiting trial.

As a result of recent legislation, most defendants charged with these crimes are released into the community with legal restrictions that prohibit contact with the listed victims. Washington County currently lacks the systems to provide assurance to victims that violent offenders are subject to live electronic monitoring 24 hours a day by trained professionals.

The grant will fund the implementation, centralization, and ongoing use of a 24/7 offender electronic monitoring system. The grant will also integrate the recent creation of an evidence-based risk assessment tool to assess the appropriate level of monitoring for each case of domestic violence across all 12 law enforcement agencies in Washington County. Finally, the grant will fund the development of a county-wide training program on domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

Officials applied for this grant after forming a workgroup in response to a tragic [2022 double murder and suicide](#). The group identified flaws in the pre-trial release program and [District Attorney Kevin Barton called on the circuit court to make needed changes](#). This grant will allow for the implementation of those suggestions.

"This grant provides critical funding to help keep victims and the community safe," said District Attorney Barton. "Ensuring defendants are appropriately assessed and monitored if released from jail is absolutely essential."

Washington County Circuit Court Presiding Judge Rebecca Guptill aided in the grant application process and is pleased the court now has the necessary resources to address problem areas.

“This is yet another excellent example of what we can do as Washington County community partners when we come together with the shared goal of improving how we function for the betterment of our entire community,” said Presiding Judge Guptill.

The sheriff’s office will provide a project coordinator to implement needed changes and is a key partner in this effort.

“I am deeply grateful to our Washington County collaborative team and our federal partners for their generous support. This funding will empower us to implement vital safety measures, ensuring that those affected by domestic violence have the protection and resources they need to feel safe in our community,” added Washington County Sheriff Caprice Massey.

The Family Justice Center of Washington County also works closely with survivors of domestic violence. Executive Director Rachel Schutz says this grant will help ensure those living in unsafe situations receive the help and support they need.

"The safety of survivors depends on offender accountability and a comprehensive coordinated response from both community-based and public safety partners," said Executive Director Schutz. "I am deeply proud of this collaboration in prioritizing those two things in securing this grant to make Washington County safer, healthier, and more hopeful. This grant will save lives."

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The DA’s Office is working closely with law enforcement and community partners on a number of events throughout the month. [Visit our website for additional information.](#)