



Grant Subaward Programmatic Narrative

Grant Subaward #: PU 22 01 0120

Subrecipient: County of Humboldt

Problem Statement:

Humboldt County is rural, isolated, and covers approximately 4,052 square miles, with a population of 136,310. According to United States census data, the population is 73.8% White, 12.1% Hispanic or Latino, 6.4% American Indian, 5.7% mixed race, 2.9% Asian, 1.5% Black or African American, and .3% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. Poverty rates are high, affecting 15.8% of the population. The median household income in 2020 dollars, between 2016 and 2020 was \$49,235, with a per capita income of \$29,584. Housing costs are high, with a median home value of \$331,300. The County seat is Eureka, which along with the courthouse and most services, is centrally located.

Currently, all probationers are assessed using a validated risk assessment tool which helps determine level of supervision. In cases where the offender is convicted of a domestic violence (DV) offense, a lethality assessment is also utilized. DV offenders are at minimum placed on a moderate level of supervision in which they check in with their probation officer (PO) monthly. High risk DV offenders are assigned a more intensive level of supervision in which a case plan designed to target criminogenic needs as identified by a validated needs assessment drives their case management. They may be reassessed for a



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lower level of supervision upon completion of a batterer's intervention program (BIP).

The Department currently has a Probation Specialized Units (PSU) grant. Continued receipt of this grant would allow the Department to maintain an intensively supervised caseload dedicated to DV offenders. This allows for a PO with expertise in issues contributing to supervision of DV offenders and in local services for offenders and their victims, and for collaboration with treatment providers and victims which leads to more timely discovery of violations of probation and other issues such as substance abuse relapse, which put the offender's success and the victim's safety at risk.

DV offenders not supervised on this specialized caseload have less accountability, and it is more difficult to respond swiftly to violations of probation or other concerns that may be observed by the treatment provider or the victim, as they are not as likely to have an established line of communication with the PO. There is also a significant issue with offenders being unable to pay the fees to participate in a BIP. Grant funds allow the Department to subsidize treatment, ensuring prompt enrollment in a BIP, thereby increasing safety for the community and the victim.



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Plan:

The Probation Specialized Units (PSU) program will consist of one caseload supervised by a Senior Probation Officer (SPO). Promotion to SPO requires completion of the Probation Officer Core Course, Penal Code (PC) 832 training, and two years of experience as a Probation Officer. Any SPO assigned to this program would also have training in Motivational Interviewing (MI) and Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS) and would have at minimum one year of experience supervising offenders with a risk score of High Violent.

Most DV offenders placed on supervised probation in Humboldt County are convicted of felonies. Prior to sentencing, offenders are assessed pursuant to Section 1203.097(b)(3)(l) PC for risk of lethality. The lethality assessment examines the following areas: threats or fantasies of homicide or suicide; use of weapons; sense of ownership of their victim; and dependance upon the victim to organize or sustain their lives. Crimes in which these elements are present are considered more serious, and the offender is considered to present a higher threat of violence. Additionally, each case is evaluated for risk to reoffend using the Static Risk Assessment (SRA) as well as for criminogenic needs using the Offender Needs Assessment (ONA), both of which are validated assessment tool



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offered through the vender Noble. The SRA predicts the level of risk the probationer presents for reoffending and whether they present an above average risk for reoffending with a violent crime.

The Humboldt County Probation Department typically supervises about two and a half times the number of felony DV offenders as would be supervised at any given time on the PSU caseload of 40 offenders. The DV offenders placed on the PSU caseload would be selected based on risk score and the findings of the lethality assessment, thereby prioritizing the highest risk offenders. Once an offender is granted probation, the Adult Field Supervisor screens their case and assigns it to an appropriate caseload. The Adult Field Supervisor would be responsible for selecting the highest risk cases to assign to the PSU.

During the twelve-month reporting period, it is estimated approximately 53 probationers would be supervised on the PSU caseload. Most of the offenders would be serving a three-year grant of probation. The total of 53 probationers is calculated assuming the caseload would always operate near capacity, and that there would be a 33% turnover in cases during the grant period. The number could be higher, as cases ONAs would be reevaluated at least every six months. If an offender completed or made good progress in their BIP and their



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ONA indicated their criminogenic needs went down and their protective factors increased, signaling they are less likely to reoffend, they could be reassigned to a lower level of supervision prior to completion of their grant of probation.

Likewise, new law violations, technical violations of probation, or violations of protective orders could result in consequences ranging from informal sanctions to revocation of probation and sentencing to state prison, causing a fluctuation in the number of people served on the caseload.

It is further expected that monthly contact would be made with each victim or that efforts to do so would be documented in the department's case management system. With the expectation that the caseload would be maintained at or near capacity, there would be a total of approximately 480 victim contacts during the reporting period. Efforts would be made for initial victim contacts to be face-to-face in the victim's home or place of their choosing, and subsequent contacts would take place by phone unless the victim desired continued face-to-face contacts or there was a reason to believe the victim was unsafe. As this caseload has already been established with prior grant awards and it is anticipated there would be at least a 30% turnover yearly, there would be about 13 new offenders added to the caseload in the first year. With this, it is estimated a minimum of 13 victim contacts would take place with



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victim's face-to-face in the field and that up to 467 contacts would be made by phone.

Section 29810 PC requires that in any case where an offender is convicted of a felony or of a specified misdemeanor, one of which is DV, the court shall, prior to sentencing, inform the defendant they are prohibited from owning or possessing a firearm. The defendant shall be given a prohibited person relinquishment form requiring them to claim any firearm(s) they own, to relinquish said firearm(s) and to report the method in which the firearm was relinquished. The court shall also refer the matter to probation, to search the Automated Firearm System (AFS) for any guns registered in the defendant's name. If at sentencing the court determines the defendant still possesses any firearms, a warrant may be issued for retrieval of the firearm(s). Additionally, offenders placed on probation would have a search and seizure clause allowing for the retrieval of any firearms. With the aforementioned estimated rate of at least 13 new offenders being assigned to the PSU caseload each year, this would equate to a minimum of 13 AFS searches for project specific probationers. Post-sentencing, the SPO would review with the offender both the state and federal gun laws prohibiting ownership of firearms and would obtain a signature from the offender acknowledging understanding of said laws. To date this has



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already been done with all probationers previously assigned to this caseload, so notification to current probationers would not be necessary. Further, compliance with gun laws would be monitored via routine visual checks of the offender's residence during field contacts, as well as more in-depth searches when there is a suspicion the offender is in violation. Possession of a firearm would constitute a new law violation which would trigger a formal violation of probation. Courts, law enforcement officers, and firearms dealers are well versed on Section 29810 PC and the prohibition for DV offenders to own or possess firearms. Further clarification of this issue would be made to victims, BIP providers, and victim advocates during initial contacts with victims as well as during monthly BIP Provider Meetings, which are attended by the SPO assigned to the PSU, BIP providers, and victim advocates.

This department employs a training manager who receives routine updates from Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) and maintains a training plan for each officer. The SPO assigned to the PSU caseload's training plan would include the 16-hour intensive Domestic Violence Core Training for Probation Officers offered through CPOC. CPOC has not yet posted their training calendar for the months covered in this grant period, so a specific date the training would be provided cannot be identified currently.



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The Humboldt County Probation Department utilizes a case management system which tracks data including: which offenders are assigned to each caseload; each contact the Probation Officer has with an offender, their victim, their treatment provider, or any other collateral contacts; and whether the offender's supervision status is active, on warrant, or in jail. Data extracted from the case management system is compiled in reports and provided to the Supervising Probation Officer weekly. The reports clearly list the names as well as the total number of offenders assigned to the PSU caseload, their supervision status, and the number of actual and attempted contacts for the month. Bookings into the jail are monitored daily. When an offender from the PSU caseload is arrested or has a warrant issued, the offender is reassigned to a separate inactive caseload. In this way the supervisor ensures the caseload consists of active supervision offenders and is quickly alerted if an offender is in need of reassignment or if the number of offenders on the caseload becomes too low or too high.



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Capabilities:

If awarded this grant, it will represent the tenth year that the Humboldt County Probation Department (HCPD) has been a recipient of said grant. The past nine years of successful performance in running a PSU demonstrates this applicant's ability to provide increased supervision to probationers of crime involving DV. More compelling however, is the HCPD's commitment to increasing public safety by guiding probationers toward healthier and more law-abiding lives through use of the ONA to identify criminogenic needs, creating case plans which target those needs, and delivering cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) interventions which further address those needs and build protective factors. When a probationer does violate or reoffend, we weigh the level of danger they present to the community against their criminogenic needs which, if addressed, would offset that dangerousness level. Our recommendations to the court are based on whether the level of dangerousness is such that it would or would not be adequately offset by the offender participating in rehabilitative services and further consider the offender's amenability to services. The Department's use of evidence-based practices and a structured method for making recommendations centered



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around community safety, make the Department qualified to provide a high level of effective supervision to probationer's convicted of DV crimes.

In Humboldt County, BIP providers, victim services providers, probation officers, and a Deputy District Attorney (DDA) attend monthly BIP provider meetings which enable these partners to develop relationships, common goals, and consistencies. In this way we maintain strong working relationships with victim service providers and the DA. We also conduct operations such as planned searches or arrests with local law enforcement agencies, occasionally train together with local law enforcement agencies, and have the benefit of sharing dispatch services with our Sheriff's Office.

This applicant's staff are well trained and qualified to provide intensive supervision to DV offenders. Officers are trained in the use of validated risk and needs assessments, case planning, and delivering CBTs. Officers are also trained through a Field Training Program to conduct field work safely. Lastly, officers are trained to respond to every violative behavior with a swift and proportionate response, and to make recommendations and/or impose sanctions which are rooted in community safety.