



Cornerstone for Justice: How Vermont Uses Byrne JAG Funding to Protect Public Safety and Prevent Crime

The cornerstone of federal support for state and local justice systems, the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant program (Byrne JAG) is a federal-state-local partnership enabling communities to target resources to their most pressing local needs.

Byrne JAG is used broadly for law enforcement, prosecution, indigent defense, courts, prevention and education, corrections and community corrections, drug treatment and enforcement, planning evaluation and technology, mental health services, and crime victim and witness programs. This breadth and flexibility means states and local communities can use Byrne JAG to balance resources and address problems across the entire criminal justice system, and to react quickly to urgent challenges and changing circumstances. Many innovative criminal justice practices demonstrated using Byrne JAG funds have been replicated nationwide, such as drug courts, opioid prevention and addiction response, methamphetamine lab reduction, anti-gang strategies, reentry programs and information sharing protocols.

Byrne JAG in Vermont:

In 2016, the Vermont Department of Public Safety invested in numerous successful initiatives. For example:

- In Vermont, Byrne JAG funding is blended with state funds to support a statewide multijurisdictional taskforce run out the Vermont State Police.

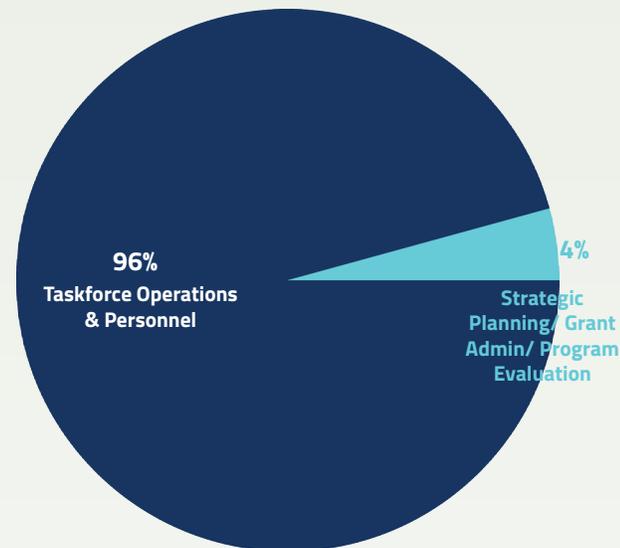
Specifically, Byrne JAG funds support one Unit Supervisor State Police Sergeant position with overtime as well as a local police officer who is assigned full time to the drug task force. The taskforce is composed of individuals from state and local law enforcement agencies. Task force priorities include heroin, opioids, prescription drugs and crack cocaine interdiction.

Additionally, Byrne JAG funding is used for direct task force operating expenses.

Byrne JAG funding keeps citizens safe, prevents crime and victimization, and provides services to individuals in the justice system so when they return to their communities they are equipped with the tools and skills they need to build productive lives and not return to the criminal justice system.

How Vermont Invests Byrne JAG Funds

Total Investment = \$625,118



How Byrne JAG Funding is Awarded:

Sixty percent of the overall Byrne JAG grant is awarded to the state criminal justice planning agency (known as the State Administrated Agency or SAA), which, in turn, awards the funding, to local governments and non-profit service providers; the remaining 40 percent goes directly from the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance to local communities based on population and crime data.

Funding is authorized at \$1.1 billion annually. At its peak in FY02, Congress appropriated \$830 million. In subsequent years, funding held steady at about \$500 million. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in FY09 provided a one-time boost of \$2 billion. Since FY10, funding has dropped by about one-third. In FY17 the program was funded at \$335 million.

2016 Byrne JAG Spending Study:

Financial estimates and program examples were gathered as part of the 2016 Byrne JAG Spending Study conducted by the National Criminal Justice Association. Financial data was submitted by and qualitative interviews were conducted with all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Byrne JAG supports the federal government's crucial role in spurring innovation and testing and replicating evidence-based practices nationwide. States and local communities use Byrne JAG funds to address needs and fill gaps across the entire justice system.

This funding touches nearly every city and town in America through projects funded and investments made in the state and local justice systems. These grants also are a catalyst for collaboration within communities and across states.

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