



## AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Action Item for the City Council Meeting of February 8, 2022

**DATE:** February 8, 2022  
**TO:** Peter Zanoni, City Manager  
**FROM:** Mike Markle, Chief of Police  
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**Acceptance and appropriation of the Paul Coverdell Forensic Sciences Improvement Grant  
for the Police Department**

**CAPTION:**

Ordinance authorizing acceptance of a grant in an amount of \$233,030.00 from State of Texas, Criminal Justice Division for the Paul Coverdell Forensic Sciences Improvement Grant for the purchase of a new laboratory information management system for the Forensic Services Division; and appropriating \$233,030.00 in the Police Grants Fund.

**SUMMARY:**

Federal funding has been awarded through the Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office, Criminal Justice Division from the U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice Paul Coverdell Forensic Sciences Improvement Grant Program. There is no match requirement for this program.

**BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS:**

The Coverdell grant will support the purchase of a new laboratory information management system (LIMS), along with a dedicated quality management system, for the Forensic Services Division (FSD). More specifically, this grant will pay for three years of licensing, after which the Corpus Christi Police Department (CCPD) will place the cost of the licensing in its annual budget. CCPD will purchase the software for this program before the end of FY 2022. The system is the same system that the Department of Public Safety uses.

Currently, the FSD does not have a computerized means of generating and maintaining data and case documentation. This presents challenges regarding physical storage space, information retrieval, metrics, and workflow efficiency. In addition, as an accredited forensic laboratory, quality control is a key requirement in order to stay in compliance. CCPD's current process without the computerized means of documentation consists of documenting lab reports on paper and maintaining physical case jackets with notes, photos, and other required documentation. Report narratives for CCPD are entered into the I-LEADS software program, but for other agencies are filed on paper only. The same process applies for all CCPD division policies and procedures, training records, proficiency tests, and other documentation. This results in a very paper-intensive, disjointed, and inefficient system that CCPD will be able to negate with this grant.

The Forensic Services Division conducts analysis on forensic evidence in the firearms and friction ridge (latent print) disciplines, as well as processing and documenting crime scenes. The laboratory operates and maintains state and national comparison databases, including the State of Texas Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS), FBI Next Generation Identification fingerprint database, and the ATF National Integrated Ballistics Identification Network (NIBIN). Most requests for service are generated within the Corpus Christi Police Department, but as one of only two accredited forensic labs in the Coastal Bend region (as well as the only NIBIN-equipped facility in South Texas), a significant number of service requests come from surrounding agencies as well. The FSD is fully accredited to ISO 17025:2017/AR 3125 standards in each of its disciplines and complies with applicable rules and regulations of the Texas Forensic Science Commission.

The implementation of a LIMS with integrated quality assurance system will accomplish the following objectives:

1. Improve the quality and timeliness of forensic services
2. Improve efficiency, reduce turnaround time, and assist with reducing existing backlogs.
3. Permit detailed analysis of statistics, performance metrics, and associated data such as uncertainty of measurement and contextual bias
4. Improve documentation and tracking of required training records, operational procedures, competency/proficiency testing, and policy changes
5. Permit faster and more efficient response to requests for information from stakeholders and other external entities (i.e., Open Records Act requests, Texas Forensic Science Commission, and judicial partners)
6. Improve efficiency and accuracy in performing required audits and quality reviews
7. Reduce physical space requirements for storage and archiving

The project period is from October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023. This is the first year that the City has applied to and received this grant.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

The alternative is not to accept the grant and continue with current manual operations.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There is no financial impact at this time. There is no match requirement for this program.

#### **Funding Detail**

Fund 1061  
Organization/Activity: Police Grant Fund – 822903F  
Mission Element: 152  
Project # (CIP Only): N/A  
Account: 520090 – Minor Tools & Equipment

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends accepting the grant application, as presented.

#### **LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:**

Award letter