



GRANT APPLICATION

Recovery of Case Dispositions Not Previously Reported to BCI

(Common Pleas Courts, Municipal Courts,
County Courts, and Clerks of Court)

Background

Ohio law requires the Ohio Attorney General's Office to maintain the state's Computerized Criminal History (CCH) repository, a task that is handled by the Identification Division of the Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI).

To help BCI to maintain a CCH repository that is accurate and reliable, state law requires Ohio's clerks of courts to report to BCI all felony case dispositions as well as final outcomes of misdemeanors that could be elevated to felonies. Limited funding and staffing, however, have historically hindered the ability of local courts to meet that mandate, leading to deficiencies in the state's criminal history information.

When BCI fails to receive and enter a record that would disqualify an individual from lawfully possessing a firearm into the relevant electronic database, a National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) background check cannot prevent that individual from purchasing a firearm.

Currently, 46% of cases in the CCH repository – nearly 4.2 million in all – lack disposition information, including some that might be disqualifiers for gun ownership. Without timely and consistent reporting of dispositions, BCI struggles to deliver complete and well-documented Ohio data not only for NICS but also for the Interstate Identification Index (III)/criminal record, National Crime Information Center (NCIC), Indices inquiries, and all automated fingerprint searches. The high number of entities that rely on the CCH data makes the need for its completeness only more urgent.

Since 2014, BCI has secured federal grants from the National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP) to enhance the reliability and accuracy of the CCH repository, steadily increasing the number of up-to-date records and the amount of information available.

These efforts in part have centered on the electronic conversion of criminal files submitted to BCI and collaboration with local courts to improve upon the courts' disposition submissions. These and other related efforts are crucial to both increasing the accuracy and availability of Ohio's criminal history information and promoting public safety as well as the effective administration of justice statewide.

Significant strides have been made, yes, but plenty of work remains. Perhaps most noteworthy, court submissions of dispositions continue to lag. BCI currently receives arrest and criminal records from 88 Common Pleas Courts, more than 120 Municipal Courts, and numerous Mayor's Courts throughout the state. These records are submitted by the courts as either physical paper records or as electronic data. Given the existing limitations of both methods of submission, the result has been an unacceptable number of arrest records that do not have a disposition associated with the arrest.

Because the disposition-reporting problem is rooted in a lack of funding, the Attorney General's Office is earmarking \$500,000 of an NCHIP grant to create subgrants to help local court systems narrow their recovery gaps.

Grant summary

The Attorney General's Office will use the \$500,000 in federal grant funding to award subgrants to clerks of court and courts of record statewide to help defray the costs associated with the recovery of missing dispositions in their jurisdictions.

Clerks and deputy clerks of local courts have the expertise and access to quickly research and update the relevant records from within their respective jurisdictions. And local information technology (IT) staff have sufficient familiarity with their native records system to assess the feasibility of extracting missing dispositions from their systems to facilitate the bulk import of missing dispositions from their jurisdictions in the format required by BCI.

The Attorney General's Office will award at least seven subgrants ranging from \$10,000 to \$100,000 to courts/clerks of court and recover dispositions from their own record management systems in a more cost-effective manner than that of a private vendor with which the AGO previously contracted. Unless a grant extension is approved, the money awarded to winning proposals must be used by Dec. 31, 2024.

The subgrants will be awarded based on a number of factors, including but not limited to:

- Regardless of the method of recovery, successful applicants must be able to recover missing dispositions at an average cost of less than \$5 per disposition.
- Priority will be given to applying entities that can recover the highest number of dispositions in the most cost-effective manner.
- Provide dispositions to BCI in a manner that can be uploaded into the CCH system through these existing [Electronic Disposition Reporting Specifications](#).
- Provide a specific timeframe within which the work can be completed.
- Prioritize dispositions that impact state and federal firearms disabilities.

One significant challenge regarding missing case dispositions is local courts' inability to know which cases lack dispositions. BEFORE devising their grant proposal, subgrant applicants can request from the Attorney General a county-specific list of historical arrests with unknown dispositions. To obtain this information, please download [this form](#), complete it, and return it to DispositionGrants@OhioAGO.gov. The Attorney General's Office will then forward the requested data as soon as possible.

Qualifying expenses

Qualifying expenses for subgrant recipients include but are not limited to:

- Base and/or overtime salaries for staff who devote time to disposition recovery, provided that the employees recover a minimum of 12 dispositions per hour (a rate not greater than \$5 per disposition).
- IT services allowing for the electronic recovery or transmission of missing dispositions in an acceptable format.

- A technological upgrade/system replacement that allows for electronic submission of case dispositions – one that is compliant with BCI's [Electronic Disposition Reporting Specifications](#) and will facilitate the reporting of at least some missing dispositions.

Reporting requirements

Every NCHIP grant has quarterly reporting requirements. Additional reporting requirements will be based on the project funded – to be determined after the grant funding is awarded. IT-specific projects may have additional AGO reporting mandates to ensure completion of the project prior to expiration of the grant funds.

Application review process

Representatives selected by the Attorney General will review all applications and make recommendations to the Attorney General's Office, with the AGO administration having the final say on the winning submissions.

The review committee and/or the Attorney General's Office may make use of resources beyond the materials submitted in each application and/or request additional information or documentation from applicants. Requests for additional information from applicants will include a due date by which applicants must respond.

The Attorney General reserves the right to make exceptions to these requirements and consider modifying program guidelines on a case-by-case basis.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Please submit the fully completed application form, supporting narratives and Excel spreadsheet by **May 15, 2024**, to DispositionGrants@OhioAGO.gov. **NOTE:** Email file size must be 20MB or less to ensure delivery.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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APPLICATION FORM

Recovery of Case Dispositions Missing From Ohio Criminal Records

(Common Pleas Courts, Municipal Courts,
County Courts, and Clerks of Court)

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Name of entity: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ ZIP: _____ County: _____

Phone number: _____

HEAD OF ORGANIZATION

Name: _____

Title _____

Phone number: _____ Email address: _____

PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON

Name: _____

Title: _____

Phone number: _____ Email address: _____

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROJECT

In a separate narrative no longer than five pages, please provide a high-level summary of the project you would implement if awarded the subgrant amount requested from the Attorney General's Office. The summary should:

- Detail the proposed project and explain how the dispositions would be recovered and provided to BCI.
- Identify whether work will be completed by existing staff, new staff or contractors.
- Estimate the quantity of missing dispositions your agency expects to recover through this project, timeframe for completion, and total cost of the project. Also explain whether local funds will be used to supplement any subgrant award.
- Identify any known risks or barriers associated with the project implementation that could reduce the volume of dispositions recovered or delay completion of the project past Dec. 31, 2024.

DETAILED PROJECT PLAN

The Project Plan should expand upon the information provided in the Executive Summary, explain the connections between various components of the project, and allow evaluators to understand how your agency would complete the goals of the project within the specified timeframe. In a separate narrative, please provide a project plan that, at a minimum, covers the following:

- Explain how subgrant funds will be used to identify dispositions for the historical arrest list provided to your agency by the AGO, the manual and/or technical processes proposed to associate dispositions with the arrests, and how the dispositions would be reported to BCI.
- If individuals outside your agency will be responsible for doing some or all of the work, explain how those individuals will be identified, selected and complete the work within the project timeline.
- Describe how recovered dispositions will be validated prior to submission to BCI (i.e. process for review by staff if dispositions are recovered through an automated technological process).
- Provide a detailed timeline for project implementation that includes proposed measurable milestones and identifies intervals at which dispositions would be reported to BCI.
- Identify whether the proposed project will allow prioritization for the recovery of dispositions for felony arrests, offenses of violence, and offenses that give rise to state or federal weapons disabilities.
- Explain how the proposed project will help mitigate in the future the issues that led to incomplete disposition reporting (if applicable).

PROJECT BUDGET

1. How much funding are you requesting for your project? _____

2. In an Excel spreadsheet ([a template is provided here](#)), please provide an itemized budget for how the subgrant funds would be used by Dec. 31, 2024.

3. In a separate narrative, please provide the following budget-related information:

- Provide detailed descriptions (as exact as possible) of the items listed in the PROJECT BUDGET table just above.
- Provide a time schedule for the period that the funds will be used, including milestones and the project completion date.

If you plan to use grant funds to hire additional staff, or to pay third parties to complete the work, explain whether you plan to continue to fund their work after subgrant funds are exhausted – and, if so, how that will be accomplished.

ORGANIZATION AUTHORIZATION AND CERTIFICATION

I understand that by signing this application, I grant the Ohio Attorney General's Office or its authorized agents access to any records for verification and evaluation of the information provided in this application. I understand that completion of the application does not guarantee that the applicant will receive the requested subgrant funds and that the Attorney General may reject, in whole or part, applications for which the Attorney General determines a grant award would not be in the best interest of the applicant or the Attorney General.

The Ohio Attorney General's Office is subject to the requirements of the Ohio Public Records Act ([Ohio Revised Code Section 149.43](#)). Accordingly, applicants must understand that an application and materials submitted with it may be subject to disclosure as a public record. Accordingly, I understand that the submitted information should not include any confidential or trade-secret information.

I certify that the information I have provided in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, a true, accurate and complete disclosure of the requested information. I am authorized to apply for this subgrant on behalf of my agency or have received approval on behalf of my agency to apply. I understand that I may be held civilly and criminally liable under federal and state law for knowingly making false or fraudulent statements.

Organization: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____