

Analysis
Oregon State Police
Forensic Science Improvement

Analyst: Julie Neburka

Request: Approval to apply for \$250,000 from the US Department of Justice's Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Competitive Grants program.

Recommendation: Approve the request.

Analysis: The Oregon State Police (OSP) operates the only full-service forensics laboratories in the state. The laboratories examine evidence in the forensic disciplines of chemistry, forensic biology (DNA), firearms and toolmarks, trace evidence, toxicology, latent fingerprints, and questioned documents. The labs expect to analyze more than 58,600 evidentiary submissions this biennium.

The Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grant Program provides grants to improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science and medical examiner services in laboratories operated by states and local governments. Funds may be used to eliminate backlogs in analysis of forensic evidence, for training and personnel costs associated with employing scientists to reduce such backlogs, and/or to address emerging forensic science issues or to purchase emerging forensic science technology. OSP's Forensic Services Division would use the grant funds, if awarded, to improve the timeliness of completing toxicology requests, which are used in conjunction with drug expert recognition evaluations in court.

This is a competitive grant opportunity for individual annual grants of up to \$250,000. Grant applications are due by March 10th, 2017, with awards anticipated to be announced by September 30, 2017 for use during calendar year 2018. No matching funds are required. If successful, the agency may return to the legislature to request additional federal funds expenditure limitation.

The Legislative Fiscal Office recommends approval of the grant application request.