

## ACT 786 REPORT

In 2019, the Task Force to Advance the State of Law Enforcement recommended that law enforcement agencies in the State of Arkansas seek and apply for federal, state, and local funding to aid in the implementation of state-of-the-art body cameras, as well as adequate server storage to aid in better surveillance for agencies. In response to the recommendation, the Arkansas General Assembly established the Public Safety Equipment Grant (Act 786) to be administered by the Secretary of the Arkansas Department of Public Safety. Specifically, the Public Safety Equipment Grant is designed to assist agencies in obtaining equipment that aids in improving trust and relationships between law enforcement agencies, detention centers, and corrections agencies, and the communities they serve.

This report is to provide an update on the progress, development, and activities pertaining to the Public Safety Equipment Grant established by Act 786 of 2021. The Department of Public Safety (DPS) administers the grant through the Public Safety Equipment Grant Program (the “grant program”). The grant program assists agencies in achieving meaningful and measurable improvement in community trust and relationships by assisting with improvements in equipment and training. This report serves as an overview of the development of the grant program. The grant is awarded to assist with funding for equipment, training, or accreditation including without limitation:

- Body cameras with auto-activation capabilities;
- In-car cameras with auto-activation capabilities;
- Cloud-based storage devices;
- On premises server hardware and storage to accommodate on-premises installations;
- Conduct electrical device and related training programs;
- Virtual reality training;
- Agency accreditation programs;
- Bulletproof vests;
- Pepper spray;
- Rubber bullets; and
- Other equipment as deemed necessary by the Secretary.

## ALLOCATED FUNDING

In March 2021, the Arkansas General Assembly passed Act 995, a portion of which established a \$40 million appropriation for the grant program. On September 1, 2021, Arkansas Attorney General Rutledge invested \$500,000 in the grant fund, allowing for an initial allocation of grant funding to Arkansas agencies.

## PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Following the enactment of Acts 786 and 995, the Department of Public Safety began working with subject matter experts to develop guidelines for the grant program consisting of program parameters, application design and evaluation construction, anticipated statistical methodologies for measuring program deliverables, advertisement of funding, grant committee recruitment, and a feasible timeline of activities.

- A. On July 20, 2021, DPS held its first meeting regarding Act 786. The meeting included subject matter experts, law enforcement representatives, and Arkansas stakeholders to discuss the following elements:

## 1. Development and Review of Application Process

- a. Secretary Cook selected Arkansas State Police LTC Shawn Garner to serve as the administrator for the grant program. LTC Garner serves as the lead contact for grant development. LTC Garner was also asked to provide recommendations of individuals to serve on the grant committee.
- b. Secretary Cook and LTC Garner, along with subjectmatter experts, law enforcement representatives, and Arkansas stakeholders reviewed the proposed grant program description and application instructions, anticipated selection process, application evaluation, timeline of events, DPS Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and statistical analysis for program deliverables and provided insight and recommendations.

## B. Grant Committee

The Public Safety Equipment Grant Committee, led by LTC Shawn Garner, consists of the following representatives:

1. Two (2) Sheriffs or Designee from Sheriff's Department
  - Sheriff Marty Boyd, Craighead County
  - Sheriff Scott Sawyer, Polk County
2. Executive Director Arkansas Sheriffs Assoc.
  - Scott Bradley
3. Executive Director Arkansas Association of Chiefs of Police
  - Gary Sipes
4. President or Designee of Arkansas Jail Administrators Assoc.
  - Keith Bowers
5. Secretary or Designee of the Arkansas Department of Corrections
  - Secretary Solomon Graves (Lead)
  - Sterling Penix (Co-Representative if absent)
6. Two (2) Chiefs of Police or designee from Municipal Law Enforcement Agency
  - Chief Chris Chapmond, Hot Springs PD
  - Chief Brad McNew, Vilonia PD
7. Director or Designee from Arkansas Office of Prosecutor Coordinator
  - Bob McMahan
8. Prosecuting Attorney or Deputy Prosecuting Attorney
  - Teresa Howell, Prosecutor 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial District
9. Colonel or Designee Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
  - Major Brian Aston
10. Colonel or Designee Arkansas State Police
  - Sgt. Marcus Daniels
11. Director or Designee Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training
  - Deputy Director Fred Weatherspoon
12. Two (2) full time non-supervisory law enforcement officers
  - Danny Harris, Investigator Saline County Sheriff's Office
  - Ashley Noel, Investigator North Little Rock Police Department

### C. Program Implementation

On September 15, 2021, the Public Safety Equipment Grant Committee convened to review and approve the grant program and discuss the notification protocol for agencies through various DPS communication platforms. The following components were addressed:

1. The Grant Committee finalized and selected October 1, 2021, as the opening of the grant application process.
2. An official announcement from the Department of Public Safety Secretary Jami Cook was made consisting of:
  - a. The approved and published DPS Public Safety Equipment Grant Instructions Guide for all applicable agencies.
  - b. Selection of the Grant Program Instruction Webinar series: October 12, 2021, and November 4, 2021, held by Dr. Mary Hughes, DPS Research and Planning Unit.
3. Finalized Grant Program Timeline:

The official timeline of events regarding the Public Safety Equipment Grant application process and distribution of funding for law enforcement agencies is detailed below:

- October 1, 2021 – Applications placed on the DPS website
- November 12, 2021 – Completed applications reviewed by DPS
- November 30, 2021 – Applications reviewed by the grant program Committee
- December 10, 2021 – Announcement of Awards
- December 10, 2021 – Statement of Grant Awards mailed to recipients with MOU
- December 27, 2021 – Statement of Grant Awards and MOU due back to DPS
- February 10, 2022 – Monthly report due to DPS
- March 10, 2022 – Monthly report due to DPS
- April 10, 2022 – Monthly report due to DPS
- May 10, 2022 – Monthly report due to DPS
- June 10, 2022 – Monthly report due to DPS
- July 10, 2022 – Monthly report due to DPS
- August 10, 2022 – Monthly report due to DPS
- September 10, 2022 – Monthly report due to DPS
- October 10, 2022 – Monthly report due to DPS
- November 10, 2022 – Monthly report due to DPS
- December 10, 2022 – Final report due to DPS and/or unexpended funds returned

1 State of Arkansas As Engrossed: S2/10/21 S3/3/21 S3/15/21 H4/8/21

2 93rd General Assembly

# A Bill

3 Regular Session, 2021

SENATE BILL 292

4

5 By: Senators Rapert, B. Johnson

6 By: Representatives Watson, M. Berry, Hollowell, McClure, Bentley, Beck, Rye, Crawford, C. Cooper,

7 Slape

8

9

## For An Act To Be Entitled

10 AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PUBLIC SAFETY EQUIPMENT GRANT  
11 PROGRAM; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER  
12 PURPOSES.

13

14

15

### Subtitle

16

ESTABLISHING THE PUBLIC SAFETY EQUIPMENT

17

GRANT PROGRAM; AND TO DECLARE AN

18

EMERGENCY.

19

20

21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

22

23 SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Legislative findings.

24 The General Assembly finds that:

25

(1) Implementing the best policing practices improves trust  
26 between law enforcement officers and persons in the communities in which they  
27 serve in Arkansas;

28

(2) The Task Force to Advance the State of Law Enforcement in  
29 Arkansas specifically recommended that law enforcement agencies in the State  
30 of Arkansas seek and apply for federal, state, and local funding  
31 opportunities to aid in the implementation of state-of-the-art body cameras,  
32 as well as adequate server storage to aid in better surveillance for all  
33 agencies;

34

(3) Specifically, the task force advocated for funding  
35 legislation that helps to ensure that all front line duty officers will be  
36 wearing state-of-the-art body cameras by 2026; and



1           (4) Other nonlethal forms of equipment, including but not  
2 limited to conducted electrical devices, rubber bullets, pepper spray, and  
3 bulletproof vests are all essential to protecting the lives of police  
4 officers and those in the community that they serve.

5  
6           SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 12, Chapter 1, is amended to add an  
7 additional section to read as follows:

8           12-1-103. Public Safety Equipment Grant Program.

9           (a)(1) There is created within the Department of Public Safety the  
10 Public Safety Equipment Grant Program to be administered by the Secretary of  
11 the Department of Public Safety.

12           (2) The secretary may hire personnel necessary to carry out the  
13 duties of administering the program.

14           (3)(A) The secretary shall establish a grant review committee to  
15 evaluate applications and to advise on the awarding of grants under the  
16 program.

17           (B) The grant review committee shall consist of law  
18 enforcement officers and other interested persons as determined by the  
19 secretary.

20           (b)(1) In consultation with the grant review committee, the secretary  
21 shall award grants under the program to law enforcement agencies, detention  
22 centers, and corrections agencies for equipment that aids in improving trust  
23 and relationships between law enforcement agencies, detention centers, and  
24 corrections agencies and the communities that they serve.

25           (2) Grants may be made for equipment, training, or accreditation  
26 including without limitation:

27           (A) Body cameras with auto-activation capabilities;

28           (B) In-car cameras with auto-activation capabilities;

29           (C) Cloud-based storage services;

30           (D) On-premises server hardware and storage to accomodate  
31 on-premises installations;

32           (E) Conducted electrical devices and related training  
33 programs;

34           (F) Virtual reality training;

35           (G) Agency accreditation programs;

36           (H) Bulletproof vests;

1 (I) Pepper spray;

2 (J) Rubber bullets; and

3 (K) Other equipment as deemed necessary by the secretary.

4 (3) As a condition for receiving a grant under this section, the  
5 secretary may require a law enforcement agency, detention center, or  
6 corrections agency to provide matching funds at a percentage to be determined  
7 by the secretary.

8 (4) As a part of the grant application process and in  
9 consultation with the grant review committee, the secretary may:

10 (A) Design procedures and criteria for awarding grants under this  
11 section;

12 (B) Receive and review applications for grants under this  
13 section;

14 (C) Prescribe the form, nature, and extent of the  
15 information that shall be contained in an application for a grant under this  
16 section;

17 (D) Audit and inspect the records of grant recipients; and

18 (E) Require reports from grant recipients.

19 (c) On or before October 1 of each year, the secretary shall submit a  
20 report to the Governor and the cochairs of the Legislative Council providing  
21 an account of the activities and expenditures of the program during the  
22 preceding calendar year.

23

24 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code Title 19, Chapter 5, Subchapter 12, is  
25 amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

26 19-5-1269. Public Safety Equipment Grant Program Fund.

27 (a) There is created on the books of the Treasurer of State, the  
28 Auditor of State, and the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State a miscellaneous  
29 fund to be known as the "Public Safety Equipment Grant Program Fund".

30 (b) The fund shall consist of:

31 (1) General revenues authorized by law;

32 (2) Moneys obtained from private grants or other sources that  
33 are designated to be credited to the fund; and

34 (3) Any other revenues authorized by law.

35 (c) The fund shall be used by the Secretary of the Department of  
36 Public Safety as provided in § 12-1-103.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36

SECTION 4. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that nonlethal equipment can save lives and improve transparency between law enforcement and the communities that they serve; and that this act provides for the nonlethal equipment necessary to save lives and improve transparency. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for the improvement of transparency between law enforcement and the communities that they serve shall become effective on:

(1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

(2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor, the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the bill; or

(3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.

*/s/Rapert*

**APPROVED: 4/20/21**