



Department of Public Safety
Minnesota Office of Justice Programs

2024-2025 Law Enforcement and Fire Department Therapy Dog Grant Program

GRANT REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	1
Request for Proposals (RFP) Part 1: Overview	2
1.1 General Information	2
1.2 Program Description	2
Additional resources.....	3
1.3 Minnesota’s Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion	3
1.4 Funding and Project Dates	3
Funding.....	3
Available Funding.....	3
Application Cap	3
Project Dates.....	3
1.5 Eligible Applicants.....	3
1.6 Questions, Technical Assistance, and Information Sessions	4
RFP Information Sessions	4
RFP Part 2: Application Process and Instructions.....	4
2.1 Application Deadline.....	4
2.2 Application Submission Instructions	4
2.3 Terms and Conditions, Grant Program Guidelines, OJP Grant Manual.....	4
2.4 Application Content.....	5
The application consists of the following required parts; any missing part will prevent the application from submission.	5
Project Information Form	5
Narrative.....	5
Budget:	6
Organizational Financial Information Form	6
Application Checklist	7
RFP Part 3: Application Review Process.....	7
RFP Part 4: Post Award Requirements.....	7
RFP Part 5: Right of Cancellation	8

Request for Proposals (RFP) Part 1: Overview

1.1 General Information

- Grant Name: *Law Enforcement and Fire Department Therapy Dog Grant Program*
- [Minnesota Office of Justice Programs \(OJP\) Website](#)
- Open for Applications: Tuesday, August 27th, 2024
- Application Due Date: Monday, September 30th, 2024 by 4:00 pm

1.2 Program Description

The Department of Public Safety, Office of Justice Programs (DPS-OJP) is requesting proposals to fund grants to support law enforcement agencies and fire departments to acquire, train, and maintain therapy dogs to aid in treating peace officers and firefighters suffering from job-related trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder and to assist in responding to calls involving persons in crisis.

Background: Dog therapy programs for first responders are gaining recognition as vital tools for enhancing mental health, resilience, and community relations. The integration of therapy dogs into law enforcement agencies and fire departments provide:

- **Comfort and Resilience:** First responders often face high-stress situations, leading to increased rates of mental health issues like PTSD, anxiety, and depression. Studies and initiatives, such as those highlighted by the Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI) and Mental Health America, show that interactions with dogs can reduce stress, lower blood pressure, and increase oxytocin levels, which help improve mood and reduce anxiety.
- **Support for Law Enforcement:** Police departments are increasingly adopting therapy dog programs to support officer wellness. Programs like those in the [Woodbury Police Department](#) and [Pinole Police Department](#) have introduced therapy dogs to provide emotional support during and after traumatic incidents, enhancing officers' ability to cope with the demands of their work. [The IACP's research](#) underscores the role of dogs in building resilience among officers, making them better equipped to handle stress.
- **Community and Victim Support:** Therapy dogs also play a crucial role in bridging the gap between law enforcement and the community. They are used to comfort crime victims, reduce the trauma experienced during investigations, and foster positive community relations. For

example, the [FBI's Therapy Dog](#) Program and various police department initiatives demonstrate how therapy dogs help in calming crime victims and improving their interaction with law enforcement.

- Positive Public Perception: The presence of therapy dogs can significantly improve the public's perception of the police. As seen in cases like the introduction of [Otis](#), a therapy dog in Woodbury, these programs not only support officers and victims but also enhance community trust and engagement, which are crucial for successful law enforcement.

Additional resources

- [How Science Supports Pets for Improving Your Mental Health | Mental Health America \(mhanational.org\)](#)
- [HABRI | The Human Animal Bond Research Institute](#)
- [News Flash • Ashes Earns Service Dog Certification \(cityofroseville.com\)](#)
- [AKC Therapy Dog Program – American Kennel Club](#)

1.3 Minnesota's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

It is State of Minnesota policy to ensure equity, diversity, and inclusion in making competitive grant awards. See Executive Order [19.01](#).

The Policy on Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities and/or disparities. See [OGM Policy 08-02](#).

1.4 Funding and Project Dates

Funding

Funds are authorized by [MN Laws of 2024, Chapter 123, Article 1, Section 4, subd. 4c](#).

This is a onetime appropriation.

Available Funding

\$100,000 is available for the grant program.

Application Cap

Eligible law enforcement agencies and fire departments may receive grants of up to \$10,000. Final award amounts may be lower than requested.

Project Dates

This is a one-year grant period, from around December 2024 through December 2025.

1.5 Eligible Applicants

Local, state, and tribal law enforcement agencies and fire departments.

1.6 Questions, Technical Assistance, and Information Sessions

Please submit any questions regarding this RFP by email to natty.b.hels@state.mn.us. Answers will be posted on the [OJP website](#) within seven days of receipt.

RFP Information Sessions

OJP will offer one online information session that includes a Q&A section. In this session, staff will provide a brief background on the *Law Enforcement and Fire Department Therapy Dog Grant Program*, walk through the RFP and application requirements, and give an overview of the application review process. At the end of the session, staff will open it up for questions. Although not required, prospective applicants are encouraged to participate in the information session. Questions and answers from the information session will be posted on the Frequently Asked Questions' page on the OJP Website.

- *Law Enforcement and Fire Department Therapy Dog Grant Program* Information Session: Monday, September 9, 2024, 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm: [Register here.](#)

RFP Part 2: Application Process and Instructions

2.1 Application Deadline

Applications must be submitted using the [e-grants](#) web-based system by Monday, September 30, 2024, 4:00 pm. Applications cannot be submitted and will not be accepted after this time. No paper submissions will be accepted.

2.2 Application Submission Instructions

Applications must be submitted via e-grants, the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) online grants management system. [e-grants](#) can also be accessed via the [Office of Justice Programs](#) website.

If you have never applied for a grant with the Office of Justice Programs, create a user account by clicking on the purple "New User" option in the login box in the upper right corner of the e-grants website and follow instructions to fill out the profile. Contact the e-grants Helpdesk at 1-800-820-1890 if you have login issues.

2.3 Terms and Conditions, Grant Program Guidelines, OJP Grant Manual

As part of submitting this application in e-grants the applicant agency agrees to the Terms and Conditions of OJP Grantees for applicants as well as the *Law Enforcement and Fire Department Therapy Dog Grant Program* Guidelines. These address federal and state requirements such as worker's compensation, civil rights, affirmative action, and data privacy. By agreeing to these in e-grants the applicant is confirming that they can make these commitments. Applicants are encouraged to print and review these documents with the appropriate agency staff prior to submitting the application in e-grants. If selected for funding, the grantee will need to submit required certifications. Grantees agree to

follow the OJP [Grant Manual](#), which provides basic information on policies and procedures for grant administration. These documents become, by reference, part of the formal grant contract agreement.

2.4 Application Content

The application consists of the following required parts; any missing part will prevent the application from submission.

Project Information Form

Input this information directly into the form in e-grants and it will be used as the cover sheet for the application. You will need:

- Contact information for the Fiscal Agent (This is the agency named in the grant contract and responsible for the administration of the grant)
- Authorized Representative
- Operating Agency's info, if different from Fiscal Agent
- Contact information for the person/s responsible for programming, financials, and contracts.
- Brief project description, including project's geographic information.
- State if this is a new, expansion or continuation of a project/program

Narrative

Format:

- *The maximum length of the narrative document is 7 pages, with 1" margins, single spaced, and with 12-point font size.*
- *Organize your narrative by answering each item in the order they are listed below, labeling, and numbering responses accordingly.*
- *Proposals are scored based on your responses to these questions. Narrative documents that do not follow this format do not score well in the grant application review process. Do not include any additional pages or supplemental materials; these will not be provided to reviewers.*
- *When ready to submit, upload the narrative as an attachment in e-grants.*

The narrative must address the following items:

1. Organizational Overview

- Provide a brief description of agency's mission and history.
- Share your agency's experience with past grant management.

2. Project Description

- **Need.** State the need for your program and include the problem your program is addressing. (Preference will be given to applicants that demonstrate that the agency's peace officers or department's firefighters suffer a high rate of job-related trauma or post-traumatic stress

disorder or are exposed regularly to high-stress incidents that are known to cause job-related trauma or post-traumatic stress disorder.)

- **Best/Promising Practices.**
 - Describe what best or promising practices your project will employ. Explain what education or training staff have received or will receive on those best or promising practices.
 - Share details about your agency's plan to acquire, train, and introduce a therapy dog in the team. Include staff members involved, responsibilities and, if applicable, training centers and/or partnerships.
- **Long-term care.** Describe your plan to care for the canine longer-term and the continuation of your program beyond the grant period.

3. Timeline

Please share a timeline that outlines your agency's plans to use the funding.

4. Evaluation

Project evaluation can help you understand, verify, or increase the effect of your project. It also provides data to highlight your project's impact.

- What is your plan to evaluate/report the impact of the therapy dog in your agency?
- What is your plan to evaluate/report the impact of the therapy dog in your community?

Budget:

Your budget should be consistent with your narrative and timeline. Please share details about what you plan to purchase with the funds. All expenses must be listed and directly chargeable to the grant. When estimating costs, please show your calculations by including quantities, unit costs, and other details. Only include grant funded expenses in the budget descriptions.

Enter budget information directly into e-grants. Directions for entering the budget are available in the [Application Guide](#). The Budget Detail Requirements in Appendix A will show you examples and specific requirements for each of the line items. Budget line items may include Personnel, Payroll Taxes & Fringe, Contract Services, Travel, Training, Office Expenses, Program Expenses, and Other Expenses. Not all line items need to be used.

Organizational Financial Information Form

This Information will be entered into e-grants form.

- *Grantee Information (entity type)*
- *Fiscal Information (accounting basis, fiscal year)*
- *Financial Documentation (based on annual revenue amount)*

- *Administrative Systems & Internal Controls (upload organizational chart)*
- *Grant Management Experience*

Application Checklist

An application must include the following to be forwarded for review:

(e-grants will not let the application be submitted if any of these are missing)

1. **Project Information form**
2. **Narrative** - Addressing questions listed above must be uploaded
3. **Budget** - Calculations must be included
4. **Organization Financial Information**

RFP Part 3: Application Review Process

This is a competitive application process. A review committee will read and rate applications using a 100-point scale. The reviewers will meet and discuss the proposals and then put forth their recommendation. A copy of the review form will be on the OJP grants page. A final staff review will consider geographic locations, coordination with other federal, state, and local funding, and past grantee performance. Timeliness and completeness of past grant financial and progress reporting is also considered. The Commissioner of Public Safety will make the final funding decisions and award notification will be by email to applicants.

RFP Part 4: Post Award Requirements

- **Pre-Award Risk Assessment and Financial Review.** In accordance with state and federal grant management policies it is required to consider a grant applicant's past performance before awarding subsequent grants to them. State policy requires states to conduct a financial review prior to a grant award made of \$25,000 and higher to any organization. The necessary information for these is provided in the financial information form in the application.
- **Minnesota's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion in Procurement**
The State of Minnesota is committed to diversity and inclusion in its public procurement process. The goal is to ensure that those providing goods and services to the State are representative of our Minnesota communities and include businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, and those with substantial physical disabilities. Creating broader opportunities for historically under-represented groups provides for additional options and greater competition in the marketplace, creates stronger relationships and engagement within our communities, and fosters economic development and equality.
To further this commitment, the Department of Administration operates a program for Minnesota-based small businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, and those with

substantial physical disabilities. For additional information on this program, or to determine eligibility, please call 651-296-2600 or go to the [OEP website](#).

- **Grant Contract Process.** After being selected for funding, OJP staff will work with the applicant to negotiate a final budget. The formal grant contract consists of the Grant Agreement, the Terms and Conditions, the Program Guidelines, as well as the work plan and budget. The Grant Agreement will be initiated, signed by grantee and OJP, and once fully executed it is then a legally binding agreement. Grant agreements not signed within 30 days of receipt may be canceled.
- **Progress Reporting.** An initial report is due by January 15, 2025, and a final report is due by January 15, 2026. Quarterly progress reports will be required as well.
- **Grant Payments.** This is a cost reimbursement grant. Grantees will only be paid for eligible expenses (after the grant contract is fully executed) that are incurred and are consistent with the negotiated budget.
- **OJP Grant Manual.** Grantees, grantee subgrants and contracts agree to follow the OJP Grant Manual as part of the application process. The manual is a resource for how our office manages grants and covers topics such as grant administration policies, program modification policies, general accounting requirements, etc. [OJP Grant Manual](#)
- **Expiring Grant Funds.** A portion of the total grant award will expire on June 30, 2025. See the Special Conditions page of the grant contract for details.
- **Grantee Orientation.** Grant award recipients will be required to have a representative, or representatives of the organization receiving the award, attend a future OJP grantee orientation session.

RFP Part 5: Right of Cancellation

The State reserves the right to cancel this solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest. The State reserves the right to negotiate modifications to the application or to reject any and all applications received as a result of this Request for Proposals. The State does not intend to award a grant contract solely on the basis of any response made to this request or pay for information solicited or obtained.