

Proposal Narrative

The Blount County Sheriff's Office is requesting funding assistance from the Office of Justice Programs Justice Assistance Grant Local Solicitation for FY 2022-23 for the purpose of purchasing new technology equipment to make a greater impact on communications for all law enforcement activities in Blount County. The Sheriff, James L. Berrong, intends to purchase four (4) new interoperable radios and accessories for patrol deputies in the field, allowing greater range of communications with other emergency services such as fire, 911, ambulance, in addition to surrounding municipalities, counties and other police jurisdictions.

- A) Blount County, the quiet side of the Smokies, is a major draw to industry, retirees, and many other groups desiring an attractive place to live. Due to the continued population growth, evidenced in the new census, area encompassed, proximity to an airport, major highways and state routes in and around Blount County, sharing of borders with cities experiencing large increases in gang, drug, violent crime activity, with the increase in traffic, comes the unfortunate increase in crime as well.
- B) The equipment will be utilized as soon as possible and will enhance the overall effectiveness of the patrol division. The enforcement tools will directly impact communications for all forms of law enforcement services. BCSO will comply with the SAFECOM Guidance for Emergency Communications Grants, support the Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan, and coordinate with the statewide interoperability coordinator.
- C) The Sheriff's Office provides quality criminal justice services to its citizens, including all investigative divisions, violent crime drug task force, SWAT, patrol unit, community

policing, transport, records management, training facilities, corrections staff, court support staff, and more. The Sheriff's Office actively pursues community-policing strategies with deputies and agents on a regular basis, participates in community events, and assists federal, state, and other local agencies as needed.

- D) With assistance from the OJP, the enhanced interoperability of communications will help the Sheriff's Office make Blount County safer. The request is based on the strain on local resources, as well as continuing growth in the City of Maryville, City of Alcoa and in the County, which is predominantly rural and covers a large area. The Sheriff's patrol unit works in coordination with local law enforcement agencies, to include the City of Maryville Police Dept, the City of Alcoa Police Dept., the Tennessee Highway Patrol, the Knoxville Police Dept., local EMS and Fire services, as well as other organizations in the fight against crime and the enhancement of public safety.
- E) Reduction in crime, increases in arrests and prosecutions are measures that would allow us to track the effectiveness of such equipment.

Members of the Patrol Unit are sworn deputies of the Blount County Sheriff's Office working in the pursuit of all patrol duties and emergency response. The interoperability of the equipment requested, will help them do their jobs more effectively.