



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

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**Department:** SHERIFF

**File #:** 18-033

Board Meeting Date: 1/9/2018

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**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**From:** Carlos G. Bolanos, Sheriff

**Subject:** FY 2017 DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction (CEBR) Program

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt a resolution accepting the FY 2017 DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction (CEBR) Program grant award in the amount of \$150,000, for the term January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2019.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Forensic DNA Backlog Capacity Enhancement and Reduction Program, through the U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, offers an opportunity for government entities with existing crime laboratories that conduct DNA analysis to handle, screen and analyze backlogged forensic DNA casework samples. This grant program also assists with improving DNA laboratory infrastructure and analysis capacity so that forensic DNA samples can be processed efficiently and cost effectively. These improvements are critical to preventing future DNA backlogs and to helping the criminal justice system use the full potential of DNA technology.

As of December 31, 2016, the Sheriff's Office Forensic Laboratory had an estimated 393 backlogged cases awaiting DNA analysis. A backlogged case, as defined by the National Institute of Justice, is one that has not been tested 30 days after submission to the laboratory.

**DISCUSSION:**

The Sheriff's Office applied for and has been awarded the FY 2017 DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction (CEBR) Program grant in the amount of \$150,000, for a period commencing January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2019. Funding will assist with overall turnaround time for the handling, screening, and analysis of forensic DNA samples, increase the throughput of the Sheriff's Office Forensic Laboratory, and reduce existing DNA forensic casework backlogs.

The DNA Backlog Capacity Enhancement and Reduction (CEBR) Program award will be applied towards: 1) funding travel and training expenses for two Criminalists to attend the 2017 Promega

International Symposium on Human Identification and the 2018 American Academy of Forensic Sciences Seminar; and 2) purchasing supplies for use in evidence examination.

Backlogged cases continue to pose a challenge for DNA analysts due to the continued submission of cold case requests by several agencies. This grant will increase the number of samples completed per analyst per month and will fund the completion of at least 143 cases while maintaining a turnaround time of less than 200 days.

The funding provided by the grant also allows our DNA analysts to fulfill their annual training requirement. These trainings provide our DNA analysts with the opportunity to learn about new technologies such as new robotics and software programs used by other forensic laboratories to reduce their backlogs and enhance their capacity. Our DNA analysts also benefit from hearing about upcoming technologies and advances in the field of forensic DNA that are in development but not yet in use in laboratory casework.

County Counsel has reviewed and approved the resolution as to form.

Approval of this grant award contributes to the Shared Vision 2025 outcome of a Safe Neighborhood by assisting with the reduction of the DNA backlog rate and turn-around time as well as helping the criminal justice system use the full potential of DNA technology.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURE:**

Measure	FY 2016-17 Actual	FY 2017-18 Projected
Average turnaround time to complete cases	208 days	200 days or less

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The FY 2017 DNA Backlog Capacity Enhancement and Reduction (CEBR) Program grant award is for the amount of \$150,000, commencing January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2019. This grant does not require matching County funds. There is no Net County Cost.