



Colorado Justice: Celebrating 42 years of fair
and impartial courts through merit selection

news

Colorado Judicial Branch
Mary J. Mullarkey, Chief Justice
Gerald Marroney, State Court Administrator

April 17, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jon Sarché
303-837-3644
1-800-888-0001 Ext. 644
jon.sarche@judicial.state.co.us

Court Security Commission awards \$1 million in grants *Forty-six counties share in first full round of grants*

DENVER – Forty-six counties in Colorado have been awarded nearly \$1 million in grants from a new state commission set up to distribute funds to help communities ensure the safety of the public and of employees in their courthouses.

Every county that applied for a grant received some funding from the seven-member Court Security Commission established under Senate Bill 07-118, sponsored by Sen. Brandon Shaffer, D-Longmont, and Rep. Steve King, R-Grand Junction, said Steven Steadman, court security specialist for the Colorado State Court Administrator's Office. The grants distributed in April represented the first full round of funding under the program. The commission also approved emergency requests from local security teams in Denver and in Lincoln counties.

“Under the law, counties are responsible for courthouse construction, security and maintenance, but sometimes their budgets can't accommodate all the competing needs, especially with the rapid rate of growth in caseloads in courts throughout Colorado” said Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Mary Mullarkey. “We are pleased the Court Security Fund grant program is working exactly as it was designed to provide supplemental funding to ensure safety in the state's courthouses based on each county's self-identified needs.”

The application period for the second round of grants, which will be distributed in September, will open in mid-June. Additional awards will be distributed annually. The legislation calls for the General Assembly to review the program in 2017 to decide whether to continue the grants.

The program is funded by surcharges on a variety of court fees that went into effect July 1, 2008. Requests for grants must be signed by a chief judge, a county commissioner and a county sheriff, each of whom may appoint a designee. Unless the commission approves a waiver, grants will reimburse counties for security-related spending specified in the grant applications.

The grants distributed in April included \$505,207 for a variety of security equipment and \$417,429 to fund additional personnel and training. Of the 46 counties that applied for funding, 34 were given the highest priority for need-based grants because they met factors included in the legislation. Such counties are those that meet at least two of the following criteria: total population below the state median; per-capita income below the state median; property tax revenues below the state median; or total population living below the federal poverty level is greater than the state median.

The April grants will fund 19 full-time and part-time security positions and will pay for a wide range of security equipment including magnetometers in 11 counties, video surveillance systems in seven counties, installation of duress alarm systems in eight counties and a video arraignment system in one county.

Questions may be directed to Steadman at steven.steadman@judicial.state.co.us or by calling 303-861-1111.