

## Agenda Item

**DATE:** AUGUST 16, 2021  
**TO:** DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
**THROUGH:** DOUGLAS J. DEBORD, COUNTY MANAGER  
**FROM:** DAN AVERY, AICP, SPECIAL PROJECTS MANAGER  
**CC:** BARBARA J. DRAKE, DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER  
**SUBJECT:** AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN UPDATE – 18<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT

---

### **SUMMARY**

Through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Douglas County will receive an allocation of \$68,207,548 from the US Department of Treasury (Treasury). Half of the allocation was already received, and the second half is payable next May.

The Board has previously heard a proposal from the 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District in June 14<sup>th</sup>. This work session is an opportunity to revisit the request with representatives from the District Attorney's office.

### **PROPOSAL OVERVIEW**

The District Attorney's office requests \$250,497.74 to offset reductions in grant funding in the Black and Gray Marijuana Grant, Victim Assistance and Law Enforcement (VALE) program, and Victim Compensation programs.

Funding is also requested for "7 FTE for a period of up to two years to address a backlog of 2,500 cases or 25% of our normal annual caseload." The request equates to approximately \$679,000 in salary, benefits and equipment needs for additional prosecutor staff.

In a Department of Treasury FAQ published on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, Treasury provided the following guidance on the use of funds in a manner similar to the DA's request:

**2.19. Would expenses to address a COVID-related backlog in court cases be an eligible use of funds as a response to the public health emergency? [6/23]**

The Interim Final Rule recognizes that "decrease[s to] a state or local government's ability to effectively administer services," such as cuts to public sector staffing levels, can constitute a negative economic impact of the pandemic. During the COVID-19 public health emergency, many courts were unable to operate safely during the pandemic and, as a result, now face significant backlogs.

Court backlogs resulting from inability of courts to safely operate during the COVID-19 pandemic decreased the government's ability to administer services. Therefore, steps to reduce these backlogs, such as implementing COVID-19 safety measures to facilitate court operations, hiring additional court staff or attorneys to increase speed of case resolution, and other expenses to expedite case resolution are eligible uses.

**NEXT STEPS**

Staff will continue to work with the Board on a prioritization process for ARPA proposals, present new and refined proposals for Board consideration, prepare monitoring reports for the Department of the Treasury, report to the Board on evolving Federal ARPA guidance, and monitor the work of State ARPA committees.