



COPS Fact Sheet

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COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Universal Hiring Program

"OUR CRIME RATE IS GOING DOWN AND THE PEACE AND TRANQUILITY SO LONG A TRADEMARK IN OUR COMMUNITY ARE BACK. THIS HAS BEEN THE MOST EFFECTIVE GRANT THAT I HAVE SEEN IN MY 32 YEARS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE FIELD."

FORMER POLICE COMMISSIONER
WILLIAM FLEET
ROME (NEW YORK) POLICE
DEPARTMENT

Adding Officers across the Nation

The Universal Hiring Program (UHP) is one of several programs developed by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (the COPS Office) to increase the number of officers on the streets of America. As state, local, and tribal law enforcement embrace the challenges of keeping communities safe, this is now more important than ever.

More than a decade ago as crime was soaring, law enforcement officers were rushing from incident to incident. Today, more than 14 years after the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 was signed into law, officers and citizens are partnering to develop creative and innovative ways to deal with long-standing community problems and public safety issues.

Supporting Local Law Enforcement

The COPS Office has awarded hiring grants through several programs during the course of its history. The COPS Office formed the Universal Hiring Program in 1995 to supersede early programs such as Phase I; Accelerated Hiring, Education, and Deployment (AHEAD); and Funding Accelerated for Smaller Towns (FAST). UHP enables invited agencies to supplement their current sworn forces through 3-year federal grants. To date, the COPS Office has funded the addition of nearly 117,000 officers. In all, the COPS Office has awarded more than 38,000 grants to 13,200 state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to advance community policing. In addition to funding

additional officers, these grants have been used to advance crime-fighting technology, support crime-prevention initiatives, and provide training and technical assistance.

Funding Provisions

The 2008 UHP grant program is available only to invited agencies. These agencies encompass jurisdictions with populations of 500,000 or more that report to UCR; all federally recognized tribes with populations of 10,000 or more; and agencies experiencing high rates of violent crime (as indicated through UCR analysis). The application process is competitive and applicants are subject to a funding cap of a maximum of three positions for agencies serving populations of 150,000 or less, and a maximum of 10 positions for agencies serving populations of more than 150,000.

UHP grants cover up to 75 percent of the approved entry-level salary and benefits of each newly hired additional officer position during the course of 3 years. There is a maximum federal contribution of \$75,000 per officer or deputy position during the 3-year grant period and a maximum 25 percent local match is required that must be a cash match from funds not previously budgeted for any law enforcement purpose. Funding will begin once the new officers have been hired or after the date of the award, and will be paid during the course of the grant.

There is a 25 percent local match requirement UHP 2008. Waivers of the local match will not be considered.

The COPS Office offers a variety of publications, products, and training opportunities to advance community policing and support its grant programs. COPS Office publications and products offer insights and experiences of others in the field addressing specific problems, and include the following:

- ✓ *Hiring in the Spirit of Service*
- ✓ *Implementing Responses to Problems*
- ✓ *Researching a Problem*
- ✓ *Partnering with Businesses to Address Public Safety Problems*
- ✓ *Award-Winning Community Policing Strategies*
- ✓ *Problem-Solving Tips: A Guide to Reducing Crime and Disorder through Problem-Solving Partnerships*
- ✓ *COPS Collaboration Toolkit*
- ✓ *Addressing Responses to Problems: An Introductory Guide to Police Problem-Solvers*
- ✓ *Call Management and Community Policing*

The COPS Office also sponsors training opportunities and conferences to give law enforcement professionals an opportunity to learn, network, and exchange ideas. COPS Office publications and training opportunities are posted on COPS Online at www.cops.usdoj.gov.

COPS Office grant funds cannot replace local funds that agencies otherwise would have devoted to sworn officer hiring. The hiring of officers under UHP must be in addition to, and not in lieu of, officers who otherwise would have been hired with local funds. All grant recipients must develop a written plan to retain the COPS Office-funded officer position for at least one full local budget cycle after federal funding has ended. This plan must be clearly specified in the Retention Plan Certification form that all applicants are required to submit at the time of their application.

Contact the COPS Office

For more information, call the COPS Office Response Center at 800.421.6770, or visit COPS Online at www.cops.usdoj.gov.