



Fulton County

Legislation Text

File #: 21-0169, Version: 1

Requested Action *(Identify appropriate Action or Motion, purpose, cost, timeframe, etc.)*

Request approval of a Memorandum of Understanding with non-profit partner Georgia Innocence Project (GIP) regarding the administration of U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance 2020 Upholding the Rule of Law and Preventing Wrongful Convictions (2020 URLPWC) Program Grant, Grant Award No. 2020-FA-BX-0012, in the amount of \$300,000.00. No cash match required. Effective dates: October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2022, with one 5-month renewal. **(APPROVED)**

Requirement for Board Action *(Cite specific Board policy, statute or code requirement)*

O.C.G.A. § 36-10-1 requires that all contracts entered into by the Board of Commissioners on behalf of the County shall be in writing and entered on the minutes.

Strategic Priority Area related to this item *(If yes, note strategic priority area below)*

Justice and Safety

Commission Districts Affected

- All Districts
- District 1
- District 2
- District 3
- District 4
- District 5
- District 6

Is this a purchasing item?

Choose an item.

Summary & Background *(First sentence includes Agency recommendation. Provide an executive summary of the action that gives an overview of the relevant details for the item.)*

The Office of the Fulton County District Attorney's (FCDAO) Conviction Integrity Unit (CIU) is the first and only conviction integrity unit in the state of Georgia. Of Georgia's 159 counties, Fulton is the most populous with the highest number of criminal convictions, representing almost 10% of the 55,000 people incarcerated in Georgia's prisons. CIU has received 121 case review requests, including 54 actual innocence claims (46 from pro se applicants).

Though independent, the Georgia Innocence Project (GIP) and CIU are necessarily connected. Each have overlapping cases: depending on case stage, between 15% to 30% of GIP's cases originate from Fulton County. Each are tackling the massive problem of correcting and preventing wrongful convictions in a state that has the highest rate of correctional control in

the nation, and an estimated 2,200 innocent people wrongfully imprisoned. And each are searching for ways to leverage limited resources to increase capacity.

FCDAO CIU and GIP jointly submitted a 2020 URLPWC grant proposal called “Streamlining Identification and Correction of Wrongful Convictions in Georgia. The grant allowed GIP and the FCDAO CIU to come together as lead applicant and sub-recipient, respectively. Since up to 30% of GIP cases are from the Fulton County District Attorney’s Office, the grant will provide paralegal support to CIU to help standardize and streamline its operations. That, in turn, will reduce the workload and demands on GIP, while facilitating a cooperative and information-sharing relationship to more effectively and efficiently identify, correct, and prevent wrongful convictions in Georgia.

GIP proposes to hire a Project Attorney to coordinate pro bono attorneys who work up GIP’s screening stage cases, advancing them toward resolution. Screening is time and labor intensive: it often involves creating detailed factual summaries of thousands of pages of documents. By hiring a project attorney to manage volunteer lawyers and professionals, GIP can help more people, more quickly. This two year grant is from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2022, with the possibility of it being extended through February 2023. There is not a required cash match for the award. The award is in the amount of \$300,000. With half of the grant funding, \$150,000, CIU will pay salary and benefits of a paralegal in the amount of \$70,103 each year. The reimbursable grant funds will be fronted by Fulton County. GIP agrees to request reimbursement from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) of all grant money expended. GIP will seek reimbursement on at least a quarterly basis. GIP also agrees to distribute funds received by the DOJ to Fulton County within 10 days of the receipt of said funds.

By collaborating with grant funding, GIP and CIU can ensure people with claims of innocence are properly represented and their cases are properly investigated. This collaboration will dramatically increase the likelihood of resolving wrongful convictions in Georgia.

Contract Modification *(Delete this chart only if the Requested Action is for a NEW award. Simply insert the text “New Procurement.” If the Requested Action is for a Contract Modification ((Renewal, Amendment, Change Order, Extension, Increase Spending Authority)), the chart should remain and be completed.)*

Current Contract History	BOC Item	Date	Dollar Amount
Original Award Amount			\$.00
1st Renewal			\$.00
2 nd Renewal			\$.00
Extension #1			\$.00
Total Revised Amount			\$.00

Grant Information Summary

Amount Requested: \$140,206 Cash
Match Required: \$0 In-Kind
Start Date: October 1, 2020 Approval to Award
End Date: September 30, 2022 Apply & Accept
Match Account \$: \$0

Fiscal Impact / Funding Source

Funding Line 1:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Funding Line 2:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Funding Line 3:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Funding Line 4:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Funding Line 5:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Key Contract Terms	
Start Date: Click here to enter a date.	End Date: Click here to enter a date.
Cost Adjustment: Click here to enter text.	Renewal/Extension Terms: Click here to enter text.

Overall Contractor Performance Rating:

Would you select/recommend this vendor again?

Choose an item.

Report Period Start: **Report Period End:**

[Click here to enter a date.](#) [Click here to enter a date.](#)