

Bullet Proof Vests

Collin County

2300 Bloomdale Road
McKinney, Texas 75071

Grant Proposal

to

CoServ Charitable Foundation

October 6, 2014

Organizational Statement of Purpose

The mission of Collin County is to deliver services including justice, public safety, infrastructure, and public health as mandated by the State of Texas and to execute other priorities as determined by the Commissioners Court. Collin County carries out our mission by delivering timely, high quality state mandated services in the most cost effective and innovative manner possible. We strive for excellence from our employees and outstanding value for our citizens. We encourage citizen involvement and will maintain the family oriented quality of life we enjoy while preserving our rich heritage. By maintaining low taxes and a strong tax base, Collin County is committed to high quality growth to attract successful businesses that provide excellent career opportunities for our citizens. Collin County strives for financial stability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness. We initiate discretionary projects after determining their value to our citizens.

Project Description

Collin County employs 481 certified peace and detention officers who provide judicial and law enforcement services, including patrol, criminal investigations, detention, warrant and civil process service, and courtroom security throughout the county. These men and women face potentially dangerous situations on a daily basis, and as such, Collin County requires the use of ballistic-resistant soft body armor through a mandatory wear policy. Body armor, also known as a bullet proof vest, is considered critical personal protective equipment necessary for law enforcement and corrections officers. It provides an increased level of protection for a range of criminal and accidental threats that officers face in everyday law enforcement events, not just in the expected, high-risk situations. Wearing body armor allows officers to protect themselves so they can protect others.

Lightweight body armor has been widely available for use by law enforcement personnel for more than 30 years, and the decreasing number of officers killed since then attests to the protection it provides. While firearms are one of the most dangerous threats faced by law enforcement officers, body armor has over 3,000 documented saves that include motor vehicle crashes, officers struck by vehicles, lightning strikes, ox gores, explosions, falls, cement blocks tossed from buildings, tow truck cable snaps, horse kicks, and bicycle and motorcycle spills, as well as protection from firearms.

The use of weapons of all types, particularly handguns by those with criminal intent, poses a constant threat to officers, whether they are performing a routine traffic stop, responding to a domestic quarrel, or serving arrest warrants. According to data published by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), approximately 92% of the 535 non-federal law enforcement officers feloniously killed in the line of duty between 2003 and 2012 were killed by a firearm. In 2012 alone, 48 law enforcement officers died from injuries incurred in the line of duty during felonious incidents; 44 were killed with firearms. A study analyzing 561 line-of-duty shootings over a 4 year period found that body armor more than triples the likelihood that a police officer will survive a shooting to the torso. In the past two years, Collin County officers have been fired upon while serving an arrest warrant and responding to a disturbance call; they have been assaulted in the line of duty on numerous occasions.

Additionally, the same properties that provide ballistic protection—resistance to penetration and blunt trauma—when combined with abrasion resistance materials have also saved many officers from serious physical injury in vehicular accidents, motorcycle accidents, and injury from physical assault with 2 by 4's, baseball bats, and other rigid objects. According to a 2010 RAND Corporation study, outfitting all law enforcement officers in the United States with body armor would result in a benefit that is nearly twice the cost. Vests save lives.

For the past 10 years, Collin County has received a U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) grant to provide bullet proof vests for those employees who require soft body armor. As such, the county does not annually budget for these expenses. Unfortunately, the bill reauthorizing the program stalled in Congress, and we were notified in July 2014 that we would not be receiving DOJ grant funds this year. The county is unable to absorb the cost of this life-saving equipment this far into the budget cycle for FY 2015. We are requesting grant funding from the CoServ Charitable Foundation to cover the costs associated with purchase of 47 ballistic vests for employees whose vests expire this year or who have need of but have not currently been issued body armor.

Project Goals/Objectives

Goal – Improve public safety through prevention/reduction of injury to law enforcement officers

Objectives

- Purchase ballistic vests for 47 employees with body armor needs
- Train new officers in proper wear and maintenance

Budget/Expense Description

| Item | Description | Grant Funding |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Soft body armor/bullet proof vests | 47 vests @ \$553 each | \$ 25,991.00 |
| | | \$ 25,991.00 |

Soft body armor is made of several layers of ballistic-resistant fabric, which absorb and disperse kinetic energy over a wide area. When a bullet strikes a vest, the horizontal and vertical fibers pull synchronously, not only slowing the bullet down to prevent penetration, with each successive layer absorbing additional energy, but also deforming the bullet, further limiting its ability to pierce the vest.

Collin County is in need of 103 ballistic vests for current county employees whose vests are expired/expiring (96) in the next 12 months or who have currently not been issued body armor (7). In addition to these vests, Collin County anticipates employee turnover throughout the year will increase our need for new body armor purchases. Each vest is custom created exactly to the officer's measurements to facilitate unrestricted movement and optimal protection. Therefore, vests cannot be re-issued to new incoming employees who may be of differing height, weight, or gender from the previous officer.

We are requesting funds from the CoServ Charitable Foundation to purchase 47 ballistic vests. We are also requesting \$19,984 through the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation for 31 vests, as well as \$14,219 combined from various local Target stores for 25 vests through their Community Safety program.