

2022 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program  
Oklahoma District Attorneys Council  
Proposal Narrative

**A. DESCRIPTION OF THE ISSUE**

**A 1. Overview**

The Oklahoma District Attorneys Council (DAC) has served as the state administering agency for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program since 1986. The DAC utilizes a board that provides general oversight for the JAG program, approves the state strategy, prioritizes purpose areas for funding, reviews grant proposals, and determines awards.

Comprised of 17 voting and non-voting members, the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Board represents a cross section of state and federal criminal justice agencies in Oklahoma.

The following agencies have representatives that serve on the JAG Board:

***Voting Members***

- A district attorney
- Oklahoma Association of Chiefs of Police
- Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs Control
- Oklahoma Department of Corrections
- Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- Oklahoma Department of Public Safety
- Oklahoma District Attorneys Council
- Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security
- Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs
- Oklahoma Sheriffs' Association
- Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation
- The Office of the Attorney General
- The Office of the Governor

***Non-Voting Members***

- Drug Enforcement Administration
- U.S. Attorneys for the Western, Eastern, and Northern Districts of Oklahoma

The JAG Board leverages federal funding to best allocate the state's resources in responding to Oklahoma's most pressing needs, such as controlling drug trafficking, limiting violent crimes, and focusing on the most serious offenders.

The District Attorneys Council has developed a five-year state strategic plan that charts the JAG Board's goals and objectives; the plan will guide Oklahoma's JAG grant expenditures through the end of 2025.

## **A 2. 2021-2025 State Strategy Funding Priorities: FY 2022 JAG Funds**

From a careful review of the data and analysis, the following goals were established:

1. Increase collaboration between law enforcement agencies, specialized task forces, and community agencies in working cases and sharing resources.
  - Require subgrantees to have at least 1 project goal aimed toward improving or increasing collaboration at the community level and/or with state, federal, and tribal law enforcement agencies.
2. Support law enforcement agencies by awarding eligible local law enforcement equipment awards (maximum \$10,000) of Department of Justice-approved items.
  - Continue to support eligible law enforcement agencies by awarding the local law enforcement equipment awards for each year covered in the state strategic plan.
3. Reduce the number of violent crimes occurring in Oklahoma by funding specialized task forces whose sole aim is to identify, arrest, and prosecute perpetrators of these crimes.

- Designate at least 50% of the total JAG award budget to grant awards that fund or support specialized task forces during each funding cycle covered in the state strategic plan.
4. Expand access and awareness of substance abuse treatment for offenders in custody or serving sentences.
    - Fund at least 1 substance abuse treatment program for offenders in custody or serving sentences during each funding cycle covered in this state strategic plan.
  5. Enhance the ability of specialized task forces to identify, investigate, and prosecute drug-related crimes.
    - Supply at least 1 annual training for specialized investigators that focuses on improving the quality of investigative work surrounding drug crimes.
  6. Improve awareness of the prevalence of domestic violence, circulating relevant and productive resources to law enforcement about effectively investigating and prosecuting these cases.
    - Provide each subgrantee with the contact information for the District Attorneys Council's Training and Outreach Division.
    - Establish an open channel of communication between task force personnel and the District Attorneys Council Training and Outreach Division for sharing resources and requesting training, and so that division can circulate informational materials.
  7. Identify and nurture alternative sustainable funding sources for drug and violent crime task forces.

8. Heighten the ability of prosecutors to efficiently investigate and charge offenders of gang violence, domestic violence, and/or drug related crimes.
  - Offer 1 specialized training annually for prosecutors working cases involving gang violence, domestic violence, and/or drug crimes.
  - Connect specialized prosecutors with the District Attorneys Council's Training and Outreach Division, creating space for a dialogue to exist for resources, training, and new investigative approaches.
9. Improve the ability for JAG programs across all purpose areas to respond to drug treatment and rehabilitation needs, improving access to residential in-patient programs, and alternatives to incarceration.
  - When possible, subgrantees will explore alternative options to incarceration, routing eligible persons to treatment programs, drug court, in-patient programs, court diversion programs or other innovative alternatives to incarceration.
  - Award at least 1 drug treatment program that functions as an alternative to incarceration during each funding cycle covered in this state strategic plan.
10. Seek out training opportunities and resources for law enforcement officers, encouraging recipients of JAG awards to utilize and expand their training on issues such as offender re-entry, mental health training, and trauma training.
  - Locate training opportunities and network with other agencies across the state to develop and organize training sessions that provide specialized topical training for law enforcement officers.

11. Develop programs to upgrade technology and databases, improve information sharing equipment, and pursue new technology for use by law enforcement personnel.

- Award technology upgrades as part of the JAG local law enforcement equipment grant.

12. Support community-based programs that aid children exposed to violence.

- Reach out to organizations across the state specializing in children exposed to violence programs and encourage these agencies to apply for funding.
- Consider funding a grant specifically focused on helping children exposed to violence.
- Encourage JAG subgrantees to cooperate and work with these programs across the state.

Consistent with the above goals, it is anticipated that the following broad categories of programs may be funded: 1) multijurisdictional drug and violent crime task forces; 2) gang-related enforcement and prosecution projects; 3) residential substance abuse treatment for incarcerated offenders; 4) drug treatment diversion programs; 5) programs that aid children exposed to violence, and 6) equipment for local law enforcement.

### **A 3. Progress and Challenges**

For the 2021/2023 subgrant cycle, the JAG Board awarded 12 multijurisdictional task forces, one residential corrections-based drug treatment program, two gang-related prosecution projects, and one project aimed toward tracking and organizing all evidence related to violent crimes and firearms. All task forces work daily with local, state, federal, and tribal law enforcement agencies to work cases, share intel and resources, and help with assists as needed. The following trainings have been conducted for the drug and violent crime task forces (DVCTFs): de-

escalation training, trauma-informed approach, PTSD and law enforcement, and racially biased policing. In July of 2022, task force investigators were provided with additional training on community policing and white-collar crime and public corruption. Additional training opportunities are routed to the investigators as received. Prosecutors for the district attorneys' offices receive regular training on a variety of topics through DAC conferences, bootcamps, and other such training events. The local law enforcement equipment grant was awarded in 2021 and will be awarded again in 2022. For the 2021 grant, the board awarded multiple technology upgrades to subrecipients.

Thus far, the 2021/2023 DVCTFs have worked a total of 313 non-drug cases spanning everything from aggravated assault (52), homicide (38), sexual assault (49), and other (120). In addition to working these cases, investigators assist other law enforcement agencies. In total, 2,823 assists were recorded so far.

Because drug possession is now a misdemeanor crime in Oklahoma, gathering informants is next to impossible. Working to dismantle large drug trafficking organizations becomes more difficult without informants. The task forces have innovatively turned to social media to create fake profiles and buy drugs via the text message feature of these apps and have achieved some success doing so. The new drug laws have caused the task forces to concentrate their efforts on interdiction and violent crime investigations. Based on one subgrant progress report so far, 359 drug arrests have been levied, with 202 arrests, or 56.3%, related to meth.

The most notable element of the DVCTFs is the level of communication and collaboration between various agencies, from tiny rural police departments, the FBI, ATF, and tribal law enforcement. The 2020 McGirt Supreme Court decision ruled that much of eastern Oklahoma is still Native American land per the reservations Congress never disestablished. This

decision has changed how law enforcement and prosecution in the state works cases, as prosecuting a case involving a Native American offender or victim stays at the tribal or federal level, with no state jurisdiction at all. State and local law enforcement rely more heavily on relationships with their federal and tribal contacts in the wake of this decision. Inter-agency cooperation is vital, and the task forces have already established and built strong relationships. As of June 2022, state police are now able to work cases involving crimes against Native victims perpetrated by non-Native offenders, even if the crime happens on tribal land. This should reduce victimization of Native individuals and allow justice to be served against non-Native offenders that have targeted a Native victim.

The JAG Board utilized the 2021-2025 state strategic plan as a guide in making their 2021/2023 JAG subawards, but the aim is to have the board utilize the plan more extensively in future years and funding cycles. The goal is for the 2023/2025 subgrant cycle to include funding for children exposed to violence and one drug treatment program that functions as an alternative to incarceration. In order to meet the goals and objectives of Oklahoma's state strategic plan, as well as ensure all criminal justice needs are met and addressed, the DAC has created a state strategic planning committee composed of non-JAG Board members. This committee will review the state strategic plan, help advise the board on goals and objectives for the state, improve equity in the subgrant application process, and address board composition.

#### **A 4. Subgrantee Award Process and Timeline**

The JAG Board utilizes two separate award processes: one for JAG programs, and one for the JAG Local Law Enforcement (LLE) grant. DAC applies through DOJ for the federal allocation of JAG each year. Applicants for JAG apply every two years, while applicants for the LLE grant apply every year.

The Notice of Availability of Funds (NOAF) for JAG is sent out in February every other year to all current subgrantees and interested applicants. DAC maintains a database of interested applicants that contains updated email addresses and mailing addresses. For the JAG LLE grant, which is for eligible equipment (up to \$10,000), the NOAF is sent out in August each year. Just like for JAG, DAC has a database for those interested in the JAG LLE grant.

The application process for both grants is through OKGrants, which is an online grant management system. The application period is open for 30 days, with JAG applications due in March and LLE applications due in September. The JAG Board meets in May of award years to review the JAG applications and make funding decisions. For JAG LLE, decisions are made in November.

The next JAG award cycle will begin in February of 2023 and awarded subgrants will have a start date of July 1, 2023. The current subgrants began on July 1, 2021. Grant recipients must make significant progress on their goals and objectives for the entire 24 months. Failure to do so can lead to award termination. The JAG awards are extremely competitive in Oklahoma, with many applicants vying for the chance to have their program funded. In order to be eligible for funding, the applicant must be eligible under the grant program requirements, be in good standing with all previous and current grant awards, and meet the requirements of the application process.

The JAG LLE grant is a six-month award running from January 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>. The next award cycle begins in August of 2022 for a start date of January 1, 2023. In order to be eligible for funding, the applicant must be eligible under the grant program requirements, be in good standing with all previous and current grant awards, and meet the requirements of the application process, including the reporting of crime data to the Oklahoma State Bureau of

Investigation (OSBI). The need for funding in comparison to all other grant requests and funding history is also considered.

For both award processes, the state administering agency (SAA) staff reviews the applications and provides information to the board on programmatic and fiscal compliance. The JAG Board reviews the submitted applications and meets to make the funding decisions based on staff reviews and the goals previously listed. Prior to the JAG program award meeting, the board provides an opportunity for applicants to answer any questions that the board may have and offer additional information as needed. For JAG LLE awards, the board meets in November to review staff recommendations and assess all submitted applications. By the end of the meeting, awards are decided.

The applicants are notified of the board's decision via the online award notice or through a denial letter. Awards are also posted on the DAC website. Awarded applicants are required to complete an award packet through the OKGrants management system and attend a financial and administrative grant training course prior to funds being released.

## **A 5. Programs to be Funded over the 4-Year Grant Period**

The following summary provides a more detailed description of the projects that may be funded through the general JAG program and the JAG Local Law Enforcement grant program:

### **❖ Multijurisdictional Drug and Violent Crime Task Forces**

Currently in Oklahoma, there are 12 DVCTFs funded through a JAG award. The multifaceted capabilities of the DVCTFs have created a unique localized drug enforcement response to the importation, manufacturing, distribution, and possession of controlled substances throughout the state. Since 2009, and especially with recent legislation naming possession of certain controlled substances as misdemeanor offenses, task forces have

expanded to encompass all types of violent crimes. Rural law enforcement often turns to the task forces for assistance in various types of crimes, such as the investigation of homicides, sexual assaults, robberies, property crimes, gangs, arsons, kidnappings, human trafficking, and child abuse cases. In addition to keeping violent offenders off the streets and controlling drug distribution and trafficking, the task forces serve as a wealth of knowledge for local law enforcement and other agencies across the state.

❖ **Gang-Related Enforcement and Prosecution Projects**

Currently, both Oklahoma and Tulsa counties have gang-specific prosecution projects under JAG. Prosecuting gang cases can be difficult because of the difficulty in getting witnesses to appear for court dates, and the amount of knowledge and history needed to understand the relationship between different gang dynamics. The two funded projects focus on charging known gang members and associates, targeting gang-related cases such as shootings, felons in possession of firearms, drug crimes, gang-related drug proceeds, and shootings with intent to kill.

❖ **Residential Substance Abuse Treatment for Incarcerated Offenders**

Providing drug and alcohol treatment services to incarcerated offenders continues to be a need for the state. According to the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, approximately 30.6% of inmates assessed had a need for substance abuse treatment. Getting inmates the treatment they need is vital in order to reduce recidivism and relapse. DOC has a treatment program at the Oklahoma State Reformatory (OCR) and North Fork Correctional Center (NFCC). The program at OSR was funded during the 2019/2020 subgrant cycle, and the program at NFCC is funded for the 2021/2023 JAG subaward cycle. The comprehensive

program addresses substance abuse treatment as well as additional needs such as education, anger management, reintegration, and problem solving.

#### ❖ **Equipment for Local Law Enforcement**

The state of Oklahoma passes a percentage of JAG funding to local law enforcement; DAC awards these grants with a maximum award of \$10,000. Many jurisdictions struggle with budget cuts and limited financial resources, especially rural departments, so this grant exists to help local law enforcement agencies obtain equipment necessary to perform their jobs. Beginning in 2020, the JAG Board allowed local law enforcement agencies to request the equipment of their choice depending on their needs. The equipment must be allowable under DOJ guidelines. If agencies seek to buy body worn cameras (BWCs), the agency must attach a body-worn camera policy certification to their grant application. If ballistic-resistant and stab resistant body armor is requested, the mandatory wear policy and certification must be uploaded to OKGrants. Both the BWC and mandatory wear policy certifications are from the DOJ website. All body armor must be American made, meet the NIJ standards, and be “uniquely fitted vests.”

#### ❖ **Drug Diversion Programs**

Many individuals in Oklahoma face a drug addiction. For the state of Oklahoma, the biggest concerns are meth and opioids. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, in Oklahoma, meth and related drugs play a role in more deaths than all opioids combined (Integrus Health). The number of lethal meth overdoses has risen alarmingly, and in half the deaths involving meth, opioids also factored into the death. Criminals with charges such as manufacturing, trafficking, and possession with the intent to distribute often suffer from a reliance on narcotics. The state has some excellent diversion programs, such as ReMerge,

which is located in Oklahoma City, but programs like this do not serve rural counties. In the next five years, the state would like to utilize JAG funding to expand access to residential inpatient programs, drug courts, and treatment programs. However, there is simply too much demand for these services and not enough facilities that can provide them, especially in rural areas, leading to prisons and jails serving as repositories for the mentally ill and those with substance abuse issues. At this time, there is not a drug diversion program being funded by the 2021/2023 grant cycle.

❖ **Aiding Children Exposed to Violence**

A priority area for the 2021-2025 JAG state strategy is to consider funding a grant specifically focused on helping children exposed to violence. DAC is in the process of compiling a statewide list of programs that fit this description and will encourage them to apply for the next funding cycle. There are many programs focused on helping child victims of sexual assault and physical abuse, and some of these programs have funding with the DAC under other grants such as VOCA. One specific aim is to encourage JAG subgrantees, especially the drug and violent crime task forces, to cooperate and work with these programs.

## **B. PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION**

### **B 1. State Strategic Planning Process and Community Engagement**

Historically, the JAG Board has obtained input for the state strategy through a public forum where in-person presentations were provided to the board by criminal justice professionals and other agency representatives. While this format was beneficial, it was also limiting, as responses from all interested parties could not necessarily be heard. Also, due to the COVID pandemic, a

public forum was not realistic. Survey Monkey was the vehicle of choice for the 2020 survey. The survey used previous questions and updated prompts to reflect the current trends and issues.

The survey was open and available for a month, and DAC encouraged law enforcement personnel and board members to forward the survey to anyone in the field. District attorneys' offices, tribal governments, victim services agencies, law enforcement agencies, the Oklahoma Sheriff's Association and the Oklahoma Chiefs of Police were all sent the survey. Two hundred thirty-nine (239) surveys were completed and returned. The survey was anonymous, and no efforts were made to determine the survey responder.

## **B 2. Data and Analysis of State Strategic Plan Survey**

The first portion of the survey included background questions, such as whether respondents were currently in law enforcement, and their jurisdiction. The second section of the survey asked about the most concerning public safety issues and where JAG funds should be allocated. This section asked participants to rank the need of projects within each purpose area. The final section of the survey included questions about JAG task forces, how to allocate the JAG LLE award, where JAG funding should head in the next five years, and an open-ended prompt to write about the top concerns for the criminal justice system.

Allowable JAG funding areas appeared on the survey along with questions for specific areas of that funding section. For each section, an "other" category was an option, with the ability for respondents to type in their response. Purpose Area 8 was not included in the survey; this gap will be addressed and considered for inclusion in the next strategic plan.

Most respondents indicated that their community was both urban and rural (35.6%). Almost thirty five percent identified themselves as living in an urban area, with the remaining 29.7% living rurally. Seventy-five percent of survey takers were local law enforcement. The

second highest response rate, at 15.9%, was state or local prosecution offices. The remaining survey takers were individuals from corrections, mental health, courts, tribal, and local/state government. 95.8% of participants were not a representative or designee on the board.

Most participants of the survey consisted of state law enforcement (75.9%), and most respondents (61%) served the entire state population as opposed to a single county or two-three counties.

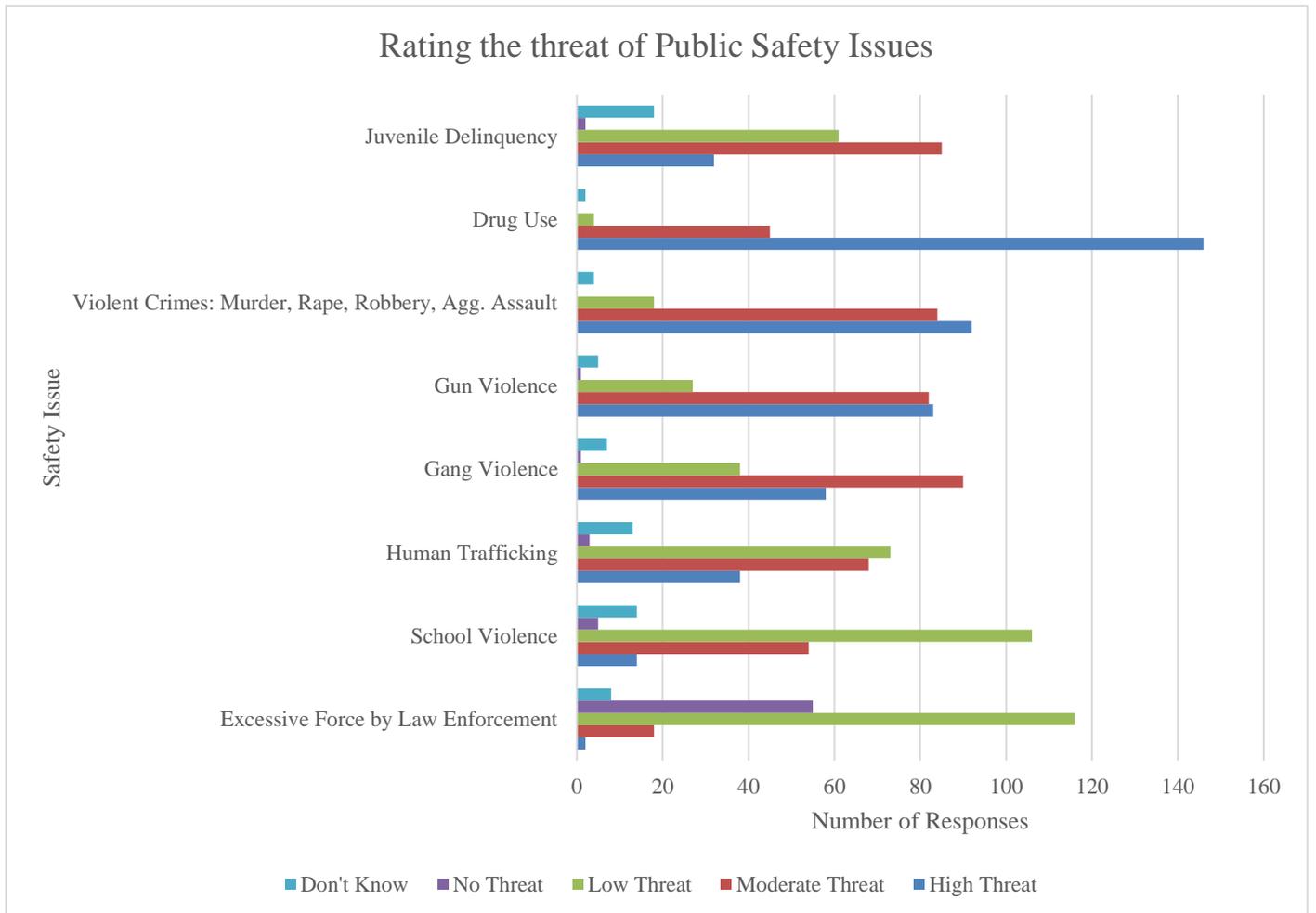
The next section of this narrative provides a detailed overview of the survey results and data. Survey responses directly factored into the writing of the 2021-2025 state strategic plan and its goals and objectives.

### **JAG Strategic Plan Survey Results**

The entire survey, including all the questions, can be found in the state strategic plan. The most pertinent data will be replicated here for convenience.

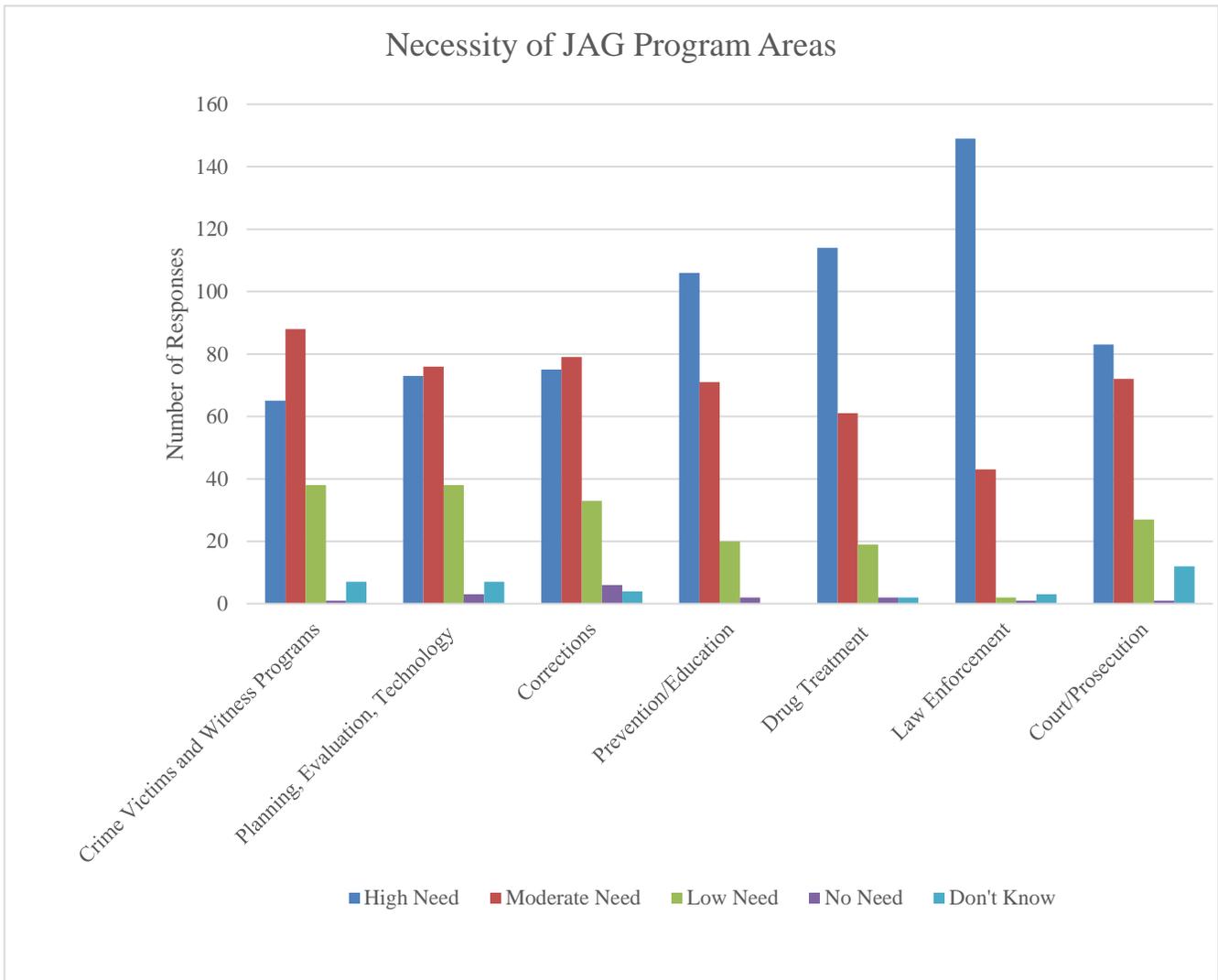
## Views on Public Safety Issues

The survey asked respondents to rate major public safety issues on a scale from “no threat” or “don’t know” to “high threat.” The most common issue to be rated as a high threat was drug use at 74%. Almost 47% and 42% of respondents considered violent crimes and gun violence, respectively, to be high public threats. The following graph shows the precise breakdown of responses.



### **JAG Purpose Areas: Overall Order of Importance**

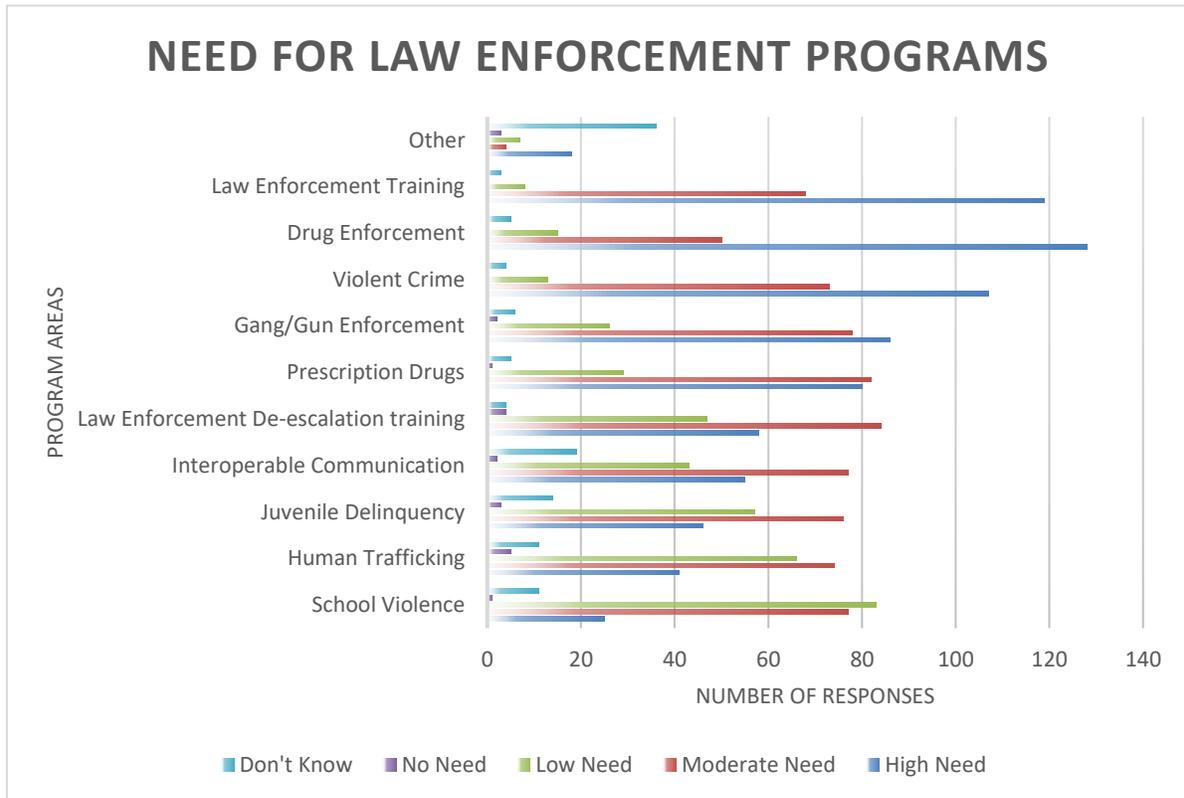
The DAC survey asked participants to rate the overall necessity of the various JAG program areas. The areas with the highest need, according to the survey, are Law Enforcement Programs (75%), and Drug Treatment Programs (57.6%).



## **Purpose Area 1: Law Enforcement Programs**

In this category, 198 respondents provided input and 42 respondents did not answer the question.

The top-ranked area of importance was Drug Enforcement Programs, followed by Law Enforcement Training and Violent Crime.



### ***Comments:***

Other project areas identified in the Comments Section included:

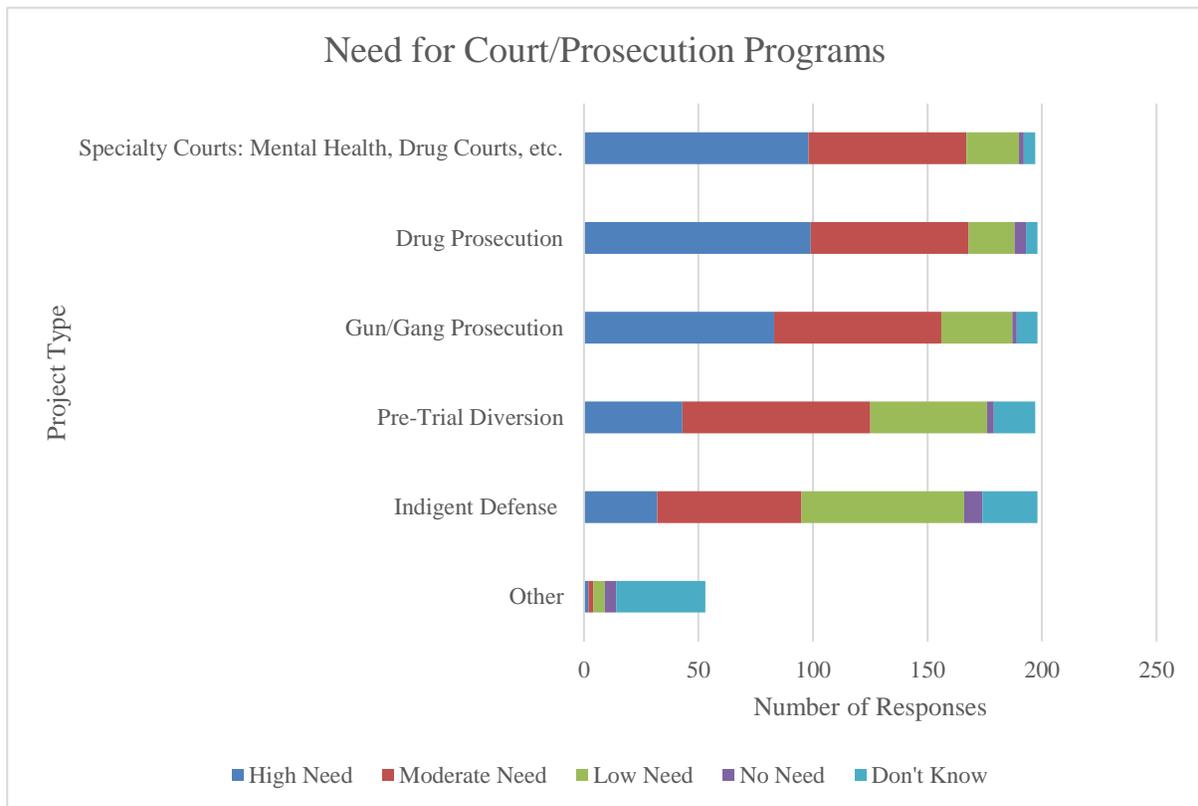
- Mental health training
- Offender re-entry programs
- Trauma informed approach training
- Domestic violence and sexual assault-specific projects
- De-escalation techniques

### ***Stakeholders:***

- Oklahoma Sheriff's Association, Oklahoma Association of Chiefs of Police, Drug and Violent Crime Task Force members, and local and tribal law enforcement officers.

**Purpose Area 2: Court/Prosecution Programs**

For this question, 198 respondents provided input and 42 respondents did not answer the question. The highest ranked response in this category was Drug Prosecution Projects. Exactly 50% of the respondents ranked this project area first in terms of need. Drug Prosecution Projects were followed by Specialty Courts, Gun/Gang Prosecution Projects, Pre-Trial Diversion, Indigent Defense Projects, and Other projects.



***Comments:***

Other project areas identified in the Comments Section included:

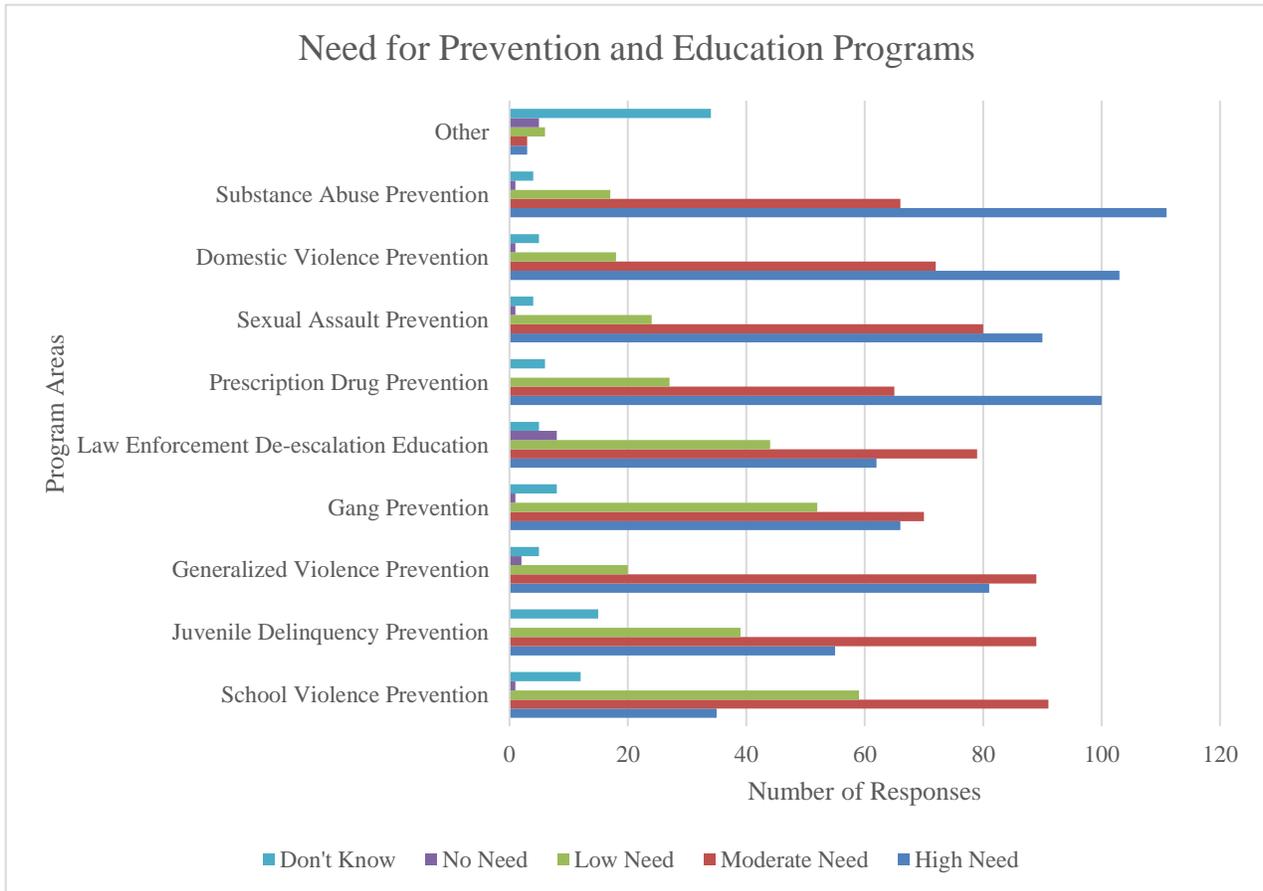
- Court intervention programs
- Domestic violence compliance courts

***Stakeholders:***

- District Attorneys Council, Administrative Office of the Courts, and local judges and prosecutors.

### **Purpose Area 3: Prevention and Education Programs**

The highest ranked response in this category was Substance Abuse Prevention Projects. This project area was followed by: Domestic Violence Projects; Prescription Drug Prevention Projects; Sexual Assault Prevention Projects.



#### ***Comments:***

Other project areas identified in the Comments Section included:

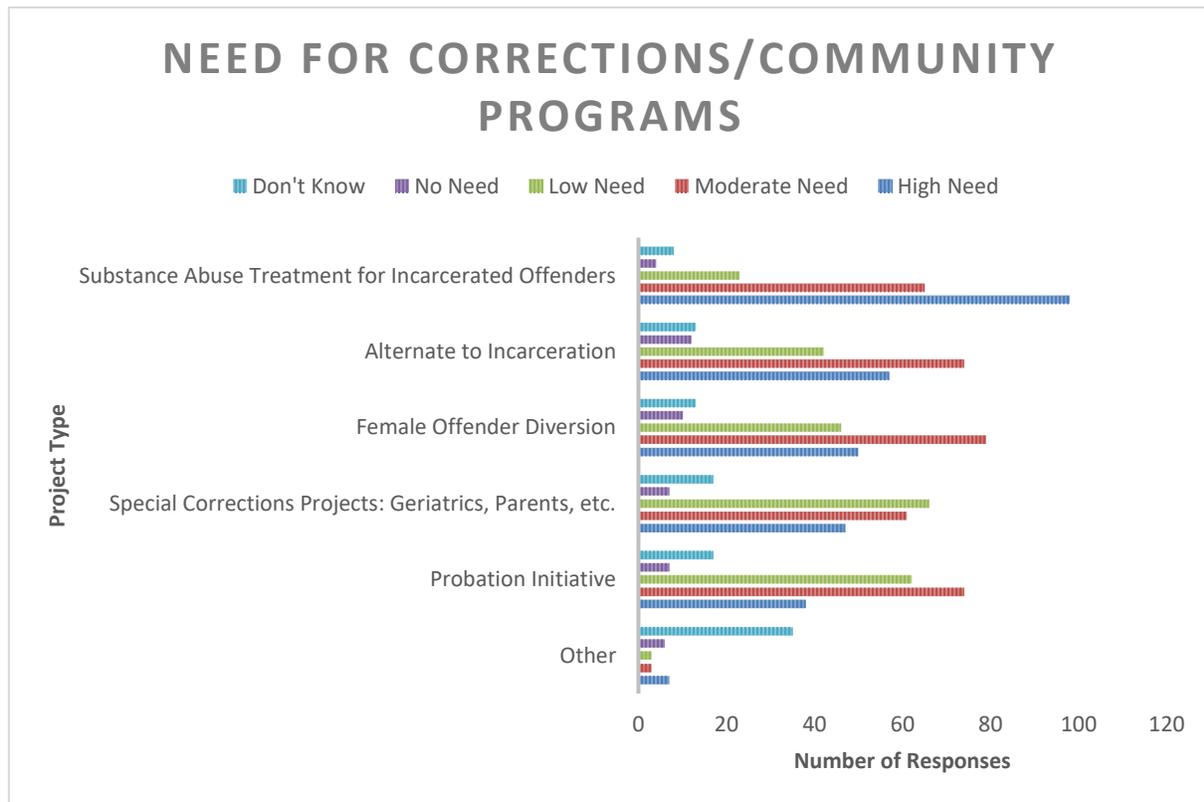
- Mental health community advocacy training
- Strangulation prevention

#### ***Stakeholders:***

- Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Office of Juvenile Affairs, Department of Corrections, Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics, Department of Public Safety, the Attorney General's Office, and the Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

**Purpose Area 4: Corrections/Community Corrections Programs**

One hundred ninety-eight respondents provided input and 72 respondents did not answer the question. By a substantial margin, Substance Abuse Treatment for Incarcerated Offenders was ranked first as a project area for funding. The following areas ranked second and third: 2) Alternate to Incarceration Projects; 3) Female Offender Diversion Projects. The following chart identifies how respondents perceive the need for projects in this purpose area.



***Comments:***

Other project areas identified in the Comments Section included:

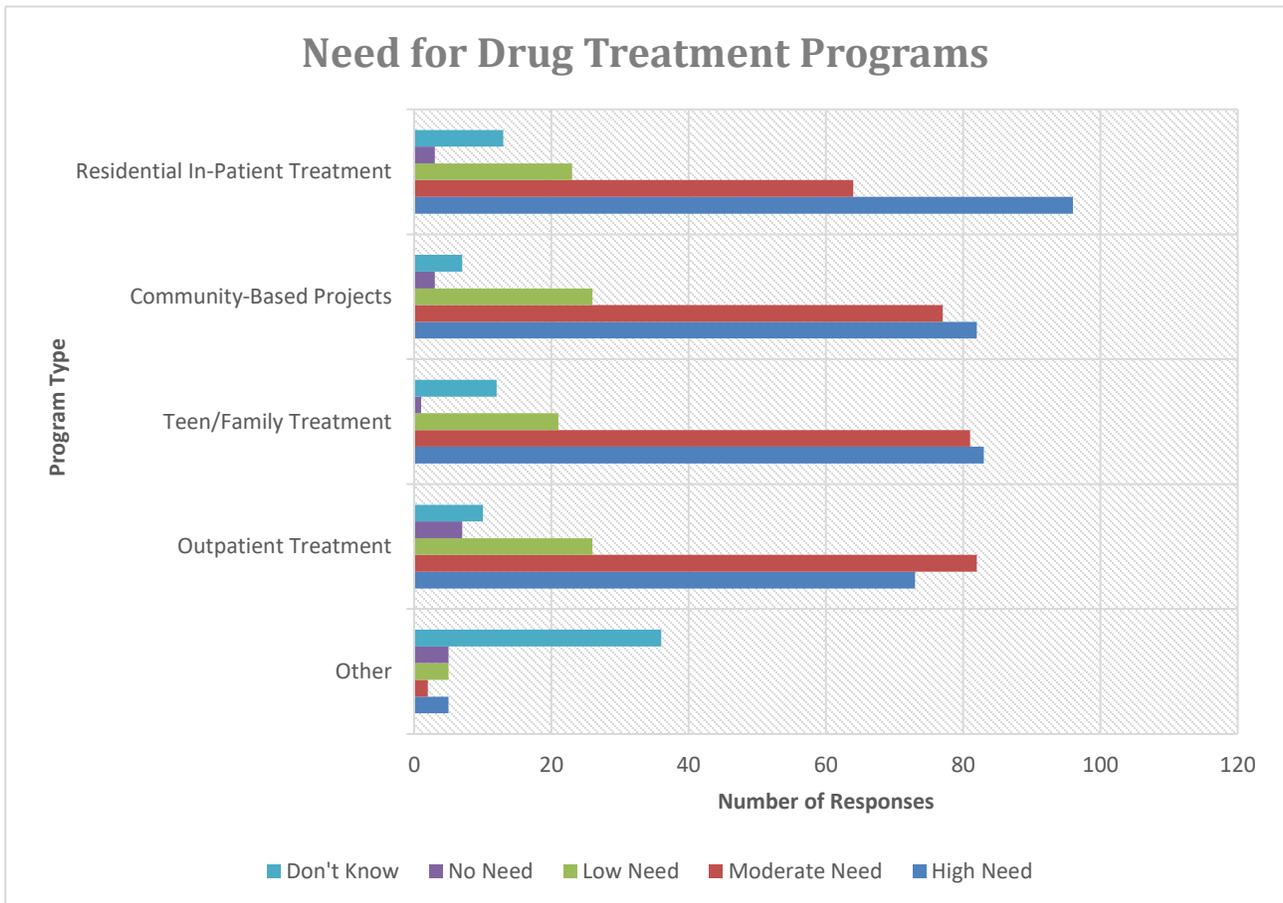
- Re-entry projects
- Specialized supervision for domestic abuse and sexual assault offenders

***Stakeholders:***

- Department of Corrections, Oklahoma Sheriff’s Association, and the Oklahoma Pardon and Parole Board.

## **Purpose Area 5: Drug Treatment Programs**

For this question, the highest-ranking area of need was Residential In-Patient Treatment Projects at 48.8%, followed by Community-Based Projects (42%) and Teen/Family Treatment Projects (41.9%).



### ***Comments:***

Other project areas identified in the Comments Section included:

- Drug treatment for those without insurance
- Telemedicine programs
- Juvenile (pre-teen) residential in-patient treatment programs

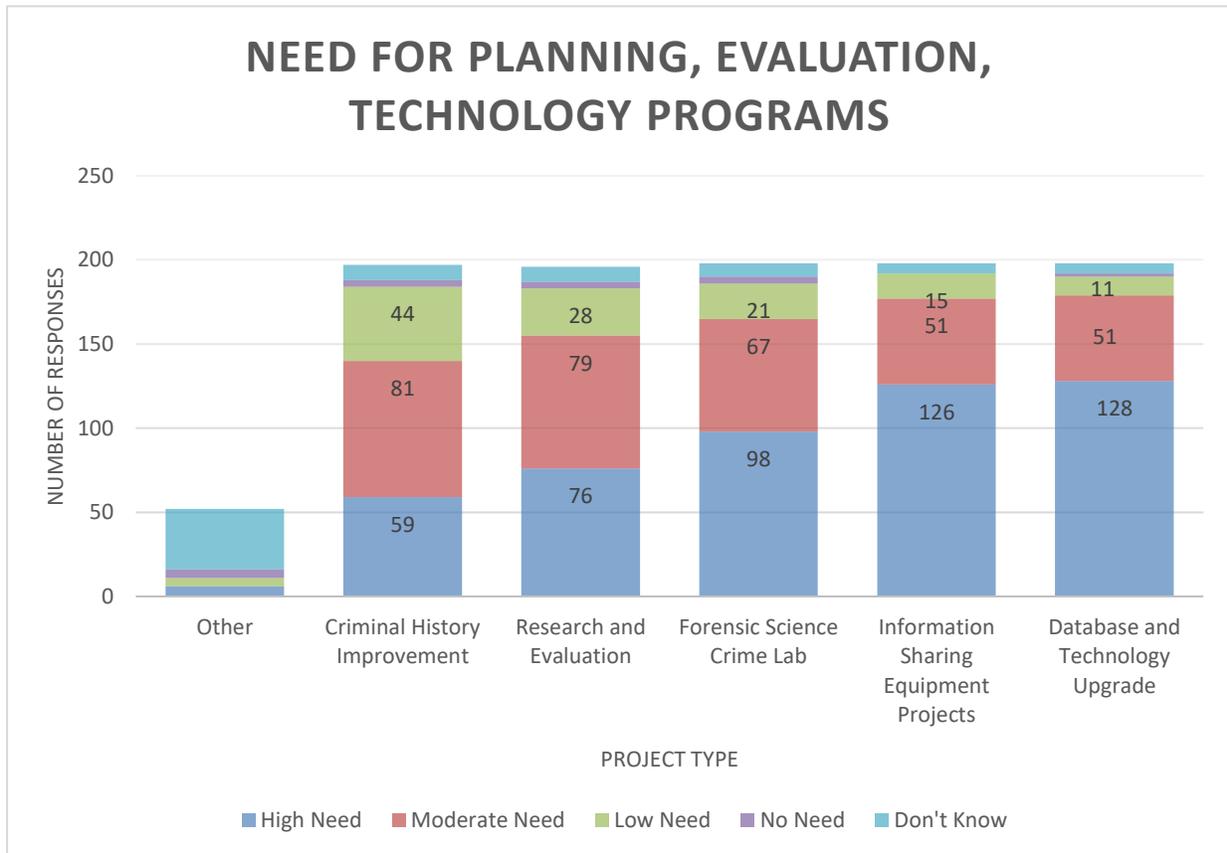
### ***Stakeholders:***

- Department of Corrections, Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics, the Drug Enforcement Administration, District Attorneys Council, Administrative Office of the Courts, local drug treatment programs.

**Purpose Area 6: Planning, Evaluation, and Technology Programs**

In this category, these projects were ranked as being of the highest need:

1. Database and Technology Upgrade Projects
2. Information Sharing Equipment Projects
3. Forensic Science Crime Lab, i.e. DNA, Cold Case Project
4. Research and Evaluation Projects
5. Criminal History Improvement Projects



**Comments:**

Other project areas identified in the Comments Section included:

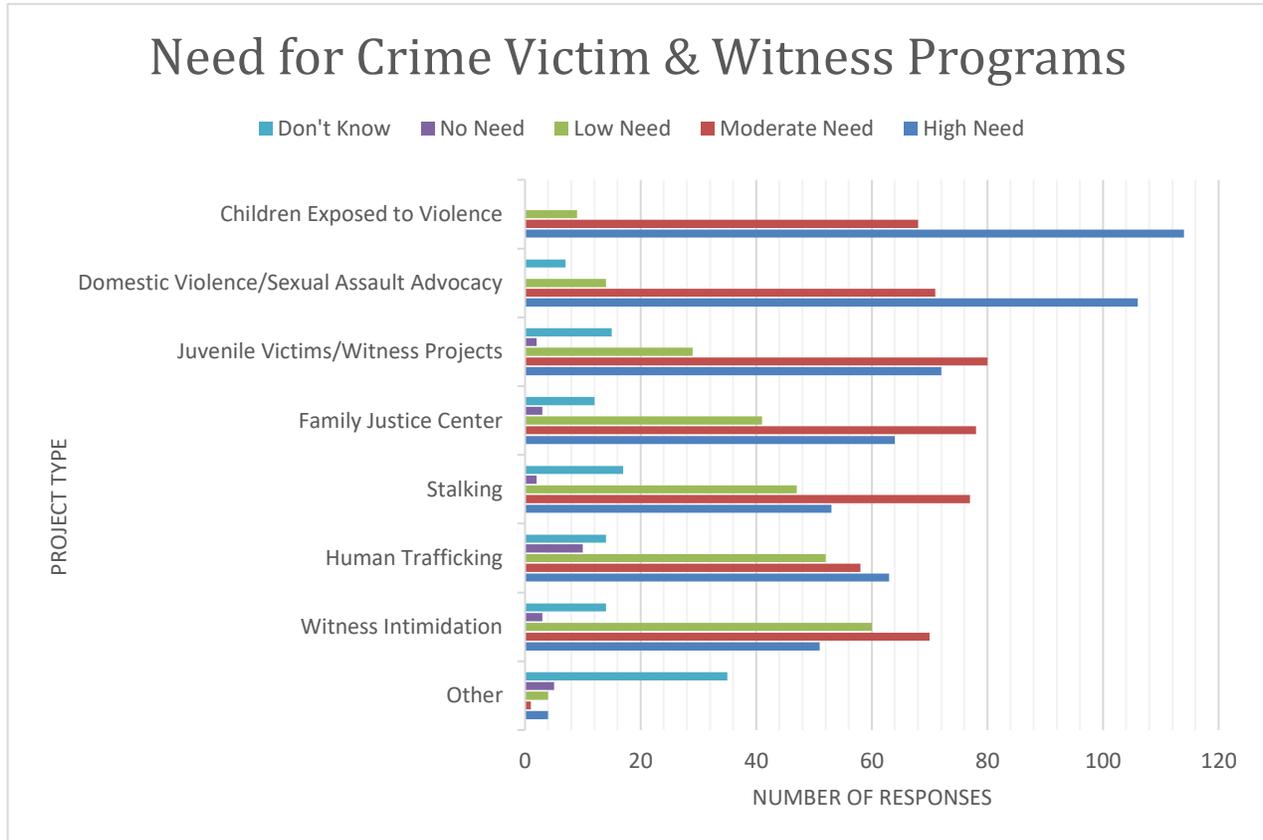
- License plate reading technology
- Equal radio communication for all agencies

**Stakeholders:**

- Office of Management and Enterprise Services, Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (including the Statistical Analysis Center), Department of Public Safety, Office of Homeland Security, District Attorneys Council, Medical Examiner’s Office, Tulsa Crime Lab, and Oklahoma City Crime Lab.

**Purpose Area 7: Crime Victim and Witness Programs (other than crime victim compensation)**

Fifty-seven percent of respondents reported that Children Exposed to Violence Projects are of a high need, followed by Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Advocacy Projects at 53.5%.



***Comments:***

Other project areas identified in the Comments Section included:

- Male family justice center projects
- Major crimes advocacy-families left behind

***Stakeholders:***

- District Attorneys Council Victims Services Division, Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Native Alliance Against Violence, Attorney General’s Office, Office of Juvenile Affairs, Palomar dba Oklahoma City’s Family Justice Center, Victim-Witness Coordinators, local and tribal victim service programs.

**Purpose Area 8: Mental Health Programs and Related Law Enforcement and Corrections Programs, including Behavioral Programs and Crisis Intervention Teams**

This purpose area was not covered in the initial survey or the first edition of the 2021-2025 JAG state strategic plan but will be addressed in the next edition of the plan by the JAG Board and stakeholders. As evidenced by the responses in the previous purpose areas, a trend is shifting toward helping individuals with substance abuse dependencies and improving access to mental health treatment as opposed to or in addition to instant incarceration as the answer.

**Local Law Enforcement Survey Question**

Currently law enforcement agencies make individual applications to DAC, and the JAG Board awards the grants. The survey asked respondents whether they would like to see the board make one or two large awards to agencies such as the Police Chief's Association or Sheriff's Association to decide how to parse out funds. Almost 56% of respondents said they would not prefer that method, while 35.8% of respondents voted 'yes.' Based on this response, the LLE awards will continue the same award process.

**Major Concerns about the Criminal Justice System**

The last survey question asked respondents to note the major concerns and barriers they notice in the criminal justice system, using an open-ended format to do so. Of the participants, 195 chose to answer this question. For the sake of space, not all answers will be replicated here—only the most prevalent.

**Major Concerns Voiced in the Survey:**

- The McGirt decision and its effect on how state, local, and tribal law enforcement respond to and work cases
- Budget cuts leading to understaffed local and rural police departments and district attorneys' offices
- Updated equipment needs: equipment constantly changes and needs to be regularly updated in order to maintain cross-agency communication, but this is cost prohibitive

- The need for alternatives to incarceration, specifically mental health treatment centers and substance abuse treatment facilities
- State Question 780 reclassified simple drug possession as a misdemeanor offense, making it more difficult for investigators to gain informants
- Negative perception of law enforcement
- The absence of adequate support for victims of crime
- The increased need for officer training, specifically for de-escalation and strangulation
- Inadequate communication between agencies and with the public, and lack of community outreach

### **Survey Findings: Major Takeaways**

- Drug crimes are the most pressing public safety issue
- Purpose Area 1 is the highest need for respondents
- Within Purpose Area 1, Law Enforcement and Drug Enforcement have the highest need
- In Project Area 2, Specialty Courts and Drug Prosecution are most needed
- For Area 4, Substance Abuse Treatment for Incarcerated Offenders is most pressing
- Project Area 5: Residential In-patient Treatment is of a high need
- For Area 6, respondents most need technology upgrade programs and information sharing equipment projects
- Drug treatment and rehabilitation programs were consistently ranked high across all purpose areas, from substance abuse prevention, to treatment for incarcerated offenders, to residential in-patient programs
- Most survey respondents (63.1%) reported they would like to see JAG funds allocated to programs other than drug and violent crime task forces

### **B 3. State Strategic Planning Committee**

The DAC has created a JAG state strategic planning committee to focus on the creation of the state strategic plan, to advise the board, and to improve equity in the grant process and review JAG Board composition. The committee will meet four times per year, with the first meeting tentatively scheduled for August of 2022. The goals of the committee are as follows:

- Improve equity in the grant making process, which may include reviewing and updating the current award process, revising rules and requirements for applicants, reducing barriers to application, and encouraging applicants serving underserved communities and/or with innovative projects to apply for funding.
- The committee will ensure JAG Board composition reflects the needs and current funding priorities for the state of Oklahoma, will review the board roster to verify no single stakeholder group or priority area has undue representation, and will ensure the roster reflects all purpose areas and represents all relevant viewpoints, such as tribal representation, victims' services, etc.
- Formulate the goals and objectives for the state of Oklahoma's JAG grant program, utilizing data and stakeholder perspectives to ensure goals place emphases on areas of

the criminal justice system that need it most; explore opportunities to diversify JAG funding to represent more priority areas and expand the types of projects funded by this grant.

- Review and streamline the award process for the JAG grant, making changes, if needed, to the grant process from cradle to grave and improving access and equity for applicants and subgrantees throughout the process.

The committee is currently composed of the following agencies: a district attorney representing prosecution and court programs; a victims services representative for the crime victim and witness programs purpose area; an individual from the Department of Corrections to serve as the corrections and community corrections representative; ReMerge on behalf of both drug treatment programs and reentry services; the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services for drug treatment programs and mental health programs; the Oklahoma City Police Department's Chief of Police for law enforcement programs; a public defender for indigent defense; a criminal justice policy analyst from the Oklahoma Policy Institute, a nonpartisan think tank engaging in research, analysis and advocacy; the Office of Juvenile Affairs for juvenile justice delinquency prevention and education; the OSBI Statistical Analysis Center to represent data experts; someone from the Tulsa Police Department for planning, evaluation, and technology improvement; the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics to advise on drug threats and policies; a judge's assistant on behalf of judges; and a task force commander to advise on violent crime and drug crime in the field and any needs therein.

In years when the state strategy is created anew, a state strategic planning survey is disseminated as the state strategic plan is compiled. The survey aims to capture lesser heard voices, particularly local agencies. Through the usage of the planning committee and the next state strategy survey, state and local communities and stakeholders will have additional space to provide input and direction for the subsequent plan. There is also the possibility for the annual report regarding the state strategy to adjust where the state's priorities fall based on discussions

and direction from the planning committee and JAG Board. Coordination challenges revolve around keeping individuals engaged in the process, and reaching communities previously ignored or with low response percentages.

#### **B 4. Gaps and Challenges**

Like most states, Oklahoma could use additional funding to address the expansive needs in law enforcement, criminal justice, and other related areas.

Domestic violence is a widespread issue within the state. Domestic abuse has been trending upward since 2011, increasing by 13.2% in 2020 compared to 2016. In 2018, Oklahoma ranked third in the nation for domestic violence (DV) related homicides, according to the Violence Policy Center's September 2021 Report, "When Men Murder Women – An Analysis of 2019 Homicide Data." In 2019, Oklahoma ranked eighth in the nation in DV-related homicides. Assault and battery is the most common DV offense type but all four offenses (murder, sex crimes, assault, and assault and battery) increased in 2020 for a combined total increase of 3% from 2019. From 2011-2020, an average of 24,845 domestic abuse incidents were reported each year (OSBI).

Oklahoma County, as a major metro area, has a major domestic violence problem. In 2020 alone, Oklahoma County reported 532 assaults, 4,254 incidents of assault and battery, 331 sex crimes, and 18 murders (OSBI). A glance at the 2021 National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data reveals that Oklahoma City had 4,288 violent crimes, with 3,026 aggravated assaults and 538 incidents of rape. In 2021, the Oklahoma City Police Department received 42,734 DV calls for assistance – a 28.5% increase over 2020 and a 46.5% increase over 2019. The Oklahoma Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board's 2020 report "Domestic Violence Homicide in Oklahoma: An Analysis of 2019 Domestic Violence Homicides" reported that

approximately 70% of DV-related homicides were caused by firearms – almost seven times the number of any other cause.

Rural police departments and smaller departments find it difficult to keep qualified officers, and as these employees gain experience, they often leave for other areas and for departments that can pay them more. The pay for officers in general is low, and resources are sparse. At DAC, the JAG LLE award helps spread equipment resources across the state and help with lifesaving items such as vests, radios, computers, and body cameras. However, resources are still needed to provide salary increases to rural officers and to hire additional officers so that departments are not operating understaffed.

Substance abuse and mental health are two very pressing needs for the state. In 2020, 762 people died of drug overdoses in Oklahoma (*The Journal Record*). From 2019 to 2020, overdoses rose by 31%. In 2020, Oklahoma recorded 19.4 overdose deaths per 100,000 residents, compared to 28.3 per 100,000 in the rest of the country. Many individuals who traffic drugs or are involved in drug-related crimes are also addicts. In the smaller towns and rural areas, substance abuse treatment is a couple of hours away. Oklahoma needs more substance abuse treatment programs and in-patient clinics, and these should be accessible to everyone in the state. In a similar vein, when officers pick someone up and it is clear they have a substance problem or need mental health treatment, these services are not always accessible or available, leading to many people going to jail or prison when they should receive treatment, or both. Increased JAG funding would help fund some of these treatment and diversion programs and spread them across the state. Poor mental health services and no substance abuse treatment often leads to recidivism, so supporting these programs also means supporting the criminal justice system as a whole. While the task forces receive training on any number of topics, patrol officers in various locales

across the state also need mental health training so they can best help and handle situations where a victim or offender is experiencing a crisis or other issues that may impact their behavior.

Plans to improve the administration of Oklahoma’s criminal justice system revolve around adhering to the state strategic plan, revisiting it yearly to ensure it still captures and reflects the state’s needs, and conducting outreach to the community, state and local agencies, and all other stakeholders for feedback.

## **C. CAPABILITIES AND COMPETENCIES**

### **Coordination with State and Related Justice Funds**

Efforts to coordinate the JAG program with other federal programs continues. This is accomplished with the various boards, who provide oversight as well as increased collaboration with other state agencies that implement and/or receive federal funding in an effort to reduce duplication and maximize resources.

### **National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP)**

The Criminal Justice Information System Task Force, a subcommittee of the JAG Board, provides oversight for the NCHIP award in Oklahoma. The NCHIP grant program aims to improve the nation’s safety and security by enhancing the quality, completeness, and accessibility of criminal history record information and by ensuring the nationwide implementation of criminal justice and noncriminal justice background check systems.

### **NICS Act Record Improvement Program (NARIP)**

The Criminal Justice Information System Task Force, a subcommittee of the JAG Board, also provides oversight to the NARIP grant in Oklahoma. This is a two-year award that exists to improve the completeness, automation, and transmittal of records to state and federal systems used by the NICS. Such records include criminal history records, records of felony conviction, warrants,

records of protective orders, convictions for misdemeanors involving domestic violence and stalking, drug arrests and convictions, records of mental health adjudications, and others which may disqualify an individual from possession of a firearm under federal law.

#### **Coverdell Forensic Sciences Improvement Act Grant (NFSIA)**

The oversight body for the Coverdell Forensic Sciences Improvement Grant is the Forensic Sciences Improvement Task Force, a subcommittee of the JAG Board. The purpose of the Forensic Sciences Improvement Task Force is to improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science services to the criminal justice system in Oklahoma and to reduce the backlog of forensic science cases. Because forensic labs are indelibly intertwined in the types of crimes that JAG is focused upon, it is a coordinating effort that functions well and maximizes the funding efforts for both grant programs.

#### **Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Program (RSAT)**

A representative from the Department of Corrections serves on both the JAG Board and the RSAT Board and as such coordinates federal funding in providing residential substance abuse treatment for incarcerated offenders. Through these boards, the District Attorneys Council ensures coordination between the RSAT program and the JAG program. In addition, the Oklahoma Department of Corrections continues to coordinate RSAT funding with JAG and other funding sources in order to continue current RSAT programs while adding additional prison-based treatment programs using evidence-based models.

#### **Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN)**

The Oklahoma District Attorneys Council is awarded three grants with the PSN funds, one for each of the three (3) U.S. Attorneys' Offices in Oklahoma. These grants aid the U.S. Attorneys' Offices in combating gun and gang violence. The PSN grant has a narrower scope than JAG does,

requiring a 30% gang set-aside, so there isn't much overlap with JAG funding. Current programs funded by PSN grants include: overtime for officers to patrol hot spots; an equipment grant to Okmulgee Police Department to expand and improve crime scene documentation and increase the ability to locate witnesses and offenders of crimes; a dedicated DV investigator; and a SAUSA.

### **Coordination with other Agencies**

The Fusion Center, located within the OSBI, is a partner with the task forces across the state. Information from the Fusion Center is available to the task forces while they funnel information to the Fusion Center for dissemination. Representatives from the Fusion Center are present at most of the quarterly task force meetings. The JAG task forces also work closely with the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs and the Regional Organized Crime Information Center (a Regional Information Sharing System). Both organizations have representatives that participate at the quarterly task force meetings. Another group that has representation at the quarterly task force meetings is the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA).

The Federal Grants Division administers a number of the Office on Violence Against Women grants and the VOCA grant through the Office for Victims of Crime.

## **D. PLAN FOR COLLECTING THE DATA REQUIRED FOR THIS SOLICITATION'S PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Currently, the District Attorneys Council requires a semi-annual progress report and a quarterly PMT report from the subrecipients in order to collect and report performance measurement data. For the semi-annual narrative progress report, the subgrantees submit a report based on the funded project and the approved goals and objectives. In addition, narrative information on grant successes and barriers is required. Multijurisdictional drug and violent crime task forces also submit the following information as part of their semiannual progress report:

- Federal agency coordination
- State agency coordination
- Local agency coordination
- Assists to law enforcement agencies
- Number of full-time personnel funded
- Number of part-time personnel funded
- Number of cases prior to reporting period
- Number of cases initiated
- Number of cases closed
- Number of cases dropped
- Number of cases pending
- Number of non-drug arrests
- Type of violent crimes investigated
- Number of search warrants served
- Number of meth related investigations
- Number of arrests per drug offense type
- Number of firearms seized
- Number of meth seizures and dumpsites
- Amount/type of drugs seized
- Number of prevention programs conducted and number of professionals trained
- Number of law enforcement trainings provided and number of law enforcement professionals trained
- Number of wiretap investigations initiated
- Number of wiretap investigations assists

The project director of each subgrant completes this progress report online in the OKGrants grant management system. The report is due 30 days after the end of the second and fourth quarter or January 30th and July 31st, respectively. Submitting the semi-annual progress report is a special condition of the grant and a requirement of the subrecipients. If this performance measure data is not provided, subrecipients are placed on draw hold and are not allowed to draw any funds until the report is submitted.

In addition to the semiannual progress report, subgrantees are required to complete the Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) on a quarterly basis. The PMT is a Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) online data collection system. The reporting of the performance measures is comprised of two (2) sections: numerical data and narrative information. The numerical data is

reported by the subgrantee for activities that occurred during the previous quarter and the narrative information is reported on a semi-annual basis by the subgrantee.

Once the PMT data is completed by the subgrantee, the DAC Grant Programs Specialist reviews the information and creates a report from the data entered. By January 30<sup>th</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup>, the PMT report containing six months of numerical and narrative information is submitted through the federal grants management system, JustGrants. The subgrantee's report is individualized based on the approved budget categories for each subgrantee. JAG local law enforcement (LLE) grant data is entered entirely into PMT by the Grant Programs Specialist. Again, submitting the PMT data is a special condition of the grant and a requirement of the subrecipients. If this performance measure data is not provided, subrecipients are put on draw hold and are not allowed to draw any funds until the report is submitted.

### **Death in Custody Reporting Act**

Since October of 2019, DAC has reported deaths occurring in custody on a quarterly basis through the PMT system. In early 2022, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner agreed to send a monthly spreadsheet containing all deaths in that month to be used as a cross reference tool. In June 2022, DAC held a DCRA meeting with all relevant stakeholders to discuss how to improve data collection and prevent duplication of reporting by law enforcement. Through this meeting, the Oklahoma State Department of Health agreed to send quarterly lists of deaths occurring in jails or detention facilities. The Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA) has agreed to send over a quarterly spreadsheet of any deaths occurring in juvenile facilities. Additionally, DAC has reached out through the Oklahoma Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP) and the Oklahoma Sheriff's Association (OSA) to be sent deaths occurring at the local law enforcement level that previously were not captured by the report. Receiving data from local law enforcement agencies

has proven a challenge due to the educational barrier of how to report and keep the data, as well as many local departments experiencing regular employee turnover. DAC plans to train local law enforcement agencies on the Death in Custody Reporting Act on a regular basis and has reached out to the OACP and the OSA to schedule these opportunities.

## Resources

Integrus Health, “Methamphetamine: The Overlooked Addiction Epidemic in Oklahoma, September 2020, <https://integrusok.com/resources/on-your-health/2020/september/methamphetamine-the-overlooked-addiction-epidemic-in-oklahoma>.

Oklahoma Attorney General, Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board, “Domestic Violence Homicide in Oklahoma: An Analysis of 2019 Domestic Violence Homicides,” 2020.

Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation, Office of Criminal Justice Statistics, “Crime in Oklahoma: 2020,” September 1, 2021, <https://osbi.ok.gov/publications/crime-statistics>.

*The Journal Record*, “Drug overdose deaths on rise in Oklahoma, across U.S.,” January 4, 2022, <https://journalrecord.com/2022/01/04/drug-overdose-deaths-on-rise-in-oklahoma-across-us/#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20report%2C%20Oklahoma,or%2016.7%20per%20100%2C000%20people>.

Violence Policy Center, “When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2018 Homicide Data,” September 2020.

Violence Policy Center, “When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2019 Homicide Data,” September 2021.