



Fulton County Sheriff's Office

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NEWS RELEASE

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Fulton County Sheriff's Office is the First Jail-based Agency to Receive a Competitive Grant Worth Over \$1Million for Groundbreaking Smart Reentry Program

(Atlanta – October 8, 2019) History is being made at the Fulton County Sheriff's Office with the announcement that it will be the first jail-based agency to receive a huge grant award of \$1,125,000 from SAMHSA [pronounced *Sam-sa*]. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration informed Sheriff Ted Jackson that the agency's grant application was approved. SAMHSA is part of United States Department of Health and Human Services. Each year, SAMHSA only awards grants of this magnitude to a limited number of agencies. This is the first time the Fulton County Sheriff's Office has applied for SAMHSA funds and it is noteworthy that the FCSO's first proposal was a success.

The Fulton County Sheriff's Office will receive \$375,000 annually for the next three years, totaling \$1,125,000. This award will provide critical funding for the nationally recognized Smart Reentry Program that Sheriff Ted Jackson established in 2016. The FCSO Smart Reentry Program utilizes the national model called Transition from Jail to Community (TJC) to coordinate strategic assistance to reduce recidivism in the Fulton County and improve public safety.

Sheriff Ted Jackson said he and his staff have made a commitment for the next three years to offer former inmates the support they need after leaving jail. These new grant dollars will perfectly complement the existing reentry program, "This new \$1,125,000 grant award will allow the team to apply lessons learned from the highly successful Smart Reentry Program which began three years ago. We found that there is a greater need to focus on long-term, post-release care. Now, more resources can be used to treat substance abuse, depression, anxiety and the underlying conditions related to the individual's mental health and likelihood to reoffend."

Sheriff Jackson continued, "There have been 117 inmates selected to participate in the Smart Reentry Program and only 7 returned to jail. That's less than 6% over three years, less than 2% annually. This program is an effort to help individuals develop skills and education to overcome mistakes they've made, so that their backgrounds will not hinder their future efforts to achieve success and be productive citizens."

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The data shows more support is vital for inmates ages 18 – 24 who reported having lived in zip codes 30310, 30314, and 30318. Those areas are in close proximity to the Fulton County Jail. Staff will screen female and male inmates to determine whether they meet the criteria to be successful candidates for the Smart Reentry Program.

Sheriff Ted Jackson credits the team and key partnerships as elements in this formula for success: Dr. Vinyl Baker, grant writer; Colonel Mark Adger, Chief Jailer; jail staff; and community partners. Sheriff Jackson is appreciative of the Atlanta Police Foundation which pledged an in kind donation in addition to allowing counseling services to take place in the nearby @Promise Center. Sheriff Jackson said he is honored and humbled by this support which is yielding positive outcomes for Fulton County residents.

GRANT HIGHLIGHTS:

Source:	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA)
Amount:	\$1,125,000
Length:	3 Years
Purpose:	Post-Release Services for inmates transitioning from jail to community
Priority Group:	18-26 year olds returning to zip codes 30310, 30314, and 30318

ADDITIONAL DETAILS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Fulton County Sheriff’s Office Smart Reentry is nationally recognized. The Reentry team utilizes proven strategies to help soon to be released inmates adapt well to life outside of jail. Program participants receive counseling, educational assistance, job training, and other services. Staff employ principles of the Thinking for a Change evidenced-based model to build up the person elevating the way the individuals view their lives and enhancing the processes through which they make choices. The participants are less likely to perpetrate crimes and return to jail.

The SAMHSA grant is prestigious and highly-competitive which meant the application submitted by the Sheriff’s Office was carefully scrutinized to ensure the agency was capable of managing a large amount of funds and providing accountability for the project. The Fulton County Sheriff’s Office has a proven track record in managing comprehensive programs. In 2016, the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) awarded the Fulton County Sheriff’s Office a \$1 million grant to establish the highly efficacious Smart Reentry Program. The Sheriff’s Office was one of only four agencies in the United States to receive an award that great in value for reentry from the DOJ at the time.