



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

File #: 15-3713, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED GRANT AWARD

Department: Circuit Court of Cook County, Office of the Chief Judge

Grantee: Circuit Court of Cook County

Grantor: John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

Request: Authorization to accept grant

Purpose: This Safety+Justice Challenge Program Grant will fund the development of a comprehensive plan to examine how the Cook County Department of Corrections is being used and to develop and implement strategies to reduce the incarceration of low-level, nonviolent persons awaiting trial without compromising public safety.

Grant Amount: \$150,000.00

Grant Period: 5/1/2015 - 12/31/2015

Fiscal Impact: None

Accounts: N/A

Concurrences:

The Budget Department has received all requisite documents and determined the fiscal impact on Cook County, if any.

Summary: Cook County was one of 20 jurisdictions out of nearly 200 applicants from 45 states selected by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to receive a \$150,000 Safety+Justice Challenge Program Grant to reduce the number of low level, nonviolent persons incarcerated in the Cook County Department of Corrections and to increase the number of persons who can safely be released while awaiting trial. The award marks the first time that all Cook County criminal justice stakeholders have joined forces to obtain funding to implement system-wide change that will enhance access to justice.

The awarding of the grant also builds onto recent collaborative efforts by the Chief Judge, the State's Attorney, the Public Defender, the Sheriff, the Circuit Court Clerk, and the Cook County Board President that have helped to reduce the jail population to its lowest point since 1991, while maintaining public safety. These include increased use of electronic monitoring and pretrial supervision, deferral from prosecution programs, and the development of specialty courts that offer alternatives to incarceration. The stakeholders recognize that significant challenges remain. These include the disproportionate incarceration of people of color; recent increases in length of stay in the Cook County Department of Corrections; and continued high levels of parole and probation violations and new arrests. The stakeholders will use this

planning grant to identify the key data and decision points that influence these outcomes, and develop collaborative responses.