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July 30, 2020

MEDIA RELEASE

On July 24, 2020, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine announced that Conneaut Municipal Court was one of 114 local law enforcement agencies, courts and service providers that have been awarded grants during the second round of Ohio's Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding (CESF) grant program.

The Conneaut Municipal Court Adult Probation Department (CMCAPD) requested and was awarded a grant in the amount of $19,805.00 to install and implement probation software and purchase several COVID items for use by the Probation Department and the Court. CMCAPD currently does not utilize any probation software or programs. The grant will allow for the purchase and implementation of the Ohio Court Supervision Systems (OCSS) Probation Software for use by CMCAPD for the supervision of individuals placed on supervised community control. The software allows for remote reporting, video interviewing and mass communication with offenders. This would allow for CMCAPD to more efficiently and effectively monitor offenders during their terms of probation by permitting video and remote monitoring capabilities during the COVID-19 Pandemic and adherence to social distancing requirements.

It is important to note that the Ashtabula County Court Adult Probation Departments have recently acquired funding for the purchase of the OCSS Software. CMCAPD works closely with these entities, and the OCSS Software will permit the more efficient supervision and exchange of information between these departments and any department who is utilizing the software as it permits users to view and share information. A law enforcement application of the software will also be accessible for use by the Conneaut Police Department.

In addition to the OCSS Software, CMCAPD was awarded grant funds to purchase a computer tablet, as well as a webcam for use with the office desktop computer, to allow the CMCAPD to conduct probation appointments and interviews utilizing the camera/video function available within the OCSS Software. Use of this technology would eliminate the need for persons on supervision to enter the courthouse during current social distancing, and permit more effective monitoring beyond telephonic and written contact only. CMCAPD would also be able to utilize the tablet during courtroom proceedings to access all information and documentation pertaining to any persons on supervised community control enabling more efficient and accurate responses in court proceedings.

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Finally, the grant will allow for the purchase of latex gloves, disinfecting supplies (i.e. wipes, sprays, etc.), and disposable face masks for use by CMCAPD, which will be utilized when conducting on-site urine drug screens and during the disinfecting process in the office and other areas utilized by CMCAPD to aid in the prevention of the transmission of COVID-19 and other potential viruses/diseases.

Based on the July 24, 2020 News Release of the Ohio Office of Criminal Services (OCJS), the second round of Ohio's CESF grant program has resulted in nearly $6 million being awarded to support the fight against COVID-19. "This second round of funding will help local courts from across the state purchase a variety of remote technology and personal protection equipment, such as plexiglass shields to keep personnel safe," said Governor DeWine. Governor DeWine announced the availability of the grant funding on April 29. The funding will be administered by OCJS, a division of the Ohio Department of Public Safety, as part of the CARES Act to support agencies in taking measures to help prevent the spread of, prepare for, and respond to the spread of COVID-19.

On July 9, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine announced that local law enforcement agencies, probation and parole offices, local courts, victim service providers, and adult, juvenile, and community corrections agencies were awarded $2 million in the first round of funding to support the fight against COVID-19. To date, OCJS has funded more than 175 projects to respond to, prevent the spread of, and prepare for COVID-19 totaling $7,966,816.03. The OCJS News Release can be found at https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/OHDPS/bulletins/297348f.

I am extremely pleased that Conneaut Municipal Court was one of the grant recipients of the CESF grant program, and am very appreciative of OCJS's assistance in substantially improving the technology utilized by CMCAPD and allowing for the purchase of items that will prevent the transmission of COVID-19. I would also like to thank Probation Officer Pamela O'Connell for her hard work in preparing the grant application and leading the Court through this grant process.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,

Nicholas A. Iarocci

Nicholas A. Iarocci, Judge
Conneaut Municipal Court