

Gov. delivers over \$40 million for new police officers across N.M.

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Law Enforcement Recruitment Fund awards will fund over 300 new officers statewide

ALBUQUERQUE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham announced the awarding of over \$40 million from the Law Enforcement Recruitment Fund for the hiring of over 300 new officers at 29 departments across New Mexico on Sept. 9

“Today we deliver on a promise to New Mexicans to get more police officers on our streets,” Lujan Grisham said. “Every New Mexican deserves to feel safe in their community, to know that law enforcement is coming when they need help – that’s why we are continuing our priority investments in public safety, funding new officers that will make a real difference in communities both small and large across the state.”

The Law Enforcement Recruitment Fund was spearheaded and secured by the governor in the 2022 legislative session, established in the House Bill 68 crime package and funded with \$50 million in the budget to support the recruitment of new officers at local departments throughout the state.

The funding awards announced on Sept. 9, totaling \$41.5 million, will be awarded to 29 departments over the next three years, with full funding of salaries provided the first year, 50% provided the second year and 25% provided the third year. Funding levels are based on an average officer salary of \$75,000 and were awarded based on needs identified by the individual

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departments in their application process.

The Gallup Police Department received over \$1.3 million, which will help hire 10 officers.

“I want to thank the governor for keeping her promise to law enforcement to deliver this funding to our department, which will enable me and my team to better serve the people of Rio Arriba County,” Rio Arriba County Sheriff Billy Merrifield said.

“I am grateful to Gov. Lujan Grisham for supporting law enforcement through this funding,” Ruidoso Chief of Police Lawrence Chavez said. “The ability to hire six new officers in Ruidoso is going to go a long way in being able to serve and protect our community.”

“As a former criminal prosecutor, I can tell you with confidence that the brave men and women of law enforcement deserve our respect and appreciation,” Rep. Marian Matthews, D-N.M., co-sponsor of House Bill 68, said. “I am grateful for the governor’s support in getting this critical funding out to community law enforcement.”

“I am excited about the grants the governor is making available to fund our police and law enforcement academies across the state while also supporting innovative recruitment efforts to grow our law enforcement teams,” Rep. Pamela Herndon, D-N.M., co-sponsor of House Bill 68 said.

The allocation of officer recruitment funding follows Lujan Grisham delivering 16% raises for New Mexico State Police Officers earlier this year.

Over the course of her administration, the governor has dedicated \$339 million toward public safety capital outlay funding – more than twice the amount appropriated in the previous eight years. In addition, the Lujan Grisham administration announced earlier this summer that the Department of Workforce Solutions is funding training and equipment costs for 100 new officers throughout the state at no cost to local departments.

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