

Organized Retail Theft Prevention & Organized Retail Theft Vertical Prosecution GRANTEE INITIAL PROGRESS: SURVEY FINDINGS

BACKGROUND:

The Budget Act of 2022 (Senate Bill 154) established the Organized Retail Theft (ORT) Prevention Grant. Funding for the ORT Grant Program was designated as a competitive grant for city police departments, county sheriffs' departments, and probation departments to support local law enforcement agencies in preventing and responding to organized retail theft, motor vehicle or motor vehicle accessory theft, or cargo theft.

The Organized Retail Theft Vertical Prosecution Grant Program was established in Assembly Bill 178. The funding for the ORT Vertical Prosecution was awarded through a competitive grant process for district attorneys to address increased levels of retail theft property crimes by using a vertical prosecution model.

Initiated by the Governor and strongly supported by the Legislature in 2022, both grants are crucial components of the state's commitment to enhancing public safety and addressing the escalating issue of organized retail theft.

On January 2, 2024, the Board of State and Community (BSCC) Corrections sent a survey to all ORT and ORT Vertical Prosecution grantees. The survey asked grantees to identify their planned activities, share highlights related to the progress in implementing their project, and describe any challenges encountered. This report summarizes the findings from the survey.

ORGANIZED RETAIL THEFT PREVENTION GRANT SURVEY FINDINGS

Organized Retail Theft Grantees:

Organized Retail Theft – Prevention Grantees

Agency Name	Award
Anaheim Police Department	\$6,104,863
Bakersfield Police Department	\$6,203,009
Beverly Hills Police Department	\$4,534,580
Brea Police Department	\$5,941,357
Campbell Police Department*	\$400,562
Chula Vista Police Department	\$3,037,986
Citrus Heights Police Department	\$2,752,138
Coalinga Police Department	\$1,745,015
Costa Mesa Police Department	\$3,518,133
Daly City Police Department^	\$8,033,830
Delano Police Department	\$633,761
Fremont Police Department	\$2,453,958
Fresno Police Department^	\$23,663,194
Garden Grove Police Department	\$1,302,231
Hemet Police Department	\$2,500,065
Irvine Police Department	\$5,403,369
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office	\$15,650,000
Los Angeles Police Department	\$15,650,000
Modesto Police Department	\$6,003,419
National City Police Department	\$935,100
Newark Police Department	\$986,444
Orange County Sheriff's Office	\$15,127,350
Palm Springs Police Department	\$4,559,233
Palo Alto Police Department	\$5,176,812
Riverside County Sheriff's Office- Jurupa Valley Station	\$2,219,710
Roseville Police Department	\$609,147
Sacramento Sheriff's Office	\$9,424,987
Salinas Police Department	\$3,573,307
San Fernando Police Department	\$494,964
San Francisco Police Department	\$15,326,301
San Jose Police Department	\$8,489,349
San Mateo Sheriff's Office^	\$15,643,538
San Ramon Police Department	\$5,616,613
Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office	\$11,767,578
Santa Monica Police Department	\$6,125,000
Santa Rosa Police Department	\$560,653
Vacaville Police Department	\$4,432,444
Ventura County Sheriff's Office	\$15,650,000
	\$242,250,000

* Partial Award

^Multi-Agency Proposal: See Table on right of partnering agencies.

Partner Agencies for Multi-Agency Proposals

^Multi-Agency Proposal Lead Agency	Partnering Agencies
Daly City Police Department	1. San Bruno Police Department 2. San Mateo Police Department
Fresno Police Department	1. Clovis Police Department 2. Fresno County Probation Department 3. Fresno County District Attorney's Office
San Mateo Sheriff's Department	1. Atherton Police Department 2. Belmont Police Department 3. Broadmoor Police Department 4. Burlingame Police Department 5. Colma Police Department 6. East Palo Alto Police Department 7. Foster City Police Department 8. Menlo Park Police Department 9. Northern California Regional Intelligence Center Fusion Center (NCRIC) 10. Pacifica Police Department 11. Redwood City Police Department 12. San Mateo County Sheriff's Office 13. San Mateo County Vehicle Theft Task Force (VTTF) 14. South San Francisco Police Department

Response Rate:

Organized Retail Theft Prevention Grant Program

- **100%** of grantees (38 out of 38 grantees)

Key Takeaways for the Organized Retail Theft Prevention Grant Program:

Below are some of the key takeaways from the Organized Retail Theft – Prevention grantees. Detailed information can be found below in the Findings section.

- The majority of grantees have initiated the procurement process for purchasing and installing surveillance, investigative, and/or tracking equipment and technology; some purchases have been completed.
- The majority of grantees plan on conducting ORT operations (e.g., blitz, task force, bait cars, etc.). Some have already implemented such operations resulting in over 900 arrests.
- All the grantees who plan on entering into agreements, contracts, or memoranda of understanding (MOU) with retailers and/or other partner organizations have established communication with some of their planned partners, with some grantees starting the contracting/MOU process.
- Grantee challenges have primarily been related to delays in implementation as a result of local policy and procedures, such as the procurement process or obtaining approval from city council/board approval for accepting the grant funds.

Findings:

Activities and Highlights

Technology and Equipment

- **98%** of grantees (n= 37) plan on purchasing and installing surveillance, investigative, and/or tracking equipment and technology. Of these 37 grantees¹:
 - **78%** have initiated the procurement process for new equipment and technology.
 - **41%** have completed the purchase of new equipment and technology.
 - **20%** have installed new equipment.

ORT Operations

- **75%** of grantees (n = 29) plan on conducting ORT operations (e.g., real-time crime centers, patrol, task force, blitz, sting, fence, bait car, catalytic converter etching, etc.). Of these 29 grantees:
 - **42%** of grantees have conducted blitz and/or enforcement operations (over **40** operations were conducted by these agencies).
 - **7%** of grantees have conducted bait car operations.

¹ Note the total percentage may be over 100% due to the same grantee falling into multiple categories (e.g., hiring both police officers/detectives and support staff).

- **17%** of agencies reported making arrests because of these ORT operations (at least 900 arrests were made across these agencies).

Hiring New Staff

68% of grantees (n = 26) plan on hiring new staff. Of these grantees, **76%** (n = 19) have initiated the hiring process for new staff for the following positions²:

- police officers and/or detectives (48%).
- support staff (46%).

Establishing Partnerships

- **40%** of grantees (n = 15) plan on entering into agreements, contracts, or memoranda of understanding with retailers and/or other partner organizations. Of these 15 grantees¹:
 - **100%** of grantees have initiated contracting/MOU processes with partners.
 - **47%** of grantees report collaborating with retailers.

New versus Existing Efforts

- **78%** of grantees (n = 30) plan on implementing new ORT efforts.
- **63%** of grantees (n = 24) plan on expanding or augmenting their existing ORT efforts.
- **55%** of grantees (n = 21) plan to fund overtime operations.
- **43%** of grantees (n = 16) plan other activities including community outreach, crime prevention, and networking/partnership development.
- **15%** of grantees (n = 6) have scheduled or completed new training.
- **11%** of grantees (n = 4) are in the process of developing/building Real Time Information Centers.

Challenges Encountered:

Contract and Procurement Process

- **37%** of grantees (n = 14) noted challenges related to the local contract and procurement process. This included:
 - increases in costs from when they originally received quotes.
 - lengthy local procurement procedures.

Staffing and Hiring

- **32%** of grantees (n = 12) noted challenges related to staffing and hiring. This included:
 - time it took to complete a background check.
 - finding qualified staff to fill the positions.
 - changes in current staff (e.g., retirements, medical leave).

Governing Board Approval

¹ Note the total percentage may be over 100% due to the same grantee falling into multiple categories (e.g., hiring both police officers/detectives and support staff).

- **24%** of grantees (n = 9) noted the amount of time it took to receive local approval for accepting the grant funds from their city council/board of supervisors. This included:
 - lengthy local approval process.
 - addressing privacy concerns related to the planned technology purchases posed by the city council/board of supervisors.

Program Evaluation

- **13%** of grantees (n = 5) reported having challenges contracting with an evaluator.

Grants Administration

- **13%** of grantees (n = 5) noted challenges related to grant administration, due to:
 - being new to grant administration.
 - being new to administering a grant of this size/scope.
 - All of these grantees also noted that BSCC staff and/or the BSCC Grant Administration Guide have been extremely helpful in this process.

Organized Retail Theft Vertical Prosecution

BACKGROUND:

The Organized Retail Theft Vertical Prosecution Grant Program was awarded to district attorneys to address increased levels of retail theft property crimes by using a vertical prosecution model. Vertical prosecution means a prosecutor is assigned to an organized retail theft case from beginning to end (e.g., initial hearing/arrangement to sentencing). Under this model, the victim(s), witness(es), and impacted law enforcement official(s) have a single point of contact throughout the process.

At the September 14, 2023 BSCC Board Meeting, 13 District Attorney's Offices were awarded in total \$24,868,293 in ORT Vertical Prosecution Grant Funding. The grant cycle is October 1, 2023 through June 1, 2027.

The following are findings from the BSCC survey of grantees on the ORT Vertical Prosecution Grant Program.

Organized Retail Theft Vertical Prosecution Grantees:

Agency	Award
Alameda County District Attorney's Office	\$2,050,000
Humboldt County District Attorney's Office	\$2,050,000
Orange County District Attorney's Office	\$2,050,000
Placer County District Attorney's Office	\$2,047,011
Riverside County District Attorney's Office	\$2,050,000
Sacramento County District Attorney's Office	\$2,050,000
San Francisco County District Attorney's Office	\$2,050,000
Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office	\$800,000
Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office	\$2,050,000
Sonoma County District Attorney's Office	\$2,050,000
Stanislaus County District Attorney's Office	\$1,560,802
Ventura County District Attorney's Office	\$2,047,631
Yolo County District Attorney's Office	\$2,012,849
Total Awarded	\$24,868,293

Response Rate:

Organized Retail Theft Vertical Prosecution:

- **92%** of grantees (12 out of 13 grantees)

Key Takeaways for Organized Retail Theft Vertical Prosecution:

Below are some of the key takeaways from the Organized Retail Theft – Vertical Prosecution grantees. Detailed information appears below in the Findings section.

- The majority of grantees have established their ORT staff/unit and have or are in the process of hiring staff.
- Over half of grantees have established or are finalizing their ORT Vertical Prosecution model.
- All the grantees who plan on entering into agreements, contracts, or memoranda of understanding (MOU) with retailers and/or other partner organizations have started conducting outreach to retailers and partner agencies, with some agreements/contract/MOUs completed.
- Their challenges were primarily related to hiring new staff.

Findings for Organized Retail Theft Vertical Prosecution:

Activities and Highlights

Establishing New Model or Staff

- **100%** of grantees (n = 12) planned on establishing an ORT vertical prosecution unit/staff. Of these 12 grantees, **83%** have established their ORT vertical prosecution unit/staff.
- **100%** of grantees (n = 12) planned on establishing an ORT vertical prosecution model. Of these 12 grantees:
 - **33%** have established their model.
 - **25%** are finalizing their model.
- **77%** of grantees (n = 9) planned on implementing new ORT efforts.
- **77%** of grantees (n = 9) planned on expanding or augmenting their existing ORT efforts.
- **67%** of grantees (n = 8) planned on hiring new staff. Of these 8 grantees:
 - **100%** of grantees have initiated or completed the hiring process for new staff.
 - **62%** of grantees are hiring support staff.
 - **38%** of grantees are hiring Deputy District Attorneys.

Equipment and Technology

- **42%** of grantees (n = 5) planned on purchasing and installing equipment and technology. Of these 5 grantees, **80%** are currently in the procurement process.

ORT Operations

- **33%** of grantees (n = 4) had planned on conducting ORT operations.
- **33%** of grantees (n = 4) planned other activities including implementing a pre-filing diversion program. Tracking ORT related cases and coordinating/communicating with law enforcement and other relevant parties.

Establishing Partnerships / Training / New Cases

- **42%** of grantees (n = 5) planned on entering into agreements, contracts, or memoranda of understanding with retailers and/or other partner organizations. Of these 5 grantees:
 - **100%** have started conducting outreach/establishing relationships with retailers and law enforcement agencies.
 - **40%** have MOUs/contracts being finalized or recently completed.
 - **20%** are developing training for retailers.
- **42%** of grantees (n = 5) have attended or are scheduled to attend training.
- **16%** of grantees (n = 2) report filing ORT cases (one of these grantees reported filing 35 cases).

Challenges Encountered:

Hiring

- **33%** of grantees reported challenges related to the hiring process, including:
 - delays related to background checks.
 - delays related to local hiring policies and procedures.

Evaluation

- 8% of grantees (n = 1) reported challenges related to identifying an evaluator.
- 8% of grantees (n = 1) reported challenges related to identifying the appropriate outcome measures/metrics.
- 8% of grantees (n = 1) reported challenges related to the scope of the problem/number of cases.

Local Processes

- 8% of grantees (n = 1) reported delays as a result of obtaining a resolution from the Board of Supervisors to accept the grant funds.
- 8% of grantees (n = 1) reported challenges related to the local procurement process.
- 8% of grantees (n = 1) reported challenges in obtaining usable information/evidence from retailers, noting that Loss Prevention Officers require training in report writing and documentation.

Please visit the [BSCC's website](#) for more information about the ORT grants:

[Organized Retail Theft Prevention Grant Program](#)

[Organized Retail Theft Vertical Prosecution Grant Program](#)