



# Legislative Finance Committee Budget Presentation

**October 28, 2021**

**Hon Edward Chavez (retd.), Chair**

**Linda Freeman, Executive Director**

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# Statewide Data Integration

## FY 2022 - 2023

- Offered assistance to Administrative Office of the District Attorneys & Judicial Information Division integrating and matching state identification number data
- Data quality assessment of information that NMSC has in our internal data system
- Continue work on integrating data several detention centers statewide – MOU Roosevelt County
- Meeting biweekly with Judicial Information Division and NM Tech ICASA

# Crime Reduction Grants

## FY 2022 Awards

- NMSC Grants Committee awarded \$178,000 in grants to 4 programs.

CJCC	Description
2nd	2nd year continuation funding for the existing position for the Program Project Coordinator to work exclusively with the clients of the Competency Court within the Behavioral Health unit, and work closely with the Forensic Navigation Pilot Program.
4th	Start a community garden program, an exercise program, and provide for additional incentives and monitoring for participants in the Fourth Judicial District's drug and DWI court.
8th	Creation of a new problem-solving court that aims to reduce recidivism in DV defendants, improve case adjudication times, and provide therapeutic intervention as an alternative to prosecution/incarceration for DV defendants, utilizing a multi-professional treatment and counseling approach.
13th	2nd year continuation funding for monitoring of individuals in the Pre-Trial Program.

# Crime Reduction Grants

## 8<sup>th</sup> District Program

- Looked at 911 calls, protection orders, cases files, dismissals and convictions data from 2018-2020
- Determined that given low conviction rate relative to filings and 911 calls, identifying domestic violence perpetrators promptly after an arrest and providing an opportunity for intervention after an immediate crisis was needed in their community.
- Creation of Domestic Violence Treatment Court aligned with NM Treatment Court Standards
- Was partially funded by Crime Reduction Grant
- Taos County provided additional funding



## County, district court commended for new family violence court

The creation of a new Family Violence Court in Taos County should be applauded by all, it directly confronts the tragedy of domestic violence (DV) that has reached epidemic proportions in our communities.

Community Against Violence (CAV) has long advocated for special court oversight of cases involving DV and understanding and addressing its underlying causes by ordering closely monitored case management, accountability and coordinated responses.

The new legal entity, called the "Eighth Judicial District Taos County Family Violence Court," will focus on people with battering (or abusive) behaviors. Offenders will go in front of the same judge and be given the option to go to jail or undergo intensive outpatient treatment and intervention programming. For the latter option, the new court will work with local behavioral health services like Golden Willow Counseling and CAV's CHANGES battering intervention program.

Without a program like this new Family Violence Court, judges can only sentence DV offenders to time in jail, a fine and/or treatment (first-time offenses are misdemeanors and punishable by a maximum of one year in jail and/or a fine).

"The traditional criminal justice system has not been incredibly effective at promoting justice, reducing recidivism and increasing safety," said Taos Magistrate Judge Sara Blankenhorn, who will preside over the new court. "Domestic violence has ripple effects that have massive societal costs. We really need to, as a community, protect our children from growing up in violent homes [or] homes where parents are incarcerated if we want to make lasting change in Taos."

In the past, Blankenhorn had extensive experience serving as legal counsel in domestic violence cases. CAV is pleased she was



**EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS**

Malinda Williams

CHANGES program, a New Mexico approved 52-session course that meets state standards of battering intervention programs (BIPs). BIPs, like CAV's CHANGES, view domestic violence as learned behavior and the offender's motivation, either conscious or unconscious, to use anger and aggression as tools to gain control over their victim(s). In their push for power, the offender uses a system of power and control tactics and manipulation, involving verbal, emotional, mental and economic abuse, and physical and sexual violence.

Anger management programs are not appropriate in DV situations. They do not get to the root causes of DV, that is, the issues of power and control and one person's need or perceived right to dominate their intimate partner/former partner and family members. (We will discuss more on this in a future column.)

The establishment of the Taos Family Violence Court is the second such effort in New Mexico. The Bernalillo Metropolitan Court has set up a similar process that has cut DV recidivism (repeat offending) by as much as 12 percent. We believe

selected to oversee this effort because of her intimate knowledge of the challenges our communities face when confronting DV. She is also familiar with CAV's



FILE PHOTO

**Taos Magistrate Judge Sara Blankenhorn is the head of the new Family Violence Court for Taos County.**

there will be similar results here. A more consistent, efficient judicial response to DV cases will effectively reduce recidivism by increasing offender accountability, and survivor and community safety.

We applaud the Eighth Judicial District Court and the Taos County

**'Domestic violence has ripple effects that have massive societal costs. We really need to, as a community, protect our children from growing up in violent homes [or] homes where parents are incarcerated if we want to make lasting change in Taos.'**

**SARA BLANKENHORN**  
*Taos Magistrate Judge*

force our dedication to eliminating DV from our community by giving offenders a strong pathway to rehabilitate so we can all build a healthier, safer Taos.

Malinda Williams is executive director of Community Against Violence (CAV) which offers FREE confidential support and assistance for child and adult survivors of sexual and domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and child and elder abuse, community and school violence prevention programs, re-education groups for people using power and control in their relationships, counseling, shelter, transitional housing, and community thrift store. To talk or get information, call CAV's 24-hour helpline, 575-758-9889 or visit [TaosCAV.org](http://TaosCAV.org).

Taos' only automotive paint store



## Funding secured for new domestic violence court

By Will Hooper | [whoop@taosnews.com](mailto:whoop@taosnews.com) | Aug 26, 2021 | Updated Aug 26, 2021



Nathan Burton / Taos News

Tuesday, Aug. 24, from left to right: Commissioner Candace O'Donnell, Commissioner Darlene Nigl, Commissioner AnJeanne Blush, Commissioner Jim Fenters, Judge Estelle Chavez, Debbie McCann (with CAV) and Karl Bockel (Court executive officer) applaud following the signing of a bill that will grant funds to the new domestic violence court at the Taos County Court House. Nathan Burton

## FY 2023 Request

- Create a fund for Crime Reduction Grant Act
- Expand the fund by 882.0 thousand
- Due to the limited funds for the crime reduction grants, only small projects have been funded
- With the limited funds, most grants have supplemented existing programs
- With expanded funding, we could fund more innovative community responsive projects

# NMSC Committee Work

- In FY 21:
  - Full Commission meetings: 6
  - Executive Committee meetings: 5
  - Reform Committee meetings: 12
  - Juvenile Committee Meetings: 8
- In FY 22 (to date):
  - Full Commission meetings: 2
  - Criminal Code Update Committee meetings: 4
  - Child abuse statutes working group: 4
  - Reform Committee meetings: 2

# NMSC Committee Work

- The Criminal Code Update Committee has formed seven working groups. The working group to assess child abuse statutes has been meeting regularly for the past few months. Working groups in the following areas will begin meeting soon: sentencing structure; mens rea; behavioral health issues as they impact the criminal justice system; race and ethnicity data; homicide statutes; and criminal sexual penetration statutes.