

Sacramento County District Attorney's Office Awarded "CHP Cannabis Tax Fund Toxicology Grant"



Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

Semper Justitia

The Sacramento County District Attorney's Office has received a \$460,168 "CHP Cannabis Tax Fund Toxicology Grant." The District Attorney's Laboratory of Forensic Services (Crime Lab) will use these funds to aid in the enforcement of Driving Under the Influence (DUI)/Driving Under the Influence of Drugs (DUID) traffic laws related to alcohol and other drugs, including cannabis and cannabis products.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Highway Patrol Cannabis Tax Fund Grant Program.

The Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) ranked Sacramento County fifth out of 58 counties in victims killed and injured when alcohol was involved in the year 2018. From 2014 to 2018, there was a 19% increase in victims killed and injured in alcohol involved collisions in Sacramento County. With a population of 1.53 million in Sacramento County, the number of DUI/DUID cases that are filed by the Sacramento County DA's Office is significant. In 2020, the office filed 263 felony and 3,954 misdemeanor DUI/DUID cases.

The Sacramento DA's Office provides services to multiple law enforcement agencies that have a hand in investigating DUI/DUID cases at various stages of the investigations whether their involvement occurs during the detention, in-field investigation stage, Drug Recognition Evaluation, or post-arrest chemical testing. These agencies run their samples through the Crime Lab.

In September 2020, the Crime Lab began testing all alcohol blood samples for the presence of drugs, both illicit and prescription. This revealed many persons driving under the combined influence of alcohol and drugs, when before alcohol was the only intoxicant suspected. Marijuana continues to be particularly problematic as it is commonly used in conjunction with alcohol. The Crime Lab is one of three public labs in California that performs drug testing on all case samples. The additional testing has increased both the monthly case load and the need for drug confirmation testing, which increases the workload for criminalists.

This grant will fund an additional criminalist assigned to the Toxicology Alcohol Unit to help with the added DUI/DUID analysis workload and DUI/DUID checkpoint support throughout Sacramento County.

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