



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Yolo County District Attorney's Office Awarded Grant From the Office of Traffic Safety for Specialized DUI Prosecution Team

Woodland, Calif. – December 7, 2023 - The Yolo County District Attorney's Office will continue to have a specialized prosecution team that handles alcohol and drug-impaired driving cases through a \$213,311 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS).

According to Yolo County District Attorney's Commons Data Transparency portal (<https://www.measuresforjustice.org/commons/yoloda>), since 2020, driving under the influence (DUI) investigations referred to the District Attorney from local police, CHP, and Sheriff for criminal charges have increased. Recent jury trial convictions, as well as numerous other DUIs that have resulted in pleas, highlight a disturbing and troubling trend of DUIs with Blood Alcohol Contents (BACs) vastly beyond the legal limit of .08. A BAC that is double or triple this rate is an exponentially greater danger to other drivers on the road and the community as a whole.

"Impaired driving is a growing problem, particularly with drivers suspected of operating a vehicle under the influence of both alcohol and drugs," Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig said. "This program allows us to focus specifically on holding those who decide to drive impaired accountable for their dangerous actions."

The specialized prosecution team will also partner with the statewide Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor Training Program (TSRP) to collaborate with law enforcement agencies on best practices for handling and managing DUI cases.

Yolo County's Deputy District Attorneys who are assigned to the program, prosecute the most serious and complex DUI cases, such as those involving injury and death and those

involving drug impairment. Deputy District Attorneys assigned to these cases handle them through all stages of the criminal process, from the time of the arrest through sentencing. They also focused closely on training law enforcement throughout California on DUI investigations. To date, close to 1,400 officers have been reached through DUI training by the Yolo County District Attorney's OTS grant.

The program has also been very active in community outreach. The team has taken steps to be involved with local high schools, youth programs, UC Davis programs, local community colleges, and the Yolo County Citizen's Academy. Over the past six years, the OTS grant program has focused on educating youths on the dangers of DUI especially as it relates to drugs. While marijuana is now legal, the program aims to educate that marijuana causes impairment despite 34% of teenagers believing it is safe to drive after smoking marijuana. Since beginning this program, the Yolo County District Attorney's Office has reached nearly every high school in the area with live DUI trials that are conducted in front of the students.

This is the 12th year the Yolo County District Attorney's Office has received funding from the OTS for a specialized (DUI) prosecution program. Last year, the prosecution team filed 421 DUI cases, including 14 DUI drug cases and 33 DUI combined alcohol and drug cases.

The grant program runs through September 2024.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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