



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 0266-2019, **Version:** 1

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### **BACKGROUND**

This legislation authorizes the Franklin County Municipal Court, Clerk of Court (Municipal Court Clerk) to accept a grant in the amount of \$25,002.00 from the Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs, and to appropriate the total amount of the grant from the unappropriated balance of the General Government Grant Fund to the Franklin County Municipal Court.

This grant will fund the Short Message Service (SMS) Reminder Notification's Pilot Project. The project will provide defendants an automated courtesy text reminder of their scheduled arraignment court appearance. In Franklin County Municipal Court, there are an overabundance of individuals who fail to appear for court; resulting in the issuance of order -ins and warrants. Most warrants issued are for low level misdemeanors, creating a clog in the system, and increasing workloads for all justice system partners.

Studies suggest that using a text notification reminder system may improve court appearance rates of defendants and reduce community and operational court costs associated with failure to appear. In addition, defendants may spend less time in jail.

**EMERGENCY:** Emergency Legislation is requested so that the grant funds can be used as soon as possible.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** \$25,002.00 will be expended from the General Government Grant Fund.

To authorize and direct the Franklin County Municipal Court, Clerk of Court to accept a grant award from the Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs; to appropriate \$25,002.00 from the unappropriated balance of the General Government Grant Fund to the Franklin County Municipal Court; and to declare an emergency. (\$25,002.00)

**WHEREAS**, it is in the city's best interest that the Municipal Court Clerk receive support to provide courtesy reminders of scheduled court appearances for defendants; therefore, reducing the number of defendants who fail to appear in Court and lessen operational costs associated with the entire Criminal Justice System.

**WHEREAS**, grant monies from the Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs, in the amount of \$25,002.00 are available to provide for the SMS Reminder Notification's Pilot Project; and

**WHEREAS**, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the Court in that it is immediately necessary to approve the acceptance of this grant so that the grant funds can be used as soon as possible, thereby preserving the public health, safety and welfare; now, therefore,

### **BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:**

**SECTION 1.** That the Municipal Court Clerk be and is hereby authorized to accept a grant in the amount of \$25,002.00 from the Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs.

**SECTION 2.** That from the unappropriated balance in the General Government Grant Fund, Fund 2220, and from all monies estimated to come into said fund from any and all sources and appropriated for any other purpose during the

during the grant period, the sum of \$25,002.00 is appropriated upon receipt of an executed grant agreement in Fund 2220, General Government Grant Fund; 2601, Municipal Court Clerk; Grant No. to be determined by the City Auditor; Object Class O3, Contractual Services; Amount \$25,002.00.

**SECTION 3.** That the monies appropriated in the foregoing Section 2 shall be paid upon the order of the Municipal Court Clerk and that no order shall be drawn or money paid except by voucher, the form of which shall be approved by the City Auditor.

**SECTION 4.** That, at the end of the grant period, any repayment of unencumbered balances required by the grant is hereby authorized and any unused City match monies may be transferred back to the City fund from which they originated in accordance with all applicable grant agreements

**SECTION 5.** That the funds necessary to carry out the purpose of this ordinance are hereby deemed appropriated, and the City Auditor shall establish such accounting codes as necessary.

**SECTION 6.** That for the reasons stated in the preamble herein, which are made a part hereof, this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after passage and approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither vetoes nor approves the same.