

**Program Narrative**  
**Edward Byrne Memorial JAG Program**  
**FY2007**

The Hamden Police Department is requesting funding for the purchase of additional Taser units in order to compensate for the minimal number of units currently available to officers. The funding for this program would allow not only for the purchase of Tasers, but necessary equipment such as cameras and cartridges, for regular use and training purposes.

This funding the U.S. Department of Justice has made available will assist the Hamden Police Department in its goals of providing safer law enforcement to its communities.

The Hamden Police Department does not have an adequate supply of Taser units to equip all of its officers at this time. The Department currently has 22 Taser units, some of which are in need of expensive repairs. Hamden is a 106 man Department, and needs this equipment for not only Patrol officers, but also Detectives, Street Interdiction Team members, and those officers working special events. At this time, few Tasers available are signed out to officers working each Patrol shift, and many times does not allow for everyone in need of one, to be issued one.

This Department has been utilizing Tasers since 2004, and has found them to be an invaluable piece of equipment. Officers come into contact with many persons who are in violation of the law and who refuse to comply with an officer's legal direction; these persons often resist violently, causing officers to have to respond to threats and aggression on the part of these individuals. Without the benefit of Tasers, officers may have to rely on the options of hand-to-hand techniques, chemical spray, PR24 or duty weapon, in order to accomplish their law enforcement responsibilities. These alternative methods present liability issues and higher risk of injury to both the officer and the suspect.

The availability and use of less-than-lethal weapons systems is a responsible approach to law enforcement and consistent with public expectations of law enforcement using less-lethal options. We believe it is in the best interest of all concerned to maintain and improve our current technology and to provide the best available training to officers.

Unfortunately, current budgetary constraints have limited the purchase of new Taser units on our own. The money that was available is needed to be distributed between repair costs and cartridge purchases, and for yearly training costs. Our Department's goal is to purchase additional Taser units for our patrol officers. We would use this funding from the Edward Byrne Memorial JAG Program to purchase 15 additional X-26 Tasers. That would make 37 total available to distribute among Patrol and other Divisions. The funding would also allow us to purchase approximately 10 cartridges for street use, or for training/recertification, which is conducted once per year. Additionally, this Department seeks to purchase 11 "TaserCam" units, which attach to the Taser Units and record incidents of use. This camera accessory records both black-and-white video and audio whenever the safety switch is flipped off. It works even in zero-light conditions. This means that the camera is recording whenever the Taser Unit is in use. This added feature gives law enforcement a tremendous advantage in the courtroom. According to an article by Taser International, "Based on the in-car video experience, when video evidence is available, 96.2% of police officers are exonerated from misconduct allegations." The Taser camera is a tool that can protect both the suspects and officers, and increase accountability.

Furthermore, the Department plans to utilize its own funds to continue the training and re-certification of personnel in the use of these devices, and will also supply additional cartridges for use with the Taser devices.