

## **TAKE BACK OUR COMMUNITY REWARD FUND PROGRAM**

**Purpose:** Take Back Our Community is a County-wide program is sponsored by the Sonoma County Alliance, which is comprised of business, labor, agriculture and individual members as well as member organization representation. These community representative groups have a strong interest in ridding our streets and neighborhoods of violent criminals and gang members through a monetary reward fund to assist local law enforcement and the District Attorney's Office to bring such individuals to justice.

**General:**

Under the oversight of the Sonoma County Alliance's Executive Committee, local business, labor, community groups, organizations and individual citizens of Sonoma County may contribute money to a reward fund used to assist in the arrest and conviction of:

- Violent felons, especially when committed by gang members, such as murder, rape robbery, car-jackings or assaults with a deadly weapon
- Other felonies that have a traumatic effect on the community such as hate crimes, felony vandalism, especially when committed against religious and educational institutions.
- Felony hit and run vehicle collisions and other vehicle manslaughter cases
- Any other crime the Alliance, in consultation with local law enforcement, believes a reward is warranted to expedite the apprehension of violent criminals

Sonoma County law enforcement agencies will make recommendations to the Sonoma County Alliance Executive Committee as to which investigations would be enhanced through the offering of a reward. The recommendation will be forwarded to the Sonoma County Law Enforcement Chief's Association for discussion and consideration prior to referral to the Alliance. The SCLECA's Executive Committees' approval is forwarded to the Alliance for a vote and final decision.

- A reward of \$5,000.00 or more may be offered for the arrest and conviction of the culprit(s) of a criminal offense
- The Sonoma County Alliance and/or law enforcement/District Attorney may desire to withhold such reward if the informant is a co-conspirator to the crime in question or has gang affiliations

- Once reward funds have been approved by the Sonoma County Alliance Executive Committee for dispersal, the appropriate law enforcement agency will craft the reward offer/notice for the public and media consumption. Such notices will recognize the Sonoma County Alliance's reward contribution
- The Sonoma County Alliance Executive Committee members are solely responsible for developing the protocol for approval and distributions of funds.
- The District Attorney's Office, in conjunction with the investigating agency will determine whether the information provided by a financially motivated informant was a "pivotal" piece of evidence that directly or indirectly lead to the arrest and conviction of the culprit(s)
- Procedures such as the issuance of a Form 1099 for tax consequences and audit trail need to be clearly defined so to hold harmless the Sonoma County Alliance and law enforcement jurisdiction from any tax liability (if any)
- A reward will not be requested by law enforcement until all reasonable investigative leads have been exhausted
- The reward offer will expire after 6 months unless extended by the investigate law enforcement agency