



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

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**PRESS RELEASE**

11/12/20

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY AWARDED OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY DUI  
PROSECUTION GRANT**

For the fourth straight year, District Attorney Tim Ward is pleased to announce the award of a California Office of Traffic Safety Grant to help prosecute cases of driving under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The \$168,800 grant will continue to fund a Vertical Prosecution team through September 2021, primarily for felony DUI with injury cases, as well as attorney training. The Vertical Prosecution model allows a prosecutor to see the case through from start to finish.

“If you drink or use drugs and decide to drive, you put lives at risk,” OTS Director Barbara Rooney said. “This funding from the OTS makes sure that those who make the choice to drive under the influence are held accountable for their actions.”

In addition to funding the special prosecution team, funding will be used to develop protocols for handling cases through every step of the criminal process, provide training for prosecutors and investigators through California’s Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor Program, and host quarterly regional meetings with law enforcement partners to improve DUI investigations and prosecutions.

Under the 2019 - 2020 Alcohol and Drug Impaired Driver Vertical Prosecution Program grant, over 2,609 total DUI cases were filed by the Office of the District Attorney – 2,169 alcohol only, 175 drug only, and 265 combination drug and alcohol. The Vertical TCDA DUI prosecutor filed over 124 cases, focusing on incidents of felony repeat offenders and DUI resulting in injury.

“I once again thank the Office of Traffic Safety for recognizing that our county can greatly benefit from this program. DUI in all of its forms is a preventable tragedy. It brings me no pleasure to report that the seven DUI related deaths in 2020 are more than double what they were in 2018 and 2019. What makes that number even more heartbreaking is that six of those seven defendants in those cases had a prior DUI conviction. There are too many options that exist today to get home safe. Please, be safe on the road. If you see DUI, call 911 immediately,” said District Attorney Tim Ward.

*Media inquiries can be directed to the Office of the District Attorney, County of Tulare  
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