

BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

FY 2022 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program - Competitive Solicitation

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May 2022

This webinar will begin shortly



BJA
Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice

Agenda

- Grants.gov and JustGrants
- Program Overview
- Goals and Objectives
- Changes to the Solicitation
- Federal Award Information/Use of Funds
- Eligibility
- Certifications Required by Law
- Application Submission
- Review Process
- Merit Review Criteria
- Application Checklist



Grants.gov and JustGrants



Two-step process

Step 1: The applicant must submit by the Grants.gov deadline the required Application for Federal Assistance standard form (SF)-424 and a Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) form when they register in Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>

To register in Grants.gov, the applicant will need to ensure that its System for Award Management (SAM) registration is current.

DUE June 22, 2022; 8:59pm ET



Step 2: The applicant must then submit the **full application** including attachments in JustGrants at [JustGrants.usdoj.gov](https://www.justgrants.usdoj.gov). To be considered timely, the full application must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline. OJP encourages applicants to review, the “How to Apply” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) and the JustGrants website for more information, resources, and training.

DUE June 27, 2022; 8:59pm ET

BJA Funding Webinar





The Federal Funding Process: First Steps to Applying, How to Prepare Now, and Other Considerations

  **BJA**
Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice

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THE FEDERAL FUNDING PROCESS: THE FIRST STEPS TO APPLYING, HOW TO PREPARE NOW, & OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Gregory Torain, BJA, Elizabeth Wolfe, BJA, and
Lisa Hartman, JustGrants

 
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January 26, 2022
1:00 – 2:30 pm

0:01 / 1:29:22

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<https://bja.ojp.gov/media/video/42231>



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Program Overview



Seeks to improve forensic science and medical examiner/coroner services, including services provided by laboratories operated by states and units of local government.

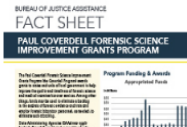
Additional Coverdell information, including funded awards and current funding opportunities, can be found at <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/Coverdell/overview>



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Overview

The Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program awards grants to states and units of local government to help improve forensic science and medical examiner/coroner services, including services provided by laboratories operated by states and units of local government.



Overview

News

Funding

Certifications

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Coverdell has two solicitations: Formula and Competitive

Under the Coverdell Program, state administering agencies (SAAs) may apply for both formula and competitive funds. Units of local government may apply for competitive funds.

This webinar is focusing on the Competitive Solicitation

BJA FY 22 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program - Competitive

Assistance Listing Number #	16.742
Grants.gov Opportunity Number:	O-BJA-2022-171341
Solicitation Release Date:	May 12, 2022 8:00 AM
Grants.gov Deadline:	June 22, 2022 8:59 PM
Application JustGrants Deadline:	June 27, 2022 8:59 PM

Goals and Objectives



The result of Coverdell grants should:

- Demonstrate improvement over current operations in forensic science or medical examiner/coroner services provided in the state, including services provided by laboratories operated by the state and services provided by laboratories operated by units of local government within the state.
- Reduction in forensic analysis backlogs is considered an improvement in timeliness of services.

Goals and Objectives



Funds must be used for one or more of the following six purposes:

- (1) To carry out all or a substantial part of a program intended to improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science or medical examiner services in the State, including such services provided by the laboratories operated by the State and those operated by units of local government within the State.
- (2) To eliminate a backlog in the analysis of forensic science evidence, including firearms examination, latent prints, impression evidence, toxicology, digital evidence, fire evidence, controlled substances, forensic pathology, questionable documents, and trace evidence.
- (3) To train, assist, and employ forensic laboratory personnel and medicolegal death investigators, as needed, to eliminate such a backlog.
- (4) To address emerging forensic science issues (such as statistics, contextual bias, and uncertainty of measurement) and emerging forensic science technology (such as high throughput automation, statistical software, and new types of instrumentation).
- (5) To educate and train forensic pathologists.
- (6) To fund medicolegal death investigation systems to facilitate accreditation of medical examiner and coroner offices and certification of medicolegal death investigators.

Changes to the Solicitation

Forensic Science Laboratory Definition Revised

The FY21 solicitation defined *Forensic Science Laboratory* as:

A state/local government performing forensic science services and has a “forensic science laboratory” with more full-time scientists than the following:

- With a minimum of 10 full-time scientists in the fields of forensic chemistry, physics, biology, computer science, and forensic anthropology.
- Whose principal function is to analyze physical and/or digital evidence in criminal matters and provide testimony regarding such evidence.

Medical examinations are not considered forensic science laboratories for purposes of this solicitation.

Changes to the Solicitation



Forensic Science Laboratory Definition Revised

FY22 Revision:

For purposes of this solicitation, any State/local government entity performing forensic science services is considered a “forensic science laboratory”.

Medical examiner and coroner offices are considered forensic science laboratories for purposes of this solicitation.

Federal Award Information



- **The maximum dollar amount has been increased for Competitive awards:**
From \$250,000 to \$500,000
- **Anticipated Number of Awards**
10-15
- **Period of Performance**
36 months
- **Period of Performance Start Date**
10/1/22 12:00 AM



Expenses - Permitted



- **Salary and benefits of laboratory employees**
 - Funds may be used for personnel, fellowships, visiting scientists, interns, consultants, or temporary staff.
- **Overtime for laboratory staff**
- **Computerization for forensic analyses and data management**
- **Laboratory equipment**
- **Supplies**
- **Accreditation, including:**
 - Application and maintenance fees charged by appropriate accrediting bodies.
- **Education, training, and certification**
- **Facilities and renovation directly attributable to improving forensic science or medical examiner/coroner services**
- **Administrative expenses - Not more than 10% of the total funds**

Expenses – Not Permitted



- Funds to conduct research, though applicants may address emerging forensic science issues and technology through implementation of new technologies and processes into public laboratories.
- Expenses other than those listed in *permitted expenses* (including expenses for general law enforcement functions or non- forensic investigatory functions).
- Costs for any new facility that exceed the limits described in the solicitation.
- Recipient administrative expenses (direct or indirect) that exceed 10% of the total grant amount.
- The use of funds for the purchase and/or lease of vehicles, such as crime scene vans.
- * The use of BJA grant funds for unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), including unmanned aircraft vehicles (UAV), and all accompanying accessories to support UAS/UAV, is unallowable. * *New*

Page 10

- State governments
- County governments
- City or township governments

For purposes of the Coverdell Program, the term “state” means each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.



Eligibility

States and units of local government may apply for FY 2022 competitive Coverdell funds for use for **forensic science laboratories**.

For purposes of this solicitation, any State/local government entity performing forensic science services is considered a “forensic science laboratory”.

Medical examiner and coroner offices are considered forensic science laboratories for purposes of this solicitation.



Q: Do I have to be accredited in order to apply?

A: Applicants do not have to be currently accredited to apply. However, Coverdell awardees must use grant funds to prepare and apply for accreditation of any FY 2022 Coverdell grant-funded unaccredited forensic laboratory system, including any laboratory operated by a unit of local government within the state, not more than 2 years after the FY 2022 Coverdell award date.

Medical examiner and coroner offices are exempt from this accreditation requirement. The accrediting body must be “a signatory to an internationally recognized arrangement” and one that “offers accreditation to forensic science conformity assessment bodies using an accreditation standard that is recognized by that internationally recognized arrangement[.]”

Q: Our law enforcement agency is accredited (e.g., CALEA) — are we eligible to apply?

A: With few exceptions, law enforcement agencies with law enforcement accreditation, rather than forensic laboratory or medical examiner accreditation, are not eligible for Coverdell funding. For eligibility, the applicant must meet the definition of a forensic laboratory.

Certifications Required by Law



Pages 10 and 17

The Coverdell law provides that, to request a grant, each applicant must submit five certifications specific to the Coverdell Program.

- Applicants requesting funds for only medical examiner's offices or coroner's offices are not required to submit the certification regarding accreditation. (See 34 U.S.C. § 10562(2).

A certification may only be completed by an official familiar with its requirements and authorized to certify on behalf of the applicant agency (i.e., the agency applying directly to BJA).

All five certifications must be completed using the BJA templates. Certifications made on behalf of subrecipients of award funds — rather than certifications made on behalf of the agency applying directly to BJA — are not acceptable to satisfy the certification requirements.

<https://bjaojp.gov/program/coverdell/certifications>

Certifications Required by Law



Certification Names	Forensic Labs	ME/C
Plan for Forensic Science Laboratories	Required	Required
Generally Accepted Lab Practices & Procedures	Required	Required
Forensic Science Laboratory System Accreditation	Required	Not Required
Use of Funds for New Facilities	Required	Required
External Investigations and Attachment	Required	Required

Forensic Genetic Genealogy



If you plan to conduct Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Searching (FGGS) using funds from your federal award, you must make note of the following:

- No DNA profiles (including SNP profiles generated for FGGS testing) generated with funding from this award may be entered into any non-governmental database (e.g. GEDmatch) without prior express written approval from BJA.
- Program activity involving FGGS is subject to the DOJ [*Interim Policy on Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Searching*](#) or to the final policy, when issued.

Page 14

The following application elements **MUST** be included in the application submission for an application to meet the basic minimum requirements (BMR) to advance to peer review and receive consideration for funding:

- **Proposal Abstract**
- **Proposal Narrative**
- **Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (web-based form)**
- **All five (5) certifications required by the Coverdell law**
 - **Medical examiner and coroner offices are exempt from submitting the certification regarding accreditation**

Application Submission - Competitive

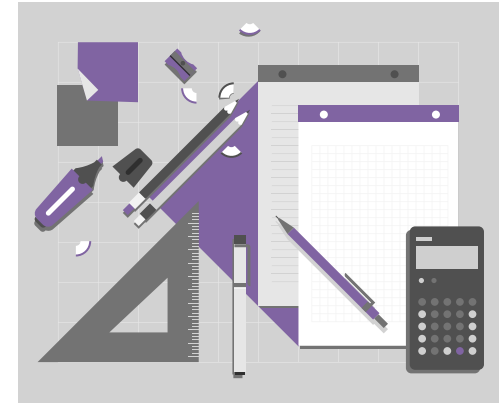


- The application must be submitted by an **eligible** type of applicant
- The application must request funding within programmatic funding constraints (if applicable)
- The application must be **responsive to the scope** of the solicitation
- The application must include all items necessary to meet the **basic minimum requirements**

Merit Review Criteria

1. Statement of the Problem/Description of the Issue
2. Project Design and Implementation
3. Capabilities and Competencies
4. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures
5. Budget

See pages 14-16 and 20 for more information



Application Checklist



Pages 22-24

What an Applicant Must Do:

Prior to registering in Grants.gov:

- Confirm your Entity's System Award Management (SAM) Registration Information (see OJP Grant Application Resource Guide)

To register in Grants.gov:

- Acquire an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and a Grants.gov username and password (see OJP Grant Application Resource Guide)
- Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC) (see OJP Grant Application Resource Guide)

To find the funding opportunity:

- Search for the funding opportunity in Grants.gov using the opportunity number, Assistance Listing or keyword(s)
- Access the funding opportunity and application package (see Step 7 in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide)
- Sign up for Grants.gov email notifications (optional) (see OJP Grant Application Resource Guide)
- Read Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov
- Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at <https://www.ojp.gov/funding/financialguidedoj/iii-postaward-requirements#6g3y8> (see OJP Grant Application Resource Guide)

Previous Year Application Data



Coverdell Competitive Application Breakdown

FY 2018		FY 2019		FY2020		FY2021	
Apps	Awds	Apps	Awds	Apps	Awds	Apps	Awds
112	25	85	26	108	21	62	23
22%		31%		19%		37%	

Important Dates and Information



BJA FY 22 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program - Competitive

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Grants.gov

- Provides technical assistance with submitting the SF-424 and SF-LLL
 - **Customer Support Hotline** – 800-518-4726 or 606-545-5035
 - Operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays
 - **Email**
 - <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html>
 - support@grants.gov
- Provides information on available federal funding opportunities for various federal agencies

JustGrants Technical Support

- Provides technical assistance with submitting the full application in DOJ's Justice Grants System (JustGrants)
 - **Customer Support Hotline** – 833-872-5175
 - Monday – Friday between 5:00 AM and 9:00 PM ET
 - Saturday, Sunday, and Federal holidays from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM ET
 - **Email**
 - <https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/user-support>
 - JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov

OJP Response Center

- Provides solicitation support and general assistance
- **email** - grants@ncjrs.gov
- **web chat** - <https://webcontact.ncjrs.gov/ncjchat/chat.jsp>
- **toll free** at 800-851-3420
- **TTY** at 301-240-6310 (hearing impaired only)

The Response Center hours of operation are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday

Subscribe

- Subscribe to receive email notifications of new funding opportunities and other resources
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 - Subscribe at <https://www.ojp.gov/subscribe> and be sure to select “Grants/funding” as an area of interest

Thank you for your hard work and dedication!

We will now address questions

Enter in the [Q&A](#) box and send to [All Panelists](#)