

# BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE FACT SHEET

## PAUL COVERDELL FORENSIC SCIENCE IMPROVEMENT GRANTS PROGRAM

The Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program (the Coverdell Program) awards grants to states and units of local government to help improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science and medical examiner/coroner services. Among other things, funds may be used to eliminate a backlog in the analysis of forensic evidence and to train and employ forensic laboratory personnel, as needed, to eliminate such a backlog.

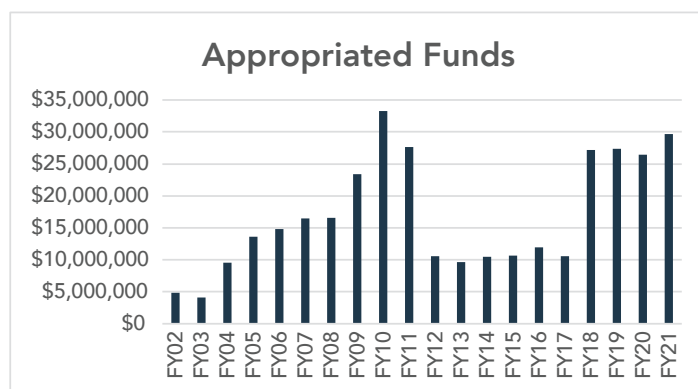
State Administering Agencies (SAAs) may apply for both “base” (formula) and competitive funds. Units of local government may apply for competitive funds.

### Program Goals

Coverdell grants must be used for one or more of these six purposes:

1. To improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science or medical examiner/coroner services in the state.
2. To eliminate a backlog in the analysis of forensic science evidence.
3. To train, assist, and employ forensic laboratory personnel.
4. To address emerging forensic science issues (such as statistics, contextual bias, and uncertainty of measurement) and emerging forensic science technology.
5. To educate and train forensic pathologists.
6. To facilitate the accreditation and certification of medicolegal death investigators.

### Program Funding and Awards



### Program Accomplishments

Of 1,590 Coverdell awards funded since fiscal year 2002:

- 953 formula awards were received by states.
- 119 competitive awards were received by states and 518 by units of local government.

From 2011 to 2018:

- More than 1.3 million backlog cases were analyzed using Coverdell funds.
- More than 14,000 forensic science personnel attended training.
- More than 1,700 medical examiner personnel attended training.



From 2017 to 2019:

- 8 agencies received initial accreditation.
- 138 agencies used Coverdell funding to maintain accreditation.

## Additional Information

- BJA Program Web Page: <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/coverdell/overview>
- Subscribe: <https://bja.ojp.gov/subscribe>

## ABOUT BJA

BJA helps America's state, local, and tribal jurisdictions reduce and prevent crime, lower recidivism, and promote a fair and safe criminal justice system. BJA provides a wide range of resources, including training and technical assistance, to law enforcement, courts and corrections agencies, treatment providers, reentry practitioners, justice information sharing professionals, and community-based partners to address chronic and emerging criminal justice challenges nationwide. To learn more about BJA, visit [bja.ojp.gov](https://bja.ojp.gov) or follow us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/DOJBJA](https://www.facebook.com/DOJBJA)) and Twitter ([@DOJBJA](https://twitter.com/DOJBJA)). BJA is a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs.