

BJA FY26 CEBR Formula - Forensic Appendix

Definitions

For the purposes of the BJA FY26 CEBR Formula NOFO, the following are defined:

Backlogged forensic biology/DNA case: A forensic biology/DNA case that has not been completed within 30 days of receipt in the laboratory.

Backlogged DNA database sample: A DNA database sample that has not been uploaded to CODIS within 30 days of receipt in the laboratory.

Case: An analysis request for examination in one forensic investigation area (forensic biology/DNA for this purpose).

CODIS: The Combined DNA Index System, the generic term used to describe the FBI's program of support for criminal justice DNA databases, as well as the software used to run these databases.

CODIS hit: CODIS hits are tracked as either an offender hit (where the identity of a potential suspect is generated) or as a forensic hit (where the DNA profiles obtained from two or more crime scenes are linked but the source of these profiles remains unknown).

DNA analysis/analyses: Activities conducted to facilitate processing and entry of forensic DNA samples into CODIS once the sample has been collected from a crime scene or a known individual; this may include screening (the location, assessment, identification, and characterization of body fluid(s) and other biological areas of interest), laboratory processing (e.g., extraction, quantitation, amplification), and/or issuing reports (e.g., fragment/sequence analysis, DNA profile evaluation and comparison, report writing and associated technical/administrative reviews of DNA reports).

Forensic Genetic Genealogy: The combination of genetic analysis with traditional historical and genealogical research to study family history. For forensic investigations, it can be used to identify remains by tying the DNA to a family with a missing person or to point to the likely identity of a perpetrator.

Forensic sample: A biological sample originating from and associated with evidence from a crime scene. A sample associated with evidence from a crime scene may include a sample that has been carried away from the crime scene. May also be referred to as a crime scene sample.

Laboratory: For the purposes of this NOFO, a laboratory is defined as a facility:

1. Employing at least two full-time employees who are qualified DNA analysts; and
2. Having and maintaining the capability to perform the DNA analysis of forensic samples and/or casework reference samples at that facility that complies with [FBI's Quality](#)

[Assurance Standards](#) and the accreditation requirements of the Federal DNA Identification Act (34 U.S.C. §12592) or subsequent laws. Having Rapid DNA as the only DNA capability does not satisfy the definition of a laboratory.

LIMS: Laboratory Information Management System is a software-based system that collects, creates, and stores all data related to forensic examinations in a crime laboratory. Key features include, but are not limited to, workflow and data tracking support, flexible architecture, and data exchange interfaces.

LIMS module: A sample/case tracking component separate from the laboratory's LIMS that functions only for the purposes of the forensic biology/DNA unit. NOTE: The module may be a product of the same vendor as the laboratory's current LIMS or a different one.

NDIS: The National DNA Index System, and one part of CODIS, containing the DNA profiles contributed by federal, state, and local participating forensic laboratories. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, the federal government, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory, and Puerto Rico participate in NDIS.

Number of CEBR-funded DNA profiles from forensic analyses entered into CODIS for the DNA laboratory: The specific fiscal year (FY) CEBR grant attribution that contributes to the uploading of a DNA profile to CODIS as a result of CEBR-funded overtime, CEBR-funded personnel, CEBR-funded analysis supplies, and/or CEBR-funded outsourcing.

Number of CEBR-funded forensic biology/DNA cases completed by the laboratory: The specific fiscal year (FY) CEBR grant attribution that contributes to the testing of a case as a result of CEBR-funded overtime, CEBR-funded personnel, CEBR-funded analysis supplies, and/or CEBR-funded outsourcing.

Number of forensic biology/DNA cases submitted to the laboratory: The number of forensic biology/DNA analysis requests submitted by agencies for testing in the laboratory.

Rapid DNA; Rapid DNA Analysis: Describes the fully automated (hands-free) process of developing a CODIS acceptable STR profile from a database, known, casework reference or forensic sample. The "swab in, profile out" process consists of automated extraction, amplification, separation, detection, and allele calling without human intervention. See [Rapid DNA-FBI](#) and [Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories](#).

Ratio of backlog/cases completed per month: This ratio is one method that can be used to normalize backlogs across laboratories of various sizes. It is calculated by taking the backlog of the laboratory and dividing it by the average number of cases the laboratory completes within a month.

Sexual assault kit (SAK): A set of items used by medical personnel for the preservation of physical evidence collected from a person, living or deceased, following an allegation or suspicion of sexual assault.

Total number of CODIS hits from forensic analyses for the DNA laboratory: The total amount of CODIS hits generated by the laboratory regardless of CEBR, local, or other agency funds.

Total number of DNA profiles from forensic analyses entered into CODIS for the DNA laboratory: Laboratory attribution that contributes to the uploading of a DNA profile to CODIS regardless of CEBR, local, or other agency funds.

Total number of forensic DNA samples completed by the laboratory: Total number of forensic DNA samples tested to completion by the laboratory regardless of CEBR, local, or other agency funds.

Total number of forensic biology/DNA cases completed by the laboratory: Laboratory resource attribution that contributes to the testing of a case to completion regardless of CEBR, local, or other agency funds.

Turnaround time: The average number of days from the date a laboratory receives a case to the date that the laboratory issues a final report for the case.

Baseline Data

Baseline Data Casework and Database Laboratories

1. Number of approved (vacant and filled) full-time equivalents (FTEs) in the biology section as of December 31, 2025.
2. Number of filled (non-vacant) FTEs in the biology section as of December 31, 2025.
3. Staff Retention: Number of the FTEs identified in Question 2 that were in the biology section as of January 1, 2025.

Definitions:

Biology Section: The section, or sections, of the laboratory responsible for processing, analyzing, reporting and reviewing biological evidence and/or database samples (convicted offender, arrestee, etc.) for CODIS. This also includes serology testing within the laboratory.

Full-time Equivalent (FTE): A paid position, either grant funded or state/local budget, that works the agency definition of a full-time workweek. This does not include interns or contractors not housed at the agency (e.g. part-time contract technical review position for CODIS ownership of vendor data). Typically, FTE's can be identified through the biology section organizational chart.

Vacant FTE: A paid position that is unfilled. An FTE on extended and/or family leave is not considered vacant.

Baseline Data Casework Laboratories

- Number of new cases for forensic biology/DNA received in 2025.
 - Estimate the percentage of these cases that were from property crimes.
- Number of forensic biology/DNA cases completed in 2025.

- Estimate the percentage of these cases that were property crimes.
- Estimate the percentage of the total cases completed by the laboratory in 2025 which had at least one crime scene (forensic) sample tested using Rapid DNA.
- Number of untested/not completed forensic biology/DNA cases more than 30 days old (backlogged) on December 31, 2025.
- The average number of days needed to complete (including peer review and report) forensic DNA cases for calendar year 2025.
- Number of CODIS entries in calendar year 2025.
- Number of CODIS entries that were submitted through an MOU with a Rapid DNA Partner Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) in calendar year 2025.
- Number of CODIS hits in calendar year 2025.
- Number of these CODIS hits that were submitted through an MOU with a Rapid DNA Partner Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) in calendar year 2025.

Baseline Data Database Laboratories

Convicted Offender Samples

- The number of new convicted offender samples received in 2025.
- The number of convicted offender samples completed in 2025.
- Samples closed by administrative means (duplicates, nonauthorized samples, etc.) in 2025.
- The number of untested/not completed convicted offender samples more than 30 days old (backlogged) on December 31, 2025.
- Average number of days to complete the processing of a convicted offender sample (including upload to CODIS) for calendar year 2025.
- The number of convicted offender CODIS entries in calendar year 2025.
- The number of convicted offender CODIS hits in calendar year 2025.

Arrestee Samples

- The number of new arrestee samples received by the laboratory in 2025.
- The number of arrestee samples completed **by the laboratory** in 2025.
- The number of arrestee samples completed using Rapid DNA in the Booking Environment in calendar year 2025.
- The number of arrestee samples closed by administrative means (duplicates, nonauthorized samples, etc.) in 2025.
- The number of untested/not completed arrestee samples more than 30 days old (backlogged) on December 31, 2025.
- Average number of days to complete the processing of an arrestee sample (including upload to CODIS) for calendar year 2025.
- The number of arrestee CODIS entries in calendar year 2025.
 - The number of these that were enrolled by Rapid DNA in the booking environment.

- The number of arrestee CODIS hits in calendar year 2025.
 - The number of these that were due to Rapid enrolled samples in the booking environment.
- Number of DISC hits in calendar year 2025.

The request is for backlog data for the database laboratory, regardless of whether federal funding assistance is being sought for the database operation.

See the [Definitions](#) section for additional information on any specific terms or technical language.

Budget Information

Generally Allowable Costs

- **Salary and Benefits for Laboratory Employees**
Funds may be used to hire additional full-time or part-time laboratory employees to directly process, record, screen, and/or analyze forensic DNA and/or DNA database samples. Funds may also be used to hire additional full-time or part-time laboratory employees (excluding executive personnel) to directly perform capacity enhancement-specific activities such as validating new DNA analysis technologies for the forensic DNA laboratory and/or the laboratory responsible for analysis of DNA database samples.
- **Overtime for Laboratory Staff**
Funds may be used to pay overtime for laboratory employees (excluding executive personnel) to directly process, record, screen, and/or analyze forensic DNA and/or DNA database samples. Funds may also be used to pay overtime for existing laboratory employees to directly perform capacity enhancement-specific activities such as validating new DNA analysis technologies for the forensic DNA or DNA database laboratory. Any payments for overtime must be in accordance with the applicable provisions of the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#).
- **Training (Limited)**
Funds may be used to train forensic DNA laboratory and DNA database laboratory personnel on topics directly related to and relevant to their specific job functions (e.g., continuing education topics to satisfy the FBI's Quality Assurance Standards). For a list of topics that are not allowable, see [Unallowable Costs](#) below.
- **Travel (Limited)**
Funds may be used for travel to conduct the required site visits of public or private accredited laboratories that will be conducting DNA analyses on behalf of the eligible state or unit of local government to review procedures and practices prior to initial sample shipment. Funds may be used to make one additional unannounced site visit.

Funds may also be used for travel associated with DNA training, as described in the "Training (Limited)" section.

Justification for the number of staff traveling and the benefit of their attendance at the annual event must be included, as well as justification why other forms of travel/training (e.g., webinars or review of journal articles) are not sufficient.

- **Equipment**

In general, funds may be used to upgrade, replace, or purchase laboratory equipment, instrumentation, and associated computer hardware for the forensic DNA and/or the DNA database laboratory. See [Unallowable Costs](#) below, for specific equipment items that are excluded from the FY 2026 program.

Requests for equipment must be adequately justified with demonstrated need and be associated with the NOFO's objectives. Computer hardware updates must be based on new technology and/or software upgrades to instrumentation.

- **Supplies**

Justification for supplies must include support for the number of units requested and reasoning for the request. Recipients are expected to use expendable supplies, including kits, prior to their expiration date and by no later than the end date of the award.

- [Laboratory supplies for validation](#)

Allowable supply expenses include the purchase of laboratory supplies that can be directly attributed to the validation of new DNA analysis technologies (instruments, processes, or chemistries).

- [Laboratory supplies for DNA sample analysis](#)

Allowable supply expenses include laboratory supplies that can be directly attributed to the processing, recording, screening, and analysis of forensic DNA casework and/or DNA database samples for inclusion in CODIS.

- [Collection kits for database samples](#)

Collection kits for database samples (convicted offender or arrestee) may be purchased.

- **Contracts**

- [Contracts for analysis of forensic DNA casework samples or DNA database samples to public or private accredited DNA laboratories](#)

Funds may be used to send forensic DNA and/or DNA database samples to fee-for-service laboratories to conduct DNA analyses. Funds may also be used to enter into agreements with government-owned laboratories to conduct forensic DNA and/or DNA database sample analyses, perform a data review, enter eligible DNA profiles into CODIS, and, where applicable, upload to NDIS.

Every laboratory that is contracted to conduct forensic DNA or DNA database sample analyses under this program must undergo an external audit, not less than once every 2 years, that demonstrates compliance with the requirements of the [Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories](#) and/or the [Quality Assurance Standards for DNA Database Laboratories](#) established by the Director of

the FBI, and must be accredited by a nonprofit professional organization actively involved in forensic science that is nationally recognized within the forensic science community.

- [Contracts for DNA audits](#)

DNA laboratories may establish contracts with vendors (individuals or entities) that can provide an external DNA audit once every 2 years, as required by the [Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories](#) and/or the [Quality Assurance Standards for DNA Database Laboratories](#) established by the Director of the FBI.

As part of the decision whether to award a contract to a vendor for a DNA audit, an award recipient is expected to carefully examine any costs charged by the vendor, including auditor fees (refer to Consultant Rate section for more information) and auditor travel expenses, and to determine whether all such charges are reasonable and justified. All audit-related costs must be detailed in the budget. Note that BJA will use the rates established by the General Services Administration as a benchmark in examining the reasonableness of audit-related travel expenses.

Auditors must meet the requirements specified in the [Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories](#) and/or the [Quality Assurance Standards for DNA Database Laboratories](#).

- [Contracts for process mapping or other efficiency studies](#)

Contracts may be established for an outside vendor to conduct a process mapping or efficiency-type study, such as a Lean Six Sigma-type efficiency study, of the DNA laboratory. One of the potential benefits from such an approach is highlighted in the report, [Increasing Efficiency of Forensic DNA Casework Using Lean Six Sigma Tools](#).

- [Warranty, service, or maintenance contracts for equipment](#)

Contracts may be established to provide warranty, service, or maintenance contracts for laboratory equipment.

- [Contracts for temporary laboratory employees](#)

Contracts may be established to hire personnel to process, record, screen, and analyze forensic DNA casework; to process, record, and analyze DNA database samples; or to perform capacity enhancement activities such as validating new DNA analysis technologies. Contracts may be established for data review in accordance with the [Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories](#) and/or the [Quality Assurance Standards for DNA Database Laboratories](#).

- [Contracts for validation studies of new DNA analysis technologies](#)

Contracts may be established for an outside vendor to validate new instruments, processes, or chemistries that are NDIS approved within the DNA laboratory.

- [Contracts for in-house training services](#)

Contracts may be established for an outside vendor to provide in-house training that is directly related to the program objectives in this NOFO to laboratory personnel directly involved in the processing, recording, screening, and/or analysis of forensic DNA or DNA database samples. See “Training (Limited)” section for more information about allowable training expenses.

- **Direct Administrative Expenses**

Up to 3 percent of the federal portion of an award under this program may be used for direct administrative expenses specifically related to grant administration and management, including travel and training costs related to federal grant management.

- **Costs Associated with and Including Accreditation**

Details regarding the costs associated with accreditation and justification for these costs must be included within the budget narrative.

- **Software**

Allowable software associated with running the DNA laboratory. Allowable purchases may include, but are not limited to, software and licenses associated with running DNA instrumentation; software associated with running temperature monitoring systems and other quality control systems; licenses for existing LIMS users in the forensic biology and/or DNA laboratory who are directly involved in the processing, recording, screening, or analysis of forensic DNA or DNA database samples; and software for DNA mixture interpretation.

- **Laboratory Information Management System**

- **New LIMS to upgrade or replace existing systems**

Contracts may be established to purchase and install a new LIMS, to upgrade or replace an existing system, or to install a LIMS in a laboratory previously without one. Projects to purchase and install a new LIMS are expected to be completed by the end of the 2-year award period. Applicants should consider a phased approach and submit requests for one phase or more, if appropriate, that can be completed within the 2-year timeframe of the DNA CEBR award.

- **Existing LIMS**

Contracts may be established to purchase and add DNA modules to an existing LIMS, extra licenses for the DNAUnit users of an existing LIMS system, or software upgrades for an existing LIMS or DNA module. **Note:** See the [Definitions](#) section of for additional information.

- **Accessories for existing LIMS**

Accessories for an existing LIMS in the forensic biology and/or DNA section of the laboratory may be purchased. Allowable accessories include items such as barcode printers and barcode scanners. A detailed justification for these items would need to be submitted with the application documents.

- **Annual maintenance and service contracts and licensing agreements for new and existing LIMS**

Contracts may be established for annual maintenance and service contracts, as well as licensing agreements for users in the forensic biology/DNA section of the laboratory.

- **Renovations**

Funds may be used to upgrade existing laboratory and office space in the forensic biology and DNA section to accommodate new equipment, more personnel, or to renovate an existing space to a more efficient layout to increase the number of samples that can be processed, to decrease the turnaround time of casework or database samples, reduce the backlog, or prevent a backlog from occurring. Renovations do not include new construction of a building or construction of a new room(s) on to an existing building.

Renovations may include electrical, plumbing, and construction of new walls within the “four walls” of the existing space. Examples may include expansion of the office space to accommodate additional analysts, reconfiguring an existing office space for analysts to allow for a more efficient layout, expansion of the laboratory space to accommodate additional equipment or additional workspaces, or reconfiguring the laboratory space to close off a dedicated screening area so alternate light sources can be used effectively. See [Unallowable Costs](#) section for additional information regarding office furniture and supplies.

Applicants should consider undertaking large renovation projects in a phased approach, and requests for one or more (if appropriate) phases must be completed in the 2-year timeframe of the DNA CEBR award.

Funding for this component must not exceed \$200,000.

Unallowable Costs

Federal funds awarded under this program may only be used for the permissible uses of funds outlined above. Among other things, they may not be used for:

- Salaries and benefits, other than as discussed in “Permissible Uses of Funds.”
- Travel, other than authorized travel expenses associated with appropriate DNA training and visits to outsourcing laboratories as discussed in “Permissible Uses of Funds.”
- Travel and training costs for continuing education/training opportunities that are associated with professional meetings and conferences (including workshops provided at such meetings and conferences) that exceed 8 percent of the total award. More in depth training opportunities, such as new analyst training, that cumulatively with other continuing education/training exceed 8% of the total award may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Education that is of primary benefit to an individual (e.g., doctoral degree), personal development training (e.g., general human resources or staff retention trainings), or other trainings that are not directly related to the operation of a forensic DNA laboratory.

- Expenses related to the application of Forensic Genetic Genealogy, other than content provided during standard conference plenary sessions.
- Trial testimony (e.g., hearings, jury/judge trials, depositions) and associated travel costs.
- Construction, other than as discussed in “Renovations.”
- Direct administrative expenses that exceed 3 percent of the federal portion of the award.
- Equipment and Office Furniture/Supplies:
 - Only equipment directly related to DNA analysis (e.g., printers connected directly to genetic analyzers or CODIS terminals) is allowable under this award. Therefore, it is expected that the grantee provides standard office supplies to staff which includes, but is not limited to, computers, monitors, paper, pens, toner, printer cartridges, office/modular furniture, chairs, tables, floor mats, “basic supplies,” etc.
 - Purchase of equipment or technologies that have not been approved for use by the National DNA Index System, including personnel and supplies that would be needed to validate equipment or technologies not approved for use by NDIS. This includes Rapid DNA Analysis instruments or supplies proposed to be used in a way not compatible with the FBI’s most recent [Quality Assurance Standards](#) (QAS) revision and [explicitly approved by NDIS](#), or other instruments not available for purchase through a commercial entity. See [Definitions](#) section for additional information about Rapid DNA.