

Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Fiscal Year 2026 Special Attorneys Program
Frequently Asked Questions

Notice of Funding Opportunity: <https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/opportunities/OJP-FY26-Special-Attorneys-Program>

1. When are the deadlines to apply?

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) will be released in multiple rounds. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. Additional rounds may be added.

- Round 1 Release Date: April 21, 2026
 - Grants.gov Deadline: May 15, 2026
 - JustGrants Deadline: May 20, 2026
- Round 2 Release Date: May 21, 2026
 - Grants.gov Deadline: June 2, 2026
 - JustGrants Deadline: June 4, 2026
- Round 3 Release Date: June 5, 2026
 - Grants.gov Deadline: June 17, 2026
 - JustGrants Deadline: June 19, 2026

2. When will grant awards be made?

OJP expects to make awards on a rolling basis as the application periods close.

3. Can the proposed Special Attorney/Special Assistant U.S. Attorney (SAUSA) work part-time?

No. The grant is for a full-time Special Attorney/SAUSA.

4. Can applicants apply for multiple full-time positions?

Yes, applicants can apply for funding for multiple positions as both Special Attorneys with the National Fraud Enforcement Division and SAUSAs with the USAO. These positions must work full-time, handling cases for federal prosecution.

5. Who retains the authority to appoint the SAUSA and make case assignments? The Executive Office for United States Attorneys (EOUSA) and the USAO retain authority to appoint all SAUSAs. The USAO will control case assignments and provide oversight and guidance on the SAUSA's work as a federal prosecutor.

6. Who is the Special Attorney/SAUSA's employer?

Special Attorneys/SAUSAs will remain employees of their current/home agency during their appointment as a SAUSA.

7. Can SAUSAs only work drug and/or human trafficking cases?

Applicants can request funding to cross-designate prosecutors to investigate and prosecute crimes committed within the United States that are committed by aliens, involve drug trafficking, involve human trafficking, or any combination of the three.

8. What is the maximum amount that an applicant can request?

Maximum amounts have not been set. Award amounts will be based on approval of up to 100 percent of the Special Attorney/SAUSA's salary and fringe benefits, plus up to 20 percent for allowable uses as outlined in the NOFO.

9. Can the grant reimburse an agency for up to 100 percent of a Special Attorney/SAUSA's salary and benefits?

Yes. Funding can be used to pay 100 percent of the Special Attorney/SAUSA's salary and fringe benefits. Fringe benefits are determined by the agency and must be itemized in the application.

10. How should applicants determine the Special Attorney/SAUSA's salary?

The applicant agency determines the salary amount and provides an itemized description of the expenses in the application.

11. What other expenses are authorized under the grant program?

In addition to the salary and fringe benefits of the Special Attorney/SAUSA, the applicant can request funding for certain staffing and capacity purposes (i.e., hiring, retention, and training of critical personnel) and certain equipment and technology needs, as specified in the NOFO. Up to 20 percent of grant funds can be requested for these allowable uses. Applicants should provide an itemized description of their expected expenses in the application. When determining costs, applicants should consider including Special Attorney/SAUSA travel and training expenses.

12. Are applicants required to submit resumes, proof of active bar admission, and certificates of good standing of potential Special Attorney/SAUSA at the time of application?

If the applicant has already identified the proposed Special Attorney/SAUSA at the time of application, then yes.

If the applicant has not yet identified the potential Special Attorney/SAUSA at the time of application, then no. For example, an applicant may submit an application then post for hiring and subsequently select an attorney to designate as the Special Attorney/SAUSA, but the applicant must provide the resume(s), proof of active bar admission, and certificates of good standing once identified in order to receive access to funds.

If the applicant is unable to provide the official certificate because of external administrative processing delays, they must at least provide documentation indicating that the certificate has been requested and will be provided as soon as it is obtained.

13. What is involved with the selection of the Special Attorney/SAUSA?

Special Attorney and SAUSA candidates must be able to meet USAO and Department of Justice (DOJ) security requirements and obtain an adjudicated background investigation *before* appointment. Candidates (and appointees) must be a member in good standing of the bar of any state jurisdiction of the United States of America, or Puerto Rico, and must be admitted, or eligible for admission, to the United States District Court for the District. Additionally, candidates/appointees may not serve as a Special Attorney or SAUSA if he/she holds a public office or is running for reelection as a political party candidate.

14. Is the Special Attorney/SAUSA expected to work at a USAO?

While the preferred duty location is at the USAO, either at the main or a branch office, the duty location could depend on whether the USAO has adequate office space as well as other factors, which should be referenced in the grant application.

15. Does the Department of Justice plan to host a press conference or issue a press release on awards made through this program?

Applicants should expect that awards made under this program will be available to the public and could be announced in a press release or other communication methods.

16. Can the funding be used for paralegal staffing expenses?

Yes, up to 20 percent of award funds may be used for justice system staffing and capacity, including paralegal staff.

17. What are the terms and conditions of the cooperative agreement?

The [Legal Overview for Awards](#) webpage is intended to give applicants for OJP awards a general overview of important statutes, regulations, and award conditions that apply to many (or in some cases, all) OJP grants and cooperative agreements awarded in the fiscal year.

18. Could the grant award be extended beyond the 36-months?

Yes. Please refer to the [DOJ Financial Guide](#) for Post Award requirements.

19. What specific data points will the applicant/awardee be expected to report semi-annually?

OJP requires recipients to submit regular performance reports that communicate progress toward achieving Program Goals and Objectives. Read information on [performance reporting](#). Award recipients will receive further guidance on post award reporting requirements.

20. If hiring internal lawyers under this opportunity, can jurisdictions promote and increase the salary of a lawyer? If yes, is there a cap on the salary?

Yes, an up to 5% annual increase can be provided.