



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

# FISCAL YEAR 2022 CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT FOR BACKLOG REDUCTION PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Last Updated May 12, 2022



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## I. GENERAL PROGRAM/SOLICITATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. How long is the project period once the award is made?

The period of performance duration for awards made under this program is 24 months (see page 7 of solicitation under "Federal Award Information"). Should additional time be needed to complete the goals of your project, a project period extension grant award modification (GAM) can be submitted for consideration by the program manager. For more information on GAMs please refer to the [Grant Award Modification – Job Aid Reference Guide](#).

### 2. When should a project period extension GAM be submitted?

Project period extension requests should be submitted at least 30 days prior to the end date of the award. It is recommended to contact your grant manager 45–90 days prior to the end date to discuss the extension request.

### 3. Does the title page and the table of contents count towards the Proposal Narrative?

A title page and table of contents are not required for the Proposal Narrative. (see page 15 of the solicitation under "Proposal Narrative" of the "Application and Submission Information" section for section requirements).

### 4. How should technical issues experienced with grants.gov and the Justice Grants system (JustGrants) be addressed?

If you experience technical issues with grants.gov or JustGrants please contact the appropriate customer support resources referenced on page 2 of the solicitation under "Contact Information."

### 5. If an applicant was previously awarded funding under this program, can they still apply for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 funding?

Yes.

### 6. Do Capacity for Enhancement for Backlog Reduction (CEBR) progress reports still require the Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) report, or should all reports be entered directly into JustGrants?

CEBR progress reports must still be submitted through the PMT system and uploaded (along with relevant supporting documentation) to JustGrants. Should changes in the process occur in the future, these changes will be clearly relayed to the JustGrants designated point of contacts for the award.

## II. ALLOWABLE USES OF FUNDING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. Can CEBR funding be used for Rapid deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) analysis?

Yes, however any laboratory seeking to use funding for Rapid DNA analysis must adhere to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI's) Quality Assurance Standards. As of the writing of this document (June 2022), this means that CEBR funding cannot be used to support testing of crime scene samples and there are specific requirements for the testing of reference samples. See FBI's [Quality Assurance Standards Audit for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories](#).

### 2. Can CEBR funding be used for Forensic Genetic Genealogy (FGG) purposes?

At Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) we recognize the importance of non- Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) advances in DNA technology for the criminal justice field; however, since the purpose of the CEBR Program is to process samples for CODIS and to increase the capacity of labs to process samples for CODIS, FGG DNA analysis expenses are not allowable under the CEBR Program at this time. FGG is allowable under many other BJA forensic solicitations (e.g., The Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI), Prosecuting Cold Cases Using DNA, and Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence) due to the nature of the goals and objectives of those programs. FGG is also allowable under the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program (JAG). Recipients using funds for FGG under those other programs must adhere to the [United States Department of Justice Interim Policy Forensic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Searching](#).

### 3. When will eligible applicants be notified of the secondary amount of funding available?

To qualify to receive this secondary amount, eligible states must send a certification statement that includes the effective start date of the legislation, the statutory citation of the legislation, an express request to receive additional funding under this second allotment of DNA CEBR funds, and a copy of the applicable statute to [Forensic.DNACapacity@ojp.usdoj.gov](mailto:Forensic.DNACapacity@ojp.usdoj.gov) by June 13, 2022 (within 30 days of the release date of the solicitation). After BJA compiles these certifications, on or about June 14, 2022, BJA will update and post the secondary allocation table, which will list all eligible states that submitted timely and sufficient documentation that demonstrates the applicant's qualification for a portion of this secondary amount. See pages 7 and 22 of the solicitation for more information.

### 4. The solicitation includes attendance at a mandatory 2-day workshop. If a portion of the grant funding is used to pay for the travel costs associated with the mandatory workshop, should the associated expenses be budgeted under the "Travel" category or under the "Other" category?

With traditional trainings, registration, and workshop fees should be listed under the "Other" cost category and the hotel, airfare, and other travel related costs should be listed under the "Travel" category. Since this mandatory training will have no registration or workshop fees, all travel related costs should be listed under the "Travel" category.

### III. ASSOCIATED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**1. Is there guidance on how to submit an application?**

Refer to the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide | Office of Justice Programs found on [ojp.gov](https://www.ojp.gov) for comprehensive instructions on how to submit an application for funding.

**2. Is there guidance on completing the SF-424 form?**

Refer to the [Grants.gov Form Instructions](https://www.grants.gov) found on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) for instructions on completing the SF-424 form.

**3. What if the required forms do not apply to the applicant's organization? For example, the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities Form?**

Please refer to the "Application and Submission Information" section and "Application Checklist" of the solicitation to determine what documents are required for the application. In regard to the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form, all applicants must submit the form, but can enter "not applicable" in questions 10a and 10b. For further guidance, please refer to the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#). (See page 14 of the solicitation under "Application and Submission Information", and page 21 of the solicitation under "Application Checklist").

**4. What other attachments should be included in the application?**

Refer to the "Application Checklist" in the solicitation to ensure that all items required for the respective Purpose Area are included in your application. (See page 21 of the solicitation of the solicitation under "Application Checklist").

### IV. PERFORMANCE METRICS GUIDANCE

**1. When is a forensic biology/DNA case and/or DNA database sample considered backlogged?**

While many agencies have their own definitions of backlog, for the purposes of this solicitation any forensic biology/DNA case that has not been completed by the laboratory within 30 days of receipt is considered backlogged. Similarly, a DNA database sample that has not been uploaded to CODIS within 30 days of the laboratory receiving the sample is considered backlogged.

**2. Does the question requesting the number of backlogged forensic biology/DNA cases at the end of the reporting period refer to all forensic biology/DNA cases in the laboratory?**

Yes, the number of casework forensic biology/DNA cases is referring to all cases that are currently backlogged at the laboratory. This does not include database samples.

**3. What is the difference between casework samples and database samples?**

Casework samples are forensic samples collected from crime scenes to be tested, analyzed, and included in CODIS if eligible. Database samples are those collected under applicable legal authority to be included in CODIS, such as convicted offender and/or arrestee samples. Further information can be found at: <https://bja.ojp.gov/library/publications/dna-capacity-enhancement-backlog-reduction-program>

**4. If there is no grant activity during the reporting period, is an explanation of why there was no grant activity and supporting documentation required?**

If there is no grant activity during the reporting period, an explanation of why there was no grant activity is required. If there is no grant activity, supporting documentation is not required. Supporting documentation is only required when you are using grant funds and reporting the respective performance metrics.

## 5. When are narrative questions required?

Narrative questions are to be submitted semiannual, with the first in January and second in July. These questions should summarize the activities completed under the award and progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the project proposal.

## 6. What is the difference between total cases completed and CEBR cases completed?

Total cases completed refers to the total number of forensic biology/DNA cases completed by the laboratory, independent of the funding source. CEBR cases completed refers to the total number of forensic biology/DNA cases completed using CEBR funds for overtime, personnel (e.g., salaries), supplies, and outsourcing.

## 7. What supporting documents are required when reporting performance data for the CEBR program?

PMT reports alone are not considered adequate supporting documentation. In addition to the PDF version of the PMT report, grantees are expected to upload the following documents to JustGrants:

- 1 A summary document that maps a metric question to a file with supporting documentation for that metric. Summary narratives should include a description of how the supporting documentation was used to calculate the numbers provided in the BJA PMT.
- 2 Object evidence (e.g., Laboratory Information Management System [LIMS] report, Excel file) that was used to obtain the data reported in each performance metric. Title files according to the metric question number:
  - i) Example (below they are labeled by CW or DB, and by metric number)

Attachments			
Name	Category	Application Number	Date Added
2019 [redacted] Progress Report State Police.pdf	Performance Report	---	7/26/2021 1:22 PM
2019 [redacted] Metric 4 - DB.pdf	Performance Report	---	7/26/2021 1:11 PM
2019 [redacted] Metric 5 - DB.pdf	Performance Report	---	7/26/2021 1:11 PM
2019 [redacted] Metric 6 - DB.pdf	Performance Report	---	7/26/2021 1:11 PM
2019 [redacted] Metric 7 - DB.pdf	Performance Report	---	7/26/2021 1:11 PM
2019 [redacted] Metric 9 - CW.pdf	Performance Report	---	7/26/2021 1:11 PM
2019 [redacted] Metric 10 - CW.pdf	Performance Report	---	7/26/2021 1:11 PM
2019 [redacted] Metric 8 - CW.pdf	Performance Report	---	7/26/2021 1:11 PM
2019 [redacted] Metric 7 - CW.pdf	Performance Report	---	7/26/2021 1:11 PM
2019 [redacted] Metric 5 - CW.pdf	Performance Report	---	7/26/2021 1:11 PM
2019 [redacted] Metric 5 - CW.pdf	Performance Report	---	7/26/2021 1:11 PM
2019 [redacted] Metric 4 - CW.pdf	Performance Report	---	7/26/2021 1:11 PM

- ii) Alternatively, some grantees provide a separate tab for casework and databasing metrics separately.
- iii) When verifying a performance metric (when using LIMS especially) for CODIS hits where "QTY" shows, have an additional source verify the number of hits received for that reporting period.
- iv) Aggregate the numeric value in the data source submitted when a screenshot is provided of cases analyzed, CODIS uploads, or CODIS hits.

Be sure the total numbers (i.e., the number you reported for that metrics in BJA PMT) are clearly labeled according to the metric in question when providing your supporting documentation.

Remember that anything submitted to BJA can be released in response to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request.

## V. PAST FUNDING

Funding and awards made under the CEBR Program since FY 2017 can be found using the following links:

- [FY 2021 Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction Program Awards](#)
- [FY 2020 Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction Program Awards](#)
- [FY 2019 Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction Program Awards](#)
- [FY 2018 Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction Program Awards](#)
- [FY 2017 Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction Program Awards](#)

## VI. CONTACTS

### JustGrants Support

Email: [JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov](mailto:JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov)

Customer Support: 833-872-5175

[JustGrants User Support](#)

JustGrants [Application Submission training resources page](#)

[DOJ Application Submission Checklist](#)

### Grants.gov Support

Email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

Customer Support: 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035

[Grants.gov customer support webpage](#)

### CEBR Policy Office and Programs Office contact information

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