

DARYL FOX: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to today's webinar for Grantees of the Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence Program, hosted by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. At this time, I'd like to introduce Andrea Borchardt, senior policy advisor with the Bureau of Justice Assistance for some welcoming remarks. Andrea?

ANDREA BORCHARDT: Thank you, Daryl. And welcome all to the kickoff webinar for the FY21 Grantees of the Postconviction Testing of DNA Evidence Program. We'll have three main presenters today besides Daryl. I have myself, Andrea Borchardt, I have Kathy Manning, and Nichole Norvesh. We'll take turns presenting the materials to you today since we all play different roles in managing your awards. I myself am super passionate about this program. I'm a former DNA analyst and I had likely worked with many of your agencies in my past role in the lab.

Today, our agenda we'll touch on topics that will help you successfully manage your award and to complete the project. Give you a little bit of a background about the program, how to manage your postconviction testing of DNA evidence. Some expenses that are allowable and unallowable, special conditions, forensic genetic genealogy, any modifications you might need to your award once you've accepted them, progress reports and performance management. And then we'll close with some contact information and resources before we open the Q&A.

As background to the program, this solicitation was created in response to the Justice for All Act of FY2005. And the Justice for All Act was actually reauthorized most recently in FY17. The language in the legislation, "Directs the Attorney General to establish the Kirk Bloodsworth Postconviction DNA Testing Grant Program to award grants to States to help defray the cost of postconviction DNA testing." And as such, we created the program, the grant program, to assist with defraying the costs associated with postconviction case review, evidence location, and DNA testing in violent felony cases as defined by state law, where the results of such testing might show actual innocence. The program was first competed in FY2007 with funds finally being awarded in FY2008. To date, we've made 94 awards totaling over \$71,000,000. And with that, I'd like to congratulate all of you, the FY21 grantees, and I have a list of all of your agencies on this slide. At this time, I'm going to turn it over to Kathy Manning to talk about a little bit of awards management. Kathy?

KATHY MANNING: Great. Thanks very much, Andrea. Hi, everyone, thank you so much for joining us. Congratulations on your awards and we're happy to have you join us on this call today. What I want to refer to first here on this award management slide. This is really what we refer to as sort of the three aspects when we talk about federal grants management, administrative, programmatic, and financial. So for your

organization as you're kicking off this award, you want to make sure you have the right person or the right people assigned to these different functions or aspects of grants management. It might be one, two, or three different people working on these administrative, programmatic, and financial aspects. For example, your PI might not be the person who's actually submitting, you know, reports in JustGrants, running financial reports, etcetera. So you want to think about, you know, what are the tasks involved, especially as we talk through this presentation today. What are the tasks involved in managing this grant, and then select the right person or people to build your team.

Specifically in JustGrants, if you haven't already, you'll need to assign a grant award administrator and a financial manager to do a lot of these tasks in the system. And there is a training document which you should already have that I can resend if needed about user roles in JustGrants related to these tasks that is helpful to help you think about who to assign to which functions. As you think about this, one of the things I really like to emphasize is to recognize the importance of these different people or parties working together throughout your grant program. It's very important not to be siloed, so the program implementation people, for example, need to, you know, at least be informed and aware of things on the financial side and vice versa, financial people need to know about program changes that might impact approved budget categories, so very important to really establish this as a team, so that you can be successful throughout the life of your award. Next slide, please.

So that's me, I'm your state policy advisor and many of you know me already. We've been in contact over email and/or over the phone. I'm your state policy advisor also known as grant manager. And really, I'm often the first person you'll be in touch with regarding the grants. You can direct all of your questions to me, really. It's not necessarily that I will always be the best person to answer them, but I will help you find the right person to answer your questions whether that's someone else on the team that you're going to meet today on this call or perhaps questions for the JustGrants helpdesk, or our Office of the Chief Financial Officer. But you're welcome to send questions to me and I'll help you find the right avenue for getting those questions answered. You'll also be hearing from me a lot about items too on your grant, questions that we have maybe about performance reports, items needed for special conditions that we'll talk about in a minute, so you'll be having a lot of contact with me throughout the life of your award.

But on the next slide, I want to introduce you to other members of our team on this program. So you've already met Andrea on the top right there. Andrea and Vanessa are our forensic policy advisors. If you heard briefly in Andrea's introduction, she's the one that really has the scientific expertise for this program. So often if you're asking, you

know, a detailed technical question, that's something that I'll consult with Andrea to get you the right answer about what's, you know, the purpose of the program, allowable, unallowable activities, things like that. And then you'll meet Nichole, on the bottom right picture there, in just a few minutes for this session but Nichole and Michael Adams are partners on our Planning, Performance, and Impact Analyst Team. And they are the ones who do a lot of data analysis, performance measure development, solicitation reviews, analytical support, and a lot to really get into the content and the depth of what—you know, what are we doing with these programs, what are we achieving, how can we help tell our story around that. So really it's a team on our end, just as I described, there will be a team on your end for this grant. And we all work in partnership to help ensure your success. And again, you'll hear from some of them again throughout the presentation.

This graphic is a representative of some of the phases that you'll go through throughout your project period. The graphic is linear and I want to say that the phases are not necessarily linear, some of them are ongoing throughout the life of your project period. For example, submitting reports is something you do not just want but regularly throughout your project period, other phases, you know, will occur as needed. For example, if you need to make a modification to your award and we're going to be talking about that. But this just sort of represents the various stages/phases of managing a federal award beginning with award acceptance, which I believe most if not all of you have accepted your award in JustGrants by now all the way through the end of the project period and beyond until the award is actually fully closed out. Next slide, please.

So, one of the most important things that I want to emphasize today is talking about special conditions on your award. These are what I like to call the "fine print" of your award, but unlike some fine print on some documents I receive, it's important to make sure you actually read the fine print on these awards. Each award is issued with anywhere between, say, 40 to 60 special conditions as it varies, but along with the special conditions, some of which are standard across all of Office of Justice Programs awards. And then some of the special conditions are very specific to this program and/or to your entity. So the special conditions provide a lot of valuable information about the requirements of the award and what is allowable on your award. Your authorized representative, when they accept the award, they are agreeing to the special conditions. So it's important to know what your entity has agreed to in these. If you haven't seen them yet, I want to point out that the special conditions are included in the award package and can be found in JustGrants within a tab that is called "award conditions." If you're not familiar with how to find that, you can let me know and I'll send you screenshots or point you in the right direction, but I really want to encourage you to be familiar with those award conditions.

One of the conditions that I want to highlight on this slide to call your attention to, I mentioned earlier that you'll be assigning, if you haven't already, you'll be assigning a grant award administrator and a financial manager in JustGrants to these awards. And one of the special conditions on that long list states that the grant award administrator and the financial manager must both complete the OJP, Office of Justice Programs, grants financial management training within 120 days of accepting the award. So if you haven't seen yet—that yet, I want to call your attention to that and let you know that the link to the training for where to complete that financial management training, the link is within the wording of the special conditions, so you'll find it there. Next slide, please.

As I said, then I'll repeat myself, please do read your entire award document to be familiar with the conditions on your award. Some special conditions are withholding. Not all of them are withholding. They are all requirements but some specifically are withholding. Meaning your organization cannot obligate, expend, or draw down funds until that particular requirement is met, and we lift the withholding conditions. A lot of you are familiar with the fact that I send emails out to every organization on December 2nd and send emails to each of the contacts that were listed in JustGrants at that time on your award with details about any withholding special conditions on your award and what is needed to resolve them. For example, maybe a budget modification or a missing form or certification that needed to be provided. If these have not yet been resolved and lifted, again, do keep in mind that you cannot begin obligating expending or drawing down funds yet until these are lifted. And this, I want to emphasize again, is a really important point to make sure that the people on your team, financial or programmatic administrative, make sure that the people on your team are aware of these holds, what's needed to do to get them resolved. And then also aware of the date when the holds are lifted, so that award activity can begin.

As I mentioned, I've sent an email on December 2nd to the people that were listed in JustGrants at the time for each award highlighting the specific withholding conditions. But again, important to read all of the conditions that are on the award. I did not include every condition in that email, so please do make sure you go back and double check all of the conditions on your award. Next slide, please.

So this slide just has an example of some of the—some of the fine print, some of those special conditions that I've talked about. As you read each one, you know, please be sure to note specific requirements within each. For example, some of them have particular timeframes such as, you know, please give us 10 days to review press releases. You'll want to pay attention to the specific wording which describes the requirement within each special condition. It usually might have a timeframe or a source

or citation for what the requirement is. So really a lot of detail is included there within those special conditions. Next slide, please.

With that, I want to hand it off to Andrea for a few minutes to talk about forensic genetic genealogy.

ANDREA BORCHARDT: Thank you, Kathy. And to highlight a couple of the special conditions that—Daryl, if you can actually go back one slide, I want to highlight a couple because they're DNA-related ones. So a couple I want to highlight here is that the recipient shall ensure that each DNA analysis conducted under this award will be performed either by one, accredited government laboratory, or two, through an accredited fee-for-service vendor. And that recipient shall ensure that all eligible forensic DNA profiles obtained with funding under this award will be entered into CODIS and, where applicable, uploaded into NDIS. Daryl, you can go to the next slide.

One of the other special conditions is in relation to non-governmental databases and I know this is a pretty big hot topic with forensic genetic genealogy. And forensic genetic genealogy is an allowable expenditure under this program. And if you do plan to conduct this using funds from your federal award, you must make note of the following. So there is a condition on your award which Kathy just kind of gave you a highlight of what conditions mean, that says no DNA profiles which would include the SNP profiles generated for the FGG testing. So no DNA profile generated with funding from this award may be entered into any non-governmental databases, such as GEDmatch, without prior express written approval from BJA. And each profile tested must receive such written approval from BJA and we'll supply you with a form to fill out to help assess the profile for approval.

Additionally, I'd like to point you to the DOJ Interim Policy on Forensic Genetic Genealogical DNA Analysis and Searching or the final policy when it's issued. Because any federal funds that are being used to conduct genetic genealogy would have to conform with this policy. So again, if you do want to do genetic genealogy which is allowable, you need to make sure you get approval from us first, we'll kind of talk with you about the policy, talk with you about your sample and your case, and make sure that you understand what you're getting into with it especially as far as the federal funds and conforming with the policy. There are additional performance measures that you would be required to submit as well when you're conducting your progress reports and performance measures which Nichole will briefly touch on later. Next slide, please.

So again, if you do intend to use this, we have come up with this process for approval. It's to submit—the first time you would like to do this, you'll submit an appropriate award

modification—grant award modification request or GAM request, where you're asking for approval to conduct the process and enter the profile into the non-governmental database, again for that special condition. We'll send you the form to fill out for each sample. You'll then—once you send those in, you'll wait for your GAM to be approved, and then once approved you may continue with your testing. So you may actually then submit it to the outsourced lab for these testing. And once you get your first approval, any subsequent uses you'd like to conduct testing on, they must be requested via email to Kathy and you'll be using the same form. And then you must wait for the email approval prior to conducting any subsequent testing or searching.

Getting into permitted expenses and expenses that are not permitted, this is all outlined within the solicitation. But I'll touch on them each briefly. So you can provide salary and benefits for additional employees to assist you with your project goals. You can provide overtime to staff. You can use the limited funds for travel. The funds may be used for expenses directly associated with the case identification, case review, location of evidence for DNA analysis. I know a lot of times you might have to drive or fly, hopefully just drive if you're in a smaller state, to the forensic lab or the police department to try to search to see if the evidence still exists. So that is an unallowable expense. Certain computer equipment that is to be used exclusively for case identification, review, location of evidence, or DNA analysis. Certain lab supplies are allowable. Be able to engage additional temporary personnel. You can conduct procurement activity from private labs for DNA analysis. Again, those must be accredited. And they must have some arrangement where the profile could be uploaded to CODIS for the conditions on the award. And limited training is allowable, but the training must be directly related to case identification, case review, location of evidence, and DNA analysis. Any of you who are previous grantees on previous years for this program, I will bring a point up about training. Previously, the training was only allowable for grant-funded staff. We have opened that up to allow training for additional personnel within your entity or within your agency, so long as the training is directly related to their job functions and to case identification, case review, location of evidence, and DNA analysis. Next slide please.

Okay. So, there are some expenses that are not permitted. So among other things, funds may not be used for costs for postconviction relief litigation after the DNA testing of biological evidence has been completed. So that is more of once exoneration happens. Salary and benefit for Victim Advocacy Services are not permitted. Salaries, benefits, or overtime for staff who are not directly engaged in the case identification, case review, location of biological evidence, or DNA analysis about biological evidence. It's not permitted to purchase laboratory equipment, construction, renovation, provide office furnishings, provide witness travel, or general litigation training or any training

that's not related specifically to postconviction DNA training. Next slide, please. And I'll turn this back over to Kathy.

KATHY MANNING: Great. Thanks, Andrea. So grant monitoring is one of the phases of the grant lifecycle that we saw earlier with that graphic, that linear graphic. When we talk about monitoring, we monitor in a variety of ways. Reviewing your performance report is a form of monitoring. We conduct annual tests—excuse me, desk reviews, we do enhanced reviews, either on site or currently remote, which are a deeper dive into your entities, policies, and procedures. So in a—in a deeper review like those, we look at those three aspects that we discussed earlier, the programmatic, the administrative, and the financial aspects of grants management of your award. And we do this because we take very seriously our roles as stewards of federal funds. And we also want to help make sure that you're successful in carrying out the projects that you were funded to do. So we check to ensure that funds are being spent as approved and that funds are being spent to do the work funded by the solicitation, and also according to the rules for use of federal funds.

In addition to what I'm describing, as reviews that we do on the programmatic and policy side of the house, it's possible you would also be contacted by our Office of the Chief Financial Officer for a deeper financial review. So again, with all of this and with your award management, it's really important to have good award management systems and files in place, so that you have effective and adequate documentation for everything, as well as effective policies and procedures. Next slide, please.

We've made reference to this briefly and so I just want to touch a little bit further on grant award modifications, you'll hear us refer to them as GAMs. So we understand that throughout the life of your project, there may be times where you need to make a change to your approved application. Note that when you're submitting a GAM, one of the things we check for is to make sure that you are current on your financial and programmatic reporting. In a moment, I'm going to talk about the three different types of GAMs that are listed here, the programmatic, financial, and project period extensions. And I just wanted to say, you know, if you're ever not sure whether or not a GAM is required at a certain time, please do feel free to reach out to me and I'd rather have you ask and find out that a GAM is not needed, than have you miss a moment where you're supposed to be doing a GAM and you proceed without doing one. So please do check with me. Next slide, please.

So again, GAMs typically fall into three buckets: programmatic, financial, or project period extension. I think probably most commonly with these awards, we would see either a programmatic scope change GAM, if you needed to change key staff, or key—

or, excuse me, approved goals and objectives, or a financial budget modification GAM, if you needed to change your approved budget. It's possible you won't have any of these changes throughout the life of your award and that's great. But if you do, we have a way to have those reviewed and considered to make sure that they're appropriate and allowable for your award.

One of the ones that I want to touch on this on this slide in that middle shape is under financial is the Budget Clearance GAM. So I know many of you are still waiting on your Budget Clearance GAM from our Office of the Chief Financial Officer. That's the method used now with JustGrants for OCFO to review your budget, to request from you any possible changes or clarifications that might need to be made. So before your budgets can be approved, I know—I know that many of you are still waiting for those Budget Clearance GAMs from the OCFO. And I can assure you that they are working on them. Volume is incredibly high right now. But they are working on them, and you'll start hearing from them.

So if you think about these GAMs, the possible need for a GAM, I want to encourage you throughout the life of your project period, to be tracking the amount of time, as well as the amount of funds that you have remaining on your award. Hopefully, you'll be able to finish your approved projects on time. But if you do need to, possibly you would need to submit an extension request as we get towards the end of your project period. That's one, you know, we don't—we don't need to think about that one right now. But I just want to encourage you to be thinking about it throughout the life of your award. We typically ask grantees to submit it at least 30 days prior to the project end date. But to be honest, I prefer about 60 to maybe 90 days before your project period end date, to look at whether or not an extension is needed and warranted. But the reason I say, you know, we don't need to think about these yet is it's too soon at this stage in the game to know for sure that we will need extensions, it's possible but we typically don't get into looking at whether an extension is needed until about 90 days before the project end date. So we've got time to think about those.

The other point I want to make on this slide is just to please, you know, be mindful of lead time needed to get these approved. You know, it can take a few weeks, honestly, depending on whether clarification is needed, or the numbers—the number of people involved in the review. These GAMs do not just go through me, but they go through multiple levels of review. It's typically I check with Andrea to make sure that any proposed changes are allowable. They also go through my supervisor and a financial GAM also go through our Office of the Chief Financial Officer and potentially a supervisor there. So there are multiple levels of review. And, you know, those steps take time. So please do submit any GAM with sufficient lead time, for any clarification



needed and the levels of reviews that occur with each. And when I say sufficient lead time, you know, I would say at least two weeks. But to be safe, you know, build in a little more time than that. You know, please, please don't submit at the last minute saying, "Hey, we need to do this thing tomorrow, please approve this," because we need more time than that. Next slide, please.

Reporting is something else we looked at in that earlier slide about phases of award management. Throughout your award, you'll have financial reports that are due quarterly, the Federal Financial Report we refer to as FFR are due quarterly. And then progress or performance reports are due semi-annually, so twice a year. And both of these reports are a way for both us, you know, to have some insight into how your program is going, but also for you to track the progress of your project. So again, this is another example where it's important for the programmatic and the administrative and the financial sides of your house to all be on the same page, so that things make sense, you know, where you are programmatically with the project, does that make sense in terms of where you are financially with the project, and how much has been obligated or drawn down or expended so far.

With each of these types of reports, they are required, according to their associated timelines, whether or not there was any grant activity. So even if you haven't expended any funds yet or even if you haven't had any activity yet, you would still need to submit the report in JustGrants according to the timeline. Partly because if you don't, your funds will be frozen due to an overdue or delinquent report. So even with no activity, we do still ask you to submit. And for progress reports, I'll point out that it's a two-step process reporting in PMT, our Performance Management Tool, which I think Nichole is going to speak about shortly, and then uploading that report into JustGrants.

Next slide, please. So, a little bit more in depth on each one. So financial reports, again, as I said, they're due quarterly and here's the timeline for when those are submitted, the reporting period, and then the due date. I just want to point out, the second bullet point here where it says, "No activity? Enter 0." There's been a change recently with how FFRs are completed. It used to be more quarterly based the information that you would enter, but now it is cumulative. So each FFR will be reporting cumulative expenditures. So it might be zero in terms of what you spent or obligated in a particular quarter, but you would still be reporting the cumulative amount for the award. There is guidance on the JustGrants training page on how to do financial reports, as well as there's guidance on all the other JustGrants tasks on the JustGrants training page. And then I also want to emphasize to be familiar with the DOJ financial guide, which also gives guidance for how to manage your award. The link for the financial guide was included in those emails that I sent out in early December, that I talked about earlier, where I sent the information

about withholding special conditions. There's also a link to the DOJ financial guide. So I would encourage you to share that as a resource with your team, and make sure people are familiar with both of those resources, the financial guide and the JustGrants training resources.

On the next slide, we talk about progress reports. As I mentioned, these are due twice a year, not quarterly like financial reports, but they're due twice a year. So they're due in January for the previous July through December period. And then they're due in July for the January through June period. As I mentioned, again, at the moment, we're still using the PMT system to do the data narrative entry. And then once you've generated a PDF of the PMT report, you go into JustGrants and upload that PMT report to actually submit it to us. We are aware that there's been a glitch recently on some awards, you may have seen showing an April 2022 due date for performance reports in JustGrants, this is not correct, and it will be fixed. So again, January and July are the two due dates every year for your performance reports for this award. To get drill down just a little bit more specifically about those January and July dates. If you accepted this award before the end of December 2021, you will likely have a performance report due at the end of this month, this January 2022. Again, it—probably your budget is still awaiting clearance or some other things are still on hold so you wouldn't have any activity. So you would complete the report saying, no activity yet and still submit the report. If you accepted the award after December, since the award wasn't accepted during that first reporting period, probably your performance report will be due in July. Again, you know, you would—you would complete that depending on whether or not there was activity. And within JustGrants, you can always check to see although again, I acknowledge that there is currently a glitch about the deadline reporting period. But you can check to see what the reporting periods and due dates are for your reports. There's both a Performance Management tab that shows those dates and deadlines as well as an FFR tab that shows those dates and deadlines. And again, if you're not sure where to find that information, just reach out to me and I can send you screenshots for where to find these things.

One other point I want to mention on when you're submitting your performance reports, as you're updating us on, you know, how your goals and objectives are going, how your progresses—how your project is progressing. If you find, you know, as yourself describing that you need to make a change to your award, please don't just include that in your performance report. Again, as mentioned earlier, please reach out to see whether or not a grant award modification is appropriate based on the change or update that you are describing, so that we can help you track that accordingly. Next slide, please.

So I've talked some about the when and the how, but just want to emphasize, you know, why we do performance reports or progress reports. It's really your way to communicate to us, you know, once the award is issued, basically your reports are a primary way that we are updated on how things are going. So we want to make sure that you're sharing with us your progress and accomplishments during the reporting period, any challenges incurred, you know, provide a picture of how you're using your funds over that reporting period. It doesn't need to be a repeat of the financial report. But just an update on how you laid out your project and how it's going. If there has been any exonerations resulting from DNA testing, please provide a description of the cases, obviously we're very interested in that information. And then activities planned for the following six months that we'd like to see in your performance reports. So please do provide us with sufficient narratives to really, you know, paint the picture of how things are going with your project, so we can understand if you need any assistance, if things are going well, or just where things stand with your report is very helpful to us. And with that, I will turn it over to Nichole to talk more about performance management.

NICHOLE NORVESH: Thank you, Kathy. And welcome, everyone. So I'm going to start off with what is performance management. It is the process by which grantees regularly collect data on their grant activities to determine whether they're implementing activities as intended and achieving desired goals and objectives. And we do this through performance measures, which are the data collected using a questionnaire that was established for each individual program. And you can find the questionnaires at the link provided here on the BJA performance measures webpage. Excuse me.

Kathy touched on this a little bit, but why do we use performance measures? The reason is twofold, both BJA and our grantees benefit from the data collected through performance measures. For BJA, it allows us to identify areas of success and potential areas of improvement, to track grant activity, and progress towards goals, understand how funds are being distributed and it's the law. For you guys, the grantees, benefits include identification of areas for improvement, you can focus internal effort, it promotes the ability to proactively request technical training and technical assistance to address any challenges that you may be facing. And it generates evidence of progress towards the goals that you have, which can lead to resource advocacy for sustainability. And before we get into the meat of the performance measures, I wanted to take some time to highlight some accomplishments from this program. So exonerations aren't the sole measure of program success, but 56 exonerations have resulted from the postconviction program, which is pretty awesome. Additionally, over 150,000 cases have been reviewed, over 300 profiles have been uploaded into CODIS, and over 80 CODIS hits have been reported. So these are the types of data that gets collected and

reviewed through performance measures and get reported publicly to show the successes that we're having with the programs.

What are the FY21 performance measures? The postconviction program has undergone substantial changes in the performance measures questionnaire since last year, when the FY20 awards began reporting. So, we wanted to go over some of those changes to bring them to your attention. I encourage you all to closely review the updates and contact us if you have any questions. So let's take a look at those.

In the narrative section, we have five NIJ narrative questions that were removed. And we added seven standardized narrative questions. And the—there are three new questionnaire sections including nine forensic genetic genealogy questions, three training questions, and three final report questions. Next slide, please.

In the semi-annual section, we have four measures that were updated with new language to answer unique performance questions, and 14 new standalone performance measures were added to the questionnaire. Some examples of new performance measures in the semi-annual section, an example is the conviction DNA of the postconviction DNA cases with biological evidence found, how many cases were sent for DNA analysis? In the forensic genetic genealogy section, please enter the amount of federal funding used to conduct FGG/FGGS since the beginning of the grant program. We just wanted to provide a couple of examples for these updated measures for guys to see kind of what was added. Next slide, please.

And we have several resources available for grantees including performance measure, reporting guidance, training videos, data collection, best practices and more. We've provided links here. The first link is to the performance measures webpage. And that is where you can find questionnaires and information on different programs and performance measures. And the YouTube channel link is right there, we have videos there, other trainings are available there as well. Next slide.

If you have any questions or issues with JustGrants, the helpdesk is here for you. We've listed the operation—hours of operation, phone number and email and you can also find training and resources at the link provided here for JustGrants.

The PMT also has a helpdesk, hours of operation and email are provided here. Please reach out if you have any questions or issues with anything involving PMT. And I'm going to pause for just a second. This is contact information for all of us, our emails, phone numbers, take a screenshot, pull out your phone, take a picture. This is how you're going to reach all of us, very important information here. And lastly, thank you so

much for your hard work and your dedication and at this time, we're going to turn it over for question and answer. Thank you.

DARYL FOX: Yeah, thank you, Nichole. Just a reminder, the PowerPoint slides, transcript, and recording for today will be posted to the BJA website. So, if you do need to go back and reference this, it'll be available approximately 10 business days or so. So as mentioned in the beginning, definitely would like to hear from you all attendees on any questions you may have today on what was discussed and what's upcoming. To do so, on the bottom right of your screen, if you just click on those three dots, and then there'll be a Q&A section. You can go ahead and enter it there, select a panelist. That way, as they're coming in, we'll be able to go through them in the list. I don't see any on the queue now. But we'll just hold on for a while. As you gather your thoughts on what was presented, what he may have questions on.

KATHY MANNING: Daryl, this is Kathy. I see a question that may have come in to just me privately. I'm not sure if it went to all of the panelists, but I can take it. So the question is, if the progress report has to be submitted in JustGrants, can it be explained why the report needs to be done in PMT as well? Yes, so I acknowledge it is not ideal to have a two-step process right now. You may be familiar, those of you that have had grants with us in the past, maybe it's familiar that we've made a transition over the past year and a half from our old Grants Management System to our new JustGrants system. And there is a lot of functionality still being built out in JustGrants. For this program, the specific details of the progress reports and the actual performance metrics and data that we collect are not yet built into JustGrants. Someday, I believe they will be but unfortunately, at the moment, they are not. So PMT is the system where you actually enter all of those details and generate the report in the PMT System. And then in JustGrants for this program, all you're doing is uploading it as an attachment and hitting submit. So JustGrants right now is the vehicle to submit that information to us. When you—when you look at the training tutorials and stuff about performance reporting, you'll see reference to a question set in JustGrants, we are not using the question set for the postconviction awards right now. So in JustGrants, really all you're doing is uploading the PMT report. I'm sorry that is a two-step process but this is where we are right now with these systems, so.

DARYL FOX: Okay. We have another question come in. If we accepted our award prior to 12/31, do we also need to submit a \$0 FFR while we're waiting on budget approval?

KATHY MANNING: It is—this is Kathy, I can take that one. I'm not looking in JustGrants at this minute at anybody's particular award, so without double checking it, I'm going to say that it is very likely that yes, JustGrants is expecting you to submit an FFR at the

end of January, you would as the person asking mentioned that you would just submit zero. I don't know that there's any need or space to indicate why it would be zero. But certainly we would understand because we know, you know, you're still waiting on budget clearance and/or other withholding conditions. But if JustGrants is expecting you to submit an FFR, then yes, you would want to go ahead and do it even if you are entering zero obligations and expenditures. And you can double check that a couple of ways. One is going into the award record itself. And when you go into JustGrants and you're within that particular award, you should be able to scroll down past an assignments section on the page and find a section that has multiple tabs, including FFR. So, you would be able to see there what the due date is for the FFR for your award. Again, if you're not sure what I'm describing, please feel free to send me an email with your award number. Anytime you email me, please include your award number. And I'm happy to send you a screenshot or talk you through how to find that information.

DARYL FOX: Great. Thanks for that. Another question that come in. For clarification, the performance measurement reports are semi-annual for this award. The financial reports are due quarterly, is that correct?

KATHY MANNING: That is correct. So your performance reports will be due January and July each year with the slight disclaimers I gave depending on when your award was accepted. But January and July are your performance reports. But your FFRs are due quarterly. Correct.

DARYL FOX: There's no question in the queue at this time. Like I said, if you do have any additional questions, please go ahead and enter those, we'll be glad to answer them. We still have about 15 minutes left today. One attendee did want me to just go back to the slide with the contact information. Yes, I didn't have that up too long earlier. There you go. Once again, everybody's emails and phone numbers that you can contact with questions. Nothing more in the queue at this time. But if something does come up, as mentioned, you can go ahead and contact them here.

In the meantime, we have another question that's come in. Is it possible to submit the progress reports in JustGrants if you have not done it in PMT? Or will JustGrants provide an error in those cases and ask for it to be completed in the PMT?

KATHY MANNING: Sure, thanks for the question. It is possible, however, it is not desirable. So yeah, unfortunately, the systems are rather independent of each other. So it is possible to click submit in JustGrants without uploading your PMT attachment. I would ask you not to do that because if you do that, then I will just have to reach out to

you and ask you to email me the PMT report and I will have to upload it on your behalf. So you'd want to do the PMT section first, and then attach it in JustGrants and submit it that way.

DARYL FOX: Then, is there a way to determine if withholding conditions have been resolved?

KATHY MANNING: Sure, there are a couple of ways. One of which is you can email me, again with your award number and, you know, ask if they're all lifted or if you're wondering about specific ones. There is a process to go through once you email me any items that were needed, and it's reviewed on our end. I would try to always respond promptly to you to let you know whether or not it was sufficient and whether I've initiated release of the withholding special conditions or whether something else is still needed. But even once I email you to let you know that I have initiated release, it still takes a little time to work its way through the system, the process that we go through in JustGrants to actually lift that hold. So once each hold is lifted, you'll get an email on audit—well, let me say it this way, your grant award administrator assigned to the award in JustGrants will receive an automated notification from JustGrants stating that an award condition modification was approved. And that will mean that a particular withholding condition was lifted. But these happen independently for each one.

So if you have three withholding conditions that we approve, you would get three notices from JustGrants. So, one way to just check the overall status is when you're in the award in JustGrants and you scroll down past that assignment section of the page and you get to the portion of the page where you can look at the different tabs, there's an award condition tab, there's a performance management tab, there's an FFR tab, there's a GAM tab, you can go to two of those tabs to check. One is the award conditions tab. And you can scroll through there to see if all of the award conditions are lifted as yes for being in compliance. You can also go to the funding balance and availability tab, which gives a summary of whether or not there are any suspensions or holds on your award. I realize I'm describing processes that might be hard to follow when you're not actually looking at your award in JustGrants. So again, please feel free to email me, reach out with your award number, ask if your holds has been lifted or not. And I'm happy to walk you through that status and whether anything else is still needed to get those lifted.

DARYL FOX: Will we be required to complete the questions set in the JustGrants performance report at any point?

KATHY MANNING: At this point, no. At this point, we are not using the questions set in JustGrants because we're using PMT. The questions set is for those grant programs that don't use PMT. So right now, when you're in JustGrants, you ignore the question set and just upload your PMT report and click "Submit". At any point in the future, I don't know the timing of when we would potentially make a shift to the questions set instead of to PMT. So I can't say for sure about at any point in the future but until you hear otherwise, we are not using the questions set for these awards in the performance reports at this time.

DARYL FOX: There's no questions in the queue at this time. If there's any additional ones, please go ahead and enter those in. Okay, I think that—oh, there's one more question that's come in. The NEPA checklist that's required for labs to complete, does that just have to be done once a lab is identified for use with regards to testing?

KATHY MANNING: So I think based on the question and the email exchange we've had—well, let me—let me back up and say this way. So a NEPA checklist is required for any lab that is doing testing. So, we understand that certainly at the time of application and past wave and now, you all might not have identified a particular lab yet. However, once that lab is identified, whether it's already known or still to be determined, we will need a checklist for each lab that is doing DNA testing using grant funds, any lab that is receiving grant funds under this award to do DNA testing, we will need a NEPA checklist for it and it does need to be completed by the lab itself.

DARYL FOX: Okay, that's all that's in the queue at this time. I think with that, we can go ahead and close today's program. So on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Assistance and our panelists, we want to thank you for joining today. If you do have any questions, please reach out. So that will—this will end today's presentation at this point. Thank you very much.