

DARYL FOX: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to the “Fiscal Year 2022 Missing and Unidentified Human Remains Program Solicitation Webinar” hosted by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. At this time, it's my pleasure to introduce Thurston Bryant, Senior Policy Advisor with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, for some welcoming remarks and to begin the presentation. Thurston?

THURSTON BRYANT: Thanks, Daryl. And thank you to everyone for joining us for today's solicitation webinar. On behalf of BJA and the Department of Justice, we welcome you and we look forward to answering your questions at the end of the webinar today. Please note that the webinar will be recorded and archived on the BJA website as a future resource tool for everyone. The BJA panel members for today's webinar will include myself, Senior Policy Advisor within the Forensic Unit of our BJA Policy Office, Mr. Alan Spanbauer, who is the Division Director of the South Atlantic Region within the BJA Programs Office, and lastly, Dr. Angela Williamson, my supervisor and supervisor of the Forensics Unit within the BJA Policy Office and also is the FBI's ViCAP Liaison for us.

As a standard procedure, we begin our webinar with the Justice Department disclaimer that the points expressed during this webinar are the views of the authors and presenters and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Department, as well as other disclaimer information that you see present on your screen.

Our webinar will be divided into three main parts with a more detailed breakdown visible on the screen in front of you. I will present on part one that will focus on an overview of the program. Mr. Spanbauer will present on part two that includes information on how to apply for the program. And Dr. Williamson will join us for part three of the webinar that will focus on a Q&A, question and answer session with you, the audience. Parts one and two will only provide a summary of the program, with more detailed information being available to you in the solicitation. However, we are very excited about part three's Q&A session, as we get to answer your questions directly and help you prepare for what we hope is your proposal submission. So, without further ado, let's begin.

Part one: Program Overview. This slide includes deadline information you should be fully aware of. The solicitation posted on July 15th and will be open for 45 days. The Grants.gov deadline is August the 26th. This deadline was extended due to a forthcoming system outage. And the JustGrants deadline is August the 29th. You will hear this reiterated again in today's webinar by my colleague Alan Spanbauer, but we want to reiterate and put this in bold writing if it was on the screen. But please submit your application well in advance of these deadlines and do not wait to the last minute to apply. This will ensure that you have sufficient time to get everything submitted without any issues.

Program Background information. BJA's Missing and Unidentified Human Remains Program, or the MUHR Program as an abbreviation, is authorized under Jennifer's Law that was initially introduced in the House of Representatives. More recently, amendments to Jennifer's Law were introduced by Representative Vicente Gonzalez and Senator John Cornyn, both from Texas. Later, Senator Cornyn and then-Senator Kamala Harris sponsored a bipartisan bill entitled the Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains Act, that became law. The effect of this more recent law was to amend the original Jennifer's Law by expanding eligibility and funding usage. Fiscal Year 2022 marks the first year of the MUHR Program being administered by the Justice Department. The program is duplicative of NIJ's NamUs Program in many respects, but overall it is a complimentary program to NamUs to help the field overall. Please note the program is currently in the 2023 budget mark of the House of Representatives in the amount of \$5.5 million and in the Senate marked for \$7.5 million. So we are very hopeful to continue the program for future years.

For some program summary information, the MUHR Program provides funding to eligible applicants for services focused on reporting and identifying missing persons and unidentified human remains in the United States. That includes migrants. The program augments the existing services available under NamUs, which is a national centralized repository and resource center for locating and identifying missing persons, unidentified human remains, and repatriating unclaimed persons. While NamUs is managed through one cooperative award to help the field, in contrast, the MUHR Program provides federal awards directly to the field. They can be more self-reliant and self-sufficient.

And the last thing you'll see here, here's a link to the solicitation located on the BJA website. If you have problems finding that information on the BJA website, at the top of our main website, you can click on "funding opportunities," and then there should be a link for current and active funding opportunities.

So as we mentioned, the solicitation posted on July 15th, and we received some questions from the field already, and a lot of them have focused on these next two parts, the eligibility and then some of the award information.

So, here's a listing of the eligible applicants for the program based on the legislation. So, as you'll see here on the screen, the eligibility for this program are states, units of local government, accredited, publicly-funded CODIS forensic laboratories, medical examiner offices, accredited, publicly-funded toxicology labs, accredited publicly-funded crime laboratories, publicly-funded university forensic anthropology laboratories, and nonprofit organizations that have a working collaborative agreements with state and county forensics offices, including medical examiners, coroners, and justices of the peace for entry of data into CODIS or NamUs or both.

Now, the entities on this page are the ones that must officially apply for the program and submit the application materials. And if awarded, these entities will also be the ones required to submit any reporting materials to the Justice Department. However, these eligible applicants can also form partnerships with other entities in order to address the goals, objectives, and deliverables of the overall program. So if you are interested in applying for the solicitation but do not meet the eligibility requirement or the listing here, we suggest you partner with an entity that is listed on this eligibility page.

Based upon the list of eligible applicants from the previous slide, entities will decide what purpose area to apply under based on their service capabilities and also based on adhering to the goals, objectives, and deliverables for those specific purpose areas.

So, overall, for the program for this year, we had a total of about \$4.5 million available to make awards for the entire program. There are three purpose areas for the program. Purpose Area 1 is for statewide agencies. And with that, BJA anticipates making about two awards with the award amount ranging from \$500,000 to \$1 million. For Purpose Area number 2, that includes counties and units of local government. BJA estimates to make up to six awards, with the award amount ranging from 100 to \$500,000. For Purpose Area 3, applicants include services to assist small, rural, and/or tribal entities. For this category, BJA anticipates making one award in the amount of \$1 million. And for all of the awards, the periods of performance begins on October 1st, 2022. If you are unaware, our fiscal year ranges from October 1st through September 30th of the following year. And then for all three purpose areas, the award duration period will be 36 months.

Applicants are expected to clearly identify the purpose areas to which they are applying. If applicants are applying for multiple purpose areas, a separate proposal must be submitted for each purpose area that they are applying. For Purpose Area 3, the objective is to serve small, rural, and/or tribal entities. Due to limited resources and the potential limited weekly volume of cases, these jurisdictions may not have the staffing and general capabilities to fully implement a large-scale project under the MUHR Program. As a result, the intent of Purpose Area 3 is to ensure that cases in these jurisdictions receive the critical resources necessary to assist with resolution.

Next, we'll discuss the goals and objectives of the MUHR Program. The overall goals of the program are to establish and expand programs to improve the reporting, transportation, processing, and identification of missing persons and unidentified remains, including migrants. Each applicant must stay within the scope of the three purpose areas for which they are applying.

The next two slides highlight the main components to be addressed by applicants under Purpose Area 1, statewide agencies, and Purpose Area 2, counties and/or units of local

government. Applicants must propose to implement a comprehensive approach to cases, including migrants, that directly achieves the goals of the program. Applicants will need to address the following components under Purpose Areas 1 and 2.

**Inventory.** Applicants shall inventory all cases in their jurisdictions or those entities that are serving jurisdictions that have yet to be processed. All qualified cases inventoried must be entered into NamUs, the National Crime Information Center, or NCIC, and where applicable, the FBI's Violent Criminal Apprehension Program, or ViCAP, all by the end of the grant period.

**Reporting.** Reporting shall occur to better understand the circumstances and scope of cases, and the methods for reporting shall include systems such as NCIC and NamUs, as well as notifying the relatives of missing persons and unidentified remains as applicable.

**Identification.** Applicants shall determine which of the inventory cases need to undergo identification efforts. Agencies must develop a comprehensive plan for case prioritization to select cases that may be associated with a threat to public safety, for example, a victim of a violent offender, and a plan for identification that will enable the entity to select a proper method for each specific case. Applicants must also establish a multidisciplinary team comprised of forensic experts, investigators, victim advocates, and other entities to establish the best method of identification for each case.

**Repatriation of Human Remains.** Agencies shall develop and implement a plan to return individuals to appropriate relatives as determined by law. As mentioned, the requirements for Purpose Area 2, counties and/or units of local government, are similar to Purpose Area 1 that was just described. Applicants must propose to implement a comprehensive approach to cases, including migrants, that directly achieve the goals of the program. Applicants will need to address the following components similar to Purpose Area 1: inventory, reporting, identification, and the repatriation of human remains

Purpose Area 3 is somewhat different as an entity will provide services to small, rural, and/or tribal entities by providing funding assistance for transportation, testing, and identification purposes. Again, the intent of this purpose area is to ensure that cases in these jurisdictions receive the necessary and critical resources to assist with resolution. Purpose Area 3 applicants must propose a plan with regards to how they will work with each submitting agency, that is, small, rural, and/or travel entities, in order to address reporting, identification, and the repatriation of remains.

The next two slides include examples of deliverables for the overall purpose areas with more detailed information available within the solicitation. As previously mentioned,

applicants under Purpose Areas 1 and 2 must include a required inventory component. Award recipients will have access to up to 25% of grant funds during the initial planning phase. The inventory must be completed within the first six months of the award. Also, the inventory must capture where possible the following information: the number of cases; the year when unidentified remains were recovered and missing persons reported missing; the number of suspected border-crossing cases; and the number of unresolved unidentified remains, unclaimed persons, and missing person cases in the applicant's jurisdiction.

For Purpose Area 3, applicants must establish successful outreach campaigns to promote the services their agency will offer to small, rural, and/or tribal jurisdictions from missing persons and unidentified remain cases. In addition, for Purpose Area 3, applicants must routinely report the turnaround time and backlog for identification services that agencies utilize.

Permissible Uses of Funds. Below are examples of permissible uses of funds that include the following: exhumation of human remains, salary, full-time, part-time, and overtime, and benefits for personnel. And the salary that pertains to personnel could include a variety of staff that are necessary to complete the project. And that also includes various forms of disciplines. In addition, funding can be used for supplies, for transportation purposes, processing and identification, and the procurement of state-of-the-art multi-modal, multi-purpose forensic DNA typing and analytical equipment.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list. However, other uses of funds may be allowable and approved by BJA and the Justice Department on a case-by-case basis. We also want you to note that supplanting is not permitted and items must be solely used for the purposes of the program. So as an example, if you're requesting to purchase equipment, the equipment purchases for enhancing a laboratory's overall capacity are not permitted. They must be in relation specifically to the BJA MUHR Program.

Forensic Genetic Genealogy. In cases where DNA profiles from unidentified persons have not resulted in a CODIS association, agencies may use funds for FGG as another resource tool for identification purposes. However, program activity involving FGG DNA analysis and searching is subject to the Justice Department's Interim Policy on Forensic Genetic Genealogy DNA Analysis and Searching, or to the final policy when issued.

Family Reference Samples. For the collection and processing of family reference samples for upload to CODIS, the applicant must submit a letter of support with a relevant law enforcement agency and medical examiner/coroner. Following FBI guidance and requirements, the relative of a missing person must voluntarily submit their DNA sample per a consent form. Law enforcement must oversee and confirm that

the relative is who they say they are via a form of identification. The reference sample can only be used for identification purposes. Once and if a match is made, the law enforcement agency overseeing the case must be notified, as well as a supporting medical examiner/coroner. More information is available at the following FBI web link, which is also included within the MUHR Program solicitation. And overall, we suggest that you examine pages 9 through 10 of the solicitation for more detailed information on family reference samples.

At this time, I will turn the presentation over to Alan Spanbauer, who will provide information on how to apply for the solicitation. Alan.

ALAN SPANBAUER: Thank you, Thurston. Welcome, everyone, to part two. We will be discussing in part two the two-part application process, important due dates, as Thurston has alluded to earlier in the presentation, as well as a listing of various resources at your disposal. Next slide, please.

As noted earlier, this is a two-step process to apply for the MUHR Program. Although there is a prerequisite, you would want to start out with accessing the System for Award Management, better known as SAM.gov, and ensure that you have your Unique Entity Identifier number, or UEI. You want to make sure that your agency is current in SAM.gov. That ensures that once you access Grants.gov, you'll be able to move forward with the application process. Once you access Grants.gov, you'll want to search for the DOJ funding opportunity number. So the DOJ funding opportunity number is located on the front page of the solicitation. For this particular solicitation, it is O-VJA-2022-171404. Again, this is listed at the top of the solicitation. Within the Grants.gov system, you'll want to fill out the SF-424 Request for Federal Funding, as well as fill out the SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities. Please note that the user and email I identified in Section 8 of the SF-424 will be identified as the application submitter in JustGrants and will receive further notifications from JustGrants.

Again, the Grants.gov workspace status will change from "in progress" to "submitted" once the application has successfully been submitted in Grants.gov. Just as a reminder, you'll want to again ensure that your SAM.gov registration is up to date. You will want to submit your application through Grants.gov prior to 8:59 Eastern Daylight Time on August 26th. Please be mindful that this is 8:59 Eastern time, and there are no exceptions for missing this deadline. Next slide, please.

In step two—this is where you will submit your full application. Within 48 hours after submitting the Grants.gov application, you should receive four email notifications from Grants.gov: a submission receipt, a validation receipt, a grantor agency retrieval receipt, and an agency tracking number assignment. Once in JustGrants 24 hours after receiving the confirmation emails from Grants.gov, the individual identified in Section 8,

as I mentioned earlier, the SF-424 will receive an email from JustGrants with instructions for the JustGrants login. Again, we encourage you to access the How to Apply section in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide that's listed within the solicitation. Also a reminder, three days later, after the Grants.gov deadline, August 29th, again at 8:59 Eastern time, your application is due, and there will be no exceptions made for late applications. Next slide, please.

A wonderful resource on applying for funding from OJP is located here on the BJA website. You'll see that there is a link which Daryl will put in the Q&A for folks to retrieve. This is a comprehensive training on applying for funding through Grants.gov, as well as through JustGrants. Please take time to review this resource. Next slide, please.

Also, a wonderful resource is once you get to the JustGrants, you will see the JustGrants landing page, across the top, there are several categories that you can go to. The first is, as you'll see in the middle of the page, is the link to the JustGrants login. Also above that, you'll see the training drop down. In that drop down, there are several categories of trainings, and one of them is application submission, the first one. So please be sure to take advantage of using the JustGrants website for training. Also, under the next category of resources, there are different categories. There's one under funding. There are resources regarding ASAP, Grants.gov, and SAM.gov. So please again, Daryl will be putting this link into the chat or into the Q&A, and it will allow you to explore the JustGrants website. Next slide, please.

Once your application has been submitted and the application deadline has passed, our policy office will review the applications for completeness prior to moving to peer review. This process is to ensure that the basic minimum requirements, or BMR, have been met. Part of this solicitation, the BMR, include a proposal abstract, which should be a succinct statement of your problem and what you're planning to do, a Proposal Narrative, a Budget Worksheet, and Budget Narrative. Now, this Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative will be embedded within JustGrants and you will fill that out within the JustGrants system. Next slide, please.

Once the screening for the BMR has been completed, the applications that meet and pass the BMR stage will be evaluated or peer reviewed for technical merit. Common BMR requirements include eligibility. The request should be within the programmatic funding constraints, as Thurston has outlined earlier in the presentation. It should be responsive in scope, as well as have all the items listed from the previous slide—an Abstract, a Proposal Narrative, Budget Worksheet, and Budget Narrative, which is embedded within the JustGrants system. You will see in the solicitation there is a section on application review information which provides an outline of the Merit Review Criteria, which we'll do next in the next slide, please.

The Merit Review Criteria will provide the weight for the components of the application. For 15% of the scoring of the merit review, the Statement of the Problem is evaluated. Project Design and Implementation is a large portion of the Merit Review Criteria at 40%. Capabilities and Competencies are also a large portion of the merit review, as well as a Plan for Collecting the Data for Performance Measures. Finally, there will be a 10% weight towards the Budget. Please also note that there will be other factors taken into consideration, which BJA will review past performance, potentially, as well as risk through Grants.gov. Next slide, please.

To ensure that you have the best proposal and that all of the factors and requirements have been met, be sure to access the link DOJ Application Submission Checklist. This will help you walk through what is needed and to ensure you can check the boxes to ensure that you have met all of the requirements and that you have submitted your application in a timely fashion. Next slide, please.

Grants.gov is a site you'll want to access when looking for the federal funding opportunities. And not just this particular one. There are other opportunities from OJP and other federal agencies listed in Grants.gov. Grants.gov provides technical assistance with the SF-424 process, as well as the SF-LLL lobbying disclosure process. Please make note of the customer support hotline as well as the website and email information listed here. These are also listed within the solicitation on troubleshooting your application when submitting your application. Next slide, please.

Also, JustGrants has a technical support system as well for issues with JustGrants. Please reach out to the JustGrants help desk. They provide technical assistance in submitting the full application in JustGrants. If you do have a problem and you do contact the customer support hotline or you reach out via email or the website, please be sure to get a ticket number and keep a recording of that. This will provide proof that you had contacted the JustGrants technical support, and that there was an issue with submitting your application. Please be sure to document any contact you may have with either help desk. You may reach them by website or email, and be sure to keep the file of your issues. Next slide, please.

Again, additional support and application assistance, you can go to the OJP Response Center. They provide solicitation support and general assistance. Here's the email—grants@ncjrs.gov. And they'll be able to help with questions such as eligibility requirements, and they will provide you with additional resources. The hours of operation for the OJP Resource Center, are Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. till 6 p.m. Eastern time. Also, if you're looking for additional funding sources, you can subscribe to receive email notifications of new funding opportunity, as well as you'll receive regular JustGrants info. Next slide, please.

And thank you for your attention. And we will now open it up for questions. Thank you.

DARYL FOX: Great. Thanks so much, Alan, and to Thurston. While the presenters are gathering the questions for response, I'll just take a note for everybody on today's webinar that the PowerPoint report and transcript will be posted to the BJA website. You'll receive an email once those are posted, within about 7 to 10 days, and where to access those. So if you need to go back at any point, reference these materials, you'll have the ability to do so. So go ahead and pass it over to our presenters once again.

THURSTON BRYANT: Thanks, Daryl. OK. Can you hear me?

DARYL FOX: Yes.

THURSTON BRYANT: So we were going to—we wanted to have our cameras off while we're actually doing the presentation portion, but we're going to turn those on so you guys can see the nice clothes that we have on. So give my colleagues here a little bit of time, and then we'll jump into some of the questions that are coming in. And so for this portion, for part three, for the Q&A, my supervisor, Dr. Angela Williamson, will be on board to assist, as well as Alan and I will also be on and available to answer any questions as well to help out. So before I jump in and start reading some of these questions, Al and Angela, you guys are there?

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: Ready to go, Thurston.

ALAN SPANBAUER: Ready to go.

THURSTON BRYANT: So, the first question is, "Can you please expound on the number of border crossing cases requirement?" So earlier in the webinar, there was a slide for the examples of some deliverables, and it was focused on Purpose Area 1 and 2. As you'll recall, Purpose Area 1 is for the states and then Purchase Area 2 is for counties and use of local government. So, in addition to talking about the inventory, there was a bullet point on the number of reported border crossing cases. So, in essence—there it is. So the number of suspected border crossing cases. So, if you look later on in the solicitation, there is a link to the performance measures that were developed for this program. That in essence is suspected border crossing cases actually pertains to migrants. So once you access that PDF file with all the listing of the measurements for Purpose Area 1 and 2, there is a note at the very beginning of that section that says that migrant is defined the same as suspected border crossing cases. So that's in essence what that is referring to. So it's referring to migrants.

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: Yeah, Thurston, and I'll just add to that, if you look at that...

DARYL FOX: Oh, I believe Angela's audio has dropped just momentarily. We'll get her back shortly.

THURSTON BRYANT: Yes, well, for one second.

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: Thurston, I don't know when...the universe is against me today. It just dropped my call. Did I get my explanation out or was I mid-sentence?

THURSTON BRYANT: No, it was like at the very beginning you cut out, so if you could just repeat, that would be great.

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: OK, I just wanted to add that if you take a look at the authorizing language behind that led to this solicitation, you will note that there is language specifically referring to migrant border crossing cases. So, that is why that component is included in the BJA MUHR Program in the solicitation and as a required metric that we will be asking grantees to collect.

THURSTON BRYANT: OK, great. Thank you, Angela. So the next question, and I'm looking at the questions in the chat, it says, "Can a portion of funds be used for cost at a private lab if our crime lab is unable or can't, due to massive workloads, run required appropriate, genealogical testing?"

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: I started nodding my head already. Absolutely. The whole point of this program is to get your missing and unidentified cases processed and hopefully make identification. So whatever is the most efficient and economical with the use of federal funding. Obviously, if you're doing forensic genetic genealogy, particularly the lab portion will need to be outsourced. If you look at our other grant programs at BJA, 95% of the grantees outsourced the DNA testing for the reasons you outlined. We don't want to create backlogs at your own labs. And you have, a set number of years to get this work completed. So, whatever makes the most sense, just put that in your proposal, and then you go through the procurement process in accordance with your own local rules and with BJA rules.

THURSTON BRYANT: And as Angela mentioned, and it's listed throughout the solicitation, we're looking for comprehensive plans for addressing these services and also, partnerships, collaborative partnerships. So, just keep that in mind.

So, I'm looking in the chat, I don't see any other questions coming in. So, wanted to give a little bit more time. We can actually extend past the 2:45 mark if we need to. But

those are the only questions I see right now. As I mentioned at the beginning of the webinar, a lot of the questions that we have received have been pertaining to eligibility requirements, the question that we just talked about, and then also in terms of the eligibility and then what purpose areas. So we hope we provide some more information on that, and then the information that Angela just provided on these two questions. So right now, I don't see any more questions. So want to take this time, as we say, we're excited to answer your questions in real time. So if you have any questions and you're still on the call, please submit a question in the chat box and we'll be happy to address it.

ALAN SPANBAUER: Thurston, there are several questions in the Q&A box.

THURSTON BRYANT: OK. I see.

ALAN SPANBAUER: Starting at 2:03 from Sherry North. "Can staff be used to design the outreach strategy, process invoices, and/or navigating bureaucracy?" I'm not sure what Sherry's asking there, but she also asked another question. "Do we have to know all the sub-recipients prior to submitting the grant application or can that be part of the first six months of work? Can we have a selection of anticipated sub-recipients, or does it have to be exhaustive?" My suggestion, Sherry, is that the more information that you can provide in your application, including a list of sub-recipients, will be best in the peer review process and the merit review process. So, the more information you can provide, the better. If you have to provide to be determined, please list or identify sub-recipients that you may have listed or a list of. Thank you.

THURSTON BRYANT: Thanks, Alan.

ALAN SPANBAUER: And I'll—

THURSTON BRYANT: I see a—go ahead, I'm sorry.

ALAN SPANBAUER: I'll toss this one to you Angela. "Letters of commitment. Would we work to get them to submit with the application? But if someone does not have a letter of commitment with the application, does that mean we won't be able to help them?"

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: OK. I don't think it means—no. You will be able to help them. The letters of commitment is mainly to demonstrate to us that you have partners on board at the outset. I mean, basically, you will define the geographical region that you intend to support. So, I think that is fine. Like the previous question, come in with as much information as you know. We try to be flexible as things change with your project. So if you need to add people, et cetera, that is a possibility.

ALAN SPANBAUER: Thank you. Then, Thurston, I'm going to punt this one to you from Daniel Meyer. "Does a certification required on page two under note need to be signed, and if so, is there a certain title or person you wish to have it signed from, such as the CEO, the sheriff, or the crime lab director?"

THURSTON BRYANT: I suggest that's signed by the authorized representative. And, Alan, you're familiar with this, working in our Programs Office. That would be my suggestion.

ALAN SPANBAUER: Typically, the authorized representative is someone in authority that if there are certifications or requirements that need to be signed lawfully, that would be either the city manager, the sheriff, possibly, the crime lab director. So those are all good examples of a person to sign the certificate.

THURSTON BRYANT: OK, thank you. Here's another question. It says, "You mentioned that we can apply for multiple purpose areas with the separate applications. How would that impact the outcome of successful grants?" So this is a competitive solicitation, and so if you are going to apply and submit different proposals under different purpose areas, you need to ensure that you adhere to the requirements under those specific purpose areas. If you're asking on how is that going to have an impact on you receiving an award potentially? It's going to be dependent upon the quality and the merit of the application for which you apply under the specific category. So whether that's Purpose Area, 1, 2, or 3.

ALAN SPANBAUER: And then, Thurston, we also have a question. "What is the definition of rural for this application?"

THURSTON BRYANT: I'm sorry, the definition of what?

ALAN SPANBAUER: Rural.

THURSTON BRYANT: We don't have an official DOJ definition for what rural entails. My suggestion is that I would include based on your jurisdiction what that would be, so that it's outlined and is spelled out in the application for us, for internal reviews, and as well as for our peer reviewers. So, we don't have like a Census Bureau type definition for what rural includes. For example, we don't have defined as based on like a certain population dynamic or anything of that nature. So, my suggestion will be for you to define that based on your jurisdiction, what rural means, because it could be a little bit different depending upon where you're located.

ALAN SPANBAUER: Thank you. Then, Angela, I'm going to hand this one to you. "Will

the requirement to enter DNA into NamUs or other national databases still hold for Purpose Area 3 for indigenous persons?”

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: Yeah. So, just to clarify, you don't actually enter DNA into NamUs. DNA goes into CODIS, not NamUs. With any DOJ funding, the DNA must be entered into governmental databases. That is a requirement we follow to the hilt. If you have entered into CODIS, for example, and you want to try and utilize local databases or, I saw another question where someone spoke about the database authority that is really designed for migrants, you may enter into those databases once the profile has been entered into CODIS.

ALAN SPANBAUER: Thank you.

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: It's pretty much the same as they do forensic genetic genealogy, CODIS first, and then you can search other databases.

ALAN SPANBAUER: OK. We have an additional question. “We are a state university with an anthropology department with a forensic tract with labs. Would this fit with the qualification publicly funded university forensic anthropology laboratory? Do you mean a public university with a forensic anthropology lab space, or if this has a specific distinction?” Again, that's under eligibility.

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: I think we'd have to clarify with our legal counsel on that one. I don't want to answer off the top of our head without getting people to understand that kind of stuff a little bit better than us.

ALAN SPANBAUER: Thank you. And as a reminder—

THURSTON BRYANT: I was going to say, too, Alan. I was going to say real quickly, too, if you go back and look at the eligibility in the solicitation, there's also the requirement that it has to be accredited. So, you should ensure that you meet that capability. But as Angela indicated, we'll have to get back to you on more specifics regarding that. Go ahead, Alan. Sorry for interrupting you.

ALAN SPANBAUER: And then it was pointed out in the Q&A that the application, the solicitation states August 23rd. That date—for Grants.gov—that deadline has been extended to August 26<sup>th</sup> due to an outage at Grants.gov. So it is August 26th.

We have another question. “If equipment instrumentation is procured through the grant, can the agency awardee allocate grant funds to maintain...so under this.....equipment to maintain after the 36 months concludes?” This would be probably a programs question. If you're buying equipment, DNA equipment, for example, to process samples,

you can purchase an extended warranty. It can extend past the end date of the award.

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: Thurston, did want to go ahead and read out some of the other questions, and we can just take them as appropriate? I think there's a lot here, and we're running out of time.

THURSTON BRYANT: Sure. I think this is when we have an answer for, "We would—we would use these funds to help pay for additional testing needs in small, rural, and/or tribal locations. Under Purpose Area 3, could our state agency be the original recipient, or would we have to apply under Purpose Area 1 because we are a statewide agency?"

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: So Purpose Area 3 is really for the central provider to be able to help a wide array of areas. If you're a statewide agency who then wants to serve everyone in your state, I would say to come in under Purpose Area 1. Thurston, did we lose you?

THURSTON BRYANT: No, I'm still here. Also, here's another question. It says—might need your expertise on this one, Angela. It says, beyond the requirement for inputting cases into—I'm sorry, hold on. "Beyond the requirement for inputting cases into CODIS and the FBI, can the funding be used for private database creation for family reference samples?"

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: We don't explicitly say no. I would be curious about the money that that would involve given that these grant amounts are fairly small. So, that would be interesting to see in a proposal. Again, this will be peer reviewed. Again, we don't explicitly say you cannot. You could put it in your proposal. I would just be wary of the cost you think would be involved in that.

THURSTON BRYANT: OK. Here's another question. "Would a letter of commitment from the Association of Sheriffs and Policy Chiefs be sufficient in lieu of all the law enforcement agencies, or do we need to have individual letters from each specific agency?"

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: So, if you're serving a wide area or your statewide site that has 100 agencies, we are not going to demand that you have letters of commitment to every single agency. I was thinking back to other programs we have that cover a wide area. A couple of larger agencies like you just suggested and maybe a couple of letters from your larger law enforcement agencies within your area. So, if you know that 60% of your cases are going to come from two particular law enforcement agencies, it would go a really long way to have letters of commitment from them.

ALAN SPANBAUER: Angela, I have another one for you.

THURSTON BRYANT: Thank you, Angela.

ALAN SPANBAUER: "In regard to family reference sample processing, it was mentioned that letters of support are needed from relevant law enforcement medical examiner/coroners. Does this apply only to Purpose Area 1 and 2 since area 3 could potentially be serving many jurisdictions? Or does area 3 require letters of support from all agencies that might be served?"

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: No, definitely just one and two. We don't want to make things overly complicated for number three. That's going to be more of a service provider. Again, that intent is to help as many small, rural, tribal agencies as possible. So we don't want to complicate that.

THURSTON BRYANT: Thank you, Angela. Here is one more that I see in the chat that I don't think we've addressed. Where did it go? I'm sorry. And we might have already talked about this. The question was, "Can you please explain the letter of support concerning family reference samples?"

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: I'm not really sure what the question is. Is it the same as the one just addressed?

THURSTON BRYANT: Yeah, we might have already—I guess they're just looking for some more information on explaining the letter of support regarding family reference samples. Might have been something that we've already addressed through the prior questions. Just want to ensure that I was going through all the questions in the chat session.

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: Yeah, I see one. Are we able to use funds for forensic genetic genealogy services, not just the lab portion? So FGG is everything from the lab all the way to the investigative piece. We definitely bundle that. Also keep in mind that NamUs is doing FGG for free on cases. So, we would ask you have you utilized their services, if possible. We know there's a waitlist. So that would be check number one. For the investigative portion, there's also the FBI Investigative Genealogy Team, who can help on homicide cases. So that would be check number two that we would ask of you. But if neither of those are possibilities, then that would be completely allowable under the grant.

ALAN SPANBAUER: Also, we have a question. "As part of preparing our application, is BJA available, especially for Program Area 3, to discuss the DOJ Technical Resources? Might be leveraged in finding and identifying human remains, for instance, from

decades ago.”

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: So you can submit any questions that you have to DOJ. That's absolutely fine. I'm not really clear on the technical resources. If you're talking about federal government resources, if you want to add some more specifics to that.

ALAN SPANBAUER: Right. And that that should go to the OJP Response Center for questions. That way we, BJA, can compile a FAQ document so that these questions are answered for folks in the future. Thank you.

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: So I see a question concerning, “Could this grant be used for training that would assist with identifications?” So, this is not a TTA program. And whilst we recognize the value of that, I will add one thing to say that we're about to launch a BJA Forensics Training and Technical Assistance Program that will cover MUHR grantees and MUHR recipients. If you're at all familiar with our [indistinct] TTA program that covers all those grantees. So, we definitely would be hesitant about funding training at this point in the program. Again, it's brand new with limited resources. The intent is for that funding to go directly to working cases at this point. Not to say things could not change, but we would want to see the majority of the funds given to grantees going towards working cases.

THURSTON BRYANT: And that Forensic Training and Technical Assistance Center that Angela mentioned, that was a solicitation that we administered this year. So we will have that award with several others in, you know, the next couple of months. So we'll get that underway beginning after October 1st of this year. So looking forward to that. So thank you.

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: There's another question. “Can you select who you want to use the services on your own, or do they need to be approved by us at BJA?” So, the answer is no, BJA does not tell you who you need to use. For example, if you're outsourcing to DNA or forensic genetic genealogy, you do have to follow BJA guidelines for how you select a provider, along with your own local procurement guidelines. So Alan and his team will guide you through that. Ultimately, who you use is your decision, as long as it's within the BJA guidelines and your own local guidelines.

THURSTON BRYANT: So looking, and Alan, help correct me if I'm wrong, I think we've addressed most of the questions. I think all the questions that come in either through the Q&A section or through the chat session. And I know we're at the top of the hour.

ALAN SPANBAUER: Yeah, there are several questions but we can answer those questions via email. I think there's several that we've missed. So we will go through

them in the interest of time.

DR. ANGELA WILLIAMSON: Please email any unanswered questions in, and we'll be able to get back to you with a response very quickly.

THURSTON BRYANT: Daryl, I think—I think we're at the end of the webinar, if you want to wrap us up. And again, here's our contact information. As Alan indicated, it's probably a great idea if you submit those through the Response Center. That information is located in this solicitation because that way it's officially recorded and documented. And then what we do is we take note of all these questions to provide that out to the field, but it also helps us because when we go to revise the solicitation next year, there's some areas that we think we need to provide more clarity, we can use those questions to tighten up some of the language in the solicitation for next year. So we appreciate that. So again, here is a link to the the contact information for the OJP Response Center that handles all of our questions for our solicitations. And then you saw our contact information.

So I think that's all from the panel members, Daryl, if you want to wrap us up, and we'll adjourn. And then we look forward to answering your questions. And again, as Alan and I reiterated during the webinar, please be mindful of those deadlines and please submit your application materials well in advance of those deadlines. So with that, I think we are—I think we are ready for the conclusion, and then we'll follow up with individuals as needed. Thank you.

DARYL FOX: Thanks. So on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Assistance and our panelists, we want to thank you for joining today's webinar. This will end today's presentation.