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The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [Bureau of Justice Assistance](#) (BJA) is seeking applicants for funding under the Second Chance Act to provide mentoring grants to nonprofit organizations and Indian tribes. This program furthers the Department's mission by providing services and programs to help facilitate the successful reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals as they return to their communities.

## **Second Chance Act Comprehensive Community-Based Adult Reentry Program Utilizing Mentors FY 2015 Competitive Grant Announcement**

### **Eligibility**

Applicants are limited to nonprofit organizations (including tribal nonprofit organizations) with a documented history of providing comprehensive, evidence-based reentry services, and federally-recognized Indian tribes.

BJA may elect to make awards for applications submitted under this solicitation in future fiscal years, dependent on the merit of the applications and on the availability of appropriations.

For additional eligibility information, see Section [C. Eligibility Information](#).

### **Deadline**

Applicants must register with [Grants.gov](#) prior to submitting an application. All applications are due to be submitted and in receipt of a successful validation message in Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on June 11, 2015.

All applicants are encouraged to read this [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#).

For additional information, see [How to Apply](#) in Section [D. Application and Submission Information](#).

### **Contact Information**

For technical assistance with submitting an application, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726 or 606-545-5035, or via e-mail to [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). The [Grants.gov](#) Support Hotline hours of operation are 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except federal holidays.

Applicants that experience unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond their control that prevent them from submitting their application by the deadline must e-mail the BJA contact identified below **within 24 hours after the application deadline** and request approval to submit

their application. Additional information on reporting technical issues is found under “Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues” in the [How to Apply](#) section.

For assistance with any other requirement of this solicitation, contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) Response Center: toll-free at 1-800-851-3420; via TTY at 301-240-6310 (hearing impaired only); email [responsecenter@ncjrs.gov](mailto:responsecenter@ncjrs.gov); fax to 301-240-5830; or web chat at <https://webcontact.ncjrs.gov/ncjchat/chat.jsp>. The NCJRS Response Center hours of operation are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, and 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. eastern time, on the solicitation close date.

Grants.gov number assigned to this announcement: BJA-2015-4199

Release date: April 15, 2015

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# **Second Chance Act Comprehensive Community-Based Adult Reentry Program Utilizing Mentors (CFDA 16.812)**

## **A. Program Description**

### **Overview**

The Second Chance Act of 2007 (Pub. L. 110-199) provides a comprehensive response to the increasing number of incarcerated adults and juveniles who are released from prison, jail, and juvenile residential facilities and returning to communities. There are currently over 2.2 million individuals serving time in our federal and state prisons, and millions of people cycling through tribal and local jails every year. Ninety-five percent of all people incarcerated today will eventually be released and will return to communities. The coordination of reentry of members of Native American tribes is even more complex given that they can return from federal, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), state, local, and tribal facilities. The Second Chance Act helps to ensure that the transition individuals make from prison, jail, or juvenile residential facilities to the community is successful and promotes public safety.

The Second Chance Act grant funding is designed to help communities develop and implement comprehensive and collaborative strategies that address the challenges posed by reentry and recidivism reduction. "Reentry" is not a specific program, but rather a process that starts when an individual is initially incarcerated and ends when he or she has been successfully reintegrated in the community as a law-abiding citizen.

Section 211 of the Act authorizes grants to nonprofit organizations and federally recognized Indian tribes that may be used for comprehensive wrap-around services/programs which incorporate the use of trained mentors to promote the safe and successful reintegration into the community of adults who have been incarcerated. It is expected that program participants will be screened, assessed, and identified for program participation pre-release, and ideally, mentoring relationships will begin pre-release. During the post-release phase of the reentry program, participants will receive case management, connection to evidence-based programming designed to ensure that the transition from prison or jail to the community is safe and successful, and the benefit of a mentor. In instances where geographic distance or other obstacles preclude in-person visits between mentors and mentees pre-release, other mechanisms, such as voice and video calling, may be utilized when allowed and appropriate to begin mentoring relationships.

### **Program-Specific Information**

#### **Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables**

This solicitation is aimed at promoting more effective and successful reentry for formerly incarcerated individuals through the utilization of comprehensive, evidence-based wrap-around reentry plans which address the identified needs of the individuals and are supported by trained mentors. These needs are often related to housing, employment, substance abuse, and mental health.

A core component of programs supported under this solicitation is the utilization of trained mentors who are assigned to program participants. The assigned mentors then support the individuals' preparations for release and help to link them to programs and services in the community that address their identified needs. In addition, mentors provide emotional support

and encouragement to individuals returning from incarceration, hold them accountable throughout the treatment process, and play active roles in promoting positive behavioral changes.

“Mentoring” refers to a developmental relationship in which a more experienced person helps a less experienced person develop specific knowledge and skills to increase the likelihood of successful reentry. Mentoring is a process that includes the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and psychosocial support that are perceived by the recipient as relevant to work, career, and/or professional and personal development. The primary goal of the mentoring process is preparing an individual (pre-release) for reentry, and supporting him/her during the reentry process to enhance success and promote public safety (post-release). Mentoring involves communication and is relationship-based, and can take many forms. It may consist of a one-to-one relationship in which a designated mentor works directly with a formerly incarcerated individual. Mentoring can also occur in a small group setting, where a designated mentor works with a group of formerly incarcerated individuals.

While mentoring approaches and programs will not look the same across jurisdictions, there are a number of key characteristics of high quality mentoring that provide a solid foundation upon which effective mentoring approaches and programs are built. These characteristics include:

- Strong, formalized partnership between the mentoring organization, the department/entity responsible for the state/local/tribal correctional facility, and the individual correctional facility/facilities that are releasing the mentoring program participants.
- Demonstrated support for and commitment to the mentoring process on the part of the department/entity responsible for the state/local/tribal correctional facility and other stakeholders who share responsibility for the reentry process.
- Clear policies and procedures which define the content of the mentoring program (which should be based on adult learning theory and tailored to the needs of individuals), the roles of mentors in promoting successful reentry, the qualifications and requirements associated with serving as a mentor, and objective processes to screen and select mentors, and to match selected mentors to individuals.
- Formal pre-service and in-service training for mentors on topics such as evidence-based offender management practices, methods to link individuals returning from incarceration to needed programs and services in the community, criminogenic needs and their relationship to the likelihood of recidivism, strategies to help hold individuals accountable in the community while supporting their participation in treatment, methods to promote behavior change (e.g., motivational interviewing, cognitive-behavioral intervention strategies such as Thinking for a Change), the roles and responsibilities of other partners/stakeholders involved in the reentry process (e.g., community corrections agencies), the importance of ongoing collaboration with other partners/stakeholders involved in the reentry process, and specific collaboration strategies.
- Ongoing data collection and evaluation systems that guide strategic continuous quality improvement efforts of the mentoring program. Examples of outcomes that such systems track include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Number of mentoring program participants who successfully complete treatment
  - Number of mentoring program participants who find and maintain employment
  - Number of mentoring program participants who find and maintain stable housing

- Number of mentoring program participants who successfully complete post-release supervision
- Number of mentoring program participants who have not recidivated (e.g., rearrested, charged for a new offense, re-incarcerated, etc.) at specific intervals following release (e.g., 3 months, 6 months, 1 year, 2 years, 3 years, etc.)
- Number of mentoring program participants who have recidivated (e.g., rearrested, charged with a new offense, re-incarcerated, etc.)

## **Mandatory Requirements**

**To be eligible to receive an award under this solicitation, applicants must demonstrate compliance with the following eight mandatory program components:**

1. Demonstrate a cost-effective program strategy which provides mentoring and other services to a minimum of 150 individuals returning from incarceration during the 3-year project period.
2. Include a Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding (MOA or MOU), or another form of documentation more binding than a letter of support, that clearly demonstrates an established collaborative relationship between the applicant, the correctional agency, and the specific facility or facilities from which the applicant proposes to recruit the target population. This documentation should describe the nature of the partnership, discuss the correctional facility access that will be granted to mentors to enable mentors to effectively establish a positive relationship with individuals prior to release, and identify the data elements and performance measures that the correctional agency will provide—or assist the grantee in obtaining—for the purpose of measuring the impact of grant activities. The documentation must also clearly describe the empirically-validated assessment tool or tools used by the correctional agency to determine the risk level and identify the criminogenic needs of the individuals to receive mentoring services and be referred to the program for comprehensive reentry support services. **The extent to which the applicant is able to demonstrate a collaborative partnership with the correctional agency, access to mentees within facilities prior to release, if applicable, and the ability and willingness of the correctional agency to share data for performance measurement purposes will be key factors in assessing the strength of applications. Applications that do not include a MOA or other acceptable form of documentation will not be selected for funding.**
3. Provide pre-release mentoring services to individuals. It is expected that program participants will be screened, assessed, and identified for program participation pre-release, and ideally, mentoring relationships will begin pre-release. In instances where geographic distance or other obstacles preclude in-person visits between mentors and mentees pre-release other mechanisms, such as voice or video calling, may be utilized when allowed and appropriate to begin mentoring relationships. For the purpose of this solicitation, pre-release services will be limited to the establishment of a positive link/relationship to returning inmates who have been referred to the program by the correctional agency based on the validated risk/needs assessment. Pre-release services are limited to screening, assessment, and transition planning including identification of eligibility for benefits and benefits enrollment.
4. Describe a comprehensive menu of post-release programs and services to be offered to individuals participating in the mentoring program to support their community reintegration. Applicants are expected to demonstrate their capability to deliver or broker evidence-based

programs and services for individuals that will be offered in conjunction with the core mentoring component, and are designed to increase the likelihood of successful reentry and reduce recidivism. Such programs and services often include cognitive-behavior approaches, and address the following individual needs and issues: lack of viable housing options, educational deficits, substance use disorders, mental health needs, anger management problems, family dysfunction, and absence of employment/job skills.

5. State the number of mentors who will be recruited, provide a timeline for recruiting mentors, and list the community partners the applicant will engage in recruiting mentors. If awarded a grant, BJA will measure performance against this number.
6. Provide outlines of the pre-service and in-service training curricula that will be provided to all mentors. The following topics should, at a minimum, be covered in the mentor training curricula:
  - a. Characteristics of the criminal justice system as a whole, with a specific focus on institutional and community corrections, and the reentry process.
  - b. Relevant policies and procedures of the correctional agencies/facilities referring individuals to the proposed mentoring program.
  - c. Interpersonal communication skills that enhance mentor effectiveness and promote individual success in the community following release. Specific issues to be addressed include strategies (e.g., motivational interviewing, use of cognitive behavioral interventions such as Thinking for a Change) to help hold formerly incarcerated individuals accountable in the community while supporting their participation in treatment, and promoting positive behavioral changes. Characteristics of evidence-based offender management practices and strategies mentors can use to support such practices.
  - d. Criminogenic needs, their relationship to the likelihood of recidivism, and strategies that mentors can use to help monitor and address them, if needed.
  - e. Awareness of the specific treatment programs and services available to individuals in the community.
  - f. Procedures and methods to link/refer individuals to needed programs and services in the community
  - g. The roles and responsibilities of other partners/stakeholders involved in the reentry process (e.g., community corrections agencies).
  - h. The importance of ongoing collaboration with other partners/stakeholders involved in the reentry process and specific collaboration strategies.
  - i. Awareness of and sensitivity to victim-related issues. Applicants are encouraged to seek constructive methods of incorporating victims' perspectives into the mentoring process, in close coordination with the corrections agency and community-based victim services organizations.
  - j. Ethical standards related to serving as a mentor, including boundary issues and upholding an appropriate mentor/mentee relationship.
  - k. Promoting safety while serving as an effective mentor.
7. Articulate a clear plan to track mentoring program participant outcomes for at least 12 months following release. This plan must describe the process for obtaining information about recidivism from the relevant corrections and/or community corrections agencies. As described in the Performance Measures section below, grantees will also be required to provide the number of program participants who are re-incarcerated within the 12-month period following their initial release.
8. Provide a baseline recidivism rate for the proposed target population, including documentation

to support the development of the rate. All grantees will be required to provide a baseline recidivism rate upon award.

### **Priority Consideration**

Priority consideration will be given to applicants who:

- Provide for an independent evaluation of the project that includes, to the maximum extent feasible, random assignment of individuals to program delivery and control groups, as per the Second Chance Act, Section 211(c).

### **National Reentry Resource Center (NRRC)**

The [National Reentry Resource Center](#) (NRRC) serves as the primary source of information and guidance in reentry, advancing the use of evidence-based practices and policies and creating a network of practitioners, researchers, and policymakers invested in reducing recidivism. The NRRC is administered by BJA in collaboration with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The Council of State Governments Justice Center operates the NRRC in partnership with many leading nonprofit organizations and service providers.

In addition to advancing the knowledge base of the reentry field including the developing and upkeep of the [What Works in Reentry Clearinghouse](#), the NRRC provides individualized and strategic guidance to recipients of Second Chance Act funding in order to maximize their efforts to help individuals returning from incarceration succeed in their communities and to reduce recidivism in their states and communities. **The NRRC will provide technical assistance to all grantees awarded under this solicitation.** The NRRC also creates peer learning networks and regularly disseminates information to the reentry field through an electronic newsletter, monthly webinars, and webcasts on key reentry topics.

### **Resources for Civil Legal Aid**

In May 2012, new guidance was issued to inform Second Chance Act grantees that expenditures on a wide range of legal services for individuals returning from incarceration may be an appropriate use of grant funds, where such services further the Second Chance Act's purpose to "break the cycle of criminal recidivism, increase public safety and help states, local units of government, and Indian tribes, better address the growing population of criminal offenders who return to their communities."

Civil legal assistance can play a critical role in addressing barriers to successful reintegration. The guidance clarifies that an allowable use of Second Chance Act funds for reentry services includes referral to and payment of legal services related to the purpose of the grant, such as:

- Securing a driver's license;
- Expunging criminal records;
- Litigating inappropriate denials of housing or employment, and violations of the Fair Credit Reporting Act;
- Creating and/or modifying child support orders; and
- Providing other family law services that help stabilize individuals and families impacted by incarceration.

This guidance is available at [www.bja.gov/Programs/SecondChanceLegalServicesGuidance.pdf](http://www.bja.gov/Programs/SecondChanceLegalServicesGuidance.pdf).

## **Target Population**

The target population for mentoring programs supported under this solicitation must be a specific subset of the population of individuals aged 18 and older convicted as an adult and imprisoned in a state, local, or tribal prison or jail. For federally recognized Indian tribes, the individuals may be housed in a tribal, regional, county, or local jail pursuant to state or tribal law. Applicants must identify and define the specific subset of formerly incarcerated individuals, or combination of subsets, that are proposed to be the target population of their project. For example, applicants may choose to specifically target individuals who:

- Represent a specific demographic or set of demographics (age, gender, etc.);
- Are returning to a specific community or neighborhood or zip code; and/or
- Are housed in the same facility.

Applicants must justify in the proposal the reason for selecting their identified target population and provide data to support this selection. In addition, applicants must provide the total number of formerly incarcerated individuals the project expects to serve during the grant period and provide evidence demonstrating that they will have that many individuals released from prison/jail during the timeframe.

**Regardless of the specific characteristics (e.g., demographics, location to which they will be returning, whether or not they are housed in the same facility) of the selected target population, individuals who comprise this population must be moderate to high risk of re-offending, based upon the results of an empirically-validated risk assessment instrument utilized by the partnering correctional agency.**

The Second Chance Act requires applicants to respond to specific performance outcomes related to the long-term goal of stabilizing communities by reducing recidivism and reintegrating formerly incarcerated individuals into the community. Each grant recipient will be required to report on its progress toward achieving its strategic performance outcomes listed in the Performance Measures section below.

**Note:** In the Project Abstract, applicants must provide the projected number of formerly incarcerated individuals to be served. If awarded, grantee performance will be measured, in part, against this number.

## **Evidence-Based Programs or Practices**

OJP strongly emphasizes the use of data and evidence in policy making and program development in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services. OJP is committed to:

- Improving the quantity and quality of evidence OJP generates
- Integrating evidence into program, practice, and policy decisions within OJP and the field
- Improving the translation of evidence into practice

OJP considers programs and practices to be evidence-based when their effectiveness has been demonstrated by causal evidence, generally obtained through one or more outcome evaluations. Causal evidence documents a relationship between an activity or intervention (including technology) and its intended outcome, including measuring the direction and size of a change, and the extent to which a change may be attributed to the activity or intervention. Causal evidence depends on the use of scientific methods to rule out, to the extent possible, alternative explanations for the documented change. The strength of causal evidence, based on the factors

described above, will influence the degree to which OJP considers a program or practice to be evidence-based. The [OJP CrimeSolutions.gov](http://OJP.CrimeSolutions.gov) web site is one resource that applicants may use to find information about evidence-based programs in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services.

## **B. Federal Award Information**

BJA estimates that it will make up to 7 awards of up to \$1,000,000 for a 36-month project period, beginning on October 1, 2015.

All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

### **Unallowable Uses for Award Funds**

In addition to the unallowable costs identified in the [Financial Guide](#), award funds may not be used for the following:

- Prizes/rewards/entertainment/trinkets (or any type of monetary incentive)
- Client stipends
- Gift cards
- Vehicles
- Food and beverage

For questions pertaining to budget and examples of allowable and unallowable costs, see the Financial Guide at [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/financialguide/index.htm](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/financialguide/index.htm).

### **Type of Award<sup>1</sup>**

BJA expects that it will make any award from this solicitation in the form of a grant.

### **Financial Management and System of Internal Controls**

If selected for funding, the award recipient must:

(a) Establish and maintain effective internal control over the federal award that provides reasonable assurance that the non-federal entity is managing the federal award in compliance with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the federal award. These internal controls should be in compliance with guidance in “Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government” issued by the Comptroller General of the United States and the “Internal Control Integrated Framework”, issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO).

(b) Comply with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the federal awards.

(c) Evaluate and monitor the non-federal entity's compliance with statute, regulations and the terms and conditions of federal awards.

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<sup>1</sup> See generally 31 U.S.C. §§ 6301-6305 (defines and describes various forms of federal assistance relationships, including grants and cooperative agreements (a type of grant)).

(d) Take prompt action when instances of noncompliance are identified including noncompliance identified in audit findings.

(e) Take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other information the federal awarding agency or pass-through entity designates as sensitive or the non-federal entity considers sensitive consistent with applicable Federal, state and local laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality.

In order to better understand administrative requirements and cost principles, award applicants are encouraged to enroll, at no charge, in the Department of Justice Grants Financial Management Online Training available [here](#).

## **Budget Information**

### **Cost Sharing or Match Requirement**

This solicitation does not require a match. However, if a successful application proposes a voluntary match amount, and OJP approves the budget, the total match amount incorporated into the approved budget becomes mandatory and subject to audit.

### **Pre-Agreement Cost Approvals**

Under this solicitation program, applicants will not be reimbursed for pre-federal awards costs. OJP does not typically approve pre-agreement costs; an applicant must request and obtain the prior written approval of OJP for all such costs. If approved, pre-agreement costs could be paid from grant funds consistent with a grantee's approved budget, and under applicable cost standards. However, all such costs prior to award and prior to approval of the costs are incurred at the sole risk of an applicant. Generally, no applicant should incur project costs *before* submitting an application requesting federal funding for those costs. Should there be extenuating circumstances that appear to be appropriate for OJP's consideration as pre-agreement costs, the applicant should contact the point of contact listed on the title page of this announcement for details on the requirements for submitting a written request for approval. See the section on Costs Requiring Prior Approval in the [Financial Guide](#), for more information.

### **Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation; Waiver**

With respect to any award of more than \$250,000 made under this solicitation, recipients may not use federal funds to pay total cash compensation (salary plus cash bonuses) to any employee of the award recipient at a rate that exceeds 110 percent of the maximum annual salary payable to a member of the Federal Government's Senior Executive Service (SES) at an agency with a Certified SES Performance Appraisal System for that year.<sup>2</sup> The 2015 salary table for SES employees is available on the Office of Personnel Management [web site](#). Note: A recipient may compensate an employee at a greater rate, provided the amount in excess of this compensation limitation is paid with non-federal funds. (Any such additional compensation will not be considered matching funds where match requirements apply.)

The Assistant Attorney General for OJP may exercise discretion to waive, on an individual basis, the limitation on compensation rates allowable under an award. An applicant requesting a waiver should include a detailed justification in the budget narrative of the application. Unless the applicant submits a waiver request and justification with the application, the applicant should anticipate that OJP will request the applicant to adjust and resubmit the budget.

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<sup>2</sup> This limitation on use of award funds does not apply to the non-profit organizations specifically named at Appendix VIII to 2 C.F.R. part 200.

The justification should include the particular qualifications and expertise of the individual, the uniqueness of the service the individual will provide, the individual's specific knowledge of the program or project being undertaken with award funds, and a statement explaining that the individual's salary is commensurate with the regular and customary rate for an individual with his/her qualifications and expertise, and for the work to be done.

### **Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs**

OJP strongly encourages applicants that propose to use award funds for any conference-, meeting-, or training-related activity to review carefully – before submitting an application – the OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at [www.ojp.gov/financialguide/PostawardRequirements/chapter15page1.htm](http://www.ojp.gov/financialguide/PostawardRequirements/chapter15page1.htm). OJP policy and guidance (1) encourage minimization of conference, meeting, and training costs; (2) require prior written approval (which may affect project timelines) of most such costs for cooperative agreement recipients and of some such costs for grant recipients; and (3) set cost limits, including a general prohibition of all food and beverage costs.

### **Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable)**

If an applicant proposes a program or activity that would deliver services or benefits to individuals, the costs of taking reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to those services or benefits for individuals with limited English proficiency may be allowable. Reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to services or benefits may include interpretation or translation services where appropriate.

For additional information, see the "Civil Rights Compliance" section under "Solicitation Requirements" in the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

## **C. Eligibility Information**

For additional eligibility information, see Title page.

### **Cost Sharing or Match Requirement**

This solicitation does not include a match.

For additional information on cost sharing and match requirement, see Section [B. Federal Award Information](#).

### **Limit on Number of Application Submissions**

If an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, BJA will review only the most recent system-validated version submitted. For more information on system-validated versions, see [How to Apply](#).

## **D. Application and Submission Information**

### **What an Application Should Include**

Applicants should anticipate that if they fail to submit an application that contains all of the specified elements, it may negatively affect the review of their application; and, should a decision

be made to make an award, it may result in the inclusion of special conditions that preclude the recipient from accessing or using award funds pending satisfaction of the conditions.

Moreover, applicants should anticipate that applications that are determined to be nonresponsive to the scope of the solicitation, or that do not include the application elements that BJA has designated to be critical, will neither proceed to peer review nor receive further consideration. Under this solicitation, BJA has designated the following application elements as critical: Abstract, Program Narrative, Budget Detail Worksheet, Budget Narrative, and Memorandum of Agreement (MOA or MOU). Applicants may combine the Budget Narrative and the Budget Detail Worksheet in one document. However, if an applicant submits only one budget document, it must contain **both** narrative and detail information. Please review the “Note on File Names and File Types” under [How to Apply](#) to be sure applications are submitted in permitted formats

*OJP strongly recommends that applicants use appropriately descriptive file names (e.g., “Program Narrative,” “Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative,” “Timelines,” “Memoranda of Understanding,” “Resumes”) for all attachments. Also, OJP recommends that applicants include resumes in a single file.*

## 1. Information to Complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)

The SF-424 is a required standard form used as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications, applications, and related information. Grants.gov and OJP’s Grants Management System (GMS) take information from the applicant’s profile to populate the fields on this form. When selecting “type of applicant,” if the applicant is a for-profit entity, select “For-Profit Organization” or “Small Business” (as applicable).

- Applicants should ensure that all information is correct, check spelling, and pay careful attention to the legal name, award amount, address, and the points of contact.
- Applicants should select the appropriate Point of Contact (POC) and the Authorized Representative (Note: These two contacts should not be the same individual).
- The Authorized Representative must have the authority to enter the organization into a legal contract with the federal government. This person is typically an executive director, chief executive officer or other similarly designated official.
- The POC will serve as the primary point of contact and will be responsible for grant management duties such as a submission of reports. Please make sure that the name, contact information, title, and solicitation is correct.

**Intergovernmental Review:** This funding opportunity (program) **is not** subject to [Executive Order 12372](#). (In completing the SF-424, applicants are to make the appropriate selection in response to question 19 to indicate that the “Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.”)

## 2. Project Abstract

Applications should include a high-quality project abstract that summarizes the proposed project in 400 words or less. Project abstracts should be—

- Written for a general public audience
- Submitted as a separate attachment with “Project Abstract” as part of its file name
- Single-spaced, using a standard 12-point font (Times New Roman) with 1-inch margins

The abstract should provide an overall summary of the project and include the project’s

purposes, goals, and deliverables. **The abstract should include the following clearly labeled and delineated information:**

- Legal name of the grant recipient and the title of the project
- Project's purposes, goals, and deliverables
- Target population characteristics
- Projected number of participants to be serviced through the project (150 is the required minimum number of clients to be served)
- Geographic location
- Projected number of mentors to be recruited, trained and matched to mentees
- Projected number of mentees to be matched to mentors
- Whether the agency/correctional facility is a state, local, or tribal entity
- Description of both the pre- **and** post-release services to be provided
- Description of the transitional service(s) to be used to assist in the reintegration of participants into the community
- Description of the training regarding formerly incarcerated individuals and victims issues
- Confirmation that an official MOA has been obtained from the correctional agency and/or facility
- Summarization of how each individual Mandatory Requirement is met
- Summarization of how the Priority Consideration that has been met
- Plan for establishing a baseline recidivism rate
- Name of the validated risk assessment tool used

As a separate attachment, the project abstract will **not** count against the page limit for the program narrative.

**BJA requires the ability to copy and paste abstract text. BJA strongly recommends submitting the abstract in a Word document format.**

### **3. Program Narrative**

The program narrative must respond to the solicitation and the Selection Criteria (a-e) in the order given. The program narrative must be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point font (Times New Roman is preferred) with no less than 1-inch margins, and must not exceed 20 pages. Number pages "1 of 20," "2 of 20," etc.

If the program narrative fails to comply with these length-related restrictions, BJA may consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

The following sections should be included as part of the program narrative:

- a. Statement of the Problem
- b. Project Design and Implementation
- c. Capabilities and Competencies

- d. Impact/Outcomes, Evaluation, Sustainment, and Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures

To assist the Department with fulfilling its responsibilities under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), Public Law 103-62, and the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010, Public Law 111-352, applicants that receive funding under this solicitation must provide data that measure the results of their work done under this solicitation.

Post award, recipients will be required to submit quarterly performance metrics through BJA's online Performance Measurement Tool (PMT), located at [www.bjaperformancetools.org](http://www.bjaperformancetools.org). Applicants should review the complete list of Second Chance Act Comprehensive Community-Based Adult Reentry Program Utilizing Mentors Program performance measures at: [www.bjaperformancetools.org/help/scamentoringquestionnaire.pdf](http://www.bjaperformancetools.org/help/scamentoringquestionnaire.pdf).

BJA does not require applicants to submit performance measures data with their application. Performance measures are included as an alert that BJA will require successful applicants to submit specific data as part of their reporting requirements. For the application, applicants should indicate an understanding of these requirements and discuss how they will gather the required data, should they receive funding.

#### **Note on Project Evaluations**

Applicants that propose to use funds awarded through this solicitation to conduct project evaluations should be aware that certain project evaluations (such as systematic investigations designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge) may constitute "research" for purposes of applicable DOJ human subjects protection regulations. However, project evaluations that are intended only to generate internal improvements to a program or service, or are conducted only to meet OJP's performance measure data reporting requirements likely do not constitute "research." Applicants should provide sufficient information for OJP to determine whether the particular project they propose would either intentionally or unintentionally collect and/or use information in such a way that it meets the DOJ regulatory definition of research.

Research, for the purposes of human subjects protections for OJP-funded programs, is defined as, "a systematic investigation, including research development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge" 28 C.F.R. § 46.102(d). For additional information on determining whether a proposed activity would constitute research, see the decision tree to assist applicants on the "Research and the Protection of Human Subjects" section of the [OJP Funding Resource Center](http://ojp.gov/funding/Explore/SolicitationRequirements/EvidenceResearchEvaluationRequirements.htm) web page ([ojp.gov/funding/Explore/SolicitationRequirements/EvidenceResearchEvaluationRequirements.htm](http://ojp.gov/funding/Explore/SolicitationRequirements/EvidenceResearchEvaluationRequirements.htm)). Applicants whose proposals may involve a research or statistical component also should review the "Data Privacy and Confidentiality Requirements" section on that web page.

## **4. Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative**

### **a. Budget Detail Worksheet**

A sample Budget Detail Worksheet can be found at [www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/BudgetDetailWorksheet.pdf](http://www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/BudgetDetailWorksheet.pdf). Applicants that submit

their budget in a different format should include the budget categories listed in the sample budget worksheet.

Applicants should include an appropriate percent of the total grant award for research, data collection, performance measurement, and performance assessment.

Applicants must budget funding to travel to DOJ-sponsored grant meetings. Applicants should estimate the costs of travel and accommodations for teams of three to attend three meetings for three days each in Washington D.C.

For questions pertaining to budget and examples of allowable and unallowable costs, see the Financial Guide at [www.ojp.gov/financialguide/index.htm](http://www.ojp.gov/financialguide/index.htm).

Applicants must budget funding to travel to DOJ-sponsored grant meetings. Applicants should estimate the costs of travel and accommodations for teams of three to attend three meetings for three days each in Washington D.C.

**b. Budget Narrative**

The budget narrative should thoroughly and clearly describe every category of expense listed in the Budget Detail Worksheet. OJP expects proposed budgets to be complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).

Applicants should demonstrate in their budget narratives how they will maximize cost effectiveness of grant expenditures. Budget narratives should generally describe cost effectiveness in relation to potential alternatives and the goals of the project. For example, a budget narrative should detail why planned in-person meetings are necessary, or how technology and collaboration with outside organizations could be used to reduce costs, without compromising quality.

The narrative should be mathematically sound and correspond with the information and figures provided in the Budget Detail Worksheet. The narrative should explain how the applicant estimated and calculated all costs, and how they are relevant to the completion of the proposed project. The narrative may include tables for clarification purposes but need not be in a spreadsheet format. As with the Budget Detail Worksheet, the Budget Narrative should be broken down by year.

**c. Non-Competitive Procurement Contracts In Excess of Simplified Acquisition Threshold**

If an applicant proposes to make one or more non-competitive procurements of products or services, where the non-competitive procurement will exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (also known as the small purchase threshold), which is currently set at \$150,000, the application should address the considerations outlined in the [Financial Guide](#).

**d. Pre-Agreement Cost Approvals**

For information on pre-agreement costs, see Section [B. Federal Award Information](#).

**5. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)**

Indirect costs are allowed only if the applicant has a current federally approved indirect cost rate. (This requirement does not apply to units of local government.) Attach a copy of the federally approved indirect cost rate agreement to the application. Applicants that do not have an approved rate may request one through their cognizant federal agency, which will review all

documentation and approve a rate for the applicant organization, or, if the applicant's accounting system permits, costs may be allocated in the direct cost categories. For the definition of Cognizant Federal Agency, see the "Glossary of Terms" in the [Financial Guide](#). For assistance with identifying your cognizant agency, please contact the Customer Service Center at 1-800-458-0786 or at [ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov](mailto:ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov). If DOJ is the cognizant federal agency, applicants may obtain information needed to submit an indirect cost rate proposal at [www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/IndirectCosts.pdf](http://www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/IndirectCosts.pdf).

## **6. Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable)**

Tribes, tribal organizations, or third parties proposing to provide direct services or assistance to residents on tribal lands should include in their applications a resolution, a letter, affidavit, or other documentation, as appropriate, that certifies that the applicant has the legal authority from the tribe(s) to implement the proposed project on tribal lands. In those instances when an organization or consortium of tribes applies for a grant on behalf of a tribe or multiple specific tribes, the application should include appropriate legal documentation, as described above, from all tribes that would receive services or assistance under the grant. A consortium of tribes for which existing consortium bylaws allow action without support from all tribes in the consortium (i.e., without an authorizing resolution or comparable legal documentation from each tribal governing body) may submit, instead, a copy of its consortium bylaws with the application.

Applicants unable to submit an application that includes a fully-executed (i.e., signed) copy of appropriate legal documentation, as described above, consistent with the applicable tribe's governance structure, should, at a minimum, submit an unsigned, draft version of such legal documentation as part of its application (except for cases in which, with respect to a tribal consortium applicant, consortium bylaws allow action without the support of all consortium member tribes). If selected for funding, BJA will make use of and access to funds contingent on receipt of the fully-executed legal documentation.

## **7. Applicant Disclosure of High Risk Status**

Applicants are to disclose whether they are currently designated high risk by another federal grant making agency. This includes any status requiring additional oversight by the federal agency due to past programmatic or financial concerns. If an applicant is designated high risk by another federal grant making agency, you must email the following information to [OJPComplianceReporting@usdoj.gov](mailto:OJPComplianceReporting@usdoj.gov) at the time of application submission:

- The federal agency that currently designated the applicant as high risk
- Date the applicant was designated high risk
- The high risk point of contact name, phone number, and email address, from that federal agency
- Reasons for the high risk status

OJP seeks this information to ensure appropriate federal oversight of any grant award. Unlike the Excluded Parties List, this high risk information does not disqualify any organization from receiving an OJP award. However, additional grant oversight may be included, if necessary, in award documentation.

## 8. Additional Attachments

### a. Project Timeline, Position Descriptions, Letters of Support, and Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding (MOA or MOU)

Ensure that the following documents are completed and attached:

- **Project Timeline** with each project goal, related objective, activity, expected completion date, and responsible person or organization.
- **Position Descriptions** for key positions and **Resumes** for personnel in those positions, including Research Partner position(s).
- **Letters of Support** from all key partners, detailing the commitment to work with the applicant to promote the mission of the project.
- **Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding (MOA or MOU)** from all key partners, detailing the commitment to work with the applicant to promote the mission of the project (see page 6).

### b. Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications

Applicants are to disclose whether they have pending applications for federally funded grants or sub-grants (including cooperative agreements) that include requests for funding to support the same project being proposed under this solicitation and will cover the identical cost items outlined in the budget narrative and worksheet in the application under this solicitation. The disclosure should include both direct applications for federal funding (e.g., applications to federal agencies) and indirect applications for such funding (e.g., applications to State agencies that will sub-award federal funds).

OJP seeks this information to help avoid any inappropriate duplication of funding. Leveraging multiple funding sources in a complementary manner to implement comprehensive programs or projects is encouraged and is not seen as inappropriate duplication.

Applicants that have pending applications as described above are to provide the following information about pending applications submitted within the last 12 months:

- The federal or state funding agency
- The solicitation name/project name
- The point of contact information at the applicable funding agency

Federal or State Funding Agency	Solicitation Name/Project Name	Name/Phone/E-mail for Point of Contact at Funding Agency
DOJ/COPS	COPS Hiring Program	Jane Doe, 202/000-0000; jane.doe@usdoj.gov
HHS/ Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration	Drug Free Communities Mentoring Program/ North County Youth Mentoring Program	John Doe, 202/000-0000; john.doe@hhs.gov

Applicants should include the table as a separate attachment, with the file name “Disclosure of Pending Applications,” to their application. Applicants that do not have pending applications as described above are to include a statement to this effect in the separate attachment page (e.g., “[Applicant Name on SF-424] does not have pending applications

submitted within the last 12 months for federally funded grants or sub-grants (including cooperative agreements) that include requests for funding to support the same project being proposed under this solicitation and will cover the identical cost items outlined in the budget narrative and worksheet in the application under this solicitation.”).

**c. Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity**

If a proposal involves research and/or evaluation, regardless of the proposal’s other merits, in order to receive funds, the applicant must demonstrate research/evaluation independence, including appropriate safeguards to ensure research/evaluation objectivity and integrity, both in this proposal and as it may relate to the applicant’s other current or prior related projects. This documentation may be included as an attachment to the application which addresses BOTH i. and ii. below.

- i. For purposes of this solicitation, applicants must document research and evaluation independence and integrity by including, at a minimum, one of the following two items:
  - a. A specific assurance that the applicant has reviewed its proposal to identify any research integrity issues (including all principal investigators and sub-recipients) and it has concluded that the design, conduct, or reporting of research and evaluation funded by BJA grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts will not be biased by any personal or financial conflict of interest on the part of part of its staff, consultants, and/or sub-recipients responsible for the research and evaluation or on the part of the applicant organization;

OR

- b. A specific listing of actual or perceived conflicts of interest that the applicant has identified in relation to this proposal. These conflicts could be either personal (related to specific staff, consultants, and/or sub-recipients) or organizational (related to the applicant or any sub-grantee organization). Examples of potential investigator (or other personal) conflict situations may include, but are not limited to, those in which an investigator would be in a position to evaluate a spouse’s work product (actual conflict), or an investigator would be in a position to evaluate the work of a former or current colleague (potential apparent conflict). With regard to potential organizational conflicts of interest, as one example, generally an organization could not be given a grant to evaluate a project if that organization had itself provided substantial prior technical assistance to that specific project or a location implementing the project (whether funded by OJP or other sources), as the organization in such an instance would appear to be evaluating the effectiveness of its own prior work. The key is whether a reasonable person understanding all of the facts would be able to have confidence that the results of any research or evaluation project are objective and reliable. Any outside personal or financial interest that casts doubt on that objectivity and reliability of an evaluation or research product is a problem and must be disclosed.
  - ii. In addition, for purposes of this solicitation applicants must address the issue of possible mitigation of research integrity concerns by including, at a minimum, one of the following two items:
    - a. If an applicant reasonably believes that no potential personal or organizational conflicts of interest exist, then the applicant should provide a brief narrative

explanation of how and why it reached that conclusion. Applicants **MUST** also include an explanation of the specific processes and procedures that the applicant will put in place to identify and eliminate (or, at the very least, mitigate) potential personal or financial conflicts of interest on the part of its staff, consultants, and/or sub-recipients for this particular project, should that be necessary during the grant period. Documentation that may be helpful in this regard could include organizational codes of ethics/conduct or policies regarding organizational, personal, and financial conflicts of interest.

OR

- b. If the applicant has identified specific personal or organizational conflicts of interest in its proposal during this review, the applicant must propose a specific and robust mitigation plan to address conflicts noted above. At a minimum, the plan must include specific processes and procedures that the applicant will put in place to eliminate (or, at the very least, mitigate) potential personal or financial conflicts of interest on the part of its staff, consultants, and/or sub-recipients for this particular project, should that be necessary during the grant period. Documentation that may be helpful in this regard could include organizational codes of ethics/conduct or policies regarding organizational, personal, and financial conflicts of interest. There is no guarantee that the plan, if any, will be accepted as proposed.

Considerations in assessing research and evaluation independence and integrity will include, but are not be limited to, the adequacy of the applicant's efforts to identify factors that could affect the objectivity or integrity of the proposed staff and/or the organization in carrying out the research, development, or evaluation activity; and the adequacy of the applicant's existing or proposed remedies to control any such factors.

## 9. Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire

In accordance with [2 CFR 200.205](#), federal agencies must have in place a framework for evaluating the risks posed by applicants before they receive a federal award. To facilitate part of this risk evaluation, **all** applicants (other than an individual) are to download, complete, and submit this [form](#).

## 10. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

All applicants must complete this information. Applicants that expend any funds for lobbying activities are to provide the detailed information requested on the form Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL). Applicants that do not expend any funds for lobbying activities are to enter "N/A" in the text boxes for item 10 ("a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant" and "b. Individuals Performing Services").

## How to Apply

Applicants must register in, and submit applications through Grants.gov, a "one-stop storefront" to find federal funding opportunities and apply for funding. Find complete instructions on how to register and submit an application at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Applicants that experience technical difficulties during this process should call the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at **800-518-4726** or **606-545-5035**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except federal holidays. Registering with Grants.gov is a one-time process; however, **processing delays may occur, and it can take several weeks** for first-time registrants to receive confirmation and a user password. OJP encourages applicants to **register several weeks before** the application submission deadline. In addition, OJP urges applicants to submit applications 72 hours prior to the application due date to

allow time to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov, and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

BJA strongly encourages all prospective applicants to sign up for Grants.gov email [notifications](#) regarding this solicitation. If this solicitation is cancelled or modified, individuals who sign up with Grants.gov for updates will be automatically notified.

**Note on File Names and File Types:** Grants.gov only permits the use of certain specific characters in names of attachment files. Valid file names may include only the characters shown in the table below. Grants.gov is designed to reject any application that includes an attachment(s) with a file name that contains any characters not shown in the table below.

Characters	Special Characters		
Upper case (A – Z)	Parenthesis ( )	Curly braces { }	Square brackets [ ]
Lower case (a – z)	Ampersand (&)	Tilde (~)	Exclamation point (!)
Underscore ( _ )	Comma ( , )	Semicolon ( ; )	Apostrophe ( ' )
Hyphen ( - )	At sign (@)	Number sign (#)	Dollar sign (\$)
Space	Percent sign (%)	Plus sign (+)	Equal sign (=)
Period (.)	<b>When using the ampersand (&amp;) in XML, applicants must use the “&amp;amp;” format.</b>		

Grants.gov is designed to forward successfully submitted applications to OJP’s Grants Management System (GMS).

**GMS does not accept executable file types as application attachments.** These disallowed file types include, but are not limited to, the following extensions: “.com,” “.bat,” “.exe,” “.vbs,” “.cfg,” “.dat,” “.db,” “.dbf,” “.dll,” “.ini,” “.log,” “.ora,” “.sys,” and “.zip.” GMS may reject applications with files that use these extensions. It is important to allow time to change the type of file(s) if the application is rejected.

All applicants are required to complete the following steps:

OJP may not make a federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the federal awarding agency is ready to make a federal award, the federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

- 1. Acquire a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number.** In general, the Office of Management and Budget requires that all applicants (other than individuals) for federal funds include a DUNS number in their applications for a new award or a supplement to an existing award. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and differentiating entities receiving federal funds. The identifier is used for tracking purposes and to validate address and point of contact information for federal assistance applicants, recipients, and sub-recipients. The DUNS number will be used throughout the grant life cycle. Obtaining a DUNS number is a free, one-time activity. Call Dun and Bradstreet at 866–705–5711 to obtain a DUNS number or apply online at [www.dnb.com](http://www.dnb.com). A DUNS number is usually received within 1-2 business days.
- 2. Acquire registration with the System for Award Management (SAM).** SAM is the repository for standard information about federal financial assistance applicants, recipients, and sub-

recipients. OJP requires all applicants (other than individuals) for federal financial assistance to maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Applicants must be registered in SAM to successfully register in Grants.gov. Applicants must **update or renew their SAM registration annually** to maintain an active status.

Applications cannot be successfully submitted in Grants.gov until Grants.gov receives the SAM registration information. **The information transfer from SAM to Grants.gov can take up to 48 hours.** OJP recommends that the applicant register or renew registration with SAM as early as possible.

Information about SAM registration procedures can be accessed at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov).

- 3. Acquire an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and a Grants.gov username and password.** Complete the AOR profile on Grants.gov and create a username and password. The applicant organization's DUNS number must be used to complete this step. For more information about the registration process, go to [www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html).
- 4. Acquire confirmation for the AOR from the E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC).** The E-Biz POC at the applicant organization must log into Grants.gov to confirm the applicant organization's AOR. Note that an organization can have more than one AOR.
- 5. Search for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov.** Use the following identifying information when searching for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number for this solicitation is 16.812, titled "Second Chance Act Reentry Initiative", and the funding opportunity number is BJA-2015-4199.
- 6. Submit a valid application consistent with this solicitation by following the directions in Grants.gov.** Within 24–48 hours after submitting the electronic application, the applicant should receive two notifications from Grants.gov. The first will confirm the receipt of the application and the second will state whether the application has been successfully validated, or rejected due to errors, with an explanation. It is possible to first receive a message indicating that the application is received and then receive a rejection notice a few minutes or hours later. Submitting well ahead of the deadline provides time to correct the problem(s) that caused the rejection. **Important:** OJP urges applicants to submit applications **at least 72 hours prior** to the application due date to allow time to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov, and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

Click [here](#) for further details on DUNS, SAM, and Grants.gov registration steps and timeframes.

#### **Note: Duplicate Applications**

If an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, BJA will review only the most recent system-validated version submitted. See Note on File Names and File Types under [How to Apply](#).

#### **Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues**

Applicants that experience unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond their control that prevent them from submitting their application by the deadline must contact the Grants.gov [Customer Support Hotline](#) or the [SAM Help Desk](#) to report the technical issue and receive a tracking number. Then applicant must e-mail the BJA contact identified in the Contact Information

section on page 2 **within 24 hours after the application deadline** and request approval to submit their application. The e-mail must describe the technical difficulties, and include a timeline of the applicant's submission efforts, the complete grant application, the applicant's DUNS number, and any Grants.gov Help Desk or SAM tracking number(s). **Note: BJA does not automatically approve requests.** After the program office reviews the submission, and contacts the Grants.gov or SAM Help Desks to validate the reported technical issues, OJP will inform the applicant whether the request to submit a late application has been approved or denied. If OJP determines that the applicant failed to follow all required procedures, which resulted in an untimely application submission, OJP will deny the applicant's request to submit their application.

The following conditions are generally insufficient to justify late submissions:

- Failure to register in SAM or Grants.gov in sufficient time
- Failure to follow Grants.gov instructions on how to register and apply as posted on its web site
- Failure to follow each instruction in the OJP solicitation
- Technical issues with the applicant's computer or information technology environment, including firewalls

**Notifications regarding known technical problems with Grants.gov, if any, are posted at the top of the OJP funding Web page at [www.ojp.gov/funding/Explore/CurrentFundingOpportunities.htm](http://www.ojp.gov/funding/Explore/CurrentFundingOpportunities.htm).**

## **E. Application Review Information**

### **Selection Criteria**

#### **1. Statement of the Problem (15 percent)**

- Describe the problems formerly incarcerated individuals in the target population face when returning to the community.
- Provide a baseline recidivism rate for the proposed target population including documentation to support the development of the rate.
- Indicate the jurisdiction or tribal community to be served, include details on the target population and the number of individuals returning to the community, and describe the number and type of individuals in facilities.
- Summarize the basic components of the state, local, or tribal reentry initiative as currently being implemented.
- Describe the existing continuum or menu of services (pre- and post-release) available to individuals corresponding to the individual's risk and need assessment, job development, cognitive behavioral therapy, life skills (including financial training), education, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and family counseling; transitional and permanent housing links; ongoing behavior assessments; and data collection and analysis for future efforts.
- Describe how the mentoring program proposed in this project application will interface with the existing reentry process.

#### **2. Project Design and Implementation (35 percent)**

- Appendix 1 contains a list of additional resources that applicants may find helpful in

designing specific reentry interventions as part of a comprehensive program proposal.

- Describe the project implementation plan including: the process the applicant will use to identify potential mentees and mentors; the mentor training curriculum components and delivery; any continual mentor professional development opportunities and supports that will be provided, how mentors and mentees will be matched, and the intended ratio between mentors and mentees; and the intended length of the formal mentor/mentee relationship.
- Identify the number of mentors who will be recruited and provide a timeline for recruiting mentors and a list of the community partners the applicant will engage in recruiting mentors.
- Describe how the proposed project will provide pre-release services that include connecting mentors and mentees who have been referred to the program based on a validated risk/needs assessment prior to release from the correctional facility.
- Describe the post-release services, in addition to mentoring, that will be provided to assist in the reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals into the community. Applicant agencies/ organizations must demonstrate their capability to deliver or broker the provision of transitional services proposed to be offered in conjunction with the core mentoring component.
- Provide an outline of the training curriculum that will be provided to all mentors, which should include, at a minimum, the following components which are designed to build/increase/enhance mentor:
  - Knowledge of the criminal justice system as a whole, and the corrections and reentry process.
  - Knowledge about relevant governing policies and procedures of the correctional agencies/facilities referring mentees.
  - Interpersonal communication skills so as to enhance mentor effectiveness.
  - Awareness and sensitivity of victim-related issues. Applicants are encouraged to seek constructive methods of incorporating victims' perspectives into the mentoring process, in close coordination with the corrections agency(ies) and community victim services agencies.
  - Awareness of available transitional services and referral procedures to other agencies/ organizations.
  - Ethical standards and the nature of the mentor/mentee relationship; and safety.
- Demonstrate how the proposed project activities incorporate proven effective correctional practices in facilitating the successful reentry of individuals. Provide a description of the research- or evidence-based methodology to be utilized in the assessment and delivery of mentoring and other proposed transitional services. See Appendix 1 for additional information.
- Provide a description of how the project could be broadly replicated if demonstrated to be effective.
- Describe in detail how the **Priority Consideration** specified on page 8 of this solicitation has been met.

### 3. Capabilities and Competencies (25 percent)

- Describe the organizational structure, capabilities, and competencies of the applicant

nonprofit organization/agency. This should include a historical perspective on how the organization is positioned to provide mentoring and transitional services throughout the entire reentry process from pre-release to post-release community support.

- Describe the management structure and staffing of the project, identifying the agency responsible for the project and the grant coordinator. BJA strongly encourages applicants to hire a full-time coordinator with a documented history of working with formerly incarcerated individuals. The management and organizational structure described should match the staff needs necessary to accomplish the tasks outlined in the project implementation plan.
- Discuss the role of local governmental agencies, other nonprofit organizations, and community stakeholders that will collaborate on project implementation.

#### **4. Impact/Outcomes, Performance Measures, Evaluation, and Sustainment (15 percent)**

- Identify goals and objectives for program development, implementation, and outcomes.
- Describe how performance will be documented, monitored, and evaluated, and identify the impact of each strategy once implemented.
- Describe the process for assessing the project's effectiveness through the collection and reporting of the required performance metrics data (see "Performance Measures," page 15).
- Outline what data and information will be collected and describe how evaluation and collaborative partnerships will be leveraged to build long-term support and resources for the program.
- Include a discussion of the role of state or local corrections departments, community corrections agencies, and/or local jail systems in ensuring successful reentry of formerly incarcerated individuals into their communities and how mentoring/transitional/training services provided under this project will be integrated into the overall reentry strategy of the state, local, or tribal prison or jail housing the target population.
- Provide a plan for tracking participant outcomes for at least 12 months following release, and describe the process for obtaining information about recidivism from the relevant corrections and/or supervision agencies. As described in the Performance Measures section, grantees will also be obligated to provide the number of participants who are re-incarcerated within the 12-month period following their initial release.
- Describe the process for assessing the project's effectiveness (see Performance Measures, page 15), including the strategy/methodology for tracking formerly incarcerated individuals assigned to the project for as long as they are actively involved.
- Discuss how the program will be sustained after federal funding ends.

#### **5. Budget (10 percent)**

- Submit a budget that is complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities). Budget narratives should generally demonstrate how applicants will maximize cost effectiveness of grant expenditures. Budget narratives should demonstrate cost effectiveness in relation to potential alternatives and the goals of the project.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Generally speaking, a reasonable cost is a cost that if, in its nature or amount, does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the costs.

- Include an appropriate percent of the total grant award for research, data collection, performance measurement, and performance assessment.
- Applicants must budget funding to travel to DOJ-sponsored grant meetings. Applicants should estimate the costs of travel and accommodations for teams of three to attend three meetings for three days each in Washington D.C.

### **Review Process**

OJP is committed to ensuring a fair and open process for awarding grants. BJA reviews the application to make sure that the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, and achievable, as well as consistent with the solicitation.

Peer reviewers will review the applications submitted under this solicitation that meet basic minimum requirements. For purposes of assessing whether applicants have met basic minimum requirements, OJP screens applications for compliance with specified program requirements to help determine which applications should proceed to further consideration for award. Although program requirements may vary, the following are common requirements applicable to all solicitations for funding under OJP grant programs:

- Applications must be submitted by an eligible type of applicant
- Applications must request funding within programmatic funding constraints (if applicable)
- Applications must be responsive to the scope of the solicitation
- Applications must include all items designated as “critical elements”
- Applicants will be checked against the General Services Administration’s Excluded Parties List

For a list of critical elements, see “What an Application Should Include” under [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#).

BJA may use internal peer reviewers, external peer reviewers, or a combination, to assess applications meeting basic minimum requirements on technical merit using the solicitation’s selection criteria. An external peer reviewer is an expert in the subject matter of a given solicitation who is not a current DOJ employee. An internal reviewer is a current DOJ employee who is well-versed or has expertise in the subject matter of this solicitation. A peer review panel will evaluate, score, and rate applications that meet basic minimum requirements. Peer reviewers’ ratings and any resulting recommendations are advisory only, although their views are considered carefully. In addition to peer review ratings, considerations for award recommendations and decisions may include, but are not limited to, underserved populations, geographic diversity, strategic priorities, past performance under prior BJA and OJP awards, and available funding.

OJP reviews applications for potential discretionary awards to evaluate the risks posed by applicants before they receive an award. This review may include but is not limited to the following:

1. Financial stability and fiscal integrity
2. Quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in the Financial Guide
3. History of performance
4. Reports and findings from audits

5. The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities
6. Proposed costs to determine if the Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative accurately explain project costs, and whether those costs are reasonable, necessary, and allowable under applicable federal cost principles and agency regulations

Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, all final award decisions will be made by the Assistant Attorney General, who may consider factors including, but not limited to, peer review ratings, underserved populations, geographic diversity, strategic priorities, past performance under prior BJA and OJP awards, and available funding when making awards.

## F. Federal Award Administration Information

### Federal Award Notices

OJP award notification will be sent from GMS. Recipients will be required to log in; accept any outstanding assurances and certifications on the award; designate a financial point of contact; and review, sign, and accept the award. The award acceptance process involves physical signature of the award document by the authorized representative and the scanning of the fully-executed award document to OJP.

### Administrative, National Policy, and other Legal Requirements

If selected for funding, in addition to implementing the funded project consistent with the agency-approved project proposal and budget, the recipient must comply with award terms and conditions, and other legal requirements, including but not limited to OMB, DOJ or other federal regulations which will be included in the award, incorporated into the award by reference, or are otherwise applicable to the award. OJP strongly encourages prospective applicants to review the information pertaining to these requirements **prior** to submitting an application. To assist applicants and recipients in accessing and reviewing this information, OJP has placed pertinent information on its [Solicitation Requirements](#) page of the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

Please note in particular the following two forms, which applicants must accept in GMS prior to the receipt of any award funds, as each details legal requirements with which applicants must provide specific assurances and certifications of compliance. Applicants may view these forms in the Apply section of the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#) and are strongly encouraged to review and consider them carefully prior to making an application for OJP grant funds.

- [Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements](#)
- [Standard Assurances](#)

Upon grant approval, OJP electronically transmits (via GMS) the award document to the prospective award recipient. In addition to other award information, the award document contains award terms and conditions that specify national policy requirements<sup>4</sup> with which recipients of federal funding must comply; uniform administrative requirements, cost principles, and audit

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<sup>4</sup> See generally 2 C.F.R. 200.300 (provides a general description of national policy requirements typically applicable to recipients of federal awards, including the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA)).

requirements; and program-specific terms and conditions required based on applicable program (statutory) authority or requirements set forth in OJP solicitations and program announcements, and other requirements which may be attached to appropriated funding. For example, certain efforts may call for special requirements, terms, or conditions relating to intellectual property, data/information-sharing or -access, or information security; or audit requirements, expenditures and milestones, or publications and/or press releases. OJP also may place additional terms and conditions on an award based on its risk assessment of the applicant, or for other reasons it determines necessary to fulfill the goals and objectives of the program.

Prospective applicants may access and review the text of mandatory conditions OJP includes in all OJP awards, as well as the text of certain other conditions, such as administrative conditions, via [Mandatory Award Terms and Conditions](#) page of the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

### **General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements**

Recipients must submit quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, final financial and progress reports, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent.

Special Reporting requirements may be required by OJP depending on the statutory, legislative or administrative obligations of the recipient or the program.

## **G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)**

For additional Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s), see the Title page.

For additional contact information for Grants.gov, see the Title page. **Error! Reference source not found.**

## **H. Other Information**

### **Provide Feedback to OJP**

To assist OJP in improving its application and award processes, we encourage applicants to provide feedback on this solicitation, the application submission process, and/or the application review/peer review process. Provide feedback to [OJPSolicitationFeedback@usdoj.gov](mailto:OJPSolicitationFeedback@usdoj.gov).

**IMPORTANT:** This e-mail is for feedback and suggestions only. Replies are **not** sent from this mailbox. If you have specific questions on any program or technical aspect of the solicitation, **you must** directly contact the appropriate number or e-mail listed on the front of this solicitation document. These contacts are provided to help ensure that you can directly reach an individual who can address your specific questions in a timely manner.

If you are interested in being a reviewer for other OJP grant applications, please e-mail your resume to [ojppeerreview@lmbps.com](mailto:ojppeerreview@lmbps.com). The OJP Solicitation Feedback email account will not forward your resume. **Note:** Neither you nor anyone else from your organization can be a peer reviewer in a competition in which you or your organization have submitted an application.

**Application Checklist**  
**FY 2015 Second Chance Act Comprehensive Community-Based Adult Reentry Program**  
**Utilizing Mentors**

This application checklist has been created to assist in developing an application. Please note that the items indicated with an asterisk (\*) below have been designated as the basic minimum requirements for both categories of applications. Applications that do not include these elements shall neither proceed to peer review nor receive further consideration by BJA.

**What an Applicant Should Do:**

*Prior to Registering in Grants.gov:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire a DUNS Number (see page 21)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire or renew registration with SAM (see page 21)

*To Register with Grants.gov:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password (see page 22)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC (see page 22)

*To Find Funding Opportunity:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Search for the Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov (see page 22)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Download Funding Opportunity and Application Package (see page 22)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sign up for Grants.gov email [notifications](#) (optional) (see page 21)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#)

*After application submission, receive Grants.gov email notifications that:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ (1) application has been received,
- \_\_\_\_\_ (2) application has either been successfully validated or rejected with errors (see page 22)

*If no Grants.gov receipt, and validation or error notifications are received:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ contact the NCJRS Response Center regarding experiencing technical difficulties (see page 22)

**General Requirements:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Review the [Solicitation Requirements](#) in the OJP Funding Resource Center.

**Scope Requirement:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ The federal amount requested is within the allowable limit(s) of \$1,000,000

**Eligibility Requirement:** Applicants are limited to nonprofit organizations (including tribal nonprofit organizations) with a documented history of providing comprehensive, evidence-based reentry services, and federally-recognized Indian tribes.

**What an Application Should Include:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) (see page 13)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Project Abstract (see page 13)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Program Narrative (see page 14)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Budget Detail Worksheet (see page 15)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Budget Narrative (see page 16)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Employee Compensation Waiver request and justification (if applicable)

- (see page 11)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at [ojp.gov/financialguide/PostawardRequirements/chapter15page1.htm](http://ojp.gov/financialguide/PostawardRequirements/chapter15page1.htm) (see page 12)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) (see page 20)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see page 16)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) (see page 17)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Disclosure of High Risk Status (see page 17)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Attachments
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Project Timeline (see page 18)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Position Descriptions (see page 18)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Letters of Support (see page 18)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ \*Memorandum of Agreement or Understanding (see page 18)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications (see page 18)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity (see page 19)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (if applicable) (see page 20)

## APPENDIX 1

### Second Chance Act Grantees: What You Need to Know to Ensure Your Program Is Built on Principles of Effective Practice

#### Fundamental Principles of Evidence-Based Correctional Practice

The primary objective of the Second Chance Act is to reduce recidivism. Based upon reliable research findings, there are six fundamental principles of evidence-based correctional practice that are widely accepted as strategies to reduce future criminal behavior.

- 1) **Objectively Assess Criminogenic Risks and Needs:** Maintain a comprehensive system to establish risk screening and needs assessment. The actuarial assessment of offenders—in a reliable and valid manner—is essential for the effective supervision and treatment of people returning from prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities (Andrews and Bonta, 2010). The levels of supervision and services for individual offenders must be matched to individual risk and need.
- 2) **Enhance Intrinsic Motivation:** Staff must be able to relate to offenders in interpersonally sensitive and constructive ways in order to enhance intrinsic motivation in offenders. Research findings suggest that motivational interviewing or other cognitive-behavioral communication techniques can effectively enhance the offender's desire to initiate and maintain behavior changes (Miller and Rollnick, 2002; Miller and Mount, 2001).
- 3) **Target Higher-Risk Offenders:** Prioritize primary supervision and treatment resources for offenders who are at higher risk to re-offend. Consistent findings from a wide variety of recidivism studies show that supervision and treatment resources focused on lower-risk offenders produce little if any positive effect on the rates of subsequent criminal behavior (McGuire, 2001, 2002) and can at times increase the risk level of low-risk offenders. Maximum benefit is gained only when intervention resources are directed to moderate- and high-risk offenders.
- 4) **Address Offenders' Greatest Criminogenic Needs.** The greatest emphasis must be placed on addressing those needs which are most closely associated with criminal behavior. When the factors that lead the offender to commit crimes are effectively addressed, that person is less likely to commit crime (Elliot, 2001).
- 5) **Use Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions:** These strategies are focused on changing the offender's thinking patterns in order to change future behavior. The most effective interventions provide opportunities for participants to practice new behavior patterns and skills with feedback from program staff. (Andrews and Bonta, 2010)
- 6) **Determine Dosage and Intensity of Services:** Higher-risk offenders require significantly more structure and services than lower-risk offenders. High-risk offenders should receive a minimum of 300 hours of cognitive-based interventions, moderate-risk offenders should receive a minimum of 200 hours, and low-risk offenders should receive a minimum of 100 hours of cognitive-based interventions. Additionally, during the initial three to nine months post-release, 40%–70% of high-risk offenders' free time needs to be occupied with delineated routine and

appropriate services (Bourgon and Armstrong, 2006; Latessa, 2004; Gendreau and Goggin, 1995).

### **Important Considerations from the Research:**

- Correctional staff members need to work with offenders to ensure they have the tools needed for success in the community.
- Correctional and community staff members must understand the importance of working with ***moderate- and high-risk*** offenders rather than low-risk offenders in order to demonstrate that their program can decrease recidivism.
- The most effective organizational-change strategies involve supervision and coaching of staff to reinforce the expected way of doing business—training alone is not sufficient.

### **Questions to Ask as You Launch Your Program:**

- Who are you targeting for your program?
- Do the risk and needs of your target population match the services and supports you have funded through your Second Chance grant, or you are proposing to fund through your Second Chance grant application?
- When and how are the risks and needs of your target population assessed?
- Following the risk/need assessment, are the services, supervision, and interventions recommendations developed with the offender?
- Are these interventions based upon a systematic assessment of individual levels of risk and criminogenic needs?
- How are services coordinated for your target population as they move from the institutional phase, to the reentry phase, to the community phase?
- How is programming that is begun in prison linked to the programming that the offender receives in the community?
- How are supervision and treatment resources prioritized for moderate and high risk offenders?
- Are your interventions cognitive-behavioral based?
- Have staff members been trained to appropriately use cognitive-behavioral interventions and strategies?
- What data is collected about offenders reentering communities?
- Do you collect case-level data on which of your program participants have (1) housing, (2) employment, (3) substance abuse treatment [if necessary], (4) mental health treatment [if necessary], and (5) social support?

## References:

Andrews, D.A., and J. Bonta (2010). *The psychology of criminal conduct, fifth edition*. New Providence, NJ: Matthew Bender & Company, Inc.

Bourgon, G., and B. Armstrong (2006). Transferring the Principles of Effective Treatment into a "Real World" Setting. *Criminal Justice*, 32(1), 3-25.

Elliott, D. (2001). Youth violence: A report of the Surgeon General.

Gendreau, P. and C. Goggin (1995). Principles of effective correctional programming with offenders. Center for Criminal Justice Studies and Department of Psychology, University of New Brunswick, New Brunswick.

Latessa, E.J. (2004). The challenge of change: Correctional programs and evidence based practices. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 3(4), 547-560.

McGuire, J. (2002). Evidence-based programming today. Paper presented International Community Corrections Association Conference, Boston, MA, November 2002.

McGuire, J. (2001). What works in correctional intervention? Evidence and practical implications. Pp. 25-43 in *Offender rehabilitation in practice: Implementing and evaluating effective programs*, edited by D.F. Gary Bernfeld, Alan Leschied. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, LTD.

Miller, W. and K.A. Mount (2001). "A small study of training in Motivational Interviewing: Does one workshop change clinician and client behavior?" Albuquerque, NM.

Miller, W. and S. Rollnick (2002). *Motivational Interviewing: Preparing people for change*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.