

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Good afternoon, everybody, and welcome to today's webinar, National Community Courts Site-Based and Training and Technical Assistance Initiative FY 2020 Competitive Grant Announcement, hosted by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. At this time, I'm going to turn it over to today's presenter.

ALYSE ALTENBURG: Great. Thank you very much. So good afternoon, everyone. My name is Alyse Altenburg, and I'm the Policy Advisor managing the National Community Courts 2020 solicitation. So we are very happy to have you all here today and I look forward to your questions at the end of the presentation. Next slide. So here, just a brief agenda of what we are going to cover on today's presentation. So, we're going to have an overview of the program, we're going to review application material, and finally we'll have a question and answer session. Next slide. Here we have the solicitation overview. So the National Community Courts Site-Based and Training and Technical Assistance Initiative supports efforts by state, local, and federally recognized Indian tribal governments to establish and enhance community courts in their jurisdiction. This community courts solicitation serves to enhance public safety by addressing underlying issues that lead to criminal behavior, including substance abuse and behavioral health issues. By engaging communities in planning and operational processes, they provide justice system officials more effective options in dealing with lower-level offenses, enhance public trust in the conduct of justice, and lastly, help to reduce unnecessary incarceration. Next slide.

So for the solicitation, BJA funds in this program may not be used to serve persons who are violent offenders unless the offender is a veteran. So this prohibition applies to activities that are funded by the BJA grant award, including match funds contributed by the grantees. Grantees who use both BJA Community Court funds and other funds in a program must be able to track these expenses to ensure separation of funds. They also must maintain documentation that demonstrates the separation of BJA-funded expenses and services from non-BJA funds. Additionally, applicants can serve veterans charged with a violent or nonviolent offense under this program. You all should clearly identify in your project abstract whether you are using these funds to primarily serve a veteran population as a track of a community court. Next slide.

All Category 1 applicants under this solicitation need to demonstrate how the proposed community court conforms to the key community court principles. For more information on these key principles, please follow the link below. In addition, Category 1 applicants must demonstrate that the proposed community court conforms with statutory requirements, continuing judicial supervision over offenders with substance abuse problems, coordination with the appropriate state or local prosecutor, and lastly, the integrated administration of other sanctions and services. Next slide. So here we have an overview of this year's solicitation. So to briefly cover Category 1 – Category 1 of the National Community Courts Site-Based and Training and Technical Assistance Initiative includes implementation or enhancement grants. Implementation grants are available to eligible jurisdictions that have completed a substantial amount of planning and are ready to establish a community court. Enhancement grants are available to eligible jurisdictions with an existing community court that has been fully operational for at least one year as of September 30, 2020. So below, we have several objectives and deliverables outlined as

related to this Category 1 Initiative. I'm not going to go over every single objective and deliverable, but I certainly want to touch on a few. One objective is to establish or enhance court-based intervention programs to prioritize and expedite the provision of treatment and recovery services to individuals who are frequent users of justice, health, and other services who commit low-level misdemeanor offenses. So that's a very important objective we have at our community court. Additionally, to build and maximize the capacity of jurisdictions to ensure that all participants are identified, assessed, and referred to services, and lastly, enhance provision of treatment and recovery support services, including transitional housing assistance to reduce recidivism and also reduce homelessness. Next slide.

So here we have Category 2 for the 2020 solicitation related to training and technical assistance. I'm going to briefly touch upon the intention of this category, which is the National Community Court Training and Technical Assistance. The TTA Program is designed to help judges, court personnel, and other partners to plan, implement, sustain, enhance, and evaluate problem-solving justice initiatives that link judicially supervised offenders to drug treatment, alternative sanctions, and other services in order to reduce drug use, crime, and incarceration. So applicants in this category should be capable of providing TTA in all settings, including rural settings, where assistance building capacity may be needed. Next slide.

So this is a really important slide related to the eligibility of applicants for the solicitation. For Category 1, for Implementation and Enhancement Eligibility, the following entities are eligible to apply: states, territories, state and local courts, counties, units of local government, and lastly, federally recognized Indian tribal governments as determined by the Secretary of the Interior. And as a subnote here, all recipients and subrecipients, including any for-profit organization, must forgo any profit or management fee. Next slide. So for the training and technical assistance, essentially, all sites will have access to a national training and technical assistance provider that will provide support to newly awarded sites. So this TTA provider will provide targeted technical assistance to the Category 1 recipients. They will help to develop individualized TTA plans for each grantee based upon their grant-funded project, state of readiness, and other grantee-specific considerations. They will also assist grantees in disseminating information and updates about their projects with their communities throughout the life of their project. And lastly, this assistance will be provided via regional training, ongoing direct Training and Technical Assistance, online orientations, tools, promising practices, and other sample motions, for example. Next slide.

So, the expected deliverables. We would like to describe the process the applicant will use to measure project performance. So this should include measures for adhering to project timelines, meeting deliverable schedules, obtaining input from customers, and seeking feedback. Additionally, we would like this deliverable to include identification of what data information will be collected. For example, who will be responsible for collecting this data, reporting this data, and also for performing measurement, how the data will be stored, any personally identifiable information, how it will be protected, and how this information will be used to guide the program. So as a note here, we would like you all to check Appendix B

of the solicitation for more information on these performance measures. Next slide. So there are several requirements for performance measures. One, applicants are not required to submit performance data with their application. Performance measures information is included as an alert that successful applicants will be required to submit performance data as part of the reporting requirements under their awards. And lastly, the application should demonstrate the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirements for this grant, and detail how the applicant will gather the required data should it receive funding. Next slide.

So here, we have the link for the National Community Courts Site-Based and Training and Technical Assistance Initiative. So I'll give you a few minutes if you want to take a screenshot or copy down that link. You may also find this under the BJA website if you search for the National Community Courts Program. You will find this link also under funding on the right-hand side of the web screen. And you'll be able to find the solicitation there as well.

So here we have some tips for applying. Applicants must register in and submit applications through Grants.gov. Registering is a one-time process, but it can take several weeks if you are a first-time registrant. So we recommend that you give yourself plenty of time to complete that registration. Additionally, applicants must comply with all applicable System for Award Management and unique entity identifier requirements. And we also encourage all applicants to submit at least 72 hours prior to the application due date to allow for any issues that may arise. Again, this application is due May 1, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. So moving on for more tips for applying, the application must be submitted by an eligible type of applicant. The application must request funding within programmatic funding constraints, if this is applicable. The application must be responsive to the scope of the solicitation and it must include all elements that are designated as critical. For a list of the critical elements of the solicitation, for example, what an application should include, you may find this under Section D, Application and Submission Information, on page six of the solicitation. Next slide. Okay. So we really went through a lot of information there. Now we are at our question and answer session. So, I'm going to turn it back to my colleague as we manage any questions that you may have and work to answer those questions. Thank you very much for your time.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Thank you, Alyse. We don't have any questions at the moment in the queue. So I'm going to move forward to the other slides, which are general information and we'll go over these while we wait for some questions to come through. The slides that you're looking at right now have information about the National Criminal Justice Reference Service and their response center. You may reach out to them after this webinar if you have any questions about the application. And they will work with Alyse to get an answer to you. They're available at 800-851-3420 or you can email them at grants@ncjrs.gov. They also have a web chat feature and the URL is listed here on the slide. They are open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. And they're open 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on the application due date. However, as mentioned previously, it is highly recommended that you submit your applications 72 hours in advance. If you'd like to stay up to date on funding opportunities available from the Bureau of Justice Assistance or any

of the agencies within the Office of Justice Programs, you can sign up to receive NCJRS's JustInfo for their funding newsletter. The funding newsletter comes out every Friday and it will announce new funding opportunities, webinars that were going to be held on these opportunities, as well as alert you when that information has been posted to their respective websites. If you have any technical problems submitting your application, you can reach out to the grants.gov customer service hotline. They are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays. You can call them at 800-518-4726 or 606-545-5035. They also have an email and are available via support@grants.gov.

This slide is information about how you can stay in touch with the Bureau of Justice Assistance. They do have email newsletters that go out. And there's a new and easy way to subscribe to them. You can text OJP, include your email address, and send it to 468-311. Please note that message and data rates may apply. You can also follow BJA on social media. They have a presence on Facebook and Twitter, and there is an RSS feed available. You can also visit the BJA website, which is another way that you can subscribe to their email. In addition, BJA taped two webinars this past October and November. One was about opportunities available from BJA and that is under "Funding Opportunities for Your Community in 2020 and Overview of What's Ahead," as well as a webinar on "The Federal Funding Process, The First Steps to Applying and How to Prepare and Other Considerations." Both of those webinars, the transcripts and the PowerPoints, can be found on the BJA website at <https://www.bja.gov/funding/webinars.html>. And lastly, here is a slide of resources. Some of them might have been mentioned during the webinar. And they will be useful to you as you move through the process. Particular ones to note are the DOJ Grants Financial Guide, the Financial Management Application, as well as the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide. So at this time, I am going to start addressing the questions that we have received. "Due to the ongoing issues with the Coronavirus, we are finding it difficult to have meetings with stakeholders and others to discuss this grant. Is there or are there any plans to potentially extend the due date for those impacted by the virus?"

ALYSE ALTENBURG: Great. So thank you for that question and that's a very good question. And we hope that everyone is certainly staying safe during the Coronavirus. So as of now, I do not believe there are any plans to extend the due date. Again, the due date is May 1, 2020. But I would encourage you all, if you are experiencing substantial difficulties in contacting NCJRS, which is our resource center, for any questions or issues you may have when applying for any type of DOJ grant, please do tell them about any issues or problems you are having related to the Coronavirus. You may find their contact information on page two of the solicitation. And we will certainly keep all of those issues and questions as they arise in mind if we do choose to extend the due date. But again, there is no plan as of now to extend the due date past May 1.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: All right. That is the only question we have at this time. I can give everybody another minute or two to see if you have anything. It's a great opportunity to hear from Alyse. So if you have any burning questions, please consider asking them. Otherwise, after the webinar, as she mentioned, you can contact NCJRS.

ALYSE ALTENBURG: I also did want to mention that the National Community Court solicitation was updated on March 12, so that was pretty recently. And the solicitation has been changed to reflect the correct amount for each category. So, please do note that change in the solicitation. And again, feel free to contact NCJRS if you're unable to see those changes that are in a newly updated solicitation with a cover letter indicating those changes. So, I just want to bring that to everyone's attention as well.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: All right. I think something just came through. "Can the implementation of a restorative justice model for dependency courts be eligible?"

ALYSE ALTENBURG: All right. Thank you for that question. So at this time, the only information I can provide is that you would please follow the terms outlined within the solicitation. So, I would ask that you follow the terms very closely. You may certainly be creative in your thinking for how you are going to address these issues and perhaps create a community court. But, again, I would urge you to follow the guidelines as outlined in the solicitation.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Under Category 2, must a nonprofit be associated with a tribal government or is any nonprofit eligible that meets the solicitation's objectives?"

ALYSE ALTENBURG: Okay. So let me just take a look again under our eligibility to ensure that I'm answering your question correctly. So, yeah, this would be for Category 2. I would say that it does not have to necessarily be associated with a tribal government so it would certainly be any type of nonprofit entity if you are applying for that training and technical assistance provision under Category 2.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "What is the definition of community courts?"

ALYSE ALTENBURG: Okay. So for this definition, again, I would ask that you all please refer to the information provided in the solicitation. So, I can tell you that under this program, a community court helps to enhance public safety by addressing underlying issues that lead to criminal behavior, including substance abuse and behavioral health issues. Additionally, these community courts engage communities in planning and operational processes that provide justice system officials with more effective options in dealing with lower-level offenses. They also help to enhance public trust in the conduct of justice and they also help to reduce unnecessary incarceration. So, that information and definition that I read to you all is listed on page four of the updated solicitation under Program Specific Information.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: "Where will we be able to find the slides? We have several of our workers out. I would like to forward the information." So these slides will be posted to the BJA website. The slides can be posted within a matter of probably another day or so. So you can check back on the BJA website for that information. And while we're waiting for another question to come in, again, I just put up the slide for the National Criminal Justice Reference Service and their information on how to reach them if you need that. And we can give you another minute to see if you have any other questions that come to

mind. And I just wanted to remind you, too, the information about NCJRS is also found on page one of the solicitation, as well as the information for grants.gov. So you do have access to that information in the solicitation. "What are considered low-level offenders?"

ALYSE ALTENBURG: So again, I would ask you all to refer to the guidelines when asking these types of questions. But low-level offenders are certainly persons who have not been convicted of violent offenses. So, again, I would ask you just to be sure that you are receiving the most specific information to look under 34 U.S.C. 10613. And those will help to answer that question. Additionally, this does not apply in the community courts but would include a veteran population.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: And right now, that looks like the last question, Alyse. I don't know if you want to allow another minute to see if anything else comes through.

ALYSE ALTENBURG: Yeah. I'm happy to stay on the line or if we think that's the end of the questions that we have here. I think another question just came in.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Yes. "Can you share additional information on the economic opportunity areas and how that is defined?"

ALYSE ALTENBURG: So I'm not quite sure what you are referring to for the economic opportunity areas. Can you clarify your question if possible?

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: And we did get something in chat. I'm not exactly sure what the question is. I was able to hear the information. However, I had to wait for the IT team to give me access to the WebEx. So if you could just let me know what the question was or you're just telling us that you were having a hard time, are you asking for some additional information? Or do you need me to move to a particular slide? What document do you want me to pull up? Here's the link to the solicitation if that's what you were asking for. You can also find these links in the chat box. The host has been adding them there so you'll be able to copy and paste those into a Word file for your use. "Looking at item 12, A, B, and C, I would like definitions for those categories."

ALYSE ALTENBURG: So item 12, I'm assuming at the back of the solicitation, let's take a look. They're going to have to be a little more specific. If they could give me the page number they're looking at in the solicitation. I'm not quite sure what item they're referring to.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: We'll wait for a second. If you could just please share the page number to help us find the information that you're looking for. And while we're waiting on that, does anybody else have any questions that they would like to ask at this time? It's on page 14. Looking at the high-poverty areas and how that is defined.

ALYSE ALTENBURG: Okay. Let's see.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Correction. That's page 13.

ALYSE ALTENBURG: All right. So I believe for documentation of high-poverty areas, this would be related to census documentation. So I believe you'd be able to find this information if this area is designated as high poverty or not as related to the Census. And, again, if you are having trouble finding that information or if the information is unable to show that type of documentation, you may always contact NCJRS to see if there's other ways they would like you to document those high-poverty areas.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: And they are also asking how high-opportunity areas are defined.

ALYSE ALTENBURG: High-opportunity? If they're referring to the opportunity zone, those as well are designated by the Census and they should be documented as an opportunity zone.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Thank you, Alyse. At this time, we have finished with the questions. I will give it another couple seconds to see if anybody else has anything. We still have quite a few people on the line that originally called in. And it looks like we got something else in here. I will give you another couple of seconds to see if there's any other questions you want answered. Otherwise, we will end the webinar. And again, you will be notified once BJA has posted this information. We also do suggest that you sign up to receive the funding newsletter from NCJRS that comes out every Friday and that would be very helpful in keeping up to date when things are released as well as posted to the BJA website. Somebody's asking, "If we have further questions that are not addressed in our research at the website, who do we call?" Again, if you have questions regarding the solicitation in particular, you can contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service. And they will work with Alyse to address any questions about the solicitation, not about your research or how you're going to design your proposal or anything of that nature. Their information for NCJRS is showing right now on the slide. You can call them at 800-851-3420. You may also email them at grants@ncjrs.gov. Again, as a reminder, they are open 10 to 6, Monday through Friday, and 10 to 8 on the day the solicitation closes. "In what capacity could a nonprofit apply under Category 1?"

ALYSE ALTENBURG: Thank you. So again, I would refer you to the eligibility section of the solicitation – those who are eligible are states, territories, state and local courts, counties, units of local government, and additionally, federally recognized tribal governments. So that being said, you all would have to really think through if a nonprofit fits this eligibility category and if you are then able to apply.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: There are no other questions in the queue at this time. I'll give it another couple of seconds. All right. I'm not seeing any other questions coming through at this time. So with that, I think we can end this webinar. So on behalf of Alyse and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, I would like to thank you very much for joining our webinar. We hope you found it helpful and look forward to receiving your applications. Have a great day.