

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Good afternoon everybody and welcome to today's webinar "Emmett Till Cold Case Investigation and Training and Technical Assistance Program" hosted by the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

At this time, I'd like to introduce today's presenters: Elizabeth Griffith, Associate Deputy Director with the Bureau of Justice Assistance; Barbara Kay Bosserman, Deputy Chief of the Cold Case Unit and Senior Legal Counsel with the U.S. Department of Justice; LaShunda Williams, Supervisory Special Agent Civil Rights Division within the Bureau of—in the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and Gerri Ratliff, Acting Director for Community Relations Service within the Department of Justice.

At this time I'm going to turn the presentation over to Betsi Griffith.

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH: Good afternoon and thank you. I'm Betsi Griffith from the Bureau of Justice Assistance. I just want to lay out here the agenda for today. We're going to spend a little bit of time talking about the agency who's offering this opportunity, the Bureau of Justice Assistance where I work, talk a little bit about the particular opportunity including eligibility and grant-related information, and some background on how we review our applications to assist you in applying.

This project has—is really building on the foundation of some tremendous work that's been happening across the Department over the last decade so I really want to turn it over to subject matter expertise that can kind of give you that context and are available to work with sites that receive funding or generally have an interest in this work so I wanted you all to be aware of that, and then we'll close with a few minutes around, you know, just logistics of both things that we've learned from experience you want to keep an eye out for as you apply as well as to talk briefly about our new Grants Management System, and answer question and—answer any questions you have. So next slide, thank you.

Just briefly, you all may be familiar with the Office of Justice Programs where the Bureau of Justice Assistance or BJA is housed. These are the organizations along with the Office on Violence Against Women and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services that make grants, that also support training and technical assistance to the field, and collect data, conduct research, and really kind of try and bring a perspective to the adult and juvenile justice system and the needs of victims. Next slide.

In particular, BJA focuses on the adult criminal justice system, and we're really trying, because this is a more targeted opportunity in terms of the scope of the work and eligibility, to try and reach a broad audience, and so really for BJA you might be

somebody who's worked with us in other arenas on cold case investigations through our forensic and sexual assault kit work. We also have a portfolio around tribal justice issues and are very excited about the opportunities to support important issues, including missing and murdered indigenous people, and hope that these resources might support some of the cold case murder investigations, as well as folks who work with us more generally around violent crime work, or communities who may be engaged around civil rights violations and histories and really how that crosscuts with our criminal justice work. Next slide.

So what we're really focusing on with this program that started last year is a project that really helps us advance a number of issues both around violent crime and fairness in our system, and bringing justice for cases that have been long standing without resolution, and we do that really through the support of the eligible organizations in this program, law enforcement and prosecutors who we know can build those relationships and support looking to bring justice in these older cases and also look forward in that work, as well as to work across with others that have interests in these communities that have been impacted and the families who have been impacted by these cold case murders. And we also hope through these strategies to really prevent that in the future. Next slide.

Our goals really here are specifically to focus on cold case investigations that resulted in a homicide, that occurred prior to December 31st, 1979, where there is some civil rights nexus where we believe race may be implicated. As part of this work, we recognize that this requires—these are older cases, these—in some cases, there may not have been an investigation so they may require, you know, extra expertise and support and we really want to offer a broad-based opportunity to help jurisdictions figure out what they need and how we can help you all to be successful, and again, very pleased that my colleagues across the Department are here to support this work and to find creative ways to bring justice for these families, and for the communities that were really impacted by these crimes.

We also hope through this to be able to build more partnerships so that as folks are investigating and learning this history and documenting it which, again, we recognize sometimes requires creative partnerships, perhaps with the local historical society or other organizations that are focused on investigating these cases to really connect with and build relationships with local prosecutors and law enforcement agencies that have that common interest, and also to think about as we're doing those cases do in a way that is respectful, doesn't bring further harm or trauma to the family members and stakeholders that have been impacted and really building that support to be strategic and thoughtful about that work. Next slide.

It—the solicitation was released in January and happily we do have a couple more months until May 11th for you all to put your applications together, but before I move on, let me just emphasize again as I mentioned at the beginning, we have a solicitation, I'm sorry we have a new Grants Management System which we call JustGrants. We're kind of going through our first year of the application process and so what we know that there will be some learning, there may be some, you know, questions that come up or technical challenges folks have. So I really encourage you if you're thinking about applying for this particularly if you haven't become familiar with JustGrants, to pay attention to some of the materials later on about different webinars that we've recorded that kind of give you some tips about how to work in the new system but also to recognize that we now have a two-part system. So you have to do an initial registration and the, you know, overall federal government Grants.gov system including your 424, and then once you're registered at least two weeks before this May 11th date, you can then finish your application in JustGrants prior to the deadline. Next slide.

So this year we have two categories of funding, we have a Category One that is focused on project implementation in state, local, and tribal settings that could also be implemented regionally. In this case the project really is focused on building a local or regional projects, could be statewide and focused that allows the partners to work together to investigate these cases, to coordinate and review the case files, and to be able to pursue prosecutions, if appropriate, or bring other resolution in these cases as well as to support and work with the family members and stakeholders that have been impacted. Again, we recognize a certain amount of—that the way of resolving these cases, we're trying to be flexible and broad in making sure that this work really brings that justice and resolution to those families who have been impacted and to acknowledge what occurred although in some cases we may not have the ability to formally pursue a prosecution.

In other cases we may have a set of cases where it is appropriate and we really encourage all of those folks to consider and bring those applications into us. In this category, we will be making grant awards, and then in Category Two we are also seeking a national training and technical assistance provider who can work with us in partnership with our federal partners to really support both the successful implementation of projects that we're funding but also more generally to offer training and education to others who may be working on these issues in the field. And again, we're looking for expertise about investigation of the cases, prosecution of the cases, and also thinking about the family support and support for other stakeholders who may be impacted by the death of these victims. So generally we're looking for someone who is—has the ability to be able to provide a range of sort of strategies to address those

needs and also brings subject matter expertise to be able to do the work, and this particular award as is the case with the majority of our TTA awards will be made as a cooperative agreement where there will be significantly more federal involvement and a really a collaborative relationship with BJA and its partners in the implementation of the work. Next slide.

So in Category One, by statute, eligible organizations are state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies as well as prosecutors' offices. This could, for example, the state level, the State Office of the Attorney General, and for tribal law enforcement, it is federally recognized tribal governments that are eligible to apply consistent with the requirements in the solicitation which goes into more detail. We would note again given sort of the need to potentially bring other expertise to the table to work these cases, we certainly encourage and allow partnerships with other agencies and potentially, you know, we'll consider subawards or subcontracts to be able to support that work. As we mentioned, you know, sometimes expertise sits outside of criminal justice in these cases, and so we want to make sure that applicants have the flexibility to be able to support those needs.

For Category Two which is our training and technical assistance, those eligible organizations are really more of the nonprofit organizations, you know, perhaps programs in higher education settings that can support this work. We will also accept applications from for-profit organizations although they would have to agree to forgo a profit on this project and in all cases they really have to demonstrate that expertise I was talking about earlier. Next slide.

So in Category One, we hope to make about six awards this year and up to half a million dollars for a three-year period of time, and for our national TTA we plan to make a[n] award of \$325,000 for up to three years. There is a possibility of also potentially supplementing those resources in the TTA. Next category—I'm sorry, next slide.

Just briefly on this, they're—these are examples of things that are allowable, there are certainly other allowable activities, although I would encourage you to take a look at our financial guide if you have more questions, there are a number of expenses including things like construction costs and other activities that are not by definition allowable for BJA to fund, but this just kind of gives you a sense of the areas we've anticipate[d] there would be potential cost for the program. And again, you will know things that are more associated with the investigation and prosecutions, as well as work and dialogue with those impacted by the crime. Next slide.

And as I'm going, just to mention, there is no match requirement for this program. Here's a list of the program sections, again, I would encourage you to look at that, and there's actually a checklist at the end of our application process just so you can kind of make sure you have—know what you need to include in your application for it to be complete. Next slide.

There are some additional attachments that we do require, including just a time task plan that really sort of explains how you plan to implement your key activities for key staff, you know, getting a sense of what expertise or persons you're considering for these positions, and information about proposed subrecipients or other applications that you have pending with someone else to apply for the same activities, which is definitely allowable, we just want to be aware of that. And a few other things that may or may not be applicable, such as if you're doing research or depending on how much you want to charge for a particular position there may be some additional information required. So please review those—next slide, the information carefully in the solicitation to make sure you're familiar with that.

Here's a list of what's required in the abstract, next slide. That really just kind of gives us a high-level summary of what we're kind of looking—kind of your description of what is in your project. And the other thing I would just be careful about is there are certain required documents that have to be submitted or we won't be considering your application. And so with that in mind, please read the application carefully to ensure that you have all of those included. Next slide.

When we review the application, we actually send it out to external peer experts to review it and give us feedback, as well as to internal reviews prior to recommendations. Pay attention to this Program Narrative, and also, some of those preparatory webinars that are now recorded. Again, if you're less familiar, these are really good places, I think, to help you with strategy. In the Program Narrative section note your description of the issue, the design and implementation, and your capabilities and competencies all have a pretty, you know, a quarter to almost a third of the overall score. I'm not saying you shouldn't work on telling us about your plans for collecting data or, you know, having a good detailed budget and budget worksheet. But obviously, you know, it helps you kind of strategize about how much time you put into, or information that you include in here to sort of respond to the different sections. Next slide.

In the budget, just a couple of tips, and I have a couple later in the process as well. Make sure that each—there—you know, each year you're applying for money, so if you have a three-year application, that each has a separate itemized budget, the worksheet kind of walks you through that. And also, keep in mind, there are certain things,

including things where you—if you were supporting conference activities, or training costs, or other projects may require some preapproval, which we would then communicate in our awarding process. But just for, you know, just know that you might have to build some of that into your timeline and your implementation. Next slide.

All right. I will turn things over to Barbara Bosserman and she will kind of follow on with the rest of our team at the Department of Justice to talk a little bit about the larger work at the Department around this important set of cases and issues.

BARBARA KAY BOSSERMAN: Hello, everybody, it's good to be with you today virtually and I certainly hope that the communities that you all serve are safe in this weather emergency. My name is Barbara Bosserman and I'm the Deputy Chief over the Cold Case Unit in the Civil Rights Division's criminal section within the Department of Justice. And what my unit does is when cases are brought to our attention that potentially fall under the Till Act, that I'm going to talk to you about what those cases are in a moment, we analyze those cases, and if they appear to be prosecutable federally, we give those to a federal prosecutor and to the FBI to look into. If they appear not to be prosecutable federally, then I will talk to you at some length about what—why that might be, but they do appear to be prosecutable by the state and local governments, we will refer those cases to state prosecutors including our investigative finding.

And finally, if the case is not prosecutable, we will write a detailed closing memo, and that closing memo will be posted on the Department of Justice website, properly redacted, of course, to protect privacy. And we do that in large part to get at something that Betsi talked about, which is bringing closure to communities, shining a light of truth upon what happened in this era, and recognizing how important that is to members of the community, both to the victim's family and to the larger community, in which the family—in which the victim lived. And also for history, history's sake, this era has a lot of interest to academics, to civil rights groups, to non-profit groups of all sorts. So that is—that is what my unit does.

We enforce the Emmett Till Act, which I'm sure many on this call know it was named after Emmett Till who was a fourteen-year-old Chicago teen who was visiting a relative in Money, Mississippi, when he was kidnapped from his bed, basically tortured, shot, and thrown into the Tallahatchie River where his body was discovered later, laid down by a cotton gin fan. So there's a lot of symbolism in that, of course. And all of this, he was tortured in this way and killed because he had allegedly whistled at a White woman he had seen in a store a few days earlier. The locals investigated and two men, Roy Bryant and J.W. Milam, were prosecuted by state authorities, but they were quickly acquitted by an all-White jury.

Those two men later basically confessed in an article to Look Magazine that they were the murderers, but the jury had acquitted and was really no justice for him, and that is why the Act is named after him.

His mother began a crusade to bring Till's murder to the attention of the world. She had an open-casket funeral, in which his body was shown and people were horrified. There were a lot of people in the North who had not recognized that this was something that was happening to Black people every day in the South. And this is, of course, an extreme example of—sort of a routine violence in the Jim Crow era.

Now, at the time, the federal government really did little and that was not because they did not care, there was interest at the time, but there were no federal hate crime laws that could be enforced in federal court. The first federal hate crime laws were enacted in 1968. There were, of course, a lot of people who had been advocating for an anti-lynching law, but none was enacted.

And many know in 2005, the U.S. Senate said, "Yeah, we probably should've done something about all of that lynching that was going on." But shortly after 2005 and partly in recognition for the fact that crimes against Black folks, particularly in the South, but certainly not only in the South, were going on relatively unabated and that there were cases that have either never been solved or in which that there had never been vindications.

Congress enacted the first Emmett Till Act. So there was one Act in 2008 and it recognized the importance of these unsolved, racially motivated murders.

And in addition, it required the FBI and the Department of Justice to look at them and the first act basically gave the date of December 31st, 1969, to look at all cases that have occurred basically before 1970. And the Act basically said, we know that there are a lot of cases that cannot be prosecuted federally, but we want you to still look at them and provide assistance to the states that are working on them.

That Act was reauthorized in 2016, and it was changed a little bit, and the most significant change is that it extended the date to December 31st, 1979. So now, our mandate is to look at unsolved cases that occurred before 1980. The law also requires that the Department meet with stakeholders, provide—communicate with victims. So there are some other changes to the—to the Act.

So just to let you know what kinds of cases fall under the Till Act, and that's important because I think that's the same—the same act that gives us authority and gives us encouragement to look into these cold cases, even in the absence of federal jurisdiction, and also that same Act created this branch, Money. And so a lot of the requirements are the same.

The Till Act is meant to respond to death-resulting cases, so there were certainly a lot of atrocities that happened to Black folk or to other people of color before 1980, but we are not able to investigate under the Till Act other sorts of crimes like assaults, or rape, or attempts to kill. We are binded to death-resulting cases.

And there must be evidence that the death was the result of a civil rights crime. So if you say cold case to the general public, or if you watch NCIS or Law & Order, you know, a cold case is any case that has become old and difficult to solve because time—of the passage of time. But the Till Act doesn't apply, it doesn't cover, for example, a domestic violence case, and it doesn't cover a bar fight. There has to be an element of it being a civil rights crime, which is mostly going to be a hate crime. It also covers, if an event occurred, for example, during a slavery or human trafficking event, or if a—if a death occurred because of misconduct by law enforcement, but 99 percent of the cases that are recorded are basically what we would call hate crimes now, and they're basically racial hate crimes, the ones that are recorded.

We are also, we have that date that I told you about before, in order to fall under the rubric of the Till Act case for us to analyze. It needs to have occurred before 1980. Now, of course, because my office generally investigates civil rights crimes, including hate crimes, if we were given a case, a death-resulting hate crime that occurred in the '90s, we would look into it, but we would not look into it under the Till Act, we would just look under it under our general authority.

So with that, those are the kinds of cases that we look at—my unit looks at under the—under the Till Act. And there have been—there are barriers to successful prosecution, and I want to talk to you a little bit about those because some of them are ones that you all face as state and local law enforcement officers but not all of them. Some of them are very particular to the federal government, to federal jurisdiction, and that means that the states do not face these barriers and may be able to bring justice in situations where the federal government cannot. So, you know, the two barriers that we all will have in common is of course death of the—of the perpetrator. We don't have a system where we prosecute people after their death and some of these cases are quite old. In many cases we close them without prosecution because the person who did it is—has clearly passed away.

The other common barrier to prosecution is simply a lack of evidence—forensic evidence has degraded, the key witness in a case that we would use to prove it has passed away and we are simply unable to bring the case due to lack of evidence and we would all share those barriers. But the federal government has a couple other barriers, and one of them is I told you that the first federal hate crimes occurred in 19—were passed, enacted in 1968. That means that any crime that occurred before 1968 that was a hate crime there's no federal jurisdiction to prosecute that case as a hate crime. So unless there is some other basis for federal jurisdiction, for example, the crime occurred on federal land or there was an interstate kidnapping, there is no way for us to touch that case, although we have powerful laws right now but we would not be able to use those laws because they were not in effect before say 1968.

Secondly, you might say, well, I'm sure you must be prosecuting—you must be recommending prosecution in a lot of cases that occurred between 1968 and 1980. The problem is for those eras the federal hate crimes that were in existence had a five-year statute of limitations. The government had to bring a case within five years. And so if the government didn't bring a case in five years, so we didn't bring it before 1985 for the latest case, we are unable to bring it because the courts have ruled that Congress can't extend the statute of limitations once it's passed. Now you all, if you're prosecuting a case, looking at a case as a murder, you know, presumably on a—I believe in every state your statute of limitations for murder is the life of the—of the subject, so you're fine, there is no statute of limitations issue. So that makes—that makes it really important I think that the state and local governments be able to look into these cases with care.

So despite these barriers there's been a couple of successful prosecutions, of course, by the federal government and by the state government, and I just want to give you a little overview of them so you can get a little excited about the possibility of being able to bring justice in some of these cases.

The first one is the prosecution of Ernest Avants for the murder of Ben Chester White in Mississippi. Ben Chester White was an elderly African-American farmer, he was not involved in civil rights work, he had not done anything personally to upset the laws of the Jim Crow South, rules of the Jim Crow South. He was just a farm worker and he was targeted because the Klan decided they wanted to lure Dr. King to Mississippi and they thought that if they killed somebody he would come to Mississippi and then they would be able to assassinate Dr. King. Their plan did not work in a sense that Dr. King did not come to Mississippi and they have not been there to assassinate him, unfortunately for Mr. White they carried out the first part of their plan and they killed him.

They shot him multiple times with an automatic weapon. And he was found and the important thing is he was killed on federal land. So that has not clicked back in the day in the—in—the murder occurred in 1966, nobody had put together that he had been killed on federal land. And in 1999 we reopened the case, we understood that there was a federal jurisdiction, a grand jury investigation occurred and a case was put together, and we successfully were able to obtain a conviction for Mr. Avants.

The second successful prosecution was of James Ford Seale in 2007, and that case involved a 1964 murder of two young men, two nineteen-year-olds Charles Moore and Henry Dee in Franklin County in Mississippi. This—the Klan had another—it would be a crackpot theory but for the fact that it was so deadly they believed that because these were two young Black men they must be with the Black Panthers and they must be planning to overthrow the White community. They were not, they had absolutely no affiliation with the Black Panthers, they were not violent individuals but the Klan tortured these two young men, they made a false confession that they had a cache of weapons somewhere that of course no one ever found because it was false. And after they made the confession they were tortured and they were thrown in the Mississippi. Now although the kidnapping of these men and the death of these men occurred—both occurred in Mississippi so they were picked up and they were taken to the river and thrown into the river and all of this was in Mississippi. But where they put them into the river prosecutors realize that they had to cross through Louisiana in order to reach their destination and because they had to cross state lines it became a federal kidnapping case. So although there was no jurisdiction to prosecute the case as a federal hate crime they were able to prosecute it as a kidnapping.

This took a lot of work because we had to prove that the victims were alive when they crossed state lines which was difficult but they were able to do it and we had a successful federal prosecution.

In addition we have assisted in a couple of state prosecutions where the state really took the lead. The prosecution of Edgar Ray Killen for what is known as the Mississippi Burning Case. This was a very famous case in which three civil rights workers, James Chaney, Daniel Goodman, and Michael Schwerner were—had gone down to Mississippi for—James Chaney was actually a native of Mississippi but Schwerner and Goodman were college students who had gone to participate in Freedom Summer to do a voter drive registration. These young men were picked up by the local sheriff, Sheriff Price. They were put in jail and the release from jail was coordinated with the Ku Klux Klan, the Klan then murdered these young men basically because they were activists in the state. The federal government including my office, Civil Rights Division, prosecuted 18 Klansmen back in the '60s. They got some convictions, some acquittals, and some

hangs. Edgar Ray Killen the jury was hung on him. There was a lot of evidence against Edgar Ray Killen but he was a preacher and some jurors said they did not want to prosecute a preacher. He was successfully prosecuted by the state of Mississippi in 2005. In 2010 James Bonard Fowler pleaded guilty to manslaughter charges with the respect to the death of Jimmie Lee Jackson. Jackson was shot while engaging in a voter registration protest. He was shot protecting his mother from a combination of White supremacists and state troopers. And of course his death was one of the catalysts of the famous march from Selma, Alabama.

And finally there was a successful prosecution of two men who participated in the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama that killed four little boy—four little girls, Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Wesley. This was again one of the very high-profile civil rights crimes. The state had successfully prosecuted Dynamite Bob Chambliss in the '70s but he was the only one who was prosecuted and it took a decade to prosecute him. And in early 2000 the state with help from the federal—United States Attorney's office and from my office reopened the investigation and Thomas Edwin Blanton and Bobby Frank Cherry were both convicted of this crime.

So those are some of the successful prosecutions that have been done and I truly believe that there are more to do. And we are happy to take referrals to any cases that fall under the Till Act, if there is a possibility of federal prosecution. If there is not a possibility of federal prosecution we are happy to work with you, we can, you know, open a grand jury investigation under the Till Act even if we do that and then give the state government the proof of our grand jury investigation in order to pursue justice and we can assist with anything else that you need as far as our expertise. We certainly are willing to do anything that you all need us to do. But I think probably the best federal help that you may receive, you know, we can—we can sort of assist your prosecutors but for you all who are on the ground looking at these as law enforcement you may be much more interested in what the FBI can do for you, so I'm going to turn this over to my colleague LaShunda Williams to talk about that.

LASHUNDA Q. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Barbara, I appreciate that. Good afternoon, everybody. I am Special Agent—Supervisory Special Agent Lashunda Q. Williams from the Civil Rights Unit here at the Federal Bureau of Investigation. And I'm one of the program managers here. As you guys may know the FBI is the primary federal agency responsible for investigating allegations of violations of civil rights and as Barbara said in her presentation we have the ability to facilitate and enhance or assist the local investigation.

So I want to kind of give you guys some insight into what resources would be available to you if you so choose. If you look on the slide you'll see a website there for our laboratory services. And working our civil rights investigations we know how important it is to collaborate and to assist our local and state partners. We understand that at sometimes you might not have all the resources you need to facilitate or push forth your investigations, and so we have this resource with our FBI laboratory where you can submit multitude of pieces of evidence to us to kind of assist in the investigations. One of the things that our lab provide is DNA analysis. So using that DNA analysis you can look up—we can help to identify the victim, the subject, or even possibly identify potential family members of the subjects and in terms of trying to identify or facilitate that investigation. We also have the ability to analyze and look at latent prints and we compare those prints to a reference holding with millions of references holdings in our NGI System. We also have the ability in terms of ballistics. So when we're looking at some of these cases where some of our victims were shot or killed we can analyze and look at firearms, pulling the serial number as well as maybe even recreating some of those scenes, recreating that ballistic, like, investigatory tool.

The FBI is definitely very invested into assisting and helping with the cold case—cold case investigation. So I will definitely implore our local and state partners if you are investigating or looking into these cold case investigations to definitely reach out to your local division, your local counterparts in the FBI to kind of assist, not only collaborating and investigating alongside you in the investigation but also as well to use us as a resource to enhance your techniques and use all of the tools and tactics and resources that the FBI has available.

I left my contact information on the slide and if you click on that resource you'll also see that there's contact information directly to the lab if you have specific questions regarding the DNA analysis, the ballistics, or latent print, or the different types of resources that are provided in a laboratory. I believe our lab partners also provide training, so if you're looking to enhance your capabilities in that sense in terms of how you can enhance your own evidence or laboratory capabilities do not hesitate to reach out to us. I believe they said in the presentation will have questions. And I'll be more than happy to answer questions, either here or offline for our law enforcement partners in terms of resources available from the FBI. Thank you everyone.

GERRI RATLIFF: Hi, my name is Gerri Ratliff and I'm with the Community Relation Service and as you are looking into possibly investigating some of these cold cases you may find that your community is experiencing renewed racial tensions as the, you know, news about the investigation reminds people of the times when these tragic events were occurring, racial tensions can pop up and even new, you know, not just historic but new

racial tensions can emerge. And the Community Relation Service is a part of the Justice Department that can work with communities who want to tackle, reducing racial tensions, or even developing actions to address the sources of those racial tensions. So we do that through four main kinds of services. One is just facilitating dialogue, we can bring together community groups and this—in the case of something like a cold case that often could involve the local police just to talk through of, you know, perceptions of current perhaps inequities and guide the communities to reduce those tensions and work for solutions to address those tensions. We can also do formal mediations, those don't happen frequently. We can—and we have certain trainings that we offer and we also can just more informally work with the local investigators or the local community groups just to share best practices for setting a tone in the community that emphasizes racial equity and fairness for all groups. Most of our work in general does touch on issues that involve the police, a hate crime, another kind of controversial issue that triggers tensions. We also do work with schools and neighborhood groups.

There's two specific programs I wanted to touch on that could be most relevant for communities that are experiencing tensions related to the investigation of a cold case and the first one is called Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships Program. This is a program that we planned with the local law enforcement and local community groups. It's a very collaborative program where we bring all of the relevant groups together. Pre-COVID, in person, during COVID we actually have successfully done this virtually with a lot of sort of prep work.

But—so it could be in person or virtually to have community members share their perceptions about these historic tensions and again you can also talk about current tensions and brain storm together, what actions would the community and the local police want to take to reduce those tensions and work in a more equitable way moving forward.

The other program that we have that is applicable to tensions related to cold cases is called the Dialogue on Race Program. And this is a very simple program where we bring together community groups to talk. To talk to each other, to share perceptions, to build understanding, and the program very much, you know, focuses on the simple. Who are we? Where do we want to go? Where have we been? What do we want to do to continue sharing and increasing understanding across groups and the community and establishing a climate that the community would like to work towards.

We can work with communities apart from those who are investigating cold cases. We can work with communities anytime there is racial tension. And our jurisdiction also includes other sources of tensions like tensions around LGBTQ issues, religion-based

tensions, disability, status cases that have led to tensions. Anytime there's a—even a perception that there's been bias incidents or hate crimes that cause community tension we can come in and work with the communities on ways to move forward.

This slide shows you where our 15 offices are, we're a very small component of the Justice Department but we are spread out everywhere. So if you're interested in learning more about CRS and how we might support work you're doing, again related to a cold case or even related to other sources of tensions. You can email [askCRS@usdoj.gov](mailto:askCRS@usdoj.gov). You can see that email address at the bottom of the slide here. And just tell us what state you're in or, you know, where you are and we can refer you to the right region for more information. And we look forward to working with any communities who—even a part from this grant process—who decide you have work to do in your community that you'd like to tackle. So now I will turn it back to the next presenter.

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH: And its Betsi Griffith back again from BJA. I'm going to take a moment to just quickly run through a couple of things that tend to come up for folks when they apply to funding—for funding to us. I want you to just be aware of. And again there are some slides later on that Mary Jo will be going over that also help outline online training resources. One more thing I just want to mention briefly. Again you have this amazing team that you can work with, we really encourage you to, you know, think about, you know, digging in and thinking about how we can support you on this important work. The other thing I did want to mention given some of the parameters of this particular project is the BJA this year received a new appropriation under The Matthew Shepard, James Byrd Act, Hate Crime Act. And so we will in the coming months have additional resources available to support hate crime activities. Again this could kind of help address the gap not just with murders but other kinds of hate crimes and it doesn't have the time limitations, so for more recent or even for education outreach and prevention activities. So more to come on that.

Just a couple of things to keep in mind, particularly with our new system and as I mentioned earlier please go in as soon as possible and just make sure your basic registration information for any federal grant you would apply for is up to speed. That you have your most current, you know, DUNS number and your different registration information, your SAM information that you need to be able to register in any federal grant in the system. Because it can take a little while to process those requests and when you put together that main kind of cover sheet which is the SF-424, it's a form that's like the cover sheet for your application, you're going to have to do that during that first phase in Grants.gov. Just make sure that you're careful to use the correct legal name for your organization or your tribe or jurisdiction. And that also that you've got the

correct information in SAM.gov. And so you just want to make sure all that information is correct and that any passcodes, you know, that the correct person is designated and they're still there, that you've got a current passcode, you know, all those pieces are in a row.

You also want to make sure you have the correct authorized representative on the 424. That person has to have the authority to be able to accept that grant application and sign on behalf of your organization or jurisdiction. And so we just want to make sure that we don't create unnecessary delays or barriers to you being able to apply. Next slide.

The budget and funding is definitely a[n] area again, pay attention to the details. Areas that we find may delay your access to award, if made, could be things including not having consistent information on the 424 versus what's in the budget. Sometimes people will put just the first year of money in the 424 and will make an amount—award for that amount when in fact you wanted three years of funding. So just make sure all of those details are paid attention to or are consistent across your application.

Again as we mentioned it's really important that you follow the Budget Detail Worksheet template. And if you don't use that that you have consistent information with what's in that form so that we can process and approve your budget.

And in addition you don't have to have a match requirement and so if you put something in that's going to be a match you're going to have to track that so be aware of that. And also be sure you're familiar with our supplanting roles and aren't requesting costs that would supplant an existing cost you already have in place or those sorts of things that could cause us to delay the approval of the budget. Next slide.

Again make sure you also have clarity between the award and that funding that's going to go directly to your organization versus funding that might go to a sub-grant or sub-awardee. That information should be included separately and you'll see that section. And again I would really encourage you to look at the financial manual that the Office of Justice Program[s] puts out so that you're not requesting funding that's not allowable, that could affect how much we're recommending for funding if you're recommended for an award. And again I went over in detail the importance of looking at the details around your attachments and your requirements to make sure you got your basic minimum requirements included in your application so that it can move forward for consideration.

And then just one last point on the next slide and that is that we do require you to submit any other applications that you have where you're applying for funding even if it's for a different activity as well as include—including a time pass plan and you resumes.

And I think that is it for me. Oh, so on the cold case investigation resources, we just wanted to provide not just information about the FBI website, a little bit of information about our program for BJA. And then some of your—I know you're definitely familiar with this, we oversee several different programs to leverage and support cold case investigations and using forensic evidence to solve cases. And so those resources might also assist you in kind of pursuing these cases as well as a publication we put together on promising strategies to really help jurisdiction strengthen their homicide investigations.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Thanks Betsi, it's Mary Jo, I'll take over. There's a few more slides to go over before we get into questions and I do see that we are running out of time. So I'm going to through these as quickly as possible.

Just as a reminder, if you do have a question for the presenters today, please submit it to the Q&A box, you can locate that at the bottom right, under the three—the icon with the three dots. As Betsi mentioned earlier in the presentation BJA has held two previous webinars, one was on the 21st of January, the “Funding Process and First Steps to Applying How to Prepare and Other Considerations.” In that webinar they do touch on the JustGrants process, so that would be a good resource for you. And it also talks about other considerations that you need to be aware of in applying for a grant opportunity.

There's also another webinar called “JustGrants and ASAP: OJP's new Grant Management System.” So that as well would be advantageous to watch. You can access both of those on the BJA website if you go to the events tab. And the links to those items are listed below.

JustGrants does have a series of trainings available, you can refer to the JustGrants Training Application Submission page for additional information and training on the application process. There's also a series of slides that are available for reviewing and we do suggest that you bookmark the JustGrants Training page. This will allow you to become aware of other opportunities, trainings, and webinars on the JustGrants process.

If you do need support and technical assistance with JustGrants you can reach them at [JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov](mailto:JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov) or 833-872-5175. They are open Monday through Friday, between 5 a.m. and 9 p.m. Eastern Time. And they're also open Saturday, Sundays, and federal holidays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Eastern Time. If you need assistance with the Grants.gov portion, which is the first portion of the application process, you can reach their technical assistance customer support hotline at 800-518-

4726. And they also have an email support@grants.gov. They are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week but they are closed on federal holidays.

The Response Center is available if you have say after today's webinar you have questions about eligibility or a particular aspect of the Emmett Till solicitation or any of the other solicitations, you can reach out to the Response Center. They have an email grants@ncjrs.gov. You could also call them 800-851-3420. They are available 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday. And there's a series of emails that you can subscribe to. Your subscription address is <https://www.ojp.gov/subscribe>. You can sign up for the JUSTINFO newsletter which comes out twice monthly, and the funding news email which comes out each Friday. The funding news email will announce new opportunities from OJP agencies and announce webinar such as the one we're on today.

We also want you to follow BJA, you can follow them on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. And they do have an email that you can subscribe to if you text 468-311, insert your email address, you'll be signed up to receive BJA's email and you can also refer to the BJA website at <https://bja.ojp.gov>. So I really flew through that, I apologize. I did want to make sure that we have time for questions. So if you do have any questions, please submit them to the Q&A and we will address those for you. And we'll give you a minute or so to go ahead and do that.

All right. Again this is your opportunity to ask any question that you may have about this opportunity. Please submit that to the Q&A and you can address it to all panelists to be sure that we all see it. We don't send it to somebody privately that it could possibly get missed if you do that.

While we're waiting for questions to come through, I'm going to go over this one last slide. This is a series of—a slide that has some resources that are available. URLs have been mentioned throughout the webinar but this one slide, when it's posted it will provide them all on one place. We've already mentioned the BJA website, Grants.gov, and JustGrants, in addition to OJP, have a great funding resource center and a URL for that is listed here as well.

So one individual wants to know if you have programs for guard transport and Marines for the extradition, let me see here. The question is an example of extradition process person in Europe and territory United States, the process of technical assistant with the National Guard Maryland Air. Do you have programs that implements process extradition and court and do you have finance support? I'm not a hundred percent sure I understand that.

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH: Well, what I would say is the scope of our authority at the Bureau of Justice Assistance is state, local, and tribal. We don't support, for example, funding federal agencies such as the Marines even if it's to support a state or local function. We're kind of prohibited by our mandate. And we don't have generally a lot of resources available to pay for those sorts of, you know, kind of moving—maybe moving folks in the—in the—in the—tied to sort of an extradition of a case. I think the only funding stream potentially again it would—depending—it would have to be to fund, state, local or tribal activities with the—our Justice Assistance Grant Program, which is a formula program and funding will go to local and tribal jurisdictions and any portions of the funding—the 60 percent goes to the states who then can make awards to local, county, or non-profit organization. So if you go on the BJA website and look up the Justice Assistance Grant page you can find the contact in your state and that might be a resource for you.

Well I think as we're finishing up here, I don't know Mary Jo who's got any other questions, I'm hopeful that that's a sign that we were thorough. But I really appreciate you all taking time today and I really encourage you to think about, you know, this funding opportunity or others that will be coming forward and looking forward to hearing from you all.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: We did get one more question. It's, "What are you looking for in the description of a problem for the TTA provider?"

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH: I think what we're looking for is sort of a national picture of, you know, sort of practice and barriers, some of the things, you know, maybe that Barbara was talking about earlier. One of these—what's the current practice out there, what are the gaps in that practice, what are the barriers and areas where you see a need to offer assistance to help build that capacity of jurisdictions to successfully implement projects in this arena. So what kind of—what's that background of what is—what are things look like across the United States that would inform your design and what capabilities and competencies you need to bring to the table to implement?

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: And with that Betsi that would be the last question that we have.

LASHUNDA Q. WILLIAMS: Hey, guys this is LaShunda.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: Thank you so much and—

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH: Go ahead, LaShunda.

LASHUNDA Q. WILLIAMS: Sorry, I just saw one of the questions privately, I know everybody is still trying to figure out how to work the terminal. So one of the questions that came in is like the process in terms of using the FBI lab. And so what you going to want to do and I apologize for not mentioning this in my brief presentation is you want to coordinate with your local division. So whether you're in Vegas or L.A. or Sacramento, whatever office—FBI offices near you, that's the local office that you want to coordinate with, and from there we can initiate the process for you to use the FBI laboratory to do any type of DNA, latent print, ballistic, any type of analysis for you and we would take care of that cost. In terms of turnaround time it would be dependent upon what it is that you're trying to--trying to have analyzed. But you should be able to get a little bit of that input once we start submitting that request and talking to the lab for you. So I would definitely--if you were considering using the lab, coordinate with your local office and be able to start the process and be able to give you additional information in terms of turnaround time, and any other resources that are available. Thank you. I apologize ladies, I just got something privately. I wanted to make sure everybody was aware.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: That's fine. Thank you. I'm glad you caught that. So Betsi, unless anybody else has any questions that were sent to them privately, it does not look like there's anything listed in the Q&A or the chat at this time.

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH: Great. Thank you. I think we can finish up.

MARY JO GIOVACCHINI: All right. Thank you everybody for joining. On behalf of the Bureau of Justice Assistance, we appreciate your time today.