

BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE FACT SHEET

PAUL COVERDELL FORENSIC SCIENCE IMPROVEMENT GRANTS PROGRAM

The Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program (the Coverdell Program) awards grants to states and units of local government to help improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science and medical examiner/coroner services. Among other things, funds may be used to eliminate a backlog in the analysis of forensic evidence and train and employ forensic laboratory personnel, as needed, to eliminate such a backlog.

State Administering Agencies (SAAs) may apply for both “base” (formula) and competitive funds. Therefore, a State can receive both a formula and competitive award in the same year. Units of local government may apply for competitive funds.

Program Goals

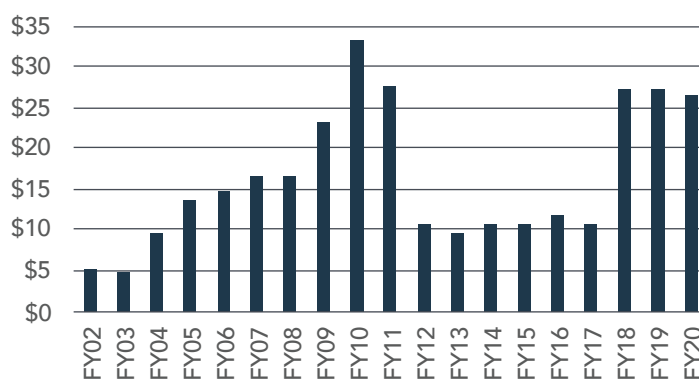
Coverdell grants must be used for one or more of these six purposes:

1. To improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science or medical examiner/coroner services in the state.
2. To eliminate a backlog in the analysis of forensic science evidence.
3. To train, assist, and employ forensic laboratory personnel.
4. To address emerging forensic science issues (such as statistics, contextual bias, and uncertainty of measurement) and emerging forensic science technology.
5. To educate and train forensic pathologists.
6. To facilitate accreditation and certification to medicolegal death investigators.

Program Funding & Awards

Appropriated Funds

In Millions



Program Accomplishments

Funded awards from 2002 to 2020:

- 1,513 total awards were made.
- 899 formula only awards.
- 499 competitive only awards.
- 115 awards funded both formula and competitive.

From 2011 to 2018:

- More than 1 million backlog cases analyzed with Coverdell funds.
- More than 10,000 forensic science personnel attended training.
- More than 1,000 medical examiner personnel attended training.

- From 2017 to 2018, 4 agencies received initial accreditation, and 70 used fees to maintain accreditation using Coverdell funding.

Additional Resources

- BJA Program Web Page: <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/coverdell/overview>
- Subscribe: <https://bja.ojp.gov/subscribe>

ABOUT BJA

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) helps to make American communities safer by strengthening the nation's criminal justice system. BJA's grants, training and technical assistance, and policy development services provide government jurisdictions (state, local, tribal, and territorial) and public and private organizations with the cutting edge tools and best practices they need to support law enforcement, reduce violent and drug-related crime, and combat victimization.

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