

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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Authorizing Language

The Strengthening the Medical Examiner and Coroner (ME/C) Offices program is a discretionary program.

Submission Deadline for FY21 Applications

July 8, 2021, 11:59p.m. Eastern Time

General Solicitation FAQs

Question: Can one organization apply for both Purpose Areas outlined in the Solicitation? If so, does that organization submit one application covering both purpose areas or one application for each purpose area?

Answer: Yes. An applicant may apply for both purpose areas. However, an applicant must submit a separate application for each purpose area. (see page 4 of the solicitation under “Goals, Objectives, Deliverables”)

Question: How long is the project period once the award is made?

Answer: The period of performance duration for awards made under this program is 24 months (see page 7 of solicitation under “Federal Award Information”)

Question: When will applicants be notified of the funding decisions?

Answer: It is anticipated that awards will be announced prior to September 30, 2021 (Refer to the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Question: Does the title page and the table of contents count towards the Proposal Narrative?

Answer: A title page and table of contents are not required for the Proposal Narrative. (see page 9 of the solicitation under “Proposal Narrative” of the “Application and Submission Information” section for section requirements).

Question: How should technical issues experienced with grants.gov and JustGrants be addressed?

Answer: If you experience technical issues with grants.gov or JustGrants please contact the appropriate customer support referenced on page 1 of the solicitation under “Contact Information.”

Question: If an applicant was previously awarded funding under this program, can they still apply for FY 2021 funding?

Answer: Yes

Allowable Uses of Funding FAQs

Question: Under Purpose Area 1, can funding be used for Forensic Pathologist Assistants, as well as Forensic Pathology Fellowships?

Answer: No. Under Purpose Area 1, funds may only be used for Forensic Pathology Fellowships.

Question: Under Purpose Area 1, are applicants required to have an accredited forensic pathology fellowship program?

Answer: Yes, eligible applicants for Purpose Area 1 must have a current Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)-accredited forensic pathology fellowship program.

<https://www.acgme.org/What-We-Do/Accreditation/Common-Program-Requirements>

Question: Under Purpose Area 2, can award funds be used for improvements to the facilities to become eligible to apply for accreditation?

Answer: Yes, award funds may be used for improvements to the facilities as long as the applicant can justify that the improvements are necessary to achieve accreditation.

Question: Under Purpose Area 2, the solicitation notes that BJA expects to make 10 awards at a dollar amount of \$100,000 per award. Does this mean you have to apply for \$100,000?

Answer: No. You can apply for any amount below \$100,000. However, the request may not exceed \$100,000.

Question: Under Purpose Area 2, can award funds be used to purchase equipment?

Answer: Yes, award funds may be used to purchase equipment under Purpose Area 2 as long as the applicant can justify that the equipment is necessary to achieve accreditation.

Question: Under Purpose Area 2, can award funds be used to maintain existing accreditation?

Answer: Funds may NOT be used to maintain existing accreditation under this program. If you are interested in identifying a funding mechanism to support maintaining existing accreditation you may want to consider exploring the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program.

Question: Under Purpose Area 2, can award funds be used to pay personnel who are not certified but are working towards certification?

Answer: Funds may be used for the purpose of paying personnel within the ME/C agencies that are seeking certification.

Question: Under Purpose Area 2, can award funds be used for travel?

Answer: Travel costs may be allowable under Purpose Area 2 if it is used to support ME/C office accreditation.

Question: Under Purpose Area 2, if an applicant is accredited by NAME but not IACME, can funds be used for IACME accreditation?

Answer: Under Purpose Area 2 funds may be used to support new ME/C Office accreditation. As noted in the solicitation, through this funding opportunity, applications are being solicited from ME/C agencies seeking accreditation through an appropriate ME/C accrediting agency. Under “Goals, Objectives, Deliverables” of the “Program Description” on page 5 of the solicitation it notes: “Examples of accrediting bodies that publish professional standards on procedures for conducting autopsies and medicolegal death investigations are the National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) and the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (IACME).” If you are already accredited by an appropriate ME/C Accrediting agency, you are not eligible for funding under this solicitation.

Associated Application Documents FAQs

Question: What is the federal requested amount in the SF-424?

Answer: The federal requested amount in the SF-424 is the funding amount the applicant is requesting in their application.

Question: Is there guidance on completing the SF-424 form?

Answer: Refer to the [Grants.gov Form Instructions](#) found on [grants.gov](#) for instructions on completing the SF-424 form.

Question: One of the questions on the SF-424 form is if this solicitation is subject to [Executive Order 12372](#). What is the appropriate response to this question?

Answer: This solicitation is not subject to Executive Order 12372. As noted in the solicitation, an applicant is to answer question 19 by selecting the response that the “Program is not covered by E.O. 12732.” (see page 8 of the solicitation under Application and Submission Information. Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form (SF)-424), in completing the SF-424).

Question: What if the required forms do not apply to the applicant’s organization? For example, the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities Form?

Answer: Please refer to the “Application and Submission Information” section and “Application Checklist” of the solicitation to determine what documents are required for the application. In regard to the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form, all applicants must submit the form, but can enter “not applicable” in questions 10a and 10b. For further guidance, please refer to the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#). (See page 8 of the solicitation under Application and Submission Information, and page 16 of the solicitation under “Application Checklist”).

Question: What other attachments should be included in the application?

Answer: Refer to the “Application Checklist” in the solicitation to ensure that all items required for the respective Purpose Area are included in your application. (See page 16 of the solicitation of the solicitation under “Application Checklist”).

Question: In the “Additional Application Components” section of the solicitation, are all items in that section required for both Purpose Areas?

Answer: The Additional Application Components are required if they are applicable to your agency and the purpose area for which you are applying. Items in the Additional Application Components section, such as a) the list of key personnel and b) a timeline, are required for all applicants under this solicitation. (See page 11 of the solicitation under “Additional Application Components”).

Performance Metrics Guidance

Purpose Area 1: Fellowships

*Question numbers below match the respective metrics in BJA’s Performance Measures Table found at: <https://bja.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh186/files/media/document/MEC-Measures.pdf>

7. **Metric:** Total hours of death Investigation by Medical Examiner/Coroner Office 6 months prior to award start date.
Guidance: The reported metric should reflect the 6 months prior to the beginning of the period of performance. For example, for FY 2021 awards the period of performance starts on October 21, 2021, so this metric should reflect data collected from April 20, 2021 – October 20, 2021. The reported metric should be the same for every reporting period over the lifetime of that award.
8. **Metric:** Total hours of death investigations performed by the BJA-funded forensic pathology fellow(s) 5 years prior to the award start date.
Guidance: The reported metric should reflect the 5 years prior to the beginning of the period of performance. For example, for FY 2021 awards the period of performance starts on October 21, 2021, so this metric should reflect data collected from October 20, 2016 – October 20, 2021. The reported metric should be the same for every reporting period over the lifetime of that award.
9. **Metric:** Total hours of death investigations performed by the ME/C office during the reporting period.
Guidance: The reporting period for this award is semi-annually/every 6 months. Therefore, the hours of death investigation performed metric would cover only those 6 months of the reporting period for the entire office (not just the BJA-funded forensic pathology fellow(s)).

10. **Metric:** Total hours of death investigations performed by BJA-funded forensic pathology fellow(s) during the reporting period.
Guidance: The reporting period for this award is semi-annually/every 6 months. Therefore, the hours of death investigation performed metric would cover only those 6 months of the reporting period for **ONLY** the BJA-funded forensic pathology fellow(s).
11. **Metric:** Total hours of death investigation performed by the ME/C office during the entire project.
Guidance: This metric will be the cumulative total of the hours reported by the ME/C Office for each subsequent reporting period. Therefore, if you reported X in Progress Reporting Period 1, and Y in Progress Reporting Period 2, the metric reported here in Progress Reporting Period 2 would be X + Y.
12. **Metric:** Total hours of death investigations performed by BJA-funded forensic pathology fellow(s) during the entire project.
Guidance: This metric will be the cumulative total of the metrics reported for the BJA-funded forensic pathology fellow(s) for each progress reporting period. Therefore, if you reported X in Progress Reporting Period 1, and Y in Progress Reporting Period 2, the metric reported here in Progress Reporting Period 2 would be X + Y.
13. – 18. For questions 13-18 follow the same guidance provided above for hours of death investigation performed.

Purpose Area 2: Accreditation

23. **Metric:** Number of individuals in the Medical Examiner–Coroner (ME/C) Office in medicolegal death investigation (MDI) supporting positions at the beginning of the award period.
Guidance: FY 2021 award’s period of performance starts on October 21, 2021. Therefore, you would report how many individuals in the ME/C office were in MDI supporting positions on October 21, 2021. The reported metric should be the same for every reporting period over the lifetime of that award.
24. **Metric:** Number of certified individuals in the Medical Examiner–Coroner office in medicolegal death investigation supporting positions at the beginning of the award period.
Guidance: FY 2021 award’s period of performance starts on October 21, 2021. Therefore, you would report how many certified individuals in the ME/C office were in MDI supporting positions on October 21, 2021. The reported metric should be the same for every reporting period over the lifetime of that award.
25. **Metric:** Target number of individuals to be certified with Strengthening the Medical Examiner–Coroner System Program funding at the beginning of the award period.
Guidance: FY 2021 award’s period of performance starts on October 21, 2021. Therefore, you would report how many individuals you plan to certify, using BJA funding, on October 21, 2021. The reported metric should be the same for every reporting period over the lifetime of that award.
26. **Metric:** Number of individuals who initiated the certification process with Strengthening the Medical Examiner–Coroner System Program funding during the project period.
Guidance: The reported metric should reflect the total number of individuals who have started

and/or are currently undergoing the certification process, using BJA-funding, at the end of the progress reporting period.

27. **Metric:** Number of individuals who achieved certification with Strengthening the Medical Examiner–Coroner System Program funding during the project period.
Guidance: For this metric, report the total number of individuals who achieved certification using BJA-funding during the current reporting period (do not include individuals certified during previous reporting periods).
28. **Metric:** Number of individuals who achieved certification with Strengthening the Medical Examiner–Coroner System Program funding during the entire project.
Guidance: This metric will be a cumulative total for the entire project. For example, if you reported X individuals achieved certification in Reporting Period 1 and Y individuals achieved certification in Reporting Period 2, this metric would be X+Y in Reporting Period 2.

Past Funding

Funding and awards made under the Strengthening the Medical Examiner and Coroner Offices Program since FY 2017 can be found at the following links:

- [FY 2020 Strengthening the Medical Examiner and Coroner Offices Program Awards](#)
- [FY 2019 Strengthening the Medical Examiner and Coroner Offices Program Awards](#)
- [FY 2018 Strengthening the Medical Examiner and Coroner Offices Program Awards](#)
- [FY 2017 Strengthening the Medical Examiner and Coroner Offices Program Awards](#)

Contacts

JustGrants Support

Email: JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov

Customer Support: 833-872-5175

[JustGrants User Support](#)

[JustGrants Application Submission training resources page](#)

[DOJ Application Submission Checklist](#)

Grants.gov Support

Email: support@grants.gov

Customer Support: 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035

[Grants.gov customer support webpage](#)