

DARYL FOX: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to today's webinar, "FY 2021 Restrictive Housing Reform Implementation Assistance Program," hosted by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. At this time, I would like to introduce today's presenter, Jessa Wilcox, Policy Advisor with the Bureau of Justice Assistance. Jessa?

JESSA WILCOX: Hi, Daryl. Thank you so much. And thanks to all of you for attending today. As Daryl said, my name is Jessa Wilcox, and I am a Policy Advisor at the Bureau of Justice Assistance. Today's webinar, as Daryl said, is on BJA's Fiscal Year 2021 Restrictive Housing Reform Implementation Assistance Program. As many of you probably know, BJA has not funded work in this space for several years, so we are thrilled to be able to offer this solicitation in FY 2021 for work on this important issue.

So before we dive into the solicitation, just briefly, BJA, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, is part of the Office of Justice Programs at the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice is committing to advancing work that promotes civil rights, increases access to justice, supports crime victims, protects the public from crime and evolving threats, and builds trust between law enforcement and the community. Our goal at BJA is to provide leadership and services in grant administration and criminal justice policy development to support local, state, and tribal justice agencies achieve safer communities. And restrictive housing reform is a vital part of this work.

So here is today's agenda. We have divided the content of this webinar into six separate sections. First, I will just give you a brief overview over the program. Then I will discuss the federal award information, a few things to note on the required deliverables, application requirements, and most importantly, how and when to apply. So let us go to the program overview. And before we begin, let us just define our terms. For the purposes of this solicitation, we are defining "restrictive housing" as holding incarcerated people in a cell, either single or double celled, for at least 22 hours a day for 15 days or longer. There are lots of names for this practice, so sometimes you can hear it referred to as extended solitary confinement, but we will be referring to it as restrictive housing. And reforming the use of restrictive housing will lead to more humane systems of incarceration. Research over the past decade has shown that restrictive housing leads to detrimental impact on incarcerated people. And there are potential harmful effects on the correctional staff who work in restrictive housing units. And in general, there is just a lack of evidence that restrictive housing leads to increased safety within correctional facilities or within the community. What is hopeful is that now a diverse stakeholder--diverse group of stakeholders and leaders, legislators, correctional professionals, advocates, believe in the need for a reform around the use of restrictive housing.

And in fact, there has been a lot of movement in the field. Per policy, some correctional agencies will no longer hold specific vulnerable populations in restrictive housing. In practice, some correctional officers now have more tools in their toolbox to use instead of needing to rely solely on solitary confinement to help manage the facility. And recently, we have even seen several state legislators weighing in on the use of restrictive housing. So while there definitely seems to be a ground swell of acknowledgment of the importance of this issue and motivation to address it, there are still tens of thousands of people being held in restrictive housing. And we at BJA feel that agencies and facilities can use strategic support and assistance in how to implement reforms while maintaining the safety of their facilities and the support of their staff.

So this leads us to the objectives of this program. Right there, there are three main ones. The first, of course, is to provide support and assistance to correctional agencies that are ready to implement meaningful reforms. The second is to create resources that will be made publicly available to agencies and facilities that are considering reforms. And third, developing practices or models for correctional agencies to use to collect and analyze data to measure the impact of reforms. These are pretty broad objectives. At BJA, we purposely do not want to be too prescriptive with the solicitation. We want this to be led by subject experts and really responsive to the needs and voices from the field on what is needed and what is working.

So some award information getting into the heart of this program--BJA plans to make one award as a cooperative agreement up to \$2.1 million over 30 months. And eligible applicants are technical assistance providers. This is a cooperative agreement solicitation for a technical assistance provider. As you see in the solicitation, we broadly define this: for-profit organizations other than small businesses, nonprofits having 501(c)(3), nonprofits that do not have 501(c)(3), institutions of higher education, public- and state-controlled institutions of higher education, small businesses, other. Basically, you just have to be a technical assistance provider, or capable of doing that work for the solicitation. Subrecipients are, of course, welcome. And there are no categories for the solicitation. So we have some required deliverables in the solicitation. BJA expects that the recipient of this award will use funds to, first, create a competitive, objective site-selection process to select correctional agencies to provide strategic support and assistance around implementing restrictive housing reform. And then once the applicant has begun working with the site, BJA will require an implementation plan for each site that will incorporate policy, practice, and training reforms with a real focus on sustainability. We will require documentation of outcomes of any implementation efforts to be publicly shared to advance the field. We are looking for a national convening of selected sites, stakeholders, and correctional leaders. In the solicitation, we do not

specify in person or virtual, so free--feel free to discuss this in your application, what you plan to do and why. Next, identification and documentation of the steps needed to promote and institutionalize broad agency and facility staff buy-in for reform, tools and resources to be used by other agencies and facilities that are beginning to implement reform. And finally, practices or models for correctional agencies to use on collecting or analyzing data to measure the impact of reforms. So moving on to section 4, the Application Requirements, we just want to make note of several requirements included in the solicitation. Starting on page 7, you will find all of the application requirements.

Please note to be even considered for funding, each application must include a Project Abstract, a Program Narrative. And the Program Narrative will include a description of the issue, where the applicant must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the issue. And any potential challenges of implementing reforms within a correctional setting. Project Design and Implementation: And for this part, please include a detailed discussion of the level of engagement you will have with the selected sites and even how many sites you propose to assist. Again, we have left this broad and up to the applicants to really show, you know, what you think is the best use of federal funds for this program. Of course, Capabilities and Competencies for doing this work and a Plan for Collecting the Data Required for the solicitation's Performance Measures. An applicant must also include a Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative, Timeline/Task Plan, proposed subrecipients, which--at the end of this solicitation, there is an appendix that you can upload, resumes of key personnel, and two or three work product examples. This could be fact sheets, research briefs, links to webinars, TTA final reports, to something that demonstrates to the peer reviewers that you are capable of doing this type of work. And of course, when peer reviewers review your applications, different weight is given to each section of the narrative and supporting materials. So please note the different weights on this slide specifically, but 40 percent of the total score will come from Project Design and Implementation. And we are speeding through this. We have reached our last section, how and when to apply. Some additional information here that might be useful. Each individual program solicitation outlines all elements of the application in a section that is called Application and Submission Information. There is also a checklist at the end of the solicitation starting on page 12 that we recommend you use to ensure that you have included all of the required items.

So as you may have heard by now, OJP has switched from our old Grants Management System to the new JustGrants System for application submission and awards management. We think that JustGrants offers several submission enhancements including a streamlined end-to-end process which enables applicants and grantees to move seamlessly through the full grants management lifecycle. It also gives applicants and award recipients new ways to manage their own entity information and that of other

users in the system. And it allows for new roles like a new entity administrator role in JustGrants that is assigned to the user who created that SAM.gov account. This system does require a longer lead time than in the past, so please plan in advance when you are thinking about when you are going to submit your application. Specifically, there is now a two-step process. In step one of the process, applicants must submit an SF-424 and an SF-LLL at Grants.gov. And for this solicitation, the deadline to complete this step is August 10th, 2021. And you must complete this stage before you can complete step two. To just be very clear, if you miss this deadline, you will not be able to apply for this solicitation. And then step two of the process. You will submit your full application, including all attachments, and that is at JusticeGrants.usdoj.gov. And the due date for this is August 24th, 2021. So we realize this is a new process, right, during application season, so we want to make it as easy as possible and as smooth--as easy to apply. So one key resource that we have is the Application Mechanics eLearning Videos. And by viewing these eLearning videos, job aids, DOJ application checklists, and other resources, you will have all the information you need to successfully navigate the mechanics of submitting an application. There are live links on this slide, and I think Tammy just put some in the chat. And, of course, this presentation will be posted on BJA's FY '21 funding opportunity page for you always to go--return to. This slide includes the live link to the DOJ Application Submission Checklist. And Tammy, thank you again for putting it in the chat. This checklist includes how to prepare to apply; completing the abbreviated application in Grants.gov; Entity Onboarding and JustGrants access; completing, reviewing, certifying, submitting your application in JustGrants; and other helpful user tips.

And here we have just included some additional resources you might consider accessing as you work through your application. There are recording and slide decks from previous webinars. You can refer to the JustGrants Training Application Submission page for additional information and training on the application submission process, and you can bookmark this JustGrants training page for any updates. Of course, if you do have questions, we have lots of technical assistance available to help you. For questions around the Grants.gov, there is the Grants.gov customer and this is the step 1, August 10th due date. There is the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline: 800-518-4726 or 606-545-5035. There is the support webpage. There is the support@grants.gov email address and this operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.

For assistance with submitting the full application to JustGrants, contact the JustGrants Service Desk. It is 833-872-5175 or there is the email address right there, JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov. And this service desk operates from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, and

federal holidays. And then, of course, if there is assistance with any unforeseen technical issues beyond your control that prevent you from submitting your application or any questions about other requirements, contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service, NCJRS, and the contact information is at the bottom of this slide. Their hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. eastern time on the solicitation close date. And just here are a few ways to stay connected, make sure you are aware of what is happening with BJA and all other relevant funding opportunities.

I think we have one more slide about online resources. Of course, you will be able to access this once this presentation has been posted. And then finally, here is a link directly to the solicitation and just another reminder of the application due dates, Grants.gov, a little bit under 2 weeks from today, 08/10/2021. And then JustGrants is-- the application is due in JustGrants, August 24th, 2021. So, we just sped through a lot. I am more than happy to stick around and answer any questions you have about today's webinar, this solicitation, or this project. So, please just put them in the chat and I will be happy to respond. Thanks so much.

DARYL FOX: Thanks, Jessa. And just a reminder as mentioned several times, the PowerPoint, recording, will be posted to--and the transcript will be posted to the BJA website in approximately 5 to 10 business days. So, be on the lookout for that. And if you do have a question, at the bottom right-hand side of your screen, there are three dots, click that and then there, the Q&A box. You can enter that in, and we will just go through them as they come in in order here. There is one in the queue currently. A particular person's now working for the North Carolina DOP. They are attempting to work on getting the state accredited by ACA, which--of which a large part is managing restrictive housing. "There is much work to be done. Do you believe that the state would be a good candidate to partner with the technical assistance provider?"

JESSA WILCOX: So, approximately since he would not come in as a subrecipient, but they would definitely be a great candidate to apply under the competitive objective site-selection process that the technical assistance provider is going to set up. So once BJA chooses the technical assistance provider, this organization or groups of organizations will then set up like, kind of, a competition to receive the TA. So, definitely state agencies are perfect candidates for that. Thank you for your question.

DARYL FOX: "There is—this is only for one award, correct?"

JESSA WILCOX: Yes, one award but there can be subrecipients of course.

DARYL FOX: “Is there a specific time during the project when the national convening event should occur?”

JESSA WILCOX: Nope. We are leaving that up to the applicants to propose, although you can discuss it if you want in your narrative--why, you know, when and why you think that would be the best time during this project period to bring people together.

DARYL FOX: While we are waiting for any others to come in, I am just highlighting this slide again. If you do have questions, either on the Grants.gov, JustGrants, or through the OJP Response Center, contact information is listed here. “For the qualified applicant, does the organization have to be an existing TTA provider?”

JESSA WILCOX: Nope, they do not. You know, the award is to provide strategic support and assistance, but they do not have to be a current TA provider.

DARYL FOX: Any other questions, please do enter those in. We will be sure to get to them today. And I will also put these resources from the funding opportunities slide up for those individuals that may want to research other items here, Grant Funding Resource Center. Grants Financial Guide is an excellent resource as well. It seems that we have another question. A bit of confusion—“Does the application need to come from the state or the technical assistance provider themselves?”

JESSA WILCOX: The application to BJA and the person that will be in receipt of the \$2,100,000 award is from a technical assistance provider. And then they will run an objective competition process to determine who--which states, which agencies, which correct--correctional agencies they will work with.

DARYL FOX: Seems to be on the queue at this time, Jessa. Hang on another minute or so.

JESSA WILCOX: Sure. Of course.

DARYL FOX: And I will highlight this as well, the link here to the full solicitation, which is on the BJA website and the two important dates, both Grants.gov, August 10th, 11:59 p.m., and the JustGrants at 08/24, 11:59 p.m. And as mentioned, obviously try to get them in as soon as possible, at least two--48 hours prior to the due date to take into consideration any technical glitches that may occur. “How will states be made aware of the opportunity to apply to the technical assistance provider that is awarded this?”

JESSA WILCOX: That will be part of responsibility of the technical assistance provider to publicize and promote it, and make sure that any interested parties know about it, know how to apply, know what the technical assistance will look like.

DARYL FOX: That seems to be all that is in the queue at this time still, Jessa.

JESSA WILCOX: Okay. Thanks, Daryl.

DARYL FOX: And I am just highlighting once again to the JustGrants Application Resources since it is a new system this year, a lot of questions and things to get through. So these eLearning videos are a wonderful resource to go ahead and access on different steps of the process: on getting ready to apply, initiating your application, budget detail forms, and then even post-submission, what you need to do and have in order. So, these are wonderful resources to take a look at as far as the JustGrants submission process is concerned. One seems to be in at this time. "Is there a limit to the work products that can be included?"

JESSA WILCOX: There is not a limit. I think in the solicitation we say two to three, but there is no limit.

DARYL FOX: And then just another question: "Where can one find SF-424 form?"

JESSA WILCOX: I think that should be on Grants.gov. I am trying to pull it up.

DARYL FOX: Yeah.

JESSA WILCOX: I do not know. Tammy or Daryl, if you have it handy?

DARYL FOX: Yeah, that is--that is correct.

JESSA WILCOX: Okay.

DARYL FOX: JustGrants.gov. You can access that form, as well as the LLL, the lobbying form, that is both required for submission. And if you do have any questions, you know, for additional assistance on those, you can contact their Grants.gov support desk here. But you will be able to access this directly from that site. And then just another question on the copy of the slides. It will be made available, as mentioned, the slides, PowerPoint, and the transcript for today on the BJA website within their funding topical area tab along with the full solicitation at this URL, this PDF. And it was just entered in in Chat, the actual URL where this will be posted in the Funding Webinars

tab. And then just reiterating, just so--it was mentioned before is once this is awarded, it will be up to the awardee, the technical assistance provider, to do the outreach.

JESSA WILCOX: Yes.

DARYL FOX: Okay.

JESSA WILCOX: That is correct.

DARYL FOX: And then just generally, is there an award schedule on the next, you know, steps on when the programs will commence?

JESSA WILCOX: This will commence on or about October 1st, 2021.

DARYL FOX: Seems to be all in the queue at this time. Okay. With that, Jessa, I do not know if there is anything else in closing to mention.

JESSA WILCOX: No. I just want to thank all the attendees today and to thank you, Daryl and Tammy.

DARYL FOX: Yeah. So on behalf of the Bureau Justice Assistance and our panelists, we want to thank you for joining today's webinar. This will end today's presentation.