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The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [Bureau of Justice Assistance](#) (BJA) is seeking applications for funding for the Second Chance Act Statewide Adult Recidivism Reduction Strategic Planning Program. This program furthers the Department's mission by providing services and programs to help facilitate the successful reintegration of individuals returning from incarceration to their communities.

## **Second Chance Act Statewide Adult Recidivism Reduction Strategic Planning Program FY 2015 Competitive Grant Announcement**

### **Eligibility**

Eligible applicants are limited to state correctional agencies (state departments of corrections or community corrections) or State Administering Agencies (SAAs). Agencies from states that were awarded Second Chance Act Statewide Recidivism Reduction grants in fiscal year (FY) FY 2013 are NOT eligible to apply. Applicants should note that the next potential opportunity to apply for a Second Chance Act Statewide Adult Recidivism Reduction Strategic Planning grant will be FY 2017.

BJA welcomes applications that involve two or more entities; however, one eligible entity must be the applicant and the others must be proposed as subrecipients. The applicant must be the entity with primary responsibility for administering the funding and managing the entire project.

BJA may elect to make awards for applications submitted under this solicitation in future fiscal years, dependent on the merit of the applications and on the availability of appropriations.

For additional eligibility information, see Section [C. Eligibility Information](#).

### **Deadline**

Applicants must register with [Grants.gov](#) prior to submitting an application. All applications are due to be submitted and in receipt of a successful validation message in Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on March 10, 2015.

All applicants are encouraged to read this [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#).

For additional information, see [How To Apply](#) in section D. Application and Submission Information.

### **Contact Information**

For technical assistance with submitting an application, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726 or 606-545-5035, or via e-mail to [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). The

[Grants.gov](#) Support Hotline hours of operation are 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except federal holidays.

Applicants that experience unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond their control that prevent them from submitting their application by the deadline must e-mail the contact identified below **within 24 hours after the application deadline** and request approval to submit their application. Additional information on reporting technical issues is found under “Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues” in the [How To Apply](#) section.

For assistance with any other requirement of this solicitation, contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) Response Center: toll-free at 1-800-851-3420; via TTY at 301-240-6310 (hearing impaired only); email [responsecenter@ncjrs.gov](mailto:responsecenter@ncjrs.gov); fax to 301-240-5830; or web chat at <https://webcontact.ncjrs.gov/ncjchat/chat.jsp>. The NCJRS Response Center hours of operation are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. eastern time on the solicitation close date.

Grants.gov number assigned to this announcement: BJA-2015-4059

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# **Second Chance Act Statewide Adult Recidivism Reduction Strategic Planning Program CFDA #16.812**

## **A. Program Description**

### **Overview**

The Second Chance Act (Pub. L. 110-199) seeks a comprehensive response to the increasing number of incarcerated adults and juveniles who are released from prison, jail, and juvenile residential facilities and return to their communities. There are currently over 2.2 million individuals serving time in our federal and state prisons, and millions of people cycling through local jails every year. Ninety-five percent of those incarcerated today will eventually be released and will return to communities. The coordination of reentry services for members of Native American tribes is even more complex given that they can return from federal, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), state, local, and tribal facilities. The Second Chance Act Programs are designed to help communities develop and implement comprehensive and collaborative strategies that address the challenges posed by reentry and recidivism reduction.

Developing a reentry approach for reducing recidivism is extremely challenging for even the most sophisticated correctional agency, requiring access to data and service delivery and coordination from multiple systems, including housing, health, employment, education, etc. This solicitation will provide funding for 12-month strategic planning grants during which time state-level participants will convene and work to 1) identify the drivers of recidivism in the state, 2) identify a target population and recidivism reduction goals for the state, 3) review the alignment of existing corrections programs and practices with evidenced-based practices, and 4) develop a plan to meet recidivism reduction goals using evidenced-based practices.

Upon the completion of the Statewide Recidivism Reduction Strategic Plan, states will be invited by BJA to submit applications for implementation grants of up to \$1 million with the potential for two supplemental awards of \$1 million each. The total possible available in implementation funding per state is \$3 million. Future funding decisions for implementation grants will be competitive and will consider the quality and comprehensiveness of the Statewide Recidivism Reduction Strategic Plan. Supplemental funding will be dependent on grantee progress and performance toward goals as well as the availability of funds.

Funding is authorized under the Second Chance Act Demonstration Programs, 42 USC 3797w.

### **Program-Specific Information**

#### **Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables**

The goal of this program is to assist state teams in developing statewide recidivism reduction strategic plans. The objectives for the Second Chance Act Statewide Adult Recidivism Reduction Strategic Planning Program are to:

- Identify drivers of recidivism in the state;
- Identify a target population and recidivism reduction goals for the state;
- Review the alignment of existing corrections programs and practices with evidence-based practices; and

- Develop a strategic plan to meet statewide recidivism reduction goals using evidence-based practices.

At the state level, effective strategies for reducing recidivism and enhancing public safety incorporate the following principles:

- Focus on the individuals most likely to recidivate;
- Use evidenced-based programs proven to work and ensure the delivery of services is high quality;
- Deploy supervision policies and practices that balance sanctions and treatment; and
- Target places where crime and recidivism rates are the highest.

See the National Reentry Resource Center for [Recidivism Reduction Checklists](#), which were developed to help state leaders evaluate strengths and weaknesses in their reentry efforts and develop recidivism reduction plans.

### **Recidivism Definition**

For purposes of this solicitation, recidivism can be defined in accordance with the definition utilized by the applicant agency. This definition must be clearly articulated in the application and evidence of an established historical baseline recidivism rate provided. The applicant agency must document the capacity to continue to collect and maintain relevant data to track the recidivism rate according to the definition provided during the length of the project period and beyond.

### **Mandatory Requirements**

Section 101 of the Second Chance Act outlines the following Mandatory Requirements that must be included in an application to be eligible to secure Section 101 funding. Applicants under this solicitation must demonstrate and complete all of the following:

1. A reentry strategic plan that describes the jurisdiction's long-term reentry strategy, including measurable annual and 5-year performance outcomes, relating to the long-term goals of increasing public safety and reducing recidivism. One goal of the plan shall be a 50 percent reduction in the rate of recidivism over a 5-year period. This goal was established in the original drafting of the Second Chance Act and applicants are urged to establish reasonable recidivism reduction goals for their jurisdiction based on current conditions and drivers.<sup>1</sup> Applicants should share the reentry strategic plan currently in place with the understanding that should a grant be awarded, states, with intensive technical assistance, will work toward a comprehensive data- and research-driven plan for recidivism reduction. Additionally, specific guidance will be provided on how to set reasonable, yet achievable reduction goals during the planning process.
2. A detailed reentry implementation schedule and sustainability plan for the program.
3. Documentation that reflects the establishment of, an ongoing engagement of, a Reentry Task Force comprised of relevant state, tribal, territorial, or local leaders and representatives of relevant agencies, service providers, nonprofit organizations, and other key stakeholders.

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<sup>1</sup> The reentry strategic plan of an applicant that has previously received funding under Section 101 of the Second Chance Act must reflect input from nonprofit organizations, as appropriate and available, and must include performance measures to assess progress toward a 10 percent reduction in recidivism over 2 years.

- The Task Force should examine ways to pool resources and funding streams and share data and best practices in reentry between stakeholder agencies and organizations.
  - The Task Force and the strategic planning requirement above should provide a key opportunity for local policymakers to work together to identify and address local barriers to effective reentry, including barriers that are policy or procedural in nature. (See Mandatory Requirement 10 below.)
4. Discussion of the role of local governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, continuums of care, state or local interagency councils on homelessness, and community stakeholders that will coordinate and collaborate during the planning and implementation of the reentry strategy. The applicant will provide certification of the involvement of such agencies and organizations. These partners and participants in the creation of the reentry strategy should include representatives from the fields of public safety, corrections, housing (including partnerships with public housing authorities), homeless services providers, health, education, substance abuse, children and families, victims' services, employment, and business.
  5. Extensive evidence of collaboration with state and local government agencies overseeing health, mental health, housing, homeless services, child welfare, education, substance abuse, victims services, state child support, and employment services, and with local law enforcement agencies.
  6. An extensive discussion of the role of state corrections departments, community corrections agencies, and local jail corrections systems in ensuring successful reentry of adults leaving incarceration into their communities. Applications must include letters of support from corrections officials responsible for facilities or the reentry population to be served through this project (see "[What an Application Should Include](#)").
  7. Documentation that reflects explicit support of the chief executive officer of the applicant state, territory, or Indian tribe and how this office will remain informed and connected to the activities of the project.
  8. A description of the evidence-based methodology and outcome measures that will be used to evaluate the program and a discussion of how such measurements will provide a valid assessment of the impact of the program. The primary objective of the Second Chance Act is to reduce recidivism. Based upon reliable research findings, there are six fundamental strategies of evidence-based correctional practice that are widely accepted as efficacious in reducing future criminal behavior. These six strategies are outlined in the [Appendix](#). Applicants are required to clearly articulate how these evidence-based strategies are integrated into their program design, and how the program will ensure participants take part in evidence-based services and programs that occur both pre- and post-release.
  9. A description of how the project could be broadly replicated if demonstrated to be effective.
  10. A plan for the analysis of the statutory, regulatory, rules-based, and practice-based hurdles to reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals into the community. (**Note:** this may be integrated into the strategic planning requirement and guided by the local task force discussed above.) BJA encourages applicants to review the database of the American Bar Association (ABA) National Study on the Collateral Consequences of Criminal Convictions, which catalogues statutes and administrative rules that contain a collateral consequence.

The database, available at [www.abacollateralconsequences.org](http://www.abacollateralconsequences.org), will assist attorneys, policymakers, and the public to more easily identify what consequences follow from particular criminal offenses.

11. A baseline recidivism rate for the proposed target population including documentation to support the development of the rate. All grantees will be required to provide a baseline recidivism rate upon award. See the Selection Criteria: Statement of the Problem, on page 23 for more information.

### **Planning and Capacity Building**

Successful applicants will develop a planning and capacity-building approach in order to develop a sound organizational infrastructure to support targeted programmatic interventions which should result in the desired reduction in overall recidivism. Collaborative strategic planning should guide systemic capacity building and eventually lead to the implementation of evidenced-based programmatic interventions targeted at specific reentry population(s) to achieve the desired goal of overall recidivism reduction.

The first step will be the development of a strategic plan which incorporates all key stakeholders required to achieve the desired goal of a reduction in recidivism. The process for developing this plan will be guided by a [Planning and Implementation Guide](#), provided by BJA's technical assistance provider, the National Reentry Resource Center, coordinated by the Council of State Governments Justice Center. This guide will help ensure that grantees meet the requirements outlined below for the planning and capacity-building phase. Once the plan is developed it may require some systemic changes to build the capacity of the applicant to implement the identified desired programmatic interventions.

The comprehensive strategy should include recommended changes in policy and practice, a work plan to implement those changes and build statewide support for them, and a budget associated with this work plan. In discussing this planning and capacity building phase, the applicant should address the following:

- Provide a clear statewide definition of recidivism, an explanation of how that rate is calculated on a regular basis and reported to policymakers periodically so that changes can be routinely and effectively tracked over time, and demonstrate the capability to access and obtain data.
- Identify a realistic, but ambitious, target for reducing recidivism within a 2-year period.
- Demonstrate interest among leaders in state government, including the governor, state legislators, and court officials, in participating on a task force or steering committee to develop and implement a plan to realize this goal of reduced recidivism. The following questions should be addressed: (1) Who will serve on the task force or steering committee, which must include representation of key stakeholders but also be of manageable size, to ensure broad support for a specific goal in recidivism reduction? (2) Who will chair this group? (3) Who will staff it? (4) How often will they meet and over what period of time?

Note: BJA acknowledges that some states will utilize existing reentry councils or task forces for this purpose.

- Review, within the context of the goal set, the state’s strengths and areas for improvement regarding the strategies that research has demonstrated are essential to any comprehensive effort to change criminal behavior and reduce recidivism:
  - Risk/need assessment is used to determine program/service placement, inform the release decision, set supervision conditions and reporting requirements, and inform the response to non-compliance or violation behavior.
  - Programs provided are designed to change criminal behaviors and are grounded in research; quality is reviewed using a structured quality assurance process and steps to improve program quality are taken based on the findings.
  - Effective supervision strategies are used to encourage compliance with conditions of release and to ensure effective responses when someone does not comply with those conditions of release.
  
- Describe what the state will do over a 12-month planning grant period to identify what changes in policy and practice are necessary to improve in the following areas: 1) risk/needs assessment; 2) pre-release planning and service coordination; 3) program quality; and 4) effective supervision.
  
- Demonstrate a commitment to share data and work closely with BJA’s technical assistance provider, the National Reentry Resource Center, coordinated by the Council of State Governments Justice Center, during the strategic planning phase, and if awarded, during the implementation phase.
  
- Demonstrate a commitment, if implementation funds are awarded at a later date, to hire an experienced full-time coordinator to facilitate the development of the state’s implementation project, and provide training to staff on implementation of risk assessment tools and on the importance of using evidenced-based practices.
  
- Describe what, if any, types of intensive technical assistance (which is available to grantees in addition to whatever funding support they receive) would be of particular value to the state as it conducts a thorough review of existing policies and practices and develops its strategic, statewide plan to reduce recidivism.

### **Data Collection and Local Research Partnerships**

Applicants are encouraged to consider a partnership with a local research organization that can assist with data collection, performance measurement, and local evaluations. One resource that applicants may be interested in using is the e-Consortium for University Centers and Researchers for Partnership with Justice Practitioners. The purpose of this e-Consortium is to provide a resource to local, state, federal, and other groups who seek to connect to nearby (or other) university researchers and centers on partnerships and projects that are mutually beneficial to the criminal justice community. The e-Consortium can be found online at [www.gmuconsortium.org/](http://www.gmuconsortium.org/).

### **Technical Assistance Resources**

Intensive and targeted technical assistance will be available from the [National Reentry Resource Center](#) (NRRC) to assist in both the completion of a strategic plan and a diagnosis of any systemic deficits which may need to be rectified, such as training appropriate staff in the use of evidenced-based practices including risk/needs assessments. Through these activities the NRRC will assist with the design of a comprehensive, statewide strategic plan, which will



include a measurable, ambitious, but realistic, goal for reducing recidivism statewide (e.g., reduce recidivism among parolees by 10 percent in 2 years).

### **Collaboration with Other Federal Agencies**

#### OJP Reentry Programs (Adults and Juveniles)

BJA and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) are collaborating closely on the Second Chance Act implementation. BJA and OJJDP will continue to collaborate to ensure that both juvenile and adult reentry efforts are supported. Similarly, both BJA and OJJDP are working with the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) in support of the research and evaluation activities called for in the Act. For more information on BJA's implementation of the Second Chance Act initiatives and Frequently Asked Questions, visit BJA's Second Chance Act web page at [www.bja.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?Program\\_ID=90](http://www.bja.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?Program_ID=90).

BJA and OJJDP are also collaborating on oversight of the [NRRC](#) for the provision of training and technical assistance (TTA) to Second Chance Act grantees. The NRRC, funded by BJA, provides education and TTA to states, tribes, territories, local governments, service providers, nonprofit organizations, and corrections institutions working on reentry.

In the area of reentry of tribal members, BJA and the Federal Workgroup on Corrections completed the [Tribal Law and Order Act \(TLOA\) Long Term Plan to Build and Enhance Tribal Justice Systems](#) (Tribal Justice Plan), which offers recommendations and action steps to support the successful reentry of tribal members.

### **Resources for Civil Legal Aid**

Civil legal assistance can often play a critical role in addressing barriers to successful reintegration. An allowable use of Second Chance Act funds for reentry services includes referral to and payment of legal services related to the purpose of the grant, such as: securing a driver's license, expunging criminal records, litigating inappropriate denials of housing or employment and violations of the Fair Credit Reporting Act, creating and/or modifying child support orders, and other family law services that help stabilize individuals and families. For more information, go to [www.bja.gov/Programs/SecondChanceLegalServicesGuidance.pdf](http://www.bja.gov/Programs/SecondChanceLegalServicesGuidance.pdf). Note: Per the Financial Guide, grant funds cannot be used for fines and penalties.

### **Evidence-Based Programs or Practices**

OJP strongly emphasizes the use of data and evidence in policy making and program development in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services. OJP is committed to:

- improving the quantity and quality of evidence OJP generates;
- integrating evidence into program, practice, and policy decisions within OJP and the field; and
- improving the translation of evidence into practice.

OJP considers programs and practices to be evidence-based when their effectiveness has been demonstrated by causal evidence, generally obtained through one or more outcome evaluations. Causal evidence documents a relationship between an activity or intervention (including technology) and its intended outcome, including measuring the direction and size of a change, and the extent to which a change may be attributed to the activity or intervention. Causal evidence depends on the use of scientific methods to rule out, to the extent possible, alternative explanations for the documented change. The strength of causal evidence, based on the factors described above, will influence the degree to which OJP considers a

program or practice to be evidence-based. The [OJP CrimeSolutions.gov](http://OJP.CrimeSolutions.gov) web site is one resource that applicants may use to find information about evidence-based programs in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services.

## **B. Federal Award Information**

### **Award Amount and Length**

BJA estimates that it will make up to 7 awards of up to \$100,000 each for an estimated total of \$700,000 of funding for a 12-month project period, beginning on October 1, 2015.

### **Future Year Funding: Implementation Awards**

If an applicant receives an FY 2015 planning award under this program, BJA will invite them to submit an application to compete for implementation funding. As early as FY 2016, BJA anticipates making up to 3 total implementation awards, totaling \$1 million each, with possible supplemental awards of \$1 million each in FY 2017 and FY 2018 that will enable states to implement a strategic and tactical plan to address statewide recidivism rates. Due to the competitive nature of this process, it is not anticipated that all FY 2015 planning award recipients will receive competitive FY 2016 Implementation grants.

Important considerations in decisions regarding supplemental funding include, among other factors, the availability of funding, strategic priorities, assessment of the quality of the management of the award (for example, timeliness and quality of progress reports), and assessment of the progress of the work funded under the award.

All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

### **Type of Award<sup>2</sup>**

BJA expects that it will make any award from this solicitation in the form of a grant.

### **Financial Management and System of Internal Controls**

If selected for funding, the award recipient must:

(a) Establish and maintain effective internal control over the federal award that provides reasonable assurance that the non-federal entity is managing the federal award in compliance with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the federal award. These internal controls should be in compliance with guidance in “Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government” issued by the Comptroller General of the United States and the “Internal Control Integrated Framework”, issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO).

(b) Comply with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the federal awards.

(c) Evaluate and monitor the non-federal entity's compliance with statute, regulations and the terms and conditions of federal awards.

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<sup>2</sup> See *generally* 31 U.S.C. §§ 6301-6305 (defines and describes various forms of federal assistance relationships, including grants and cooperative agreements (a type of grant)).

(d) Take prompt action when instances of noncompliance are identified including noncompliance identified in audit findings.

(e) Take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other information the federal awarding agency or pass-through entity designates as sensitive or the non-federal entity considers sensitive consistent with applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding privacy and obligations of confidentiality.

In order to better understand administrative requirements and cost principles, award applicants are encouraged to enroll, at no charge, in the Department of Justice Grants Financial Management Online Training available [here](#).

## **Budget Information**

### **Cost Sharing or Match Requirement (cash or in-kind)**

As required by the [Second Chance Act](#), a match is required for all applications funded under Section 101. Federal funds awarded under this program may not cover more than 50 percent of the total costs of the project. Applicants must identify the source of the 50 percent non-federal portion of the total project costs and how they will use match funds. The recipient of a grant must provide a minimum of 25 percent of the total project cost in cash match, and 25 percent of the total project cost may be matched by making in-kind contributions of goods or services that are directly related to the purpose for which the grant was awarded. Federal funds received and cash match provided by the grantee shall be used to supplement, not supplant, non-federal funds that would otherwise be available for the activities funded under this section.

If a successful applicant's proposed match exceeds the required match amount, and OJP approves the budget, the total match amount incorporated into the approved budget becomes mandatory and subject to audit. (Match is restricted to the same uses of funds as allowed for the federal funds.) Applicants may satisfy this match requirement with either cash or in-kind services.

### **Match Waiver:**

The Attorney General may waive the match requirement upon a determination of fiscal hardship. To be considered for a waiver of match, a letter of request signed by the Authorized Representative must be submitted with the application defining the fiscal hardship. Fiscal hardship may be defined in terms related to reductions in overall correctional budgets, furloughing, or reductions in force of correctional staff or other similar documented actions which have resulted in severe budget reductions. **Detailed information about the documented actions referenced above must be provided with match waiver requests or waivers will not be granted.**

A match waiver request must be submitted as a separate attachment to the application and titled as the "Match Waiver."

Note: The budget detail should distinguish cash from in-kind matched funds using an asterisk to show what percentage of the budget is cash. Once incorporated into the OJP-approved budget, the match becomes mandatory and subject to audit. Further, if a successful applicant's proposed match exceeds the required match amount, and OJP approves the budget, the total match amount incorporated into the approved budget becomes mandatory and subject to audit.

**The applicant must identify the source of the 50 percent non-federal cash portion of the budget and how both cash and in-kind match funds will be used.**

The formula for calculating the match is:

$$\frac{\text{Federal Award Amount}}{\text{Federal Share Percentage}} = \text{Adjusted (Total) Project Costs}$$

$$\text{Required Recipient's Share Percentage} \times \text{Adjusted Project Cost} = \text{Required Match}$$

**Example:** For a federal award amount of \$100,000, match would be calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\$100,000}{50\%} = \$200,000 \quad 50\% \times \$200,000 = \$100,000 \text{ match}$$

For additional cost sharing and match information, see Section [C. Eligibility Information](#)

### **Pre-Agreement Cost Approvals**

OJP does not typically approve pre-agreement costs; an applicant must request and obtain the prior written approval of OJP for all such costs. If approved, pre-agreement costs could be paid from grant funds consistent with a grantee's approved budget, and under applicable cost standards. However, all such costs prior to award and prior to approval of the costs are incurred at the sole risk of an applicant. Generally, no applicant should incur project costs *before* submitting an application requesting federal funding for those costs. Should there be extenuating circumstances that appear to be appropriate for OJP's consideration as pre-agreement costs, the applicant should contact the point of contact listed on the title page of this announcement for details on the requirements for submitting a written request for approval. See the section on Costs Requiring Prior Approval in the [Financial Guide](#), for more information.

### **Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation; Waiver**

With respect to any award of more than \$250,000 made under this solicitation, recipients may not use federal funds to pay total cash compensation (salary plus cash bonuses) to any employee of the award recipient at a rate that exceeds 110 percent of the maximum annual salary payable to a member of the Federal Government's Senior Executive Service (SES) at an agency with a Certified SES Performance Appraisal System for that year.<sup>3</sup> The 2015 salary table for SES employees is available at [www.opm.gov/salary-tables](http://www.opm.gov/salary-tables). Note: A recipient may compensate an employee at a greater rate, provided the amount in excess of this compensation limitation is paid with non-federal funds. (Any such additional compensation will not be considered matching funds where match requirements apply.)

The Assistant Attorney General for OJP may exercise discretion to waive, on an individual basis, the limitation on compensation rates allowable under an award. An applicant requesting a waiver should include a detailed justification in the budget narrative of the application. Unless the applicant submits a waiver request and justification with the application, the applicant should anticipate that OJP will request the applicant to adjust and resubmit the budget.

The justification should include the particular qualifications and expertise of the individual, the uniqueness of the service the individual will provide, the individual's specific knowledge of the

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<sup>3</sup> This limitation on use of award funds does not apply to the non-profit organizations specifically named at Appendix VIII to 2 C.F.R. part 200.

program or project being undertaken with award funds, and a statement explaining that the individual's salary is commensurate with the regular and customary rate for an individual with his/her qualifications and expertise, and for the work to be done.

### **Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs**

OJP strongly encourages applicants that propose to use award funds for any conference-, meeting-, or training-related activity to review carefully – before submitting an application – the OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at [www.ojp.gov/financialguide/PostawardRequirements/chapter15page1.htm](http://www.ojp.gov/financialguide/PostawardRequirements/chapter15page1.htm). OJP policy and guidance (1) encourage minimization of conference, meeting, and training costs; (2) require prior written approval (which may affect project timelines) of most such costs for cooperative agreement recipients and of some such costs for grant recipients; and (3) set cost limits, including a general prohibition of all food and beverage costs.

### **Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable)**

If an applicant proposes a program or activity that would deliver services or benefits to *individuals*, the costs of taking reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to those services or benefits for individuals with limited English proficiency may be allowable. Reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to services or benefits may include interpretation or translation services where appropriate.

For additional information, see the "Civil Rights Compliance" section under "Solicitation Requirements" in the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

## **C. Eligibility Information**

For additional eligibility information, see Title page.

### **Cost Sharing or Match Requirement**

As required by the [Second Chance Act](#), a match is required for all applications funded under Section 101. A grant made under this program may not cover more than 50 percent of the total costs of the project being funded.

For additional information on cost sharing and match requirement, see Section [B. Federal Award Information](#).

### **Limit on Number of Application Submissions**

If an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, BJA will review only the most recent system-validated version submitted. For more information on system-validated versions, see [How To Apply](#).

## **D. Application and Submission Information**

### **What an Application Should Include**

Applicants should anticipate that if they fail to submit an application that contains all of the specified elements, it may negatively affect the review of their application; and, should a decision be made to make an award, it may result in the inclusion of special conditions that

preclude the recipient from accessing or using award funds pending satisfaction of the conditions.

Moreover, applicants should anticipate that applications that are determined to be nonresponsive to the scope of the solicitation, or that do not include the application elements that BJA has designated to be critical, will neither proceed to peer review nor receive further consideration. Under this solicitation, BJA has designated the following application elements as critical: Program Narrative, Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative, and Letter documenting applicant agency executive commitment. Applicants may combine the Budget Narrative and the Budget Detail Worksheet in one document. However, if an applicant submits only one budget document, it must contain **both** narrative and detail information. Please review the “Note on File Names and File Types” under [How To Apply](#) to be sure applications are submitted in permitted formats.

*OJP strongly recommends that applicants use appropriately descriptive file names (e.g., “Program Narrative,” “Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative,” “Timelines,” “Memoranda of Understanding,” “Resumes”) for all attachments. Also, OJP recommends that applicants include resumes in a single file.*

#### **1. Information to Complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)**

The SF-424 is a required standard form used as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications, applications, and related information. Grants.gov and OJP’s Grants Management System (GMS) take information from the applicant’s profile to populate the fields on this form. When selecting “type of applicant,” if the applicant is a for-profit entity, select “For-Profit Organization” or “Small Business” (as applicable).

**Intergovernmental Review:** This funding opportunity (program) **is not** subject to [Executive Order 12372](#). (In completing the SF-424, applicants are to make the appropriate selection in response to question 19 to indicate that the “Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.”)

#### **2. Project Abstract**

Applications should include a high-quality project abstract that summarizes the proposed project in 400 words or less. Project abstracts should be—

- written for a general public audience.
- submitted as a separate attachment with “Project Abstract” as part of its file name.
- single-spaced, using a standard 12-point font (Times New Roman) with 1-inch margins.

As a separate attachment, the project abstract will **not** count against the page limit for the program narrative.

All project abstracts should follow the detailed template available at [ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/ProjectAbstractTemplate.pdf](http://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/ProjectAbstractTemplate.pdf)

BJA recommends that the abstract be submitted as a Microsoft Word document.

**Permission to Share Project Abstract with the Public:** It is unlikely that BJA will be able to fund all promising applications submitted under this solicitation, but it may have the opportunity to share information with the public regarding promising but unfunded applications, for example, through a listing on a webpage available to the public. The intent

of this public posting would be to allow other possible funders to become aware of such proposals.

In the project abstract template, applicants are asked to indicate whether they give OJP permission to share their project abstract (including contact information) with the public. Granting (or failing to grant) this permission will not affect OJP’s funding decisions, and, if the application is not funded, granting permission will not guarantee that abstract information will be shared, nor will it guarantee funding from any other source.

**Note:** OJP may choose not to list a project that otherwise would have been included in a listing of promising but unfunded applications, should the abstract fail to meet the format and content requirements noted above and outlined in the project abstract template.

### 3. Program Narrative

The program narrative must be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point font (Times New Roman is preferred) with no less than 1-inch margins, and must not exceed 15 pages. Number pages “1 of 15,” “2 of 15,” etc.

If the program narrative fails to comply with these length-related restrictions, BJA may consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

The program narrative must respond to the solicitation and include sections a–e below, in order, as part of the program narrative. See “[Selection Criteria](#)” for more information about what each section should include.

- a. Statement of the Problem
- b. Project Design and Implementation
- c. Capabilities and Competencies
- d. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation’s Performance Measures  
To assist the Department with fulfilling its responsibilities under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), Public Law 103-62, and the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010, Public Law 111–352, applicants that receive funding under this solicitation must regularly provide data to measure the results of their work done under this solicitation. Post award, OJP will require any award recipient, post award, to provide the data requested in the “Data Grantee Provides” column so that OJP can calculate values for the “Performance Measures” column. Recipients will be required to submit quarterly performance metrics through BJA’s online Performance Measurement Tool (PMT), located at [www.bjaperformancetools.org](http://www.bjaperformancetools.org). Performance measures for this solicitation are as follows:

Objective	Measure	Data Grantee Provides
<b>Phase 1: Planning and Capacity Building</b>	Submit a Reentry Strategic Plan description	Provide updates on the completion of key components of the Reentry Strategic Plan

Develop a reentry strategic plan that will provide participants with appropriate evidence-based services—including addressing individual criminogenic needs—based on a reentry plan that relies on a risk/needs assessment that reflects the risk of recidivism for that participant.	Reentry strategic plan status	Describe any updates or modifications concerning the reentry plan implementation schedule and sustainability plan for the program
	Data collection plan status	Describe any updates or modifications to the data collection plan and policy including how data will be collected and what indicators will be utilized upon implementation. Describe how data and program outcomes will be obtained by program managers and service providers
	Reentry task force composition	Provide the current status of the establishment of a Reentry Task Force. Include a description of relevant leaders, representatives of agencies, service providers, nonprofit organizations, and other key stakeholders
	Reentry population	Describe the target population including relevant information on demographics, risk level, and offense types
	Anticipated capacity	Enter the number of participants expected to be admitted to the reentry program per year of the grant
	Risk and needs assessment	A. What risk assessment instrument will be used, if any? B. Describe how participants will be assessed
	Baseline recidivism	Describe how a baseline recidivism rate will be calculated for the proposed target population
	Recidivism rate reduction	Discuss what level of reduction in recidivism you would consider to be success. Include a description of the follow-up period length (post-release), and the recidivism rate targeted such as arrest, conviction, revocation, and/or incarceration

BJA does not require applicants to submit performance measures data with their application. Performance measures are included as an alert that BJA will require successful applicants to submit specific data as part of their reporting requirements. For the application, applicants should indicate an understanding of these requirements and discuss how they will gather the required data, should they receive funding.

**Note on Project Evaluations**

Applicants that propose to use funds awarded through this solicitation to conduct project evaluations should be aware that certain project evaluations (such as systematic investigations designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge) may constitute “research” for purposes of applicable DOJ human subjects protection regulations. However, project evaluations that are intended only to generate internal improvements to a program or service, or are conducted only to meet OJP’s performance measure data reporting requirements likely do not constitute “research.” Applicants should provide sufficient information for OJP to determine whether the



particular project they propose would either intentionally or unintentionally collect and/or use information in such a way that it meets the DOJ regulatory definition of research.

Research, for the purposes of human subjects protections for OJP-funded programs, is defined as, “a systematic investigation, including research development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge” 28 C.F.R. § 46.102(d). For additional information on determining whether a proposed activity would constitute research, see the decision tree to assist applicants on the “Research and the Protection of Human Subjects” section of the [OJP Funding Resource Center](http://www.ojp.gov/funding/Explore/SolicitationRequirements/EvidenceResearchEvaluationRequirements.htm) web page ([www.ojp.gov/funding/Explore/SolicitationRequirements/EvidenceResearchEvaluationRequirements.htm](http://www.ojp.gov/funding/Explore/SolicitationRequirements/EvidenceResearchEvaluationRequirements.htm)). Applicants whose proposals may involve a research or statistical component also should review the “Data Privacy and Confidentiality Requirements” section on that web page.

e. Impact/Outcomes, Evaluation, and Sustainment

#### **4. Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative**

##### **a. Budget Detail Worksheet**

A sample Budget Detail Worksheet can be found at [www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/BudgetDetailWorksheet.pdf](http://www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/BudgetDetailWorksheet.pdf). Applicants that submit their budget in a different format should include the budget categories listed in the sample budget worksheet:

- Personnel
- Fringe Benefits
- Travel
- Equipment
- Supplies
- Consultants/Contracts
- Other Costs
- Indirect Costs

For questions pertaining to budget and examples of allowable and unallowable costs, see the Financial Guide at [www.ojp.gov/financialguide/index.htm](http://www.ojp.gov/financialguide/index.htm).

Applicants must show all computations. The budget detail worksheet should provide itemized break downs of all costs. If the computations do not show sufficient amount of detail or are incorrect, the budgets will be returned for corrections.

The budget summary page must reflect the amounts in the budget categories as included in the budget detail worksheet. These amounts should mirror the amounts in the budget narrative.

Applicants must budget funding to travel to DOJ-sponsored grant meetings. Applicants should estimate the costs of travel and accommodations for three staff to attend one meeting in Washington, DC. All expenses must be reasonable, allowable, and necessary to the project. The estimates must provide a breakdown of all costs and adhere to the federal per diem.

### **Unallowable Uses for Award Funds**

In addition to the unallowable costs identified in the [Financial Guide](#), award funds may not be used for the following:

- Prizes/rewards/entertainment/trinkets (or any type of monetary incentive)
- Client stipends
- Gift cards
- Vehicles
- Food and beverage

For questions pertaining to budget and examples of allowable and unallowable costs, see the Financial Guide at [www.ojp.gov/financialguide/index.htm](http://www.ojp.gov/financialguide/index.htm).

See "[Selection Criteria](#)" for more detail on what a budget for the Statewide Adult Recidivism Reduction Strategic Planning Program should include.

#### **b. Budget Narrative**

The budget narrative should thoroughly and clearly describe every category of expense listed in the Budget Detail Worksheet. OJP expects proposed budgets to be complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities).

Applicants should demonstrate in their budget narratives how they will maximize cost effectiveness of grant expenditures. Budget narratives should generally describe cost effectiveness in relation to potential alternatives and the goals of the project. For example, a budget narrative should detail why planned in-person meetings are necessary, or how technology and collaboration with outside organizations could be used to reduce costs, without compromising quality.

The narrative should be mathematically sound and correspond with the information and figures provided in the Budget Detail Worksheet. The narrative should explain how the applicant estimated and calculated all costs, and how they are relevant to the completion of the proposed project. The narrative may include tables for clarification purposes but need not be in a spreadsheet format. As with the Budget Detail Worksheet, the Budget Narrative should be broken down by year.

#### **c. Non-Competitive Procurement Contracts In Excess of Simplified Acquisition Threshold**

If an applicant proposes to make one or more non-competitive procurements of products or services, where the non-competitive procurement will exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (also known as the small purchase threshold), which is currently set at \$150,000, the application should address the considerations outlined in the [Financial Guide](#).

#### **d. Pre-Agreement Cost Approvals**

For information on pre-agreement costs, see Section [B. Federal Award Information](#).

### **5. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)**

Indirect costs are allowed only if the applicant has a current federally approved indirect cost rate. (This requirement does not apply to units of local government.) Attach a copy of the federally approved indirect cost rate agreement to the application. Applicants that do not

have an approved rate may request one through their cognizant federal agency, which will review all documentation and approve a rate for the applicant organization, or, if the applicant's accounting system permits, costs may be allocated in the direct cost categories. For the definition of Cognizant Federal Agency, see the "Glossary of Terms" in the [Financial Guide](#). For assistance with identifying your cognizant agency, please contact the Customer Service Center at 1-800-458-0786 or at [ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov](mailto:ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov). If DOJ is the cognizant federal agency, applicants may obtain information needed to submit an indirect cost rate proposal at [www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/IndirectCosts.pdf](http://www.ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/IndirectCosts.pdf).

#### **6. Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable)**

Tribes, tribal organizations, or third parties proposing to provide direct services or assistance to residents on tribal lands should include in their applications a resolution, a letter, affidavit, or other documentation, as appropriate, that certifies that the applicant has the legal authority from the tribe(s) to implement the proposed project on tribal lands. In those instances when an organization or consortium of tribes applies for a grant on behalf of a tribe or multiple specific tribes, the application should include appropriate legal documentation, as described above, from all tribes that would receive services or assistance under the grant. A consortium of tribes for which existing consortium bylaws allow action without support from all tribes in the consortium (i.e., without an authorizing resolution or comparable legal documentation from each tribal governing body) may submit, instead, a copy of its consortium bylaws with the application.

#### **7. Applicant Disclosure of High Risk Status**

Applicants are to disclose whether they are currently designated high risk by another federal grant making agency. This includes any status requiring additional oversight by the federal agency due to past programmatic or financial concerns. If an applicant is designated high risk by another federal grant making agency, you must email the following information to [OJPComplianceReporting@usdoj.gov](mailto:OJPComplianceReporting@usdoj.gov) at the time of application submission:

- The federal agency that currently designated the applicant as high risk;
- Date the applicant was designated high risk;
- The high risk point of contact name, phone number, and email address, from that federal agency; and
- Reasons for the high risk status.

OJP seeks this information to ensure appropriate federal oversight of any grant award. Unlike the Excluded Parties List, this high risk information does not disqualify any organization from receiving an OJP award. However, additional grant oversight may be included, if necessary, in award documentation.

#### **8. Additional Attachments**

- a. Letter from Applicant Agency Executive** demonstrating agency commitment to strategic planning period.
- b. Project Timeline** with each project goal, related objective, activity, expected completion date, and responsible person or organization.
- c. Position Description(s)** for key position(s) and **Resume(s)** for personnel in those positions.
- d. Letters of Support/ Memoranda of Agreement** from all key partners detailing the commitment to work with the applicant to promote the mission of the project.

**e. Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications**

Applicants are to disclose whether they have pending applications for federally funded grants or subgrants (including cooperative agreements) that include requests for funding to support the same project being proposed under this solicitation and will cover the identical cost items outlined in the budget narrative and worksheet in the application under this solicitation. The disclosure should include both direct applications for federal funding (e.g., applications to federal agencies) and indirect applications for such funding (e.g., applications to State agencies that will subaward federal funds).

OJP seeks this information to help avoid any inappropriate duplication of funding. Leveraging multiple funding sources in a complementary manner to implement comprehensive programs or projects is encouraged and is not seen as inappropriate duplication.

Applicants that have pending applications as described above are to provide the following information about pending applications submitted within the last 12 months:

- the federal or state funding agency
- the solicitation name/project name
- the point of contact information at the applicable funding agency.

Federal or State Funding Agency	Solicitation Name/Project Name	Name/Phone/E-mail for Point of Contact at Funding Agency
DOJ/COPS	COPS Hiring Program	Jane Doe, 202/000-0000; jane.doe@usdoj.gov
HHS/ Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration	Drug Free Communities Mentoring Program/ North County Youth Mentoring Program	John Doe, 202/000-0000; john.doe@hhs.gov

Applicants should include the table as a **separate attachment**, with the file name **“Disclosure of Pending Applications,”** to their application. Applicants that do not have pending applications as described above are to include a statement to this effect in the separate attachment page (e.g., “[Applicant Name on SF-424] does not have pending applications submitted within the last 12 months for federally funded grants or subgrants (including cooperative agreements) that include requests for funding to support the same project being proposed under this solicitation and will cover the identical cost items outlined in the budget narrative and worksheet in the application under this solicitation.”).

**9. Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire**

In accordance with [2 CFR 200.205](#), federal agencies must have in place a framework for evaluating the risks posed by applicants before they receive a Federal award. To facilitate part of this risk evaluation, **all** applicants (other than an individual) are to download, complete, and submit this [form](#).

**10. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**

All applicants must complete this information. Applicants that expend any funds for lobbying activities are to provide the detailed information requested on the form Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL). Applicants that do not expend any funds for lobbying activities are to enter “N/A” in the text boxes for item 10 (“a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant” and “b. Individuals Performing Services”).

## How To Apply

Applicants must register in, and submit applications through Grants.gov, a “one-stop storefront” to find federal funding opportunities and apply for funding. Find complete instructions on how to register and submit an application at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Applicants that experience technical difficulties during this process should call the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at **800-518-4726** or **606-545-5035**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except federal holidays. Registering with Grants.gov is a one-time process; however, **processing delays may occur, and it can take several weeks** for first-time registrants to receive confirmation and a user password. OJP encourages applicants to **register several weeks before** the application submission deadline. In addition, OJP urges applicants to submit applications 72 hours prior to the application due date to allow time to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov, and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

BJA strongly encourages all prospective applicants to sign up for Grants.gov email notifications regarding this solicitation. If this solicitation is cancelled or modified, individuals who sign up with Grants.gov for updates will be automatically notified.

**Note on File Names and File Types:** Grants.gov only permits the use of certain specific characters in names of attachment files. Valid file names may include only the characters shown in the table below. Grants.gov is designed to reject any application that includes an attachment(s) with a file name that contains any characters not shown in the table below.

Characters	Special Characters		
Upper case (A – Z)	Parenthesis ( )	Curly braces { }	Square brackets [ ]
Lower case (a – z)	Ampersand (&)	Tilde (~)	Exclamation point (!)
Underscore ( _ )	Comma ( , )	Semicolon ( ; )	Apostrophe ( ‘ )
Hyphen ( - )	At sign ( @ )	Number sign ( # )	Dollar sign ( \$ )
Space	Percent sign ( % )	Plus sign ( + )	Equal sign ( = )
Period ( . )	<b>When using the ampersand (&amp;) in XML, applicants must use the “&amp;amp;” format.</b>		

Grants.gov is designed to forward successfully submitted applications to OJP’s Grants Management System (GMS).

**GMS does not accept executable file types as application attachments.** These disallowed file types include, but are not limited to, the following extensions: “.com,” “.bat,” “.exe,” “.vbs,” “.cfg,” “.dat,” “.db,” “.dbf,” “.dll,” “.ini,” “.log,” “.ora,” “.sys,” and “.zip.” GMS may reject applications with files that use these extensions. It is important to allow time to change the type of file(s) if the application is rejected.

All applicants are required to complete the following steps:

OJP may not make a federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the federal awarding agency is ready to make a federal award, the federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

- 1. Acquire a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number.** In general, the Office of Management and Budget requires that all applicants (other than individuals) for federal

funds include a DUNS number in their applications for a new award or a supplement to an existing award. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and differentiating entities receiving federal funds. The identifier is used for tracking purposes and to validate address and point of contact information for federal assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. The DUNS number will be used throughout the grant life cycle. Obtaining a DUNS number is a free, one-time activity. Call Dun and Bradstreet at 866–705–5711 to obtain a DUNS number or apply online at [www.dnb.com](http://www.dnb.com). A DUNS number is usually received within 1-2 business days.

- 2. Acquire registration with the System for Award Management (SAM).** SAM is the repository for standard information about federal financial assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. OJP requires all applicants (other than individuals) for federal financial assistance to maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Applicants must be registered in SAM to successfully register in Grants.gov. Applicants must **update or renew their SAM registration annually** to maintain an active status.

Applications cannot be successfully submitted in Grants.gov until Grants.gov receives the SAM registration information. **The information transfer from SAM to Grants.gov can take up to 48 hours.** OJP recommends that the applicant register or renew registration with SAM as early as possible.

Information about SAM registration procedures can be accessed at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov).

- 3. Acquire an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and a Grants.gov username and password.** Complete the AOR profile on Grants.gov and create a username and password. The applicant organization's DUNS number must be used to complete this step. For more information about the registration process, go to [www.grants.gov/applicants/get\\_registered.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp).
- 4. Acquire confirmation for the AOR from the E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC).** The E-Biz POC at the applicant organization must log into Grants.gov to confirm the applicant organization's AOR. Note that an organization can have more than one AOR.
- 5. Search for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov.** Use the following identifying information when searching for the funding opportunity on Grants.gov. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number for this solicitation is 16.812, titled "Second Chance Act Reentry Initiative," and the funding opportunity number is BJA-2015-4059.
- 6. Submit a valid application consistent with this solicitation by following the directions in Grants.gov.** Within 24–48 hours after submitting the electronic application, the applicant should receive two notifications from Grants.gov. The first will confirm the receipt of the application and the second will state whether the application has been successfully validated, or rejected due to errors, with an explanation. It is possible to first receive a message indicating that the application is received and then receive a rejection notice a few minutes or hours later. Submitting well ahead of the deadline provides time to correct the problem(s) that caused the rejection. **Important:** OJP urges applicants to submit applications **at least 72 hours prior** to the application due date to allow time to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov, and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

Click [here](#) for further details on DUNS, SAM, and Grants.gov registration steps and timeframes.

### **Note: Duplicate Applications**

If an applicant submits multiple versions of the same application, BJA will review only the most recent system-validated version submitted. See Note on File Names and File Types under [How To Apply](#).

### **Experiencing Unforeseen Grants.gov Technical Issues**

Applicants that experience unforeseen Grants.gov technical issues beyond their control that prevent them from submitting their application by the deadline must contact the Grants.gov [Customer Support Hotline](#) or the [SAM Help Desk](#) to report the technical issue and receive a tracking number. Then applicant must e-mail the BJA contact identified in the Contact Information section on page 2 **within 24 hours after the application deadline** and request approval to submit their application. The e-mail must describe the technical difficulties, and include a timeline of the applicant's submission efforts, the complete grant application, the applicant's DUNS number, and any Grants.gov Help Desk or SAM tracking number(s). **Note: BJA does not automatically approve requests.** After the program office reviews the submission, and contacts the Grants.gov or SAM Help Desks to validate the reported technical issues, OJP will inform the applicant whether the request to submit a late application has been approved or denied. If OJP determines that the applicant failed to follow all required procedures, which resulted in an untimely application submission, OJP will deny the applicant's request to submit their application.

The following conditions are generally insufficient to justify late submissions:

- failure to register in SAM or Grants.gov in sufficient time
- failure to follow Grants.gov instructions on how to register and apply as posted on its Web site
- failure to follow each instruction in the OJP solicitation
- technical issues with the applicant's computer or information technology environment, including firewalls.

**Notifications regarding known technical problems with Grants.gov, if any, are posted at the top of the OJP funding web page at [www.ojp.gov/funding/Explore/CurrentFundingOpportunities.htm](http://www.ojp.gov/funding/Explore/CurrentFundingOpportunities.htm).**

## **E. Application Review Information**

### **Selection Criteria**

#### **1. Statement of the Problem (15 percent)**

- Clearly define the scope of the problem which the proposed project seeks to impact.
- Provide a clear statewide definition of recidivism and an explanation of how that rate is calculated on a regular basis and reported to policymakers periodically so that changes can be routinely and effectively tracked over time. Applicant must identify their current rate of recidivism, as well as explain how they calculated the rate.
- Provide a description of the state's recidivism reduction strategy to date.

- Describe the state's current ability to target supervision and resources consistent with individuals' risk and need level.
- Describe the state's current ability to ensure supervision and service (housing, employment, treatment, education) quality, consistency, timing, and dosage are appropriate.
- Describe the geographic areas to which the highest concentration of released prisoners return.
- Provide information that clearly articulates evidence of an established historical baseline recidivism rate and how the applicant will document the capacity to continue to collect and maintain relevant data to track the recidivism rate according to the definition provided during the length of the project period and beyond.

## **2. Program Design and Implementation (35 percent)**

- Clearly articulate the recidivism reduction goal established for this project.
- Describe the data sets required to be accessed during the planning project period.
- Address the Planning and Capacity Building criteria outlined on pages 7-8.
- Present a statewide strategic planning process, which will include development of a measurable, ambitious but realistic, goal for reducing recidivism statewide (e.g., reduce recidivism among parolees by 10 percent in 2 years). The comprehensive strategy should include recommended changes in policy and practice, and a work plan to implement those changes and build statewide support for them.
- Describe how a target population will be identified for service delivery and describe how services will be delivered
- Address all of the Mandatory Requirements as discussed on pages 5-7.

## **3. Capabilities and Competencies (25 percent)**

- Describe the management structure and staffing of the project, identifying the agency responsible for the project and the project coordinator.
- Demonstrate the executive leadership commitment to the development and adherence to a Statewide Recidivism Reduction Plan. Applicants should consider all agencies and major stakeholders necessary to plan and implement.
- Demonstrate the capability of the implementing agency and collaborative partners to implement the project, including gathering and analyzing information, developing a plan, and evaluating the program.

## **4. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures (5 percent)**

- Describe the process for assessing the project's effectiveness through the collection and



reporting of the required performance metrics data (see “Performance Measures,” page **Error! Bookmark not defined.5**).

#### **5. Impact/Outcomes, Evaluation, and Sustainment (10 percent)**

- Identify goals and objectives for the strategic planning process, including development, implementation, and outcomes.
- Describe how performance will be documented, monitored, and evaluated, and identify the impact of the strategy once implemented.
- Outline what data and information will be collected and describe how evaluation and collaborative partnerships will be leveraged to build long-term support and resources for the program.
- Discuss how this effort will be integrated into the state justice system plans or commitments, how the program will be financially sustained after federal funding ends, and the expected long-term results for the program.

#### **5. Budget (10 percent)**

- Submit a budget that is complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities). Budget narratives should generally demonstrate how applicants will maximize cost effectiveness of grant expenditures. Budget narratives should demonstrate cost effectiveness in relation to potential alternatives and the goals of the project.<sup>4</sup>
- Include an appropriate percent of the total grant award for research, data collection, performance measurement, and performance assessment. There is no minimum requirement regarding what constitutes an appropriate percent; however, the budget designated should be adequate to fund the activities outlined in the application. The budget narrative should explain how the amount dedicated to these activities is adequate to support the proposed activities.
- Applicants must budget funding to travel to one DOJ-sponsored grant meeting. Applicants should estimate the costs of travel and accommodations for a team of three to attend one meeting for three days each in Washington D.C.

#### **Review Process**

OJP is committed to ensuring a fair and open process for awarding grants. BJA reviews the application to make sure that the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, and achievable, as well as consistent with the solicitation.

Peer reviewers will review the applications submitted under this solicitation that meet basic minimum requirements. For purposes of assessing whether applicants have met basic minimum requirements, OJP screens applications for compliance with specified program requirements to help determine which applications should proceed to further consideration for award. Although

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<sup>4</sup> Generally speaking, a reasonable cost is a cost that, in its nature or amount, does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the costs.

program requirements may vary, the following are common requirements applicable to all solicitations for funding under OJP grant programs:

- Applications must be submitted by an eligible type of applicant
- Applications must request funding within programmatic funding constraints (if applicable)
- Applications must be responsive to the scope of the solicitation
- Applications must include all items designated as “critical elements”
- Applicants will be checked against the General Services Administration’s Excluded Parties List

For a list of critical elements, see “What an Application Should Include” under [Section D. Application and Submission Information](#).

BJA may use internal peer reviewers, external peer reviewers, or a combination, to assess applications meeting basic minimum requirements on technical merit using the solicitation’s selection criteria. An external peer reviewer is an expert in the subject matter of a given solicitation who is not a current DOJ employee. An internal reviewer is a current DOJ employee who is well-versed or has expertise in the subject matter of this solicitation. A peer review panel will evaluate, score, and rate applications that meet basic minimum requirements. Peer reviewers’ ratings and any resulting recommendations are advisory only, although their views are considered carefully. In addition to peer review ratings, considerations for award recommendations and decisions may include, but are not limited to, underserved populations, geographic diversity, strategic priorities, past performance under prior BJA and OJP awards, and available funding.

OJP reviews applications for potential discretionary awards to evaluate the risks posed by applicants before they receive an award. This review may include but is not limited to the following:

1. Financial stability and fiscal integrity
2. Quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards prescribed in the Financial Guide
3. History of performance
4. Reports and findings from audits
5. The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-federal entities
6. Proposed costs to determine if the Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative accurately explain project costs, and whether those costs are reasonable, necessary, and allowable under applicable federal cost principles and agency regulations

Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, all final award decisions will be made by the Assistant Attorney General, who may consider factors including, but not limited to, peer review ratings, underserved populations, geographic diversity, strategic priorities, past performance, and available funding when making awards.

## F. Federal Award Administration Information

### Federal Award Notices

OJP award notification will be sent from GMS. Recipients will be required to log in; accept any outstanding assurances and certifications on the award; designate a financial point of contact; and review, sign, and accept the award. The award acceptance process involves physical signature of the award document by the authorized representative and the scanning of the fully-executed award document to OJP.

### Administrative, National Policy, and other Legal Requirements

If selected for funding, in addition to implementing the funded project consistent with the agency-approved project proposal and budget, the recipient must comply with award terms and conditions, and other legal requirements, including but not limited to OMB, DOJ or other federal regulations which will be included in the award, incorporated into the award by reference, or are otherwise applicable to the award. OJP strongly encourages prospective applicants to review the information pertaining to these requirements **prior** to submitting an application. To assist applicants and recipients in accessing and reviewing this information, OJP has placed pertinent information on its [Solicitation Requirements](#) page of the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

Please note in particular the following two forms, which applicants must accept in GMS prior to the receipt of any award funds, as each details legal requirements with which applicants must provide specific assurances and certifications of compliance. Applicants may view these forms in the Apply section of the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#) and are strongly encouraged to review and consider them carefully prior to making an application for OJP grant funds.

- [Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements](#)
- [Standard Assurances](#)

Upon grant approval, OJP electronically transmits (via GMS) the award document to the prospective award recipient. In addition to other award information, the award document contains award terms and conditions that specify national policy requirements<sup>5</sup> with which recipients of federal funding must comply; uniform administrative requirements, cost principles, and audit requirements; and program-specific terms and conditions required based on applicable program (statutory) authority or requirements set forth in OJP solicitations and program announcements, and other requirements which may be attached to appropriated funding. For example, certain efforts may call for special requirements, terms, or conditions relating to intellectual property, data/information-sharing or -access, or information security; or audit requirements, expenditures and milestones, or publications and/or press releases. OJP also may place additional terms and conditions on an award based on its risk assessment of the applicant, or for other reasons it determines necessary to fulfill the goals and objectives of the program.

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<sup>5</sup> See *generally* 2 C.F.R. 200.300 (provides a general description of national policy requirements typically applicable to recipients of Federal awards, including the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA)).

Prospective applicants may access and review the text of mandatory conditions OJP includes in all OJP awards, as well as the text of certain other conditions, such as administrative conditions, via [Mandatory Award Terms and Conditions](#) page of the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

### **General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements**

Recipients must submit quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, final financial and progress reports, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200. Future awards and fund drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent.

Special Reporting requirements may be required by OJP depending on the statutory, legislative or administrative obligations of the recipient or the program.

## **G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)**

For additional Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s), see the Title page.

For additional contact information for Grants.gov, see the Title page. **Error! Reference source not found.**

## **H. Other Information**

### **Provide Feedback to OJP**

To assist OJP in improving its application and award processes, we encourage applicants to provide feedback on this solicitation, the application submission process, and/or the application review/peer review process. Provide feedback to [OJPSolicitationFeedback@usdoj.gov](mailto:OJPSolicitationFeedback@usdoj.gov).

**IMPORTANT:** This e-mail is for feedback and suggestions only. Replies are **not** sent from this mailbox. If you have specific questions on any program or technical aspect of the solicitation, **you must** directly contact the appropriate number or e-mail listed on the front of this solicitation document. These contacts are provided to help ensure that you can directly reach an individual who can address your specific questions in a timely manner.

If you are interested in being a reviewer for other OJP grant applications, please e-mail your resume to [ojppeerreview@lmbps.com](mailto:ojppeerreview@lmbps.com). The OJP Solicitation Feedback email account will not forward your resume. **Note:** Neither you nor anyone else from your organization can be a peer reviewer in a competition in which you or your organization have submitted an application.

**Application Checklist**  
**FY 2015 Second Chance Act Statewide Adult Recidivism Reduction**  
**Strategic Planning Program**

This application checklist has been created to assist in developing an application.

**What an Applicant Should Do:**

*Prior to Registering in Grants.gov:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire a DUNS Number (see page 21)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire or renew registration with SAM (see page 22)

*To Register with Grants.gov:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password (see page 22)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC (see page 22)

*To Find Funding Opportunity:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Search for the Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov (see page 22)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Download Funding Opportunity and Application Package
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sign up for Grants.gov email notifications (optional) (see page 21)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#)

*After application submission, receive Grants.gov email notifications that:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ (1) application has been received,
- \_\_\_\_\_ (2) application has either been successfully validated or rejected with errors (see page 22)

*If no Grants.gov receipt, and validation or error notifications are received:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ contact the NCJRS Response Center regarding experiencing technical difficulties (see page 2)

**General Requirements:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Review the [Solicitation Requirements](#) in the OJP Funding Resource Center.

**Scope Requirement:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ The federal amount requested is within the allowable limit(s) of \$100,000.

**Eligibility Requirement:** Eligible applicants are limited to a state correctional agency (the state department of corrections or department of community corrections), or the State Administering Agency (SAA). Agencies from states that were awarded Second Chance Act Statewide Recidivism Reduction grants in fiscal year (FY) 2012 or FY 2013 may apply. Agencies that were awarded Second Chance Act Recidivism Reduction Strategic Plan Implementation grants in FY 14 are NOT eligible to apply.

**What an Application Should Include:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) (see page 13)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Project Abstract (see page 14)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Program Narrative (see page 15)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Budget Detail Worksheet (see page 17)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*Budget Narrative (see page 18)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Employee Compensation Waiver request and justification (if applicable) (see page 12)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at [ojp.gov/financialguide/PostawardRequirements/chapter15page1.htm](http://ojp.gov/financialguide/PostawardRequirements/chapter15page1.htm) (see page 13)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) (see page 20)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) (see page 18)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) (see page 19)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Disclosure of High Risk Status (see page 19)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Attachments
  - \_\_\_\_\_ \*Letter from Applicant Agency (see page 19)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Project Timeline (see page 19)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Position Description(s) and Resume(s) (see page 19)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Letters of Support/ Memoranda of Agreement (see page 19)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Disclosure of Pending Applications (see page 20)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (if applicable) (see page 20)

\*These elements are the basic minimum requirements for applications. Applications that do not include these elements shall neither proceed to peer review nor receive further consideration by BJA.

## **Appendix**

### **Second Chance Act Grantees: What You Need to Know to Ensure Your Program Is Built on Principles of Effective Practice**

#### **Fundamental Principles of Evidence-Based Correctional Practice**

The primary objective of the Second Chance Act is to reduce recidivism. Based upon reliable research findings, there are six fundamental principles of evidence-based correctional practice that are widely accepted as strategies to reduce future criminal behavior.

- 1) Objectively Assess Criminogenic Risks and Needs:** Maintain a comprehensive system to establish risk screening and needs assessment. The actuarial assessment of offenders—in a reliable and valid manner—is essential for the effective supervision and treatment of people returning from prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities (Andrews and Bonta, 2010). The levels of supervision and services for individual offenders must be matched to individual risk and need.
- 2) Enhance Intrinsic Motivation:** Staff must be able to relate to offenders in interpersonally sensitive and constructive ways in order to enhance intrinsic motivation in offenders. Research findings suggest that motivational interviewing or other cognitive-behavioral communication techniques can effectively enhance the offender’s desire to initiate and maintain behavior changes (Miller and Rollnick, 2002; Miller and Mount, 2001).
- 3) Target Higher-Risk Offenders:** Prioritize primary supervision and treatment resources for offenders who are at higher risk to re-offend. Consistent findings from a wide variety of recidivism studies show that supervision and treatment resources focused on lower-risk offenders produce little if any positive effect on the rates of subsequent criminal behavior (McGuire, 2001, 2002) and can at times increase the risk level of low-risk offenders. Maximum benefit is gained only when intervention resources are directed to moderate- and high-risk offenders.
- 4) Address Offenders’ Greatest Criminogenic Needs.** The greatest emphasis must be placed on addressing those needs which are most closely associated with criminal behavior. When the factors that lead the offender to commit crimes are effectively addressed, that person is less likely to commit crime (Elliot, 2001).
- 5) Use Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions:** These strategies are focused on changing the offender’s thinking patterns in order to change future behavior. The most effective interventions provide opportunities for participants to practice new behavior patterns and skills with feedback from program staff. (Andrews and Bonta, 2010)
- 6) Determine Dosage and Intensity of Services:** Higher-risk offenders require significantly more structure and services than lower-risk offenders. High-risk offenders should receive a minimum of 300 hours of cognitive-based interventions, moderate-risk offenders should receive a minimum of 200 hours, and low-risk offenders should receive a minimum of 100 hours of cognitive-based interventions. Additionally, during the initial three to nine months post-release, 40%–70% of high-risk offenders’ free time needs to be occupied with delineated routine and appropriate services (Bourgon and Armstrong, 2006; Latessa, 2004; Gendreau and Goggin, 1995).

### **Important Considerations from the Research:**

- Correctional staff members need to work with offenders to ensure they have the tools needed for success in the community.
- Correctional and community staff members must understand the importance of working with ***moderate- and high-risk*** offenders rather than low-risk offenders in order to demonstrate that their program can decrease recidivism.
- The most effective organizational-change strategies involve supervision and coaching of staff to reinforce the expected way of doing business—training alone is not sufficient.

### **Questions to Ask as You Launch Your Program:**

- Who are you targeting for your program?
- Do the risk and needs of your target population match the services and supports you have funded through your Second Chance grant, or you are proposing to fund through your Second Chance grant application?
- When and how are the risks and needs of your target population assessed?
- Following the risk/need assessment, are the services, supervision, and interventions recommendations developed with the offender?
- Are these interventions based upon a systematic assessment of individual levels of risk and criminogenic needs?
- How are services coordinated for your target population as they move from the institutional phase, to the reentry phase, to the community phase?
- How is programming that is begun in prison linked to the programming that the offender receives in the community?
- How are supervision and treatment resources prioritized for moderate and high risk offenders?
- Are your interventions cognitive-behavioral based?
- Have staff members been trained to appropriately use cognitive-behavioral interventions and strategies?
- What data is collected about offenders reentering communities?
- Do you collect case-level data on which of your program participants have (1) housing, (2) employment, (3) substance abuse treatment [if necessary], (4) mental health treatment [if necessary], and (5) social support?



## References:

Andrews, D.A., and J. Bonta (2010). *The psychology of criminal conduct, fifth edition*. New Providence, NJ: Matthew Bender & Company, Inc.

Bourgon, G., and B. Armstrong (2006). Transferring the Principles of Effective Treatment into a "Real World" Setting. *Criminal Justice*, 32(1), 3-25.

Elliott, D. (2001). Youth violence: A report of the Surgeon General.

Gendreau, P. and C. Goggin (1995). Principles of effective correctional programming with offenders. Center for Criminal Justice Studies and Department of Psychology, University of New Brunswick, New Brunswick.

Latessa, E.J. (2004). The challenge of change: Correctional programs and evidence based practices. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 3(4), 547-560.

McGuire, J. (2002). Evidence-based programming today. Paper presented International Community Corrections Association Conference, Boston, MA, November 2002.

McGuire, J. (2001). What works in correctional intervention? Evidence and practical implications. Pp. 25-43 in *Offender rehabilitation in practice: Implementing and evaluating effective programs*, edited by D.F. Gary Bernfeld, Alan Leschied. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, LTD.

Miller, W. and K.A. Mount (2001). "A small study of training in Motivational Interviewing: Does one workshop change clinician and client behavior?" Albuquerque, NM.

Miller, W. and S. Rollnick (2002). *Motivational Interviewing: Preparing people for change*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.