

BJA FY 2026 Second Chance Act Community-based Reentry Program

Grants.gov Funding Opportunity Number: O-BJA-2026-172717

Application Deadlines in Eastern Time (ET):

1. Complete SF-424 and submit in Grants.gov: **October 30, 2026, by 11:59 PM ET**
 2. Submit full application in JustGrants: **November 6, 2026, by 8:59 PM ET**
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1. BASIC INFORMATION

Purpose of the Funding

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) is committed to advancing work that furthers the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) mission to keep our country safe and secure and uphold the rule of law and protect the rights of American citizens. OJP provides federal leadership, funding, and other critical resources to directly support law enforcement, combat violent crime, protect American children, provide services to American crime victims, and address public safety challenges, including human trafficking and the opioid crisis.

This is a notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for the **BJA FY 2026 Second Chance Act Community-based Reentry Program**. This opportunity will support community-based organizations and tribal governments to provide mentoring and transitional services for people returning to communities from adult correctional facilities and who are assessed as moderate to high risk for recidivism. Services may be provided pre- and/or post-release.

See the [Eligible Applicants](#) section for eligibility details.

The Second Chance Act of 2007 and the First Step Act of 2018 authorize federal grants to facilitate reentry services and programs for people leaving incarceration. In FY 2026, BJA is releasing [six NOFOs](#) to support adults reentering the community and enhance public safety in different ways. Applicants are welcome to seek funding through more than one NOFO.

Funding Details

Announcement Type	Initial
Assistance Listing Number	16.812
Statutory Authority	Pub. L. No. 110-199, Sec. 211 (codified at 34 U.S.C. 60531; Department of Justice Appropriations Act, 2026 (Pub. L. No. 119-74, 140 Stat. 5, 32, para. 13)
Grants.gov Opportunity Number	O-BJA-2026-172717
Expected Total Amount of Funding	Up to \$12,500,000
Anticipated Number of Awards	13
Award Type(s)	Grant
Anticipated Award Amount	Up to \$1,000,000
Expected Award Period(s)	36 months starting on January 1, 2027

Key Dates and Times

NOFO Release Date	September 21, 2026
SAM.gov Registration/Renewal	Begin the process by September 21, 2026, and no later than September 30, 2026
Step 1: Grants.gov Deadline	11:59 p.m. ET on October 30, 2026
Step 2: JustGrants Deadline	8:59 p.m. ET on November 6, 2026

See [Questions?](#) at the end of this NOFO for agency contact information.

2. ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants

The types of entities that are eligible to apply are:

Government Entities

- Native American Tribal governments (federally recognized)

Nonprofit Organizations

- Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), other than institutions of higher education
- Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education

Cost Sharing (Match) Requirement: This NOFO does **not** require cost sharing (match).

Limit on Number of Applications: You may submit more than one application if each application proposes a different project.

If a project will be carried out by two or more entities (project partners), only one entity may submit the application. The other entities (project partners) must be proposed as subrecipients rather than co-applicants. An entity may be proposed as a subrecipient in more than one application. For additional information regarding subawards, see the [Application Resource Guide](#).

Multiple SCA Applications: You may apply to more than one [BJA FY 2026 Second Chance Act program](#) and may reuse portions of your narrative across multiple applications. All other required materials must be submitted separately in response to each NOFO.

Additional Eligibility Factors

Certifications: You must submit the following certifications. See [Additional Application Components](#) for how to submit.

- **Mandatory Chief Executive Assurance to Collect and Report Recidivism Indicator Data**—Applicants must certify that it will collect unique identifiers and recidivism indicator performance data for each program participant to meet program reporting requirements.

Required Partnership: Memorandum of Understanding with correctional agencies to demonstrate collaborative relationship with correctional agency or agencies that oversees specific facility or facilities where applicant proposes to recruit the target population.

3. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Statutory Authority

Pub. L. No. 110-199, Sec 211 (codified at 34 U.S.C. 60531; Department of Justice Appropriations Act, 2026 (Pub. L. No. 119-74, 140 Stat. 5, 32, para. 13)

Agency Funding Priorities

To help meet its mission, OJP may give priority consideration to applications proposing (as applicable within the scope of this NOFO) projects designed to advance the goals listed below:

- (a) Directly supporting law enforcement operations (including immigration law enforcement operations);
- (b) Combatting violent crime;
- (c) Supporting services to American citizens;
- (d) Protecting American children; and
- (e) Supporting American victims of trafficking and sexual assault.

As articulated in the Second Chance Act, additional priority consideration will be given to applications that:

1. Include a plan to implement activities that have been demonstrated effective in supporting successful reentry; and
2. Provide for an independent evaluation that includes, to the maximum extent feasible, random assignment of program participants to program delivery and control groups.

Note: Addressing these priorities is one of many factors that OJP considers in making funding decisions. Receiving priority consideration does not guarantee funding.

Unallowable Activities: The following are certain unallowable costs and certain activities that are out of the program scope and will not be funded.

1. Out of program scope is any program or activity, at any tier that, directly or indirectly, violates (or promotes or facilitates the violation of) federal immigration law (including 8 U.S.C. § 1373) or impedes or hinders the

enforcement of federal immigration law—including by failing to comply with 8 U.S.C. § 1373, give access to DHS agents, or honor DHS requests and provide requested notice to DHS agents.

2. Out of program scope is any program or activity, at any tier that violates any applicable Federal civil rights or nondiscrimination law. This includes violations that (1) indirectly violate the law, including by promoting or facilitating violations; or (2) unlawfully favor individuals in any race or protected group, including on a majority or minority, or privileged or unprivileged, basis, within a given area, population, or sector.
3. As specified in the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#), in Chapter 3.13 “Unallowable Costs” (“Legal Services for Aliens”), any obligations of funds, at any tier, under this award that would provide (or support the provision of) legal services to any removable alien or any alien otherwise unlawfully present in the United States shall be unallowable costs for purposes any award made under this notice, but the foregoing shall not be understood to apply: (1) to legal services to obtain protection orders for victims of crime; or (2) to immigration-related legal services that may be expressly authorized or required by any law, or any judicial ruling, governing or applicable to the award.

Goals and Objectives of This Funding Opportunity

Goal: Create safer communities by improving reentry outcomes and reducing recidivism for people returning to communities from adult correctional facilities.

- **Objective 1:** Provide mentoring and other transitional services.
- **Objective 2:** Prioritize service to people at moderate to high risk of recidivism.

For a description of how awards under this NOFO will contribute to achieving these goals and objectives, see the [Performance Reports](#) section below.

Expected Outcomes

OJP expects recipients to submit deliverables and performance reports, as described below. Read the [Application Resource Guide](#) for more information. OJP will measure success by reviewing a recipient’s submission of performance reports and data and the extent to which project implementation reflects progress toward the goals and objectives of this NOFO.

Deliverables

Recipients will be expected to submit the following:

- Final Performance Report (see below) to include recidivism outcomes as noted in [Appendix A](#).

Performance Reports

OJP requires recipients to submit regular performance reports that communicate progress toward achieving [Program Goals and Objectives](#). Read information on [performance reporting](#).

Award recipients will receive further guidance on post award reporting requirements.

4. APPLICATION CONTENTS AND FORMAT

Application Contents List

OJP will only consider applications that contain all required parts, which are marked ***Required*** below. Refer to the [DOJ Grant Application Submission Checklist](#) for application instructions.

Application Item	Submission Type
Step 1: Grants.gov	
Application for Federal Assistance: SF-424 *Required*	Online Form
Step 2: JustGrants	
Standard Applicant Information *Required*	Online Form
Proposal Abstract	Text Box
Data Requested With Application - Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (including Applicant Disclosure of High-Risk Status) - Agency Funding Priorities Inventory	Online Form
Proposal Narrative *Required*	Attachment
Budget *Required*	Online Form
Other Budget/Financial Attachments - Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) - Consultant Rate (if applicable) - Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation for Awards Over \$250,000; Waiver (if applicable)	Attachment

Application Item	Submission Type
Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation (if applicable)	
Memorandum of Understanding *Required*	Attachment
Additional Application Components - Timeline *Required* - Mandatory Chief Executive Assurance to Collect and Report Recidivism Indicator Data (Appendix A) *Required*	Attachment

In addition to the items marked ***Required*** in the table above, the following are considered basic minimum requirement elements that are considered in the responsiveness review:

- The application is submitted by an eligible applicant.
- The requested award amount does not exceed the award ceiling.
- The application is responsive to the scope of the NOFO.

Standard Applicant Information ***Required***

Review and edit as needed the information imported from the SF-424 submitted in Grants.gov. Add ZIP codes for areas affected by the project.

Proposal Abstract

In JustGrants, enter a proposal abstract (limited to 2,000 characters) summarizing the proposed project. Because abstracts for funded projects are public, do not include any personally identifying information (e.g., staff names). The abstract should include the following information:

- The name of the applicant's proposed project.
- The purpose of the proposed project (i.e., what the project will do and why it is necessary).
- Where the project will take place (i.e., the service area, if applicable).
- Who will be served by the project (i.e., who will be helped or have their needs addressed by the project).
- What activities will be carried out to complete the project.
- The subrecipient(s)/partner organizations or entities, if known.
- Deliverables and expected outcomes (i.e., what the project will achieve).
- Name(s) of other SCA NOFOs to which the applicant applied.

View an example of a [proposal abstract](#).

Data Requested With Application

Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (including Applicant Disclosure of High-Risk Status)

Review information on this [questionnaire](#).

Agency Funding Priorities Inventory

Applicants seeking priority consideration under the [Agency Funding Priorities](#) section should answer the inventory questions in their entirety in the web-based form in JustGrants.

Proposal Narrative ***Required***

Format of the Proposal Narrative

Submit the narrative as an attachment in JustGrants. The document should:

- Be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point size font.
- Have no less than 1-inch margins.
- Have numbered pages.
- Not exceed 10 pages.

Tables, charts, and graphs included in the proposal narrative will count towards the page limit and may use a legible font smaller than 12-point. If the Proposal Narrative does not follow this format, OJP may reduce the score/ranking of the application.

Sections of the Proposal Narrative

The Proposal Narrative must include the four sections listed below. If you want priority consideration, the Proposal Narrative must state which [priority\(ies\)](#) your project will advance and describe how it will do so.

Note: Applicants may apply to more than one [BJA FY 2026 Second Chance Act program](#) and may reuse portions of their narrative across multiple applications. All other required materials must be submitted separately in response to each NOFO.

1. Description of the Need (5% of application score): What critical issue or problem do you propose to address with this project? Please include:

- A brief explanation of the need, gap, or issue to be addressed by the proposed project.
- Supporting information, data, or evidence to demonstrate the need's existence, size, and impact on the target population and community.
- How the need relates to the purpose of the NOFO.

2. Project Goals and Objectives (15% of application score): How will the proposed project address the need identified and address the purpose of the NOFO? Please include:

- Project goals (goals are broad, visionary statements on what you hope to accomplish).
- Project objectives (objectives are specific outcomes you plan to achieve through project activities).
- How your project goals and objectives relate to the goals and objectives of the funding opportunity.

3. Project Design and Implementation (35% of application score): How will you implement project activities that meet the project goals and objectives? Please include:

- List the activities you will conduct to achieve the proposed goals and objectives. Include supporting information, such as data, names of validated assessment tools, use of research-informed strategies as applicable.
- When the activities will take place.
- How you will deliver or complete those activities.
- A description of the target population, including eligibility requirements for program participation, and the number proposed to be engaged, including explanation of how this number was determined and can be served in the allotted grant timeframe.
- Identify and explain the baseline recidivism rate for the target population.
- A description of the partnerships with one or more correctional agencies, specifically agencies that will allow pre-release access to participants. Upload MOU.
- Who in your organization will staff the activities, including key staff.
- If you are seeking Second Chance Act priority consideration, discuss the extent to which the proposed activities are evidence-based and the level of rigor envisioned for the evaluation, including the plan for random assignment, and measures that will be used to assess the effectiveness of the program, as well as who will be responsible for implementing evaluation activities. You should explain how you will balance the practical realities of implementation (such as recruitment, enrollment, and availability of data related to service use) with an evaluation design that establishes trust and confidence in the results.
- What deliverables, reports, and other items will be produced as part of the project.
- If you plan to use subrecipients to help conduct the project, please name them (if they are known) or describe how the applicant will identify them. Please describe their role in conducting project activities.

4. Capabilities and Competencies (30% of application score): What administrative and technical capacity and expertise do you bring to successfully complete this project? Please include:

- A short description of your capacity to deliver the proposed project and meet the post-award requirements, including collecting and reporting the required performance measure data.
- A description of projects or activities your organization and key partners have conducted, or are currently conducting, that demonstrates your ability to undertake the proposed project activities.
- A summary of relevant experience of team members and key partners with responsibilities for implementing and, if applicable, evaluating the project. If you are seeking Second Chance Act priority consideration, specify how you will engage an evaluation partner who is not otherwise associated with the project (e.g., university-based researcher, private research company) to assess the work funded under the grant award. In addition, BJA strongly encourages applicants to hire a full-time coordinator who has experience working with people who have been incarcerated.
- Your history of collaborating with correctional agency partners. The extent to which you can demonstrate a collaborative partnership with institutional and/or community corrections agencies that includes access to participants with facilities prior to release and data sharing will be key factors in assessing the application's strengths. The nature of this collaboration should be reflected in the uploaded Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
- Uploaded Mandatory Chief Executive Assurance to Collect and Report Recidivism Indicator Data ([Appendix A](#)).

Project Evaluations: An applicant that proposes to use award funds to conduct project evaluations must follow the guidance on [project evaluations](#).

Budget and Associated Documentation

Budget (15% of application score) ***Required***

- Use the Budget Detail Worksheet (Web-Based Form) or Separate Attachment (attach file in JustGrants) to submit the budget. Read information on [budget preparation](#) and [JustGrants Application Submission Training](#).
- List each cost needed to implement the project under the appropriate cost category.
- Clearly name and describe each cost.
- Show the computation of each cost (e.g., cost per unit, number of units, and total cost).
- Enter narrative, as needed, to explain the cost calculations and connection to your project goals, objectives, and activities.

- Include only costs that are reasonable, allocable, and necessary to implement the project. They must be allowable under the funding statute and agency requirements.¹

In addition to unallowable costs identified in the DOJ Grants Financial Guide, award funds may not be used for the following:

- Prizes, rewards, entertainment, trinkets, or any other monetary incentives
- Client stipends
- Gift cards
- Vehicle purchases
- Food and beverages

Allowable uses of funds include, but are not limited to:

- Use of validated tools to assess risk of recidivism and criminogenic needs
- Educational, literacy, and vocational services
- Substance use and mental health treatment and services
- Individual and/or group mentoring or peer supports
- Services to support family reunification and restoration
- Service coordination, including connections to physical health care, providing or making referrals to safe and affordable housing, and continuity of substance use and mental health care
- Training on reentry and victim-related topics
 - A transitional jobs strategy serves people who are chronically unemployed or have barriers to employment
 - Is conducted by governments, workforce boards, and non-profit organizations
 - Provides short-term employment without displacing existing employees
 - Provides services that help people build skills and overcome job barriers including continuing and vocational education, job retention and re-employment services
 - Pays at least the minimum wage set by federal, state, or local law - whichever is highest, and is partly or fully paid by public funds
 - Has a long-term goal to move people into permanent, unsubsidized jobs

Budget/Financial Attachments

- **Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable):** If the budget includes indirect costs calculated using a current, federally approved indirect cost rate, upload your indirect cost rate agreement. Read information about [indirect costs](#).

¹ See [2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart E](#) and the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#). Read information on [unallowable costs](#) that apply to all funding opportunities.

- **Consultant Rate (if applicable):** Read information on [limits to consultant rates](#) and whether you need to request approval to exceed those limits.
- **Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation for Awards Over \$250,000; Waiver (if applicable):** Read information on this [limitation](#) and to determine whether you need to submit a waiver.
- **Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation (if applicable):** An applicant that is a nonprofit organization may be required to make certain disclosures relating to the processes it uses to determine the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees, and key employees. Read information about this [disclosure and documentation](#) to upload.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Supporting Documents

Required

Attach a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or letter of intent between the applicant and each of the project correctional partner(s). Read information on what to include in an [MOU](#).

MOUs should be submitted as one separate attachment to the application. Unsigned draft MOUs may be submitted with the application, but you should describe in a cover page to the attachment why they are unsigned.

Additional Application Components

Attach these in JustGrants:

- **Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable):** Read information on whether you may need to submit a [Tribal Authorizing Resolution](#).
- **Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity Statement (if applicable):** Read information whether you may need to submit this [statement](#).
- **Timeline:** Provide a timeline listing key activities and milestones, and the quarters when they will take place. ***Required***
- **Mandatory Chief Executive Assurance to Collect and Report Recidivism Indicator Data ([Appendix A](#))** ***Required***

Disclosures and Assurances

Read the [disclosures and assurances](#) and complete them in JustGrants:

- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
- Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items (if applicable)
- DOJ Certified Standard Assurances
- DOJ Certifications
- Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High-Risk Grantees (if applicable)

5. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

The [DOJ Grant Application Submission Checklist](#) provides instructions for how to submit your application by the [deadlines](#). [Executive Order \(E.O.\) 12372](#) (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) does not apply to this funding opportunity: read the [Application Resource Guide](#) for details. Read OJP's policy for applicants to [request late submission](#) due to technical difficulties, severe weather, or natural or manmade disasters.

6. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

The [Application Resource Guide](#) explains the responsiveness review, review criteria, and review and selection process, including risk review, and deciding official. Refer to the [Application Contents List](#) for all required application components and other basic minimum requirement elements that are considered in the responsiveness review. The [Proposal Narrative](#) and [Budget](#) sections of this NOFO indicates the weight of peer review criteria.

7. AWARD NOTICES

Read about the [award notification](#) process.

8. POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS & ADMINISTRATION

Read the [Application Resource Guide](#) for more information about standard award terms and conditions, administrative and national policy requirements, and post-award reporting requirements.

9. QUESTIONS?

NOFO Contact	Name: OJP Response Center Phone: 800-851-3420 or 202-353-5556 (TTY for hearing-impaired callers only) Email: OJP.ResponseCenter@usdoj.gov Hours: 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. ET, Monday–Friday
SAM.gov Help Desk	Website: sam.gov/help Hours: 8 a.m.–8 p.m. ET, Monday–Friday (closed federal holidays)
Grants.gov Help Desk	Phone: 800-518-4726 Email: support@grants.gov Website: grants.gov/support Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (closed federal holidays)

JustGrants Help Desk	Phone: 833-872-5175 Email: JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov Hours: 7:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m. ET, Monday–Friday and 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. ET on Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays.
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APPENDIX A

Mandatory Chief Executive Assurance to Collect and Report Recidivism Indicator Data

I hereby assure that, if awarded grant funds under the FY 2026 Second Chance Act Community-based Reentry Program, my organization will collect unique identifiers and recidivism indicator performance data for each program participant and will aggregate all such data and submit them via Just Grants as required upon grant closeout. I understand that the inability or refusal to submit such data after an award is made may impact my organization's ability to receive future Bureau of Justice Assistance competitive grant funding.

Signature

Title

Date