

BJA FY 2026 John R. Justice (JRJ) Formula Grant Program

Grants.gov Funding Opportunity Number: O-BJA-2026-172779

Application Deadlines in Eastern Time (ET):

1. Complete SF-424 and submit in Grants.gov: **November 3, 2026, by 11:59 p.m. ET**
 2. Submit full application in JustGrants: **November 10, 2026, by 8:59 p.m. ET**
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BJA
Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice

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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 FY2026 John R. Justice (JRJ) Formula Grant Program**. This opportunity provides loan repayment assistance for local and state prosecutors and local, state, and federal public defenders who commit to continued employment as public defenders and prosecutors for at least three years.

States receiving funding will administer statewide programs through state agencies designated by the governor by soliciting applications from eligible beneficiaries, which include local and state prosecutors and local, state, and federal public defenders ("beneficiaries"). Beneficiaries selected must commit to an additional three years of qualifying service in exchange for partial loan repayment directly to the beneficiary's loan service provider.

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

Funding Details

Announcement Type	Initial
Assistance Listing Number	16.816
Statutory Authority	Pub. L. No. 90-351, Title I, Sec. 3001 (codified at 34 U.S.C. § 10671)
Grants.gov Opportunity Number	O-BJA-2026-172779
Expected Total Amount of Funding	Up to \$2,193,858
Anticipated Number of Awards	56
Award Type(s)	Grant
Anticipated Award Amount	Based on Formula Allocation
Expected Award Period(s)	24 months starting on January 1, 2027

Key Dates and Times

NOFO Release Date	September 25, 2026
SAM.gov Registration/Renewal	Begin the process by October 2, 2026, and no later than October 20, 2026
Step 1: Grants.gov Deadline	11:59 p.m. ET on November 3, 2026
Step 2: JustGrants Deadline	8:59 p.m. ET on November 10, 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

- State governments

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

3. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Statutory Authority

Pub. L. No. 90-351, Title I, Sec. 3001 (codified at 34 U.S.C. §10671)

Agency Funding Priorities

In order to advance public safety and help meet its mission, OJP's priorities include:

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

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

- 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 to provide (or to 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: Improve the recruitment and retention of local, state, and federal public defenders and local and state prosecutors.

- **Objective:** Offer an incentive to allow jurisdictions to attract and retain qualified prosecutors and public defenders who commit to continued employment.

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:

- Signed [JRJ Beneficiary Service Agreements](#):
 - First time participant agreement
 - Acknowledgment of benefit (annual)
 - Second term of service agreement (if applicable)
- [JRJ Verification Form](#)
- [Exited/Repayment Form](#) submitted through Justice Enterprise File Sharing (JEFS)

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

The table below lists the contents for your application. 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	Online Form
Step 2: JustGrants	
Standard Applicant Information	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	Attachment
Budget	Attachment
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

Standard Applicant Information

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. As 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).

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](#).

Proposal Narrative

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 toward the page limit and may use a legible font smaller than 12-point.

Sections of the Proposal Narrative

The Proposal Narrative must include the three sections listed below.

1. Description of the Need: 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. Describe how the JRJ Grant Program addresses a need in your state.

- Supporting information, data, or evidence to demonstrate the need's existence, size, and impact on the target population and community.
- For returning applicants, include data on the impact of the JRJ Grant Program in the recruitment and retention of prosecutors and public defenders in the state.

2. Project Design and Implementation: How will you implement project activities that meet the JRJ Grant Program's goal and objective? Please include:

- The plan to implement a statewide JRJ Grant Program to address the needs identified in the Description of the Need. The proposed statewide JRJ Grant Program must include an outreach strategy and a program plan.
- Outreach Strategy: Applicants must provide an outreach strategy for prospective eligible beneficiaries (including current and continued beneficiaries) in their state that should include but not be limited to an online presence publicizing the JRJ Grant Program statewide. This plan must reflect equitable outreach to both prosecutors and public defenders (including federal public defenders).
- Program Plan: Applicants must include a program plan that provides a brief overview explaining how beneficiaries will apply for JRJ Grant Program loan repayment, how decisions will be made regarding eligibility and award amounts, and how statutory requirement as outlined under 34 U.S.C. §10671 will be met. The program plan must include the following:
 - Evaluation criteria used to determine applicant eligibility and selection and how priority consideration will be given as outlined by 34 U.S. Code § 10671 (f)(2):
 - ☐ borrowers who have the least ability to repay their loans, except that the Attorney General shall determine a fair allocation of repayment benefits among prosecutors and public defenders, and among employing entities nationwide; and
 - ☐ borrowers who received repayment benefits under this section during the preceding fiscal year; and have completed less than three years of the first required period of service.
 - General grant application process.
 - Technical application process (*i.e.*, how prospective beneficiaries will submit their application).
 - Determination of award amounts, including as outlined by 34 U.S. Code § 10671 (f)(2).
 - Proposed process and method for awarding additional JRJ Grant Program benefits to individuals who have already completed the initial three-year term of service of their original JRJ Service Agreement and would like to apply for additional benefits in exchange for additional terms of service.

- If you plan to use subrecipients to help conduct the project, please name them (if they are known) or describe how you will identify them. Please describe their role in conducting project activities.

3. Capabilities and Competencies: 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, if funded.
- A description of projects or activities your organization has conducted, or is currently conducting, that demonstrates your ability to undertake the proposed project activities.
- A summary of relevant experience of team members with key responsibilities for implementing the project.

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

- Use the Budget Detail 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

The following information specific to this funding opportunity will help you develop your project budget:

- **Formula Allocations.** You should budget \$1 under the Other category when submitting your application. Once the formula allocations for FY26 are determined, the amounts will be communicated to you during the application review process for planning purposes and awards will accurately reflect the allocation amounts based on states that apply. Once grants are awarded, grantees will submit updated budgets during the post-award process.

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.

- **Administrative Costs.** Not more than 15 percent of the total amount of a JRJ Grant Program award may be used for a recipient's administrative expenses.
- **Beneficiary Limitations.** Award amounts to eligible beneficiaries are determined by the state administering agency within the submitted budget. Repayment benefits for each beneficiary cannot exceed \$10,000 in a calendar year, with a total lifetime benefit not to exceed \$60,000. Eligible beneficiaries must agree to remain employed in eligible positions as prosecutors and defenders for at least three years after signing their first-time participant service agreement, which must be reported annually by the state administering agency using the JRJ Verification Form, signed service agreements, and JEFS Exited/Repayment form.
- **Prior year funding.** The JRJ Verification Form from prior-year awards must be submitted and reflect full expenditure of all prior-year funds before funds will be accessible under this award.
- **Profit/Management fees.** All recipients and subrecipients (including any for-profit organization) must forego any profit or management fee.

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](#).
- **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):** Applicants to this funding opportunity are not required to provide this disclosure.

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

OJP will review applications to ensure the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, achievable, and consistent with the goals of the funding opportunity. See the [Application Resource Guide](#) for information on the application review process for formula grants, including risk review, and the deciding official.

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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