



BJA Bureau of Justice Assistance Fact Sheet

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Local Law Enforcement Block Grants Program

The Omnibus Fiscal Year 1996 Appropriations Act, Public Law 104–134, provides \$503 million for the implementation of the *Local Law Enforcement Block Grants Program*, to be administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), U.S. Department of Justice. The purpose of the Local Law Enforcement Block Grants Program is to provide units of local government with funds to underwrite projects to reduce crime and improve public safety. These projects must be funded in accordance with the seven purpose areas described below.

Program Purpose Areas

Local Law Enforcement Block Grants Program funds may be used for one or more of the following seven purpose areas:

- Hiring, training, and employing on a continuing basis new, additional law enforcement officers and necessary support personnel (if funds are used for hiring law enforcement officers, there must be a net gain over the unit of local government's current appropriated budget, in the number of law enforcement officers who perform nonadministrative public safety service); paying overtime to presently employed law enforcement officers and necessary support personnel for the purpose of increasing the number of hours worked by such personnel; and/or procuring equipment, technology, and other material directly related to basic law enforcement functions.
- Enhancing security measures in and around schools, and in and around any other facility or location that the unit of local government considers a special risk for incidents of crime.
- Establishing or supporting drug courts. To be eligible for funding, a drug court program must include the following:
 - Continuing judicial supervision over offenders with substance abuse problems, but who are not violent offenders.
 - Integrating the administration of other sanctions and services, which shall include: (i) mandatory periodic testing of each participant for the use of controlled substances or other addictive substances during any period of supervised release or probation; (ii) substance abuse treatment for each participant; (iii) probation or other supervised release involving possible prosecution, confinement, or incarceration because of noncompliance with program requirements or failure to show satisfactory progress; and (iv) programmatic, offender management and aftercare services such as relapse prevention, vocational job training, and job and housing placement.
- Enhancing the adjudication of cases involving violent offenders, including cases involving violent juvenile offenders. For the purposes of this program, violent offender means a person charged with committing a Part 1 violent crime under the Uniform Crime Reports.

- ❑ Establishing a multijurisdictional task force, particularly in rural areas, composed of law enforcement officials representing units of local government; this task force will work with Federal law enforcement officials to prevent and control crime.
- ❑ Establishing crime prevention programs involving cooperation between community residents and law enforcement personnel to control, detect, or investigate crime or the prosecution of criminals.
- ❑ Defraying the cost of indemnification insurance for law enforcement officers.

Prohibition on Use of Funds

Funds are not to be used to purchase, lease, rent, or acquire tanks or armored vehicles, fixed-wing aircraft, limousines, real estate, yachts, consultants, or any vehicle not used primarily for law enforcement. In addition, Federal funds cannot be used to supplant State or local funds, but instead to increase the amount of funds that would be available otherwise from State and local sources.

Eligibility for Program Funds

Units of local government are eligible to apply for an award. Units of local government are counties, towns and townships, villages, cities, and Puerto Rico. Indian tribes and Alaskan Native villages that carry out substantial governmental duties and powers are also eligible.

Matching Funds Requirement

This program has a 10-percent cash matching requirement which will not be waived. Matching funds may be provided from the following sources: State and local government funds, the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, the Appalachian Regional Development Act, the Equitable Sharing Program (Federal assets forfeiture distributions), and private funds. All recipients must maintain records clearly showing the source, the amount, and the timing of all matching contributions.

Application Requirements for Units of Local Government

An application must be signed and submitted by the chief executive of the jurisdiction (i.e., mayor, county executive, tribal chief, etc.), who must:

- ❑ Establish an advisory board to review the application. This board must be designated to make nonbinding recommendations for the proposed use of funds received under this program. The advisory board must include a member from at least each of the following: the local law enforcement agency; prosecutor's office; court system; school system; and a nonprofit group (e.g., educational, religious, or community) active in crime prevention or drug use prevention or treatment.
- ❑ Hold at least one public hearing regarding the proposed use of funds.
- ❑ Forward the application to the Governor or designated representative at least 20 days prior to submission to BJA, as required by statute.

The first two bulleted items above need not occur prior to applying for funds, but must occur prior to the obligation of funds.

An additional requirement is that units of local government give suitable preference in the employment of persons as additional law enforcement officers or support personnel to members of the Armed Forces who were involuntarily separated or retired due to the reductions in the Department of Defense.

Distribution of Awards

The Director of BJA will set aside funds for units of local government within a State. The amounts will be proportionate to the State's average annual amount of Part 1 violent crimes, compared to that for all other States for the three most recent calendar years of data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation. However, each State will receive a minimum award of .25 percent of the total amount available for formula distribution under the Local Law Enforcement Block Grants Program.

Awards to units of local government will be proportionate to each local jurisdiction's average annual amount of Part 1 violent crimes compared to all other local jurisdictions in the State for the three most recent calendar years.

- ❑ BJA will make awards directly to units of local government when award amounts are at least \$10,000. Each unit of local government eligible to apply for an award of \$10,000 or more will be notified by BJA.
- ❑ Each State will receive the remainder of the State's allocation for local applicants whose award amounts

are less than \$10,000. BJA will make one aggregate award directly to the State. The State will distribute such funds among State police departments that provide law enforcement services to units of local government and units of local government whose allotment is less than such amount in a manner which reduces crime and improves public safety.

Each recipient must establish a trust fund to deposit program funds, which may accrue interest. All Federal funds (including interest) not expended 2 years from the date of the initial award by BJA are to be returned to BJA within 90 days of project termination.

Section 104(b)(9) contains the following provision in an attempt to accommodate potential funding disparities within jurisdictions:

- (A) Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, if —
- (i) the attorney general of a State certifies that a unit of local government under the jurisdiction of the State bears more than 50 percent of the costs of prosecution or incarceration that arise with respect to Part 1 violent crimes reported by a specified geographically constituent unit of local government, and
 - (ii) but for this paragraph, the amount of funds allocated under this section to —
 - (I) any one such specified geographically constituent unit of local government exceeds 200 percent of the amount allocated to the unit of local government certified pursuant to clause (i), or
 - (II) more than one such specified geographically constituent unit of local government (excluding units of local government referred to subclause I and in paragraph (7)), exceeds 400 percent of the amount allocated to the unit of local government certified pursuant to clause (i) and the attorney general of the State determines that such allocation is likely to threaten the efficient administration of justice,

then in order to qualify for payment under this title, the unit of local government certified pursuant to clause (i), together with any such specified geographically constituent units of local government described in clause (ii), shall submit to the Director a joint application for the aggregate of funds allocated to such units of local government. Such application shall specify the amount of such funds that are to be distributed to each of the units of local government and the purposes for which such funds are to be used. The units of local government involved may establish a joint local advisory board for the purposes of carrying out this paragraph.

(B) In this paragraph, the term ‘geographically constituent unit of local government’ means a unit of local government that has jurisdiction over areas located within the boundaries of an area over which a unit of local government certified pursuant to clause (i) has jurisdiction.

Administration of Block Grant Funds by the States

The Governor shall designate a State agency to administer these funds. The designated State agency will be responsible for submitting the State’s application, selecting subrecipients to receive funds, disbursing funds, and performing other administrative functions.

Deadline for Application Submission

BJA will distribute application kits for both those local jurisdictions eligible for direct awards and State applicants no later than June 15, 1996. All applications must be received by August 9, 1996. BJA will begin making awards in mid-September 1996.

For Further Information

For more information about the Local Law Enforcement Block Grants Program, call the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 1-800-421-6770; or access the BJA home page at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA>.

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