

Derrick Franke:

I want to welcome everybody to this year's new solicitation webinar for the fiscal year 2023 Second Chance Act Program, Community-based Reentry Program. Welcome.

So in this webinar today, you'll hear from your policy advisor at the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Mr. Andre Bethea. You will also hear from two of my fellow TA coaches from the American Institutes for Research, Joe Williams and Shaun Ali. My name is Derrick Franke. So in this webinar, you'll hear first an overview of the Office of Justice Programs of BJA, also the Second Chance Act. We will follow with a discussion of this solicitation, which can be found at the link provided on this slide. And finally, we will talk about how to apply, so application steps and procedures as you consider applying for this award. So for an overview of OJP, BJA and the Second Chance Act, I'll hand things over to our colleague at BJA, Mr. Andre Bethea.

Andre Bethea:

Thank you, Derrick.

Hello everyone. My name is Andre Bethea. I'm a senior policy advisor at the Bureau of Justice Assistance within the Office of Justice Programs at the US Department of Justice.

What is the Office of Justice Programs? Well, we provide grant funding, training, research and statistics to the criminal justice community. The Office of Justice Programs, or OJP, is one of three grant making components of the Department of Justice, along with the Office on Violence Against Women and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. Within the Office of Justice Programs, you have the Smart Office, which is the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking; OJJDP, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; OVC, Office for Victims of Crime, NIJ, the National Institute of Justice; BJS, Bureau of Justice Statistics. And where I sit in this program sits, BJA, the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

The Bureau of Assistance's mission is to provide leadership and services in grant administration and criminal justice policy development to support state, local and tribal justice strategies to achieve safer communities. BJA works with communities, governments, and nonprofit organizations to reduce crime, recidivism, and unnecessary confinement and promote a safe and fair criminal justice system. Check us out, www.bja.gov.

At BJA, our current director is Karlton F. Moore. He was appointed by President Biden in February 2022. Director Moore leads BJA's programmatic and policy efforts on providing a wide range of resources, including training and technical assistance to law enforcement, courts, corrections, treatment, re-entry, justice information sharing and community-based partners to address chronic and emerging criminal justice challenges nationwide.

Within the Bureau of Justice Assistance, we have the Policy Office, which is where I sit, which provides national leadership to criminal justice organizations that partner with BJA to identify effective program models for replication and infuse data-driven evidence-based strategies into operational models, practices, and programs. We have the programs offered within BJA, which administers state, local, tribal, and territorial grant programs. It acts as BJA's direct line of communication to state, local jurisdictions, territories, and tribal governments by providing customer-focused grants, management support and careful stewardship over federal funds. Also, at BJA, we have an Operational Office which coordinates all communications, formulates and executes the budget, manages contracts, measures grantees' performance, and provides administrative support to BJA. And lastly, we have the Public Safety Officer Benefits Office, which provides death and education benefits to survivors of fallen law

enforcement officers, firefighters, and other public safety officers and disability benefits to officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty.

So at BJA, we have five major strategic focus areas. The first, improved public safety through measures which build trust with the community and ensure an effective criminal justice system. Second, reduction in recidivism and prevention of unnecessary confinement and interactions with the criminal justice system. Our third major strategic focus area, integration of evidence-based research-driven strategies into the day-to-day operations of BJA and the programs BJA administers and supports. Fourth, increasing program effectiveness with a renewed emphasis on data analysis, information sharing and performance management. The fifth major strategic focus area, ensuring organizational excellence through outstanding administration and oversight of all of BJA's strategic investments.

So at BJA, we fund, educate, equip, and partner. By fund, we invest diverse funding streams to accomplish goals. We educate, we research, develop, and deliver what works. At BJA, we equip. We create tools and products to build capacity and improve outcomes. At BJA, we also partner, which means we consult, connect, and convene subject matter experts.

This current program, Community-based Reentry, is funded through the Second Chance Act. The Second Chance Act funding is used to reduce recidivism and improve outcomes for youth and adults leaving detention and incarceration to return to their communities. The Second Chance Act was initially signed in 2008 and in 2018 it was reauthorized under the First Step Act. To date, over \$500 million in grants have been administered through BJA to develop, implement, and test strategies within state, local and tribal governments as well as community based organizations and nonprofits.

So what does BJA's Second Chance Act funding do? Well, with grant funding, it could be used as seed money or proof of concept. Second Chance Act funding could also be used to expand or enhance an existing program. Second Chance Act funding also provides for training and technical assistance to grantees so that they can do programming with fidelity, programming that is in line with research as well as move with project management and content expertise. We also provide for the National Reentry Resource Center which supports all of the Second Chance Act training and technical assistance providers. And you'll hear more about that in a coming slide.

So I'll pass it on back to you, Derrick.

Derrick Franke:

Thank you, Andre. So as Andre mentioned, part of this Second Chance Act Program is to provide training and technical assistance to community-based Second Chance grantees. So AIR, the American Institutes for Research, is the TTA provider for the Second Chance Act award. And so what we do at AIR is help you achieve your goals and objectives of the grant. So we provide content expertise, we provide TA coaching, project management support, and importantly connections to peer networks and resources through this work.

Andre also mentioned the National Reentry Resource Center, which we encourage you to check out. So AIR also operates the NRRC. The NRRC serves as a convener and coordinator of Second Chance Act grantees. It's also a great resource. And so on the next slide, we will see the website for the NRRC. And on that website, you will find so many resources that will help you not only apply for this grant but also learn about other opportunities and efforts in the field, in the area of reentry so intersecting with reentry, community supervision, housing and employment. The NRRC also includes the National Inventory of Collateral Consequences of Conviction, the Clean Slate Clearinghouse, the Public Safety-

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Derrick Franke:

... the Clean Slate Clearinghouse, the Public Safety Risk Assessment, and a Reentry Service Directory open to everyone. The email address here is listed for your reference.

The website I mentioned, the NRRC website, is listed here. I also wanted to mention that April, every April, is Second Chance Month here at AIR. We do a number of activities to celebrate and honor Second Chance Month. Please check out this link to 2023's Second Chance Month. You'll find the latest news and resources in reentry, you'll find an interactive criminal justice initiatives map. Directories for state and local reentry services as well can be found there. So not only organizations but also clients in reentry can find helpful resources on the NRRC website.

So again, here at a AIR we operate the Corrections and Community Engagement Technical Assistance Center, also known as CCETAC. Our primary mission here at CCETAC is to provide TTA to Second Chance Act grantees, including those funded through this award. We work closely with you to finalize your action plan, so to plan your grant. We call these the Planning and Implementation Guide. So the first portion of your grant cycle will be devoted to planning, and you'll work closely with your TA coach to get through those plans. We also work, as Andre mentioned, in evidence-based practices to improve the implementation and evaluation. Along with this grant, we provide training and resources to promote you achieving the goals you set out to with this award, connect you to organizations and communities of practice, including other Second Chance Act grantees. We have a number of subject matter experts that will also support you in this work. We do also do this TA through one-on-one coaching as I mentioned earlier.

Now for the next slides describing this solicitation in particular, I want to hand things back over to Andre.

Andre Bethea:

Thanks, Derrick. Now we're going to go into the actual grant program, Second Chance Community-Based Reentry Program. The purpose of this solicitation is to call for applications from community and faith-based organizations as well as tribal governments that have established partnerships with corrections, parole, probation, or other reentry service providers and stakeholders to implement or expand reentry programs. Applicants should work collaboratively with their partners to develop comprehensive case management plans that directly address criminogenic risk and needs that are informed by validated criminogenic risk assessments.

Funds awarded under this program support individuals at moderate to high risk for recidivism. Applicants are encouraged to think holistically about the needs of the participants and the supports and resources needed in their local communities. Services may include cognitive behavioral therapy, substance use disorder treatment, employment services, housing assistance, family engagement, et cetera.

Who is eligible for Second Chance Act Community-Based Reentry Grant Program? Native American tribal governments (federally recognized) and nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education. An applicant entity may submit more than one application if each application proposes a different project in response to the solicitation. Also, an entity may be proposed as a subrecipient (subgrantee) in more than one application.

Now we're going to get into the goals, objectives, and deliverables for the Second Chance Act Community-Based Reentry Grant Program. The goals: strengthen communities by improving outcomes for individuals who have been incarcerated and reduce recidivism. Let's start into the objectives. Develop comprehensive case management plans that directly address criminogenic risks and needs as

identified by validated criminogenic risk assessment tool, for example LSI-R. Deliver or facilitate services in a manner consistent with participants' learning styles and abilities, for example, gender-specific programs. Other objectives include demonstrate increased collaboration between community and faith-based organizations and corrections, community supervision, law enforcement, and other local reentry stakeholders like a reentry task force.

Additional deliverables are ... Well, now we're going into deliverables. Have an action plan to be developed with input from BJA and CCETAC and submitted within six months of receiving final budget approval. Action plans include project goals and objectives, defining the population to be served, services and support to be provided, project design, evaluation and sustainability. You'll have to produce a final report at the end of your project. If an applicant proposes and receives priority consideration under the evaluation priority, which is going to be talked about later, they must deliver a final evaluation report.

So just a quick summary of some of the things that we're discussing here. Second Chance Act Community-Based Reentry Grant Program. This year and fiscal year 2023, BJA anticipates 15 awards. The anticipated maximum dollar amount of each award is 750,000. The period of performance starts October 1, 2023. The grant cycle itself, 36 months. Altogether, BJA anticipates a total of 11,250,000 funds being awarded for fiscal year 2023, Second Chance Act Community-Based Reentry Grant Program. I'm handing it back over to Derrick. Oh, to Joe. My apologies. Joe.

Joseph Williams:

Thank you, Andre. Good day everyone. My name is Joseph Williams, and I'm a senior consultant for American Institutes for Research. I've been privileged to serve as a TA coach on the community-based reentry track and want to congratulate you all on your interest in applying for this award to help those reentering the community where you are.

So just a bit of information I want to share with you as far as what the grant funds can be used for. They can be used for service coordination and tracking, gender-specific and trauma-informed programming and services, individual or group mentoring, peer supports, educational literacy and vocational services, substance use and mental health disorders treatment and recovery services, connections to physical healthcare, services to support family reunification and restoration, assistance in securing safe and affordable housing as one of that's the things that we're finding is a major challenge for reentry providers today ... It was a challenge for everyone in the community is finding affordable and safe housing, so that's something you definitely want to consider addressing ... Civil rights assistance and staff training.

Unallowable uses for the award funds include prizes, rewards, entertainment, trinkets or any type of monetary incentive, client stipends, gift cards, vehicles, food and beverage, cost sharing or matching requirement.

Here are some of the things that you want to consider as you plan your grant. Participants must be-

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Joseph Williams:

Grant participants must be screened, assessed, and identified for program participation prior to release from incarceration. And to the degree possible, you should look at what type of services, especially case management that you can provide while they're in the pre-release stage of their release. Applicants should build pre-release access into their proposal programming plan, including case management

services and evidence-based interventions. In post-release, as these people are released from the institution and returned to the community. Following release from incarceration, participants should receive case management services and be connected to evidence-based programming designed to ensure that the transition from prison to the community is successful. And the services that you propose in your application don't all have to be provided by your organization or program, but you can include other partners in this work to provide some of the services. In order to facilitate a full continuum of services, BJA expects applicants will have active partnerships with a large range of local stakeholders, including corrections.

Part of the application requires a correctional partner memorandum of understanding, MOA or MOU. So applicants must include as an attachment, a memorandum of agreement or understanding that clearly demonstrates an established collaborative relationship between the applicant and the correctional agencies that oversee a specific facility or facilities from which the applicant proposes to recruit the target reentering population or that oversees community corrections such as probation or parole for the target population.

Your MOU should include the following elements: The roles and responsibilities for staff from both agencies involved in the program. Terms of access to the correctional facility or facilities for program staff. If applicants are unable to conduct in-reach into correctional facilities, the applicant should explain the reasons that such access is not practicable. It should include information on pre-release programming and interventions provided by the correctional agency to each participant. And last and very important is the data elements and performance measures that the partnering agencies will provide or assist the grantee in obtaining, for the purpose of measuring the impact of the grantee's activities.

It's going to be very important for you to have this kind of relationship with your corrections partner so that they can provide you with data especially as it relates to recidivism, as when you address your recidivism results in your evaluation and in your reports to BJA. And now you'll hear from my colleague Sean Ali, who is also a coach on the community-based reentry track.

Sean:

Thank you so much, Joe. As Joe mentioned, my name is Sean Ali, TA coach here as well. I'm going to continue us on down through the summary information section. So an important part will be to provide with your submission the documentation of advancing DOJ priorities. And these are what was outlined by Andre at the outset. And just again, this states that the Department of Justice is committed to advancing work that promotes racial equity, increases access to justice, supports crime victims and individuals impacted by the justice system. Strengthens community safety and protects the public from crime and evolving threats. And lastly, builds trust between law enforcement and the community populations and communities.

An additional priority consideration as is stated in the Second Chance Act, that priority consideration will be given to applications that do have an independent evaluation alongside the program team. And that includes, to the maximum extent feasible, a random assignment of program participants to program delivery and control groups. So again, this would be having an evaluation partner as a part of your project at submission, worked into your budget so that they can conduct an external evaluation of your program. And this is again, a priority for priority consideration, but for all grantees, even those who do not include that in their program, there are evaluation and performance measure requirements regardless that you will still be responsible for, and those are detailed in the solicitation and you can work on those with your technical assistance provider when that time comes.

In the Tribal Authorizing Resolution, again, if applicable, applicants must submit the Tribal Authorizing Resolution by uploading it as an attachment in JustGrants. The OJP Grant Application Resource Guide has more information on the tribal authorizing resolutions as well as instructions on submitting that in JustGrants as required.

Another section is the plan for data collection. And this is very important. An applicant should describe how performance will be documented, monitored, and evaluated, as well as the data and information that will be collected and by whom. That goes to the previous point of whether there is an external evaluator or not. This data and performance measures that are detailed in the solicitation must be collected by somebody and it must be explained in the application. You must describe the process for assessing the program's effectiveness through the collection and reporting of the required performance data and the optional evaluation. Again, priority consideration too that we just mentioned. And lastly, discuss how the program will be sustained after the federal funding ends.

And the budget applicants should include budget funding to travel to a peer-learning event such as a regional meeting. So be sure to include funds for that in your budget. Applicants must estimate the costs of travel and accommodations for three staff members to attend one meeting per year in Washington, DC. All expenses must be reasonable, allowable, and necessary to the project. The estimates must provide a breakdown of all costs and must adhere to the federal per diem. Each grantee will have access to up to \$200,000 until their action plan that was detailed previously is approved by BJA during the first six months of the grant period after their final budget is approved. And thereafter the rest of the funds are released once that plan has been approved within the first six months. And now I will be turning it back over to my colleague, Derek.

Derrick Franke:

Thank you, Sean. So if you are interested in applying for this award, and we hope you are. This final section will give you some helpful information on how to apply. So before you submit an application, you must register with the System for Award Management SAM.gov, and you must renew and validate this registration every 12 months. If you don't do so, it will expire. An expired registration can delay or prevent application submission in Grants.gov and JustGrants. And registration and renewal, keep this in mind, can take up to 10 business days to complete. So we recommend you go to SAM.gov as soon as possible to register.

And following your registration with SAM.gov, the application process follows two steps. And so the first step is on Grants.gov. And so after registering with SAM, you'll submit an SF-424 and SF-LLL in Grants.gov. The link is provided here. Submit this as early as possible, but no later than 48 hours before the Grants.gov deadline, which is listed below. That will be May 17th of this year at 8:59 Eastern. So we also recommend avoiding any technical issues doing that as soon as possible. And then step two is where you will submit your full application. And so that is done through JustGrants. And so the website is listed there. And the JustGrants deadline for your full application materials is due May 24th.

There is a lot of helpful information you can find online, especially if this is your first time applying for-

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Derrick Franke:

... you can find online, especially if this is your first time applying for Second Chance Act funds at the OJP grant Application Resource guide listed there, and the DOJ application submission checklist. We

recommend strongly that you visit both of these websites, just to have a really good understanding of what's needed for your application.

So you'll identify the forms needed to submit an application, complete a web-based budget form, the application, including certifying all that information, and submitting the application in JustGrants. And JustGrants has a lot of helpful support as well. This is a fairly new system, so you can click the link here on this slide that will take you to several webinars and trainings. Again, if you are new to JustGrants, we highly recommend you visit these resources. You'll learn how to search and find open DOJ funding opportunities in addition to the Second Chance Act Awards actions that you need to take before applying for funding. The roles in JustGrants, what it means to be an entity administrator and application submitter, this will be very important information throughout the cycle of your grant so please become familiar with that before you submit, and also how to navigate and use the system, saving your work before moving to the next page so you don't lose all of your progress for instance.

And here's just a little more information about JustGrants support. You can contact the service desk at the number provided here or at the email address listed there. They're very helpful. We know this from current grantees we coach, so feel free to use JustGrants supports early and often, and for assistance with any other requirements for the solicitation, you can contact the OJP response center at the telephone number listed or at the email address listed there as well.

So just to review the application elements needed for this award, your SF-424, which is your application, the proposal abstract, your narrative, goals, objectives, deliverables, and importantly, timelines. All of your budget information. As was earlier mentioned, your correctional partner MOU or MOA, the indirect cost rate agreement if that applies, your financial management questionnaire, and any disclosures pertaining to lobbying, pending applications, research and evaluation, independence, forms, and executive compensation.

For this award, this is important to keep in mind as you write your proposal. So it will be reviewed as following: your description of the issue at the front end of your narrative will count towards 15% of your award. The bulk here is your project design and implementation, and this is where you get to talk about what you will do and how you will do it, and how that is based on evidence-based principles. The capabilities and competencies of your agency, along with any partner agencies will count for 25% of your overall proposal. And then the plan for collecting data for the solicitation's performance measures, and also if you are including an independent evaluation, this is where you would include that information as well. And finally, your budget information will count for 10%.

Some more recommended resources that you can check out, other funding opportunities this year, what's ahead, the funding process for steps to applying, how to prepare now, and other considerations. You can find PDFs of all those presentations and transcripts at bja.gov, at the site listed here, and several other recommended resources. We have plenty of resources available to you through the OJP Funding Resource Center, the DOJ Grant's Financial Guide. Make sure to check that out, in particular the DOJ Grant's Financial Management Online Training, which you will need to complete if awarded, the OJP grant Application Resource Guide listed there. And also, and this will help you as you write your proposal narrative, then check out the NIJ's crimesolutions.gov, which covers evidence-based programming, what we know about what works, what doesn't, and what's promising.

Some important contacts for you to keep in mind. The OJP Response Center, for any solicitation content questions, can be reached at that 1-800 number or at the email address listed there. Help with grants.gov. The first step of your application procedure can be found there, and information on step two, JustGrants, submitting your full application on step two can be found at the number and email address listed there.

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Second Chance Act solicitations are available at the website listed on this slide. Depending on the award, application deadlines may vary so please read those carefully, and JustGrants trainings can be accessed at the website listed here.

We want to thank you and we want to encourage you to apply for this award. We have seen as TA coaches some really great things that our nonprofits, faith-based and tribal organizations have done with these grants. We look forward to working with you. On behalf of Andre Mathea at BJA and my fellow coaches at AIR, Shauna Lee and Joseph Williams, I want to thank you for your interest in this, and please contact us if you have any further questions.

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