

**Second Chance Act Grant Recipients**  
**Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Compliance with Federal Grant Management**  
**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

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**1. When does the grant term begin?**

Generally, for most grantees, the start date of the grant is October 1st of the award year, but check the “PROJECT PERIOD: FROM” dates in the award document you received from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) via the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) [Grants Management System](#) (GMS). Review the special conditions of your award to determine whether you are permitted to obligate, expend, or draw down funds.

**2. What are the first steps to take after receiving the grant?**

You will find step-by-step post-award instructions on the website below:  
<http://ojp.gov/funding/Implement/Resources/PostAwardInstructions.pdf>

Carefully read the award document and special conditions because this award is a legally binding agreement. If you accept the terms and conditions of the award, have your authorized official -- the person authorized by your organization to sign awards and enter into legal contracts on behalf of your organization -- sign a copy of the award document and special conditions.. Particular individuals may include, but are not limited to, county executives, executive directors, governors and mayors.

You have 45 days from the award date to accept the award. Notify your program officer if your organization is unable to accept the award within this time. Failure to accept within 45 days may result in de-obligation of funds.

**3. How do I access funds?**

You may access funds using the online Grant Payment Request System (GPRS). You will find a detailed GPRS user guide, which includes registration guidance and GPRS frequently asked questions, at <https://ojp.gov/about/pdfs/gprsuserguide.pdf>.

**4. There is an active special condition withholding funds for Conditional Clearance. What does this mean and how do I clear this special condition?**

The special condition withholding funds for Conditional Clearance means that your grant was approved for award purposes only, but the grant budget has not been approved. Therefore, you may not obligate, expend, or draw down funds until the OJP Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) has approved your budget and issued a Grant Adjustment Notice (GAN) to retire the special condition.

The OJP OCFO will review the budget for each grant award and issue either an Initial Budget Review or a Financial Clearance Memo. Your assigned State Policy Advisor will be your liaison during this process and will contact you to request a revised budget, or to inform you that your budget has been approved. If a revised budget is requested, you must address each individual budget item by the due date specified. Submit a complete, revised budget detail worksheet and budget narrative by email to your assigned State Policy Advisor.

**5. The SCA grant that I was awarded requires matching funds. I submitted a request to waive the cash match requirement with my original application. Does this mean that my cash match waiver request is approved?**

The OJP OCFO will review the budget for each grant award and issue either an Initial Budget Review or a Financial Clearance Memo. Your assigned grant manager will notify you of the status of the match waiver and the results of the budget review.

**6. I included matching funds in my grant application, but I did not submit a cash match waiver request. Do I still have the opportunity to waive the cash match?**

No. Match waiver requests must be submitted with the original application.

**7. What rules and regulations must I adhere to during the administration of my grant award?**

There are Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars and Common Rules and other important information you will need to know for the administration of your award. The most up-to-date versions of these documents are available on the Internet:

- OMB Uniform Guidance: [http://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/2CFR200\\_2013.pdf](http://ojp.gov/funding/Apply/Resources/2CFR200_2013.pdf).
- Code of Federal Regulations: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collectionCfr.action?collectionCode=CFR>.
- The current DOJ Grants *Financial Guide*: <http://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/index.htm>.

OJP grantees with questions concerning the content of the DOJ Grants *Financial Guide* should contact OCFO Customer Service: 1-800-458-0786, option 2, or [ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov](mailto:ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov).

Grantees that are subcontracting with external providers of services, expertise, materials or equipment should also review the OCFO *Guide to Procurement Procedures for Recipients of DOJ Grants and Cooperative Agreements*:

<http://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.8a.htm>

**8. Are food and beverage costs allowable?**

No. As of October 21, 2011, food and beverage costs are unallowable.

**9. I am not listed as a contact person in GMS for this grant, but I would like to be included in all grant correspondence. Is that possible?**

No. Grant correspondence is only provided to the individuals listed in GMS. The designated point of contact (POC) is the primary contact and is responsible for keeping the information current in GMS. You may initiate a Grant Adjustment Notice (GAN) request to add an additional alternate point of contact (APOC) or to change the current primary POC in GMS.

**10. I need assistance with OJP's online GMS. What resources are available?**

OJP has several resources available to assist you with GMS. Please visit <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/training/gmstraining.htm>, for instruction on the following steps:

- [Get Started in GMS](#)
- [Apply for/Accept an OJP Grant](#)
- [Submit a Payment Request through the Grant Payment Request System \(GPRS\)](#)
- [Create, Save and/or Submit a Grant Adjustment Notice \(GAN\)](#)
- [Submit a Progress Report](#)
- [Submit a Financial Report \(SF-425\)](#)
- [View Site Visit Correspondence and Follow Up on Issues for Resolution](#)
- [Report Conference Costs](#)
- [Submit a Closeout](#)

The GMS computer based online training tool can be found at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/gmscbt/>. If you require further assistance, please email the GMS Help Desk at [gms.helpdesk@usdoj.gov](mailto:gms.helpdesk@usdoj.gov) or call 1-888-549-9901, option 3.

**11. What are the reporting requirements under the SCA grant?**

Reporting requirements must be met during the life of the grant. OJP payment systems will deny requests for funds if reporting requirements are not met on a timely basis. BJA will also reject any GAN submissions by the grantee if reports are not up to date. In summary, SCA grant recipients must submit the following:

- Quarterly Financial Status Reports (SF-425) in GMS: <https://grants.ojp.usdoj.gov/gmsexternal/>
- Quarterly Performance Reports in PMT: <https://bjapmt.ojp.gov/> (applies to most SCA grant recipients)
- Progress Reports in GMS: <https://grants.ojp.usdoj.gov/gmsexternal/>
- FFATA Reports in FSRS: <https://www.fsr.gov/>
- FAPIIS Reports in FAPIIS: <https://www.fapiis.gov/fapiis/index.action>

**Quarterly Financial Status Reports (SF-425):**

Once you accept the award you will become responsible for financial reports even if your budget was not reviewed and cleared by OCFO. A step-by-step guide for filing Financial Status Reports can be found at [http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/training/pdfs/gms\\_userguide.pdf](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/training/pdfs/gms_userguide.pdf). If you did not obligate or expend funds during a reporting period, enter 0.

Financial status reports are due thirty days following the close of each quarter on the following schedule:

- October 1 – December 31 (due January 30)
- January 1 – March 31 (due April 30)
- April 1 – June 30 (due July 30)
- July 1 - September 30 (due October 30)

**Need Help with Financial Reports/Financial Issues?** If you have questions or need assistance on any financial aspect of your grants, please contact OCFO Customer Service Center at t 1-800-458-0786, option 2, or [ASK.OCFO@usdoj.gov](mailto:ASK.OCFO@usdoj.gov).

**Quarterly Performance Reports in PMT:**

Performance measurement reports must be submitted on a quarterly basis via the BJA [Performance Measurement Tool](#) (PMT). Performance measurement reports are due thirty days following the close of each quarter at <https://bjapmt.ojp.gov> on the following schedule:

- October 1 – December 31 (due January 30)
- January 1 – March 31 (due April 30)
- April 1 – June 30 (due July 30)
- July 1 - September 30 (due October 30)

In addition, grantees are responsible for downloading their PMT reports and uploading them into GMS with their Semi-annual Progress Report (see below) by **January 30 and July 30**.

If you are required to submit PMT reports then your final report in GMS should include the final PMT report.

**Final PMT Report:** To close the grant, you must include a synopsis explaining the manner in which the grant funds were spent and all project accomplishments. In addition, indicate that all grant funded activities are complete and inform BJA if all funds have been expended. Data capturing program participant court and criminal involvement and recidivism must be provided in the final report.

**Need Help with PMT Reports?** Please contact BJA performance tools help desk: 1-888-252-6867 or [bjapmt@usdoj.gov](mailto:bjapmt@usdoj.gov)

**Progress Reports in GMS:**

Grantees must submit progress reports on a **semi-annual** basis in GMS on the following schedule:

- January 1 – June 30 (due July 30)

July 1 – December 31 (due January 30)

- The Semi-Annual Progress Report in GMS must include the PMT report attachments covering the reporting period. For example, a Semi-Annual Progress Report for January 1 – June 30 must include the PMT attachment for the two quarters within that period (January – March, and April – June).
- The Final Progress Report is due 90 days after the grant end date. However, the Final Progress Report *should* be submitted no later than 60 days after the grant end date to allow for BJA review and approval of the Final Progress Report. The Final Progress Report must be approved in order for the grantee to submit the closeout package by the due date, which is also 90 days after the grant end date.
- Final Progress Report/Award Closeout: To close the grant, you must include a synopsis explaining the manner in which the grant funds were spent and all project accomplishments. In addition, indicate that all grant funded activities are complete and inform BJA if all funds have been expended.

**Need Help with GMS Reports?** Please contact the GMS Help Desk by e-mail at [GMS.helpdesk@usdoj.gov](mailto:GMS.helpdesk@usdoj.gov) or by telephone at 1-888-549-9901 (choose option 3).

Performance and progress reports must be submitted on the following schedule:

<b>Activity Period</b>	<b>Type of Data</b>	<b>Submit to GMS?</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
January 1- March 31	Numerical	No	April 30
<a href="#">April 1 – June 30</a>	<a href="#">Narrative and Numerical</a>	<a href="#">Yes</a>	<a href="#">July 30</a>
July 1 – September 31	Numerical	No	October 30
<a href="#">October 1 – December 31</a>	<a href="#">Narrative and Numerical</a>	<a href="#">Yes</a>	<a href="#">January 30</a>

**FFATA Reporting:**

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) of 2006 aims to empower every citizen with the ability to hold the government accountable for each spending decision.

GMS Help Desk: 1-888-549-9901, option 3 or [gms.helpdesk@usdoj.gov](mailto:gms.helpdesk@usdoj.gov)  
OCFO Customer Service: 1-800-458-0786, option 2 or [ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov](mailto:ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov)  
PMT Help Desk: 1-888-252-6867, or [bjapmt@usdoj.gov](mailto:bjapmt@usdoj.gov)

The end result is to reduce wasteful spending in the government. The FFATA legislation requires that information on federal awards (federal financial assistance and expenditures) be made available to the public via a single, searchable website: [www.USASpending.gov](http://www.USASpending.gov).

Prime Grant Recipients awarded a new federal grant greater than or equal to \$25,000 as of October 1, 2010 are subject to FFATA sub-award reporting requirements as outlined in the OMB guidance issued August 27, 2010. The prime awardee is required to file a FFATA sub-award report by the end of the month following the month in which the prime recipient awards any sub-grant greater than or equal to \$25,000. FFATA Reports are to be submitted using the FFATA Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) at <https://www.fsrs.gov/>.

FAQs for FSRS can be found at <https://www.fsrs.gov/index?startover=1#a-faqs>.

Guidance from OMB can be found at:

[https://www.fsrs.gov/documents/OMB\\_Guidance\\_on\\_FFATA\\_Subaward\\_and\\_Executive\\_Compensation\\_Reporting\\_08272010.pdf](https://www.fsrs.gov/documents/OMB_Guidance_on_FFATA_Subaward_and_Executive_Compensation_Reporting_08272010.pdf).

### **FAPIIS Reporting**

The Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) requires grantees to report information on certain civil, criminal, and administrative proceedings to the System for Award Management (SAM) and FAPIIS <https://www.fapiis.gov/fapiis/index.action>. OJP grants and cooperative agreements that exceed \$500,000 typically will include a condition that requires the recipient -- if the total value of its currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all federal agencies exceeds \$10 million, as set out in the condition -- to report particular information on civil, criminal, and administrative proceedings connected with (or connected to the performance of) either its OJP award or any other grant, cooperative agreement, or procurement contract from the federal government. For more information on OJP and FAPIIS go to <http://ojp.gov/funding/FAPIIS.htm>

## **12. When should I submit a Grant Adjustment Notice (GAN)?**

It is important to keep BJA up-to-date on current project and contact information. To make changes you will need to initiate a GAN request to change the name and contact information of the recipient or key recipient staff due to a permanent withdrawal, change in staff or temporary absence.

If you wish to change the project's budget or scope, or make any corrections to your contact information, you must submit a GAN via GMS. Please refer to section 3.5 of the OJP Financial Guide for more details on types of GANs.

<http://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.5a.htm>.

For detailed instruction on how to submit a GAN in GMS please refer to the training offered at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/gmscbt/>.

Once you submit a GAN please do not assume that it was approved. If more information or correction is needed, the GAN will be sent back to you in GMS and will be in a CHANGE

REQUEST status pending your correction and resubmission. Please make sure that you check GMS and your e-mail (to include Junk/SPAM folder) for notices from GMS on action taken. To avoid duplicates, please do not submit a new GAN.

Please make sure you are current with all reports before you submit a GAN. A GAN cannot be approved if the grant recipient is overdue with a report in GMS. Please respond to any requests for additional information or changes within seven days. Failure to respond may lead to your GAN being denied. Noncompliance with office requests may affect your future funding.

### **13. I need more time to complete the project. May I request a project period no-cost extension?**

Yes. Requests for a no-cost extension of an award period must be submitted through the GAN module in GMS. Award recipients may request a no-cost extension by submitting a GAN no later than 45 days prior to the end of the award.

You must submit a narrative justification with the project or program extension request. Provide complete details, including the justification and the extraordinary circumstances which require the proposed extension. You must explain the effect a denial of the request will have on the project or program.

The narrative justification for an extension should include:

- current, unobligated balance;
- explanation for why the project could not be finished before the current grant end date;
- description of the pending activities to be completed during the requested extension period; and
- how you will use the grant funds during the requested extension period. Please show the breakdown of costs for the additional time requested.

Keep in mind:

- The maximum extension allowable for any project period is 12 months.
- Generally, requests for retroactive extension of project periods may not be considered.
- Generally, only one extension per award will be permitted.

For more information, please see the OJP Financial Guide:

<http://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.5a.htm>

### **14. How do I submit a SAM Claim in GMS?**

To submit the SAM claim, take the following steps:

- Verify that you are registered at the [SAM.gov](http://SAM.gov) website.
- If registered, log into GMS.
- Click the SAM Claim link.
- Verify that you are registered by clicking the submit button.



## 15. What are the steps to close out an award?

Once your project is complete and all funds have been expended, you are required to close out the grant. Submit all closeout documents and complete all requirements within 90 days after the end date of the grant. All expenses must be obligated by the last day of the project period, including match and program income. All obligations properly incurred by the end of the federal award must be liquidated no later than **90 days** after the end date of the award. If your award has been properly obligated, you will have the full liquidation period for remaining expenditures. Any funds not liquidated at the end of the **90-day period** will revert to the awarding agency. Please be aware of the project end date and complete the standard closeout in GMS:

### **Standard Closeout:**

- Submitted within 90 calendar days after the grant end date.
- All administrative, programmatic, and financial requirements have been met.
- All expenses must be obligated by the last day of the project period.

### **Administrative (non-compliant) Closeout:**

If the grant recipient is unwilling/non-compliant or unable to complete closeout requirements, GMS will automatically freeze funds, initiate an administrative closeout and notify the grant recipient on the 91<sup>st</sup> day after the grant end date.

**TIP:** Start the closeout process as soon as the program has been completed and all funds have been spent. Submit your final SF-425 and final progress report well in advance of the end of the 90-day period. Once an administrative closeout begins, you will be unable to draw any additional funds on the award.

### **Recipient Closeout Requirements**

Within 90 days of the end date of the award (or any approved extension), you must submit the following to the awarding agency:

#### **Submit Final SF-425**

- This FINAL report of expenditures must have no unliquidated obligations.
- Make sure you have obligated all of your funds prior to the award end date. Any unobligated or unexpended funds will be de-obligated from the award amount.
- You must meet your match requirements by the end of the award period and include them in the report.
- If you who have drawn down funds in excess of your federal expenditures, you must return unused funds to the awarding agency when you submit the final report.
- Be sure to reconcile your final FFR to your internal accounting records. All entries in the accounting system must be supported by adequate source documentation (for example, original invoices and contracts).



- Report all allowable costs incurred, both at the recipient and subrecipient level.

### **Submit Final Progress Report**

- Prepare the final progress report in accordance with instructions provided by the awarding agency's program office. If you are required to submit PMT reports then your final report in GMS should include the final PMT report.
- To close the grant, include a synopsis explaining the manner in which the grant funds were spent and all project accomplishments. In addition, indicate that all grant funded activities are complete and inform BJA if all funds have been expended.
- Provide program participant court and criminal involvement and recidivism data in the final report.

### **Programmatic Requirement Certification**

- Once you provide a response you will be able to click the "SUBMIT" button in the closeout module and submit the closeout package for a review.

### **Financial Reconciliation**

- OCFO will conduct financial reconciliation and contact you with any financial outstanding issues. If your reported unobligated balance of federal funds is more than your draw downs, draw down the difference.

## **16. What should I know about audit reports?**

**For fiscal years beginning on or after December 26, 2014**, if you are a non-federal entity that expended \$750,000 or more in federal funds (from all sources including pass-through subawards) in your organization's fiscal year (12-month turnaround reporting period), then you are required to arrange for a single organization-wide audit conducted in accordance with the provisions of [Title 2 C.F.R. Subpart F \(§ 200.500 et seq.\)](#).

If you are a non-federal entity that expended less than \$750,000 a year in federal awards, you are exempt from federal audit requirements for that year. However, you must keep records that are available for review or audit by appropriate officials including the federal agency, pass-through entity, and U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO).

- Audit reports are due nine months after the close of your agency's fiscal year.
- State and local governments, institutions of higher education, and nonprofit institutions should submit reports to:

Federal Audit Clearinghouse  
Bureau of the Census  
1201 East 10th Street  
Jeffersonville, IN 47132  
<https://harvester.census.gov/facweb/>

## 17. Who should we contact with other questions about the grant?

The DOJ Financial Guide <http://ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/index.htm> serves as the **primary reference** manual to help award recipients fulfill their fiduciary responsibility to safeguard grant funds and ensure funds are used for the purposes for which they were awarded. It compiles a variety of laws, rules and regulations that affect the financial and administrative management of your award.

The Guide should be the **starting point for all recipients and subrecipients** in ensuring the effective day to day management of your awards. If you need additional information about your specific award requirements, including budget and compliance issues, please contact the BJA program manager identified in your award notification materials.

**State Policy Advisors:** <https://www.bja.gov/About/Contacts/ProgramsOffice.html>

Award POC and FPOCs are required to successfully complete an OJP financial management and grant administration training within 120 days of award acceptance, either online or in person (In person trainings reach capacity quickly). Information detailing the required training can be found in your award special conditions. Additional information on training components and logistics can be found on the following websites and <https://live.impaqint.com/ojptraining/index.html> and <https://ojpfgm.webfirst.com/>

Also, important contact information has been included in the footer of each page:

- For GMS Questions, contact the GMS Help Desk: 1-888-549-9901, option 3 or [gms.helpdesk@usdoj.gov](mailto:gms.helpdesk@usdoj.gov)
- For financial questions, including GPRS questions, please contact OCFO Customer Service: 1-800-458-0786, option 2 or [ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov](mailto:ask.ocfo@usdoj.gov)
- For PMT questions, please contact the PMT Help Desk: 1-888-252-6867 or [bjapmt@usdoj.gov](mailto:bjapmt@usdoj.gov)

To learn how to access funds, please review the OJP Training and Technical Assistance User Guide for the Grant Payment Request System (GPRS): <http://www.ojp.gov/about/pdfs/gprsuserguide.pdf>