

Planning & Implementation Guide

Second Chance Act

Smart Supervision: Reducing Prison Populations, Saving Money, and
Creating Safer Communities

DESCRIPTION

This Planning & Implementation Guide is intended for state, local, or tribal jurisdictions who received a FY16 Second Chance Act (SCA) grant for the Smart Supervision: Reducing Prison Populations, Saving Money, and Creating Safer Communities (“Smart Supervision”) grant track. Complete this Planning & Implementation Guide in partnership with the technical assistance provider assigned by the National Reentry Resource Center (NRRC). The U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) will review the guide upon its completion. Any questions about this guide should be directed to your technical assistance provider at the NRRC.

The Council of State Governments Justice Center prepared this guide with support from the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

About the Planning & Implementation Guide

The National Reentry Resource Center (NRRRC) has prepared this Planning & Implementation Guide (P&I Guide) to support grantees in the implementation of proposed initiatives and to help you track progress and make adjustments to maximize positive outcomes. The guide is not intended to serve as a step-by-step blueprint, but rather to cultivate discussion on best practices, identify considerations for your collaborative effort, and help you work through key decisions and implementation challenges.

Although the guide was developed as a tool for grantees, it also serves as an important tool for your NRRRC technical assistance provider (“TA provider”) to understand the status and progress of your project, the types of challenges you are encountering, and the ways your TA provider might be helpful to you in making your project successful.

You and your TA provider will use your responses to the self-assessment to collaboratively develop priorities for technical assistance.

Any questions about this guide should be directed to your TA provider.

Contents of the Guide

The P&I guide is divided into four sections. The questions and exercises in each section are designed to help you meet the requirements of the grant. You will be prompted to write short responses, attach relevant documents, and complete exercises, and your answers will provide insight into your program’s strengths and identify areas for improvement. As you work through each section, take note of the corresponding supporting resources in call-out boxes, as they contain suggestions for further reading and provide access to important resources and tools. Your TA provider may also send you additional information on specific topics to complement certain sections. If you need additional information or resources on a topic, please reach out to your TA provider.

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Due to your NRRC TA Provider Friday, January 27, 2017

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Due to your NRRC TA Provider Friday, February 24, 2017

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Due to your NRRC TA Provider Friday, March 31, 2017



SECTION 1: IDENTIFY IMPLEMENTATION GOALS

Although your TA provider has read the project narrative that you submitted in response to the SCA solicitation, there may have been updates or developments since your original application was submitted. This exercise is intended to give your TA provider a sense of your current project goals and your initial technical assistance needs. Convene team members, including key stakeholders and partners, to confirm your goals and target population, and to identify any revisions to your project plan since submitting the proposal.



EXERCISE 1: GRANTEE AT A GLANCE

Grantee Information	
Grantee Name:	
Project Name:	
Grantee Type (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Courts <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit <input type="checkbox"/> City <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> State	

Point(s) of Contact	
Name:	Email:
Name:	Email:

Target Population				
Description & Size of Target Population (e.g., 40 supervision staff, 100 high-risk female probationers):				
Exclusion Criteria:				
Are clients* supervised on... (check all that apply): <small>*Refers to target population or clients supervised by target population</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> Probation	<input type="checkbox"/> Probation following incarceration	<input type="checkbox"/> Parole	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
Jurisdiction Type (check all that apply):	<input type="checkbox"/> Rural	<input type="checkbox"/> Suburban	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Project Goals
List all project goals. Be concise and specific. (Copy and paste the rows below to create additional space, if needed.)
1.
2.
3.

Please provide the following documents, if available, to your TA Provider at your earliest convenience:

- MOUs and information-sharing agreements
- Letters of support
- Graduated responses decision matrix (if applicable)
- Current strategic plan
- Gap/needs/capacity analysis
- Program flow chart



EXERCISE 2, PART 2: COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

The following exercise evaluates stakeholder support and preparedness for grant project activities. Complete the table by responding to each question or prompt.

Questions/Prompts	Responses			
What is the vision for this project? ¹				
What is the mission? ²				
What are the key mutual goals that the team would like to accomplish with the grant?				
Indicate the level of support (buy-in) for your program that you feel from the leadership within the criminal justice system. (0 = no support, 5 = complete support)				
Indicate the level of support (buy-in) for your program that you feel from the leadership within any local or state partners. (0 = no support, 5 = complete support)				
Do you have the endorsement of your governor, mayor, commissioner or other legislative champion?				
How will you keep system leaders, champions, and community stakeholders informed about the progress of the grant?				
Are there interagency agreements, memoranda of understanding (MOUs), contracts, or similar documents that define partnerships, policies, and/or information sharing practices?				
How often will you have stakeholder meetings?				
List the stakeholder meetings you currently have planned.	Date of Meeting	Phone or in-person?	Location	Planning Person

¹ Your vision should be the end result of what you seek to accomplish through this grant program.

² Your mission should clearly articulate your purpose as an organization or grant project.



SECTION 3: OPERATIONALIZE YOUR GRANT PROJECT

BJA expects that Smart Supervision grantees will implement evidence-based strategies to increase the effectiveness of community supervision, including the incorporation of risk and needs assessment; assignment of individuals to caseloads based on assessment results; and supervision and programming of the appropriate type and dosage, including swift and certain responses to violations.

This section will help you operationalize your project with respect to the areas of interest to BJA. The following exercise links project goals to discrete activities, target population(s), resources, and measures to document the progress of activities and the resulting outcomes. Convene your project team, including relevant stakeholders, such as judicial actors, administrators, supervision officers, and probationers or parolees to complete this exercise. Your evaluator may be particularly helpful as well.

Additional information about the areas of interest to BJA is available through your TA provider or in the CSG Justice Center's report, [A Ten-Step Guide to Transforming Probation Departments to Reduce Recidivism](#).



EXERCISE 3: LOGIC MODEL

A logic model demonstrates the causal relationships between goals, activities, and results. It is a useful tool to visualize the purpose and scope of proposed activities, including the resources needed and expected outcomes. Complete the logic model below (page 11), and refer to the example logic model (p. 10). Here are brief descriptions of the column and row headings in the logic model:

- **Content Area:** This column is pre-populated so that each row reflects broad categories of recidivism reduction strategies. Content areas are intentionally broad in order to capture the wide range of goals and activities that a Smart Supervision grant project might include. If a goal spans multiple content areas, please list that goal in the row that best corresponds to the purpose of the activity. The content areas are:
 - **Supervision Practices:** Changes to the ways in which supervision staff do their jobs
 - **Case Management:** Any activity directly related to case planning or case management
 - **Promoting Quality Programs:** Activities related to implementation of any quality assurance measures, whether for assessing training effectiveness, adherence to best practices of programming, or program fidelity
 - **Operations:** Any changes that affect the operations of the agency or department, such as revisions to hiring practices, job descriptions, or current practices (e.g., use of sanctions and incentives or use of risk/need data)
 - **Direct Services:** Use of grant funds to support any direct services to supervision clients, including subgrants to community service providers
 - **Risk and/or Needs Assessment:** Development, revision, or implementation of a new risk and/or needs assessment

- **Project Goals:** Each row should reflect a specific goal the team intends to pursue through the implementation project. Refer back to Exercise 1.
- **Activities:** Enter one or more discrete activities the agency will undertake to achieve each goal. Activities should be concise and specific.
- **Activity Type (Training, QA, Policy, Procedure, Service Provision, Technology):** Place an “X” in the relevant subcolumn(s) to indicate the nature of each activity as training, quality assurance, policy, procedure, direct service provision, or implementation of new technology. Activities can span multiple types.
- **Resources:** List existing resources (e.g., staff, contracts, technology) that will be used to accomplish each activity, as well as resources that will be supported by grant funds. The latter items should be reflected in the grant budget.
- **Process Measures:** Note how you will measure the progress of each activity, including completion.
- **Short-Term Outcomes:** Indicate short-term (i.e., 3–12 months), quantifiable measures that each activity is expected to yield, such as changes in knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors (e.g., through staff surveys) of the population targeted by each activity (e.g., inmates, parolees, staff, and stakeholders).
- **Long-Term Outcomes:** Indicate long-term (i.e., a year to several years), quantifiable measures that each activity is expected to yield, such as changes in recidivism and organizational structure and procedure. Long-term outcomes should build on short-term outcomes.
- **Sustainability:** Describe how the agency will maintain these investments after the implementation project period.

EXAMPLE Logic Model

Content Area	Project Goals	Activities	Training	QA	Policy	Procedure	Service Provision	Technology	Resources (Existing and Grant-Funded)	Process Measures	Short-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes	Sustainability
Supervision Practices	Ensure that probation officers' actions, strategies, and training align with accepted best practices	Review current community supervision policies and practices and assess adherence to accepted best practices			X	X			Policy analyst on staff; new hire for additional policy analyst using grant funds	Number of staff allocated; number of policies reviewed; percentage of total supervision policies and practices reviewed	Hire policy analyst Fifty percent of necessary policies and practices reviewed	All necessary policies and practices reviewed	Incorporate QA measures into performance reviews, position descriptions and hiring procedures.
		Alter supervision practices and training, where necessary, to align with best practices	X	X				Internal DOC staff to make policy changes; training contract (using grant funds)	Number of probation officers trained; percentage of total probation officers trained	Submit Request For Proposal for training contract Sign contract with trainer Fifty percent of total probation officers trained	All current probation officers trained in best practices QA demonstrates consistent application in the field Reduction in recidivism		

<<Smart Supervision Project Name>> Logic Model

Content Area	Project Goals <i>Insert goals from Exercise 1</i>	Activities	Training	QA	Policy	Procedure	Service Provision	Technology	Resources (Existing and Grant-Funded)	Process Measures	Short-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes	Sustainability
Supervision Practices													
Case Management													
Promoting Quality Programs													
Operations													
Direct Services													
Risk and/or Needs Assessment													



SECTION 4: PROGRAM EVALUATION

BJA expects that Smart Supervision grantees will document a baseline recidivism rate based on historical data and incorporate a research partner to assist with (a) data collection and analysis, (b) problem assessment, (c) strategy development, and/or (d) implementation monitoring and evaluation. This section will help your team identify the most appropriate evaluation activities and inform conversations with third party research partners.

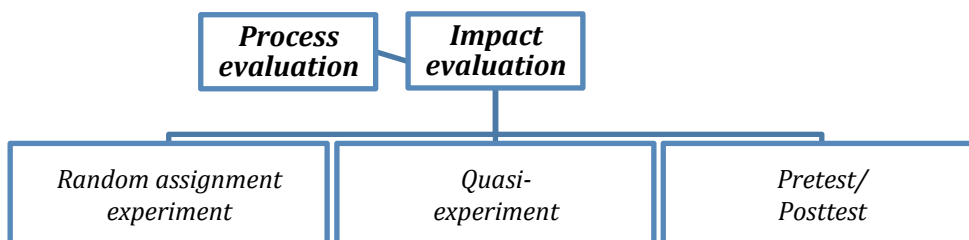
Program evaluations can inform current and future implementation, and provide information to stakeholders and funders about the effects, potential limitations, and strengths of the program. Grantees should consider their own needs and goals and their ability to advance the field as they plan evaluations.

Program evaluations are a meaningful way for agencies to document activities, accomplishments, and needs. Results are useful to:

- Document program accomplishments, including positive and negative effects of program participation;
- Document program development activities to inform replication;
- Improve implementation and effectiveness;
- Better manage limited resources;
- Achieve and increase buy-in;
- Promote sustainability; and
- Justify current and future funding, including the need for increased levels of funding.

EVALUATION DESIGN

Not all investments made through your program can necessarily be evaluated in the same way. The evaluation design for a specific program will likely look different from the evaluation design for a new policy with agency-wide implications. To develop a successful evaluation design, it is critical to understand what is being evaluated. This requires program staff to document their processes, the changes that are occurring, and whether those processes are functioning consistently, through a process evaluation. Once the process evaluation is complete, it is then possible to evaluate the impact of the program or policy changes on key outcome measures such as recidivism. Consider the types of impact evaluations shown in the chart and described below to identify the one best suited to your activities, needs, and budget.



Process Evaluation

Process evaluations are often qualitative in nature, and results are useful for assessing the quality of implementation and making adjustments to strengthen the program's effectiveness for future participants. In justice settings, common data sources include implementation plans and interviews with stakeholders, and common measures include the number of participants served and duration of engagement. Process evaluations are particularly useful to:

- Examine whether programs are implemented with fidelity and in accordance with evidence-based principles. Documents that guide implementation, such as program plans, should reflect evidence-based principles and outline how to implement your initiative with fidelity. Then, as the process

evaluation examines implementation, results will reveal whether and to what extent the initiative adhered to those plans.

- Track intermediate outcomes and alter implementation, if necessary. For example, tracking program enrollment allows grantees to assess whether you are on pace to meet your goals and, if not, to adjust recruitment practices. Similarly, if enrollment numbers are on pace but completion numbers are down, grantees may assess and refine retention and engagement strategies.

Which Intermediate Outcomes Should You Track?

- Number and percentage of new participants enrolled (based on enrollment target)
- Number and percentage of participants who successfully completed the program
- Number and percentage of participants who unsuccessfully completed the program (i.e., attend through the duration of the program but do not satisfy all requirements)
- Number and percentage of program incompletes (i.e., leave the program before the end)
- Recidivism rate for participants who successfully complete the program
- Recidivism rate for participants who do not successfully complete the program

Impact Evaluation

Impact evaluations assess effectiveness by measuring change that has occurred as a result of the program, including goal attainment, as well as positive, negative, intended, and unintended consequences. They are usually quantitative in nature and consider short-term (3–6 months), medium-term (6–12 months), or long-term (12 months or longer) outcomes. In justice settings, criminal history records are common data sources and recidivism is a common outcome measure. There are three common impact evaluation designs:

- Random Assignment Experimental designs are the most rigorous. Evaluators assign individuals with similar attributes and characteristics to treatment or control groups at random. Individuals assigned to the treatment group participate in the program; those assigned to the control group do not. Then, both groups are assessed on the same outcome measures. By controlling for any pre-existing bias, outcomes are attributable to the program. One difficulty with this design is sample size; evaluators must obtain a sample size large enough in both groups to draw conclusions in accordance with statistical rules of power and significance.
- Quasi-experimental designs are similar to, but less rigorous than, experimental designs. Similarly, evaluators identify treatment and control groups, and only the treatment group participates in the program. However, the control group may be contemporaneous or historical. A *contemporaneous control group* is used when the outcomes of the treatment and control groups are compared over the same time period. A *historical control group* is used when the outcomes of the treatment group are compared with the outcomes of a control group observed at some previous time. For example, if a gender-specific program targets all female probationers in a given jurisdiction, there is no contemporaneous comparison group available. Therefore, evaluators may compare participants' outcomes to those of female probationers in preceding years. Evaluators should collect and analyze data to control for potential differences between the treatment and control groups.
- Pretest/posttest designs are best when it is difficult to identify a comparison group. Evaluators collect information on program participants at two points in time: once before program participation (baseline information) and again after participation. This design is the least rigorous in establishing a causal link between program activities and outcomes. However, it is a practical and sufficient way to determine whether a program is making a difference as long as appropriate outcome measures are collected. For example, pretest/posttest designs can be effective for evaluating changes in participants' knowledge but should not be used to evaluate recidivism outcomes where it would be difficult to determine whether changes in recidivism are the result of program participation or simply the passage of time.



EXERCISE 4: EVALUATION PLANNING

BJA requires that implementation grantees complete process and impact evaluations. Complete the table below to indicate the type of evaluations you propose to conduct.

The process measures, short-term outcomes, and long-term outcomes in the logic model above should provide an outline to develop a comprehensive plan. Respond to the final set of questions below; these will help round out the plan. Please provide multiple answers to the questions below, as necessary, to reflect components of the implementation proposal that will be evaluated individually.

1. What type of evaluation will you use to assess the outcomes and impact of the proposed grant activities?				
Activities	Evaluation type			
	Process	Random assignment Experiment	Quasi-experiment	Pretest/Posttest
Activity 1: <copy from logic model>	✓			
Activity 2: <copy from logic model>	✓			
Activity 3: <copy from logic model>	✓			
Activity 4: <copy from logic model>	✓			
Activity 5: <copy from logic model>	✓			
Add additional rows as needed.				

2. What is the target population being studied in the evaluation?	
Answer:	
Considerations & Examples:	<i>Clearly define the group you will study in the evaluation and ensure that the target population is appropriate for the intervention provided.</i>

3. How will you define successful completion of the program?	
Answer:	
Considerations & Examples:	<i>Completion definitions can be either process-based (e.g., program participant has completed 70% of program requirements or case plan within one year) or outcome-based (e.g., program participant has achieved core benchmark goals of the program, such as improving risk and needs level, attaining stable housing, attaining employment, achieving a GED, etc. within one year).</i>

4. What is the definition of recidivism that will be evaluated?

Answer:

Considerations & Examples: *This should be the same as the definition of recidivism used by the jurisdiction in which the grantee operates.*

5. What will be the tracking period for recidivism, and when will it begin?

Answer:

Considerations & Examples: *The tracking period must allow for uniform “time at risk to recidivate” for all offenders tracked (e.g., all in group have at least one year of exposure to street time after completing the program or upon release from prison when determining the one-year recidivism rate). You may want to track recidivism at multiple intervals (1-, 2-, and 3-year rates), but the period(s) tracked must be consistent for all individuals.*

6. What is the comparison group for the evaluation?

Answer:

Considerations & Examples: *The comparison group must have similar characteristics to the treatment group for the evaluation to be valid. Random assignment to a “program” and “control” group is the preferable methodology for the evaluation. If that isn’t possible, it is important for the selected control group to be statistically matched to the program group. Meaning, the two groups should be comparable on key characteristics such as risk level. Pre- and posttest designs are acceptable only if there is no way to identify a statistically matched control group.*

7. How many individuals will be in the program/treatment and control groups for analysis after 6 months? After 12 months?

Answer:

Considerations & Examples: *After 12 months there will ideally be more than 100 individuals each in the treatment and comparison groups.*

8. Who will collect data records on program participation and services received, as well as recidivism outcomes, for analysis? Where and how will these data be captured?

Answer:

Considerations & Examples: *Clearly identify available electronic record data that can be used for the research. Electronic records are essential to conduct matching of databases, reduce cost, and complete the research in a timely fashion.*

9. Who will conduct the process and impact evaluations?

Answer:

Considerations & Examples: *BJA encourages grantees to contract with an outside provider to assist with the design and completion of the evaluation.*