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RESOURCE CENTER

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Second Chance Act Grants: Guidance for Smart Probation Applicants

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Resource Center and the Bureau of Justice
Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice

Speakers

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The Second Chance Act

- Public Law 110-199 signed into law on April 8, 2008
- Purpose: to help states and communities reduce recidivism



Section 101

Authorizes grants to **state and local governments** and **federally recognized Indian tribes** that may be used for demonstration projects to promote the safe and successful reintegration into the community of individuals who have been incarcerated

Smart Probation

- Solicitation is available at <https://www.bja.gov/Funding/12SmartProbationSol.pdf>.
- Applications are due on May 21, 2012.
- Applicants are limited to states, units of local government, and federally recognized Indian tribal governments .
- For information about other Second Chance Act funding opportunities, visit https://www.bja.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?Program_ID=90 or <http://www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/about/second-chance-act>.

Smart Probation

- Purpose: to support the development and implementation of evidence-based **probation programs** that effectively address the needs of offenders, improve probation success rates and reduce recidivism.

Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables

- Improve supervision strategies that will reduce recidivism and provide training, technical assistance (TTA), and policy support.
- Promote and increase collaboration among agencies and officials who work in probation, pretrial, law enforcement, and related community corrections fields.
- Develop and implement strategies for the identification, supervision, and treatment of “high risk/high needs” probationers that may serve as a model for other agencies throughout the nation.
- Objectively assess and/or evaluate the impact of innovative and evidenced-based supervision and treatment strategies.
- Demonstrate the use and efficacy of evidence-based practices and principles to improve the delivery of probation supervision strategies and practices.

Mandatory Requirements

There are **no mandatory program-related requirements** for submitting an application, however applicants must propose projects that include at least one of the approved uses listed on pages 4-6 of the solicitation.

Approved Uses of Funds

Proposed projects must include at least one of the approved uses listed below.

- Increase the capacity of states, localities, and tribal communities to help probation agencies improve supervision strategies.
- Test new policies and strategies in community supervision and treatment to increase public safety and generate savings.
- Analyze and implement changes to policies and practices that guide community supervision conditions and revocation procedures.
- Develop or promote the integration of probation supervision strategies and tools to facilitate effective offender reentry.
- Expand collaboration and strategic partnerships between community supervision agencies and law enforcement.
- Evaluate the results of the new strategies and tools tested through this initiative.

Target Population

- Projects should be focused on “adult” target populations, however this may be defined by the jurisdiction. Applicant should provide justification for supporting their jurisdiction’s definition of adult target populations, specific age range, etc.
- This grant cannot be used for parole populations. Based upon legislation applications under this solicitation are limited to probation projects.

Priority Consideration

Priority consideration will be given to applicants who:

- Clearly demonstrate the appropriate use and integration of evidence-based principles such as the application of risk/needs assessment.
- Target medium- to high-risk offenders, high-needs offenders, or those with special needs such as offenders with mentally illness, female offenders, or sex offenders.
- Document a baseline recidivism rate based on historical data.
- Provide a historical record of comprehensive data collection and the ability to track program participation.
- Employ a program strategy that includes collaboration among a variety of government and private agencies.
- Establish a relationship with an objective entity such as a university or nationally-recognized expert who can provide an assessment/evaluation of the impact of the proposed strategies.

What An Application Should Include

- Abstract
- Program Narrative that includes:
 - Statement of the Problem
 - Program Design and Implementation
 - Capabilities and Competencies
 - Impact/Outcomes, Evaluations, Sustainment, and Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures
- Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative
- Additional Attachments
- Please see pages 13-15 of the solicitation for a full list of application requirements.

Selection Criteria

- Statement of the Problem (15%)
- Program Design and Implementation (35%)
- Capabilities/Competencies (25%)
- Impact/Outcomes, Evaluation, and Sustainment, and Plan for Collecting Data for the Solicitation's Performance Measures (15%)
- Budget (10%)

Statement of the Problem

- Clearly define the scope of the problem.
 - Size and demographic make-up of the population
 - Current organization/management structure of the responsible agency/entity
 - Describe the use of evidence-based strategies including the type of risk/needs assessment instrument utilized
 - Describe current violation rate and translate into baseline recidivism rate
- Describe how the applicant anticipates the project's implementation will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of offender supervision.
- Explain the inability to fund the program adequately without federal assistance.

Program Design and Implementation

- Clearly articulate the goals established for this project and connect them to the overarching goals of the solicitation set forth on pages 4.
- Describe how the proposed project activities will address these program goals and further the overall intent of the solicitation
- Refer to the “approved uses of funds” section on pages 4-6 and describe specifically how the proposed allocation of project funds meets these standards

Program Design and Implementation

- Describe in detail how the proposed project addresses the priority considerations outlined on page 6.
- Indicate the number of people under community supervision who would receive services if this proposal is funded.

Capabilities/Competencies

Applicants must:

- Describe the management structure and staffing of the project, identifying the agency responsible for the project and the grant coordinator.
- Demonstrate the capability of the implementing agency and collaborative partners to implement the project, including gathering and analyzing information, developing a plan, and evaluating the program.

Impact/Outcomes, Evaluation, Sustainment, and Data Collection

Applicants must:

- Describe the process for assessing the initiative's effectiveness through the collection and reporting of the required performance metrics data
- Identify goals and objectives for program development, implementation, and outcomes.
- Describe how performance will be documented, monitored, and evaluated, and identify the impact of the strategy once implemented.
- Outline what data and information will be collected and describe how evaluation and collaborative partnerships will be leveraged to build long-term support and resources for the program.
- Describe a plan for the evaluation of the project and document a collaborative relationship with an objective, third-party evaluator such as a local college or university. Specifically identify and describe the partnership and collaboration
- Discuss how this effort will be integrated into the state or tribal justice system plans or commitments, how the program will be financially sustained after federal funding ends, and the expected long-term results for the program.

Performance Measures

- A preliminary list of performance measures for this grant program appears on pages 8-10 of the solicitation.
- Please note that performance measures are finalized after jurisdictions apply for funding.
- By applying for the solicitation, all applicants agree that they will report on these measures when they are released in their final form.
- All applicants must demonstrate their methods for collecting data for performance measures.

Performance Measures

- Applicants are not required to achieve a specific recidivism rate reduction.
- However, successful applicants are required to report the recidivism rates for participants enrolled in a smart probation program funded through this grant.
- Grantees are also required to calculate a baseline recidivism rate for the proposed target population and the percentage decrease in the recidivism rate for program participants from that baseline.

Performance Measures

The preliminary list of performance measures for this grant program includes the following recidivism indicators:

- Number of participants who had a technical violation of supervised release while participating in the program.
- Number of participants who were arrested while participating in the program.
- Number of participants who were convicted while participating in the program.
- Number of participants who had a revocation of the terms of supervised release while participating in the program.
- Number of participants who were reincarcerated while participating in the program.

Budget

- Applicants must provide a proposed budget that is complete; reasonable and allowable; cost effective, and necessary for project activities.
- Contingent upon the availability of funds, awards of up to \$500,000 will be made for a period of up to 24 months.
- At least 25% of the total grant award should be used for data collection, performance measurement, and performance assessment.
- Applicants must budget funding to travel to Department of Justice-sponsored grant meetings. Applicants should estimate the costs of travel and accommodations for three staff to attend two meetings in Washington D.C.

Matching Requirement

This solicitation does not require a match. A voluntary match amount may be incorporated into the budget proposal, but if approved it will be considered mandatory and subject to audit.

Additional Attachments

- Project Timeline with each project goal, related objective, activity, expected completion date, responsible person, or organization.
- Position Descriptions for key positions.
- Letters of Support from all key partners, detailing the commitment to work with the applicant to promote the mission of the project.

Contact Information

For questions about the process of submitting an application:

For technical assistance with submitting the application, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 1-800-518-4726 or via e-mail to support@grants.gov. The Grants.gov Support Hotline hours of operation are 24 hours, 7 days a week, except federal holidays.

For questions about the specific requirements of the solicitation:

For assistance with any other requirements of the solicitation, contact the BJA Justice Information Center at 1-877-927-5657, via email to JIC@telesishq.com, or by [live web chat](#). The BJA Justice Information Center hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, and 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. eastern time on the solicitation close date.

Other Helpful Resources

Applicants can obtain more information on evidence-based strategies for probation supervision from the following resources:

- *A Ten-Step Guide to Transforming Probation Departments to Reduce Recidivism*, Council of State Governments Justice Center (www.nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/documents/0000/1150/A_Ten-Step_Guide_to_Transforming_Probation_Departments_to_Reduce_Recidivism.pdf)
- *Putting Public Safety First: 13 Strategies for Successful Supervision and Reentry*, The Urban Institute (www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411800_public_safety_first.pdf)
- *Maximum Impact: Targeting Supervision on Higher-Risk People, Places and Times*, The Pew Center on the States (www.pewcenteronthestates.org/report_detail.aspx?id=54209)



Questions and Answers



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This presentation was prepared by the Council of State Governments Justice Center, in partnership with Gary Dennis, Senior Policy Advisor to the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice. Presentations are not externally reviewed for form or content. The statements reflect the views of the authors and should not be considered the official position of the CSG Justice Center, the members of the Council of State Governments.