



U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Bureau of Justice Statistics

The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is pleased to announce that it is seeking applications for funding to administer state-level activities under the 2009 National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP). This program furthers the Department's mission to enhance the crime fighting and criminal justice capabilities of State governments by improving the accuracy, utility, and interstate accessibility of criminal history records and enhancing records of protective orders involving domestic violence and stalking, sex offender records, automated identification systems and other State systems supporting national records systems and their use for criminal history background checks.

FY 2009 National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP) Solicitation

Eligibility

The NCHIP application must be submitted by the agency designated by the Governor to administer the NCHIP program. States may choose to submit applications as part of a multi-state consortium or other entity. In such cases, please contact your BJS program manager for further information.

Deadline

All NCHIP applications are due by 5:00 p.m. eastern time on Thursday, February 26, 2009.
(See "Deadline: Application" on page 4)

Contact Information:

This application must be submitted through the OJP Grants Management System (GMS) at <http://www.ojp.gov/gmscbt/>. For assistance with the requirements of this program announcement, contact Devon B. Adams at 202-307-0765 or e-mail askbjs@usdoj.gov. Include "2009NCHIP" in the subject line. The Grants Management System Support Hotline is 1-888-549-9901, option 3. Note: The GMS Support Hotline hours of operation are Monday-Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. eastern time.

2009-BJS-2027

CONTENTS

Overview.....	3
Deadline: Registration.....	4
Deadline: Application.....	4
Eligibility.....	4
Project Specific Information.....	5
Performance Measures.....	11
How to Apply.....	12
What an Application Must Include:	13
Standard Form 424	
Program Narrative	
Budget and Budget Narrative	
Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)	
Other Program Attachments	
Selection Criteria.....	16
Review Process	17
Additional Requirements.....	18

FY 2009 National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP) Solicitation

CFDA Number 16.554

Overview

BJS is publishing this notice to announce the continuation of the National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP) in Fiscal Year 2009, to identify the program priorities, and provide information on application requirements.

Program goals

The goal of the NCHIP grant program is to improve the Nation's safety and security by enhancing the quality, completeness, and accessibility of criminal history record information and by insuring the nationwide implementation of criminal justice and noncriminal justice background check systems. Achieving this goal is contingent upon accomplishing four objectives:

- providing direct financial and technical assistance to States to improve their criminal records systems and other related systems in an effort to support background checks;
- ensuring the infrastructure is developed to connect each State's records systems to Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) records systems and, in turn, to connect each State's background check databases to one another;
- providing the training and technical assistance needed to insure that records systems are developed and managed to conform to FBI standards, as well as the most appropriate technologies and that States adhere to the highest standards of practice with respect to privacy and confidentiality; and,
- assessing and measuring through systematic evaluation and standardized performance measurement and statistics, progress made implementing improvements in State and national records holdings and background check systems.

The NCHIP program serves as an umbrella for various record improvement activities and funding streams, each of which has unique goals and objectives. As a basic principle of this program, BJS strongly encourages States to ensure the integrated functioning of record improvement initiatives, regardless of the funding source. Also, BJS strongly encourages applicants to match and/or leverage the Federal funds provided with other resources to the maximum extent possible.

Authorizing legislation

In the past, appropriations for the NCHIP program have been made pursuant to the Crime Identification Technology Act of 1998, and the procedures for applying for NCHIP grants generally reflect the provisions of that Act. The NCHIP program implements the grant provisions of:

- The Crime Identification Technology Act of 1998 (CITA), Pub. L. No. 105-251, 112 Stat.1871 (1998), codified at 42 USC Section 14601 et seq.;
- The Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (Brady Act), Pub. L. No. 103-159, 107 Stat.1536 (1993), codified as amended at 18 U.S.C. Section 921 et seq.;
- The National Child Protection Act of 1993 (NCPA), Pub. L. No. 103-209, 107 Stat. 2490 (1993), codified as amended at 42 U.S.C. Sections 3759, 5101 note, 5119, 5119a, 5119b, 5119c;
- those provisions of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (Omnibus Act), Pub. L. No. 90 351, 82 Stat. 197 (1968), codified as amended at 42 U.S.C. Section 3711 et seq., as amended; and the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (Violent Crime Control Act), Pub. L. No.103 322, 108 Stat. 1796 (1994), codified as amended at 42 U.S.C. Section 13701 et seq., which pertain to the establishment, maintenance, analysis, or use of criminal history records and criminal record systems;
- relevant requirements of the Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Registration Act, Pub. L. No. 103-322, 108 Stat. 2038, Megan's Law, Pub.L. No. 104-145, 110 Stat. 1345, and the Pam Lychner Sexual Offender Tracking and Identification Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-236, 110 Stat. 3093;
- The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, Pub. L. No. 106-386, 114 Stat. 1464 (2000) and related laws pertaining to the identification, collection, analysis and interstate exchange of records relating to domestic violence and stalking (including protection orders);
- The Violence Against Women Act of 1994, codified as amended at 42 U.S.C. Section 14031 et seq; and,
- The Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005, Pub. L. No. 109-162, 119 Stat 2960 (2006).

Deadline: Registration

The GMS registration deadline is Thursday, February 26, 2009.

Deadline: Application

Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. eastern time, Thursday, February 26, 2009, to be eligible for funding in FY 2009. Awards are expected to be made by September 30, 2009.

Eligibility

The NCHIP application must be submitted by the agency designated by the Governor to administer the NCHIP program. States may choose to submit applications as part of a multistate consortium or other entity. In such cases, please contact your BJS program manager for further information.

Also, as required by Crime Identification Technology Act of 1998 (CITA) under 42 USC 14601(c), to be eligible to receive a NCHIP grant, the application must specifically assure that the State or Territory:

- (1) has the capability to contribute pertinent information to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) established under section 103(b) of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (18 U.S.C. 922 note).
- (2) is or will be following a comprehensive strategy for information sharing systems to improve the functioning of the criminal justice system, with an emphasis on integration of all criminal justice components, law enforcement, courts, prosecution, corrections, and probation and parole. Further, the strategy must be developed in consultation with State and local officials with emphasis on the recommendation of officials whose duty it is to oversee, plan, and implement integrated information technology systems, and contain –
 - (A) a definition and analysis of “integration” in the State and localities developing integrated information sharing systems;
 - (B) an assessment of the criminal justice resources being devoted to information technology;
 - (C) State and local resource needs;
 - (D) Federal, State, regional, and local information technology coordination requirements; and,
 - (E) statewide priorities for planning and implementation of information technology systems.
- (3) it coordinates the programs funded by NCHIP with other Federally-funded information technology programs, including directly funded local programs; and,
- (4) assures that the individuals who developed the grant application took into consideration the needs of all branches of the State Government and specifically sought the advice of the chief of the highest court of the State with respect to the application.

(See “Other Program Attachments” on page 16)

Project Specific Information

The NCHIP program was initiated in 1995 and has encompassed evolving efforts to support State activities for the establishment of records systems and the collection and use of criminal history and related records. Since 1995 direct awards under the basic NCHIP (including awards to "priority" States and awards under the Advanced State Award Program (ASAP) have totaled over \$520 million. In addition, \$6 million was transferred to the FBI for implementation of the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) and over \$18 million was awarded to provide direct technical assistance to States, to evaluate the program, and to collect statistics and research data on presale firearm checks.

The National Sex Offender Registry Assistance Program (NSOR-AP) was added to NCHIP in FY 1998, with a \$25 million appropriation having the goal of assisting States in upgrading sex

offender registries consistent with Federal and State standards and providing data to the FBI's National Sex Offender Registry. Starting in FY 1999, funding for State sex offender registries has been covered under the general NCHIP.

As part of the Violent Crime Control Act, the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 authorized a total of \$6 million for fiscal years 1996 through 1998 to improve processes for entering data on stalking and domestic violence into local, State, and national databases. The funds were incorporated into, and awarded under, the NCHIP program during those years. This program was re-authorized by the Violence Against Women Act of 2000 (Pub. L. No. 106-386, Section 8) at \$3 million per year for fiscal years 2001 through 2006 and funding was re-instituted in FY 2002. The Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 (Pub. L. No. 109-162, Section 109) authorizes appropriations for the program at \$3 million for each of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.

To date, all States, the District of Columbia, and 5 U.S. Territories have received funds under NCHIP. Detailed information about the history of the NCHIP program and its accomplishments are available at <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/nchip.htm>>. NCHIP has provided support to States in the following areas:

- Record improvement and support for courts.
- Participation in the Interstate Identification Index (III).
- Automation of records and fingerprint data.
- National Instant Criminal Background Check System.
- Sex offender registries.
- Domestic violence records/protection orders.

Issues and needs to be addressed

Despite the tremendous progress made toward criminal record improvements since 1995, several significant shortcomings remain, including the following:

- Many arrest records available through III – excluding those for the twelve States participating in the National Fingerprint File (NFF) – are missing case outcome information in the FBI's Criminal History File. Missing case disposition information also continues to plague many State record systems. It remains vitally important that the courts and prosecutors be major players in the development of improvements to criminal records systems. The involvement of these officials is key to helping ensure the timely and accurate transmittal of disposition information, including non-prosecution outcomes, to criminal record repositories.
- Many States and territories are not submitting all available qualifying records to the NICS Index.
- Some States and Territories are not yet submitting qualifying records to the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Protection Order File, and the FBI reports continued problems with the appropriate flagging of protection orders regarding the prohibition for firearm purchases.

This program announcement is intended to target FY 2009 NCHIP resources on these specific needs as identified in the following priorities.

Funding

All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

Priority areas for grant funding

Through this competitive solicitation, BJS invites applications from States that (1) have clearly demonstrated a need for and the ability to expend NCHIP funds in a timely fashion; (2) propose projects that specifically and directly address one or more of the priority areas identified below; and, (3) to the maximum extent possible, propose to match and/or leverage the NCHIP award with other resources.

1. Updating and automating case outcomes from courts and prosecutors in State records and the FBI's Criminal History file.

Allowable costs may include activities such as:

- a. automating the interface between the record repository and prosecutors, courts, and corrections, including the development of relevant information exchange package documentation based on the Global Justice XML Data Dictionary (GJXDM) and/or National Information Exchange Model (NIEM);
- b. implementing improved criminal history record capture procedures, including complete arrest reporting and researching missing dispositions, provided that the captured data are subsequently included in the permanent automated database;
- c. ensuring that records of all criminal events that start with an arrest or indictment are included in the database;
- d. capturing data on domestic violence misdemeanor convictions;
- e. capturing data on persons convicted of abuse of children, the elderly, and the disabled and/or stalking and domestic violence offenses (including protection orders and violations thereof);
- f. implementation of, or upgrades to, record systems which facilitate immediate identification of disposition records, provided the records are accessible for State- or Federal-level criminal history inquiries;
- g. reducing any backlog of missing dispositions;
- h. implementing the standardized RAP sheet format which relies on GJXDM and NIEM, including assisting the States in converting criminal history records to the standard interstate RAP sheet format or for developing electronic interchange capabilities related thereto;
- i. conversion of manual or other non-automated records to electronic records;
- j. submitting disposition information to the FBI via the Machine Readable Data (MRD) process, through Interstate Identification Index messages, or other methods of

- transmission accepted by the FBI;
- k. establishing more effective accuracy and information quality controls;
 - l. conversion of juvenile records to the adult system - Federal regulations allow the FBI to accept juvenile records if submitted by the State or local arresting agency;
 - m. upgrading equipment where directly related to improving availability of data and where appropriate given the level of data completeness and participation in national records systems (the ongoing and/or maintenance costs associated with any such equipment are allowable only for the first twelve-month period);
 - n. purchasing livescan equipment for local agencies where the funds can be justified on the basis of geographic, population, traffic, or other related factors, and only where the State has established an Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) and either has implemented or is implementing procedures to ensure that the AFIS is compatible with FBI standards (the ongoing and/or maintenance costs associated with any such equipment are allowable only for the first twelve-month period); and,
 - o. ensuring compatibility with Federal record systems, such as III, and to implement statewide integrated system strategies which interface all components of the criminal justice system, including law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, and corrections, to the extent that such expenditures improve the availability of criminal record data, including protection orders, and provided that any systems funded are compatible with FBI standards for national data systems, such as National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), National Crime Information Center (NCIC)-2000, NICS, Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System (IAFIS), the NCIC Protection Order File, and the NCIC National Convicted Sexual Offender Registry. However, funds may not be used to support studies, analysis, design, or development of State integrated systems strategies.
- 2. Automating access to information concerning persons prohibited from possessing or receiving a firearm, including persons who: have been adjudicated as a mental defective or have been committed to a mental institution; are unlawful users of or addicted to any controlled substance; are the subject of protection or restraining orders; and/or have been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence.**

Allowable costs may include activities such as:

- a. identifying and developing access to data on persons prohibited from firearm purchases under the Gun Control Act (18 U.S.C. Section 922), as amended by the Brady Act;
- b. participating in the FBI's Identification for Firearms Sales (IFFS) program which is a system for flagging Interstate Identification Index records for the immediate and accurate identification of convicted felons; and,
- c. enabling the State to serve as a Point of Contact (POC) under the NICS system (including costs of equipment, software, personnel training, and development and implementation of related operating and administrative procedures). However, funds may not be used to cover ongoing costs of presale firearm background checks, but may be used to pay costs associated with capturing dispositions in response to a specific NICS inquiry, provided that the captured data are entered into the automated State and FBI system and serves to upgrade the permanent quality of the record systems.

3. Transmitting relevant State records to: (1) the NICS Index; and/or (2) the NCIC's National Convicted Sexual Offender Registry file.

Allowable costs may include activities such as:

- a. programming or operational changes in records management necessary to comply with the requirements for NICS record-keeping and the reporting of transaction statuses;
- b. participating in the NCIC National Convicted Sexual Offender Registry File, including assisting States to develop and enhance State registries that feed into the national system to ensure compliance with requirements set forth in State and Federal legislation (the Wetterling Act, Megan's Law, and the Lychner Act). Allowable expenditures may include costs of equipment, software, personnel training, and development and implementation of related operating and administrative procedures. **Note: Costs of regular operating expenditures are not covered under the program.** Sex offender registry files supported with NCHIP funds must be compatible with the FBI file. Funds are only allowable to support development of local sex offender registries where data in such files are or will become directly accessible throughout the State and available to the FBI's national system. Funds may be used to purchase equipment and develop software to permit the disclosure of registry data in connection with background checks or other purposes as authorized by State or Federal legislation. Funds may not be used to purchase equipment for use by individual law enforcement officers; and,
- c. establishing interfaces and/or information exchanges between criminal history records, sex offender registry, and civil protection order files to ensure that, consistent with State law, a complete data review is possible in connection with background checks for child care or other authorized purposes. Funds may be used to develop software to establish protocols to permit interface between the criminal history record system, the State sex offender registry, and related protection order files including files of civil protection orders.

4. Full participation in the Interstate Identification Index (III).

Allowable costs may include activities such as:

- a. automating criminal record databases;
- b. synchronizing records between the State and the FBI;
- c. developing software and hardware necessary to enable electronic access to State records on an intrastate or interstate basis;
- d. paying reasonable costs associated with the adoption and implementation of the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact, including those associated with State review and enactment of the Compact, and the development and implementation of procedures (including purchase of equipment and development of software) necessary to facilitate operations pursuant to Compact protocols including those relating to participation in the FBI's National Fingerprint File.

5. Implementing a Stalking or Domestic Violence Record Improvement Program.

NCHIP funds may be supplemented for a State that certifies that it has or intends to establish a program that enters into the NCIC:

- warrants for the arrest of persons violating protection orders intended to protect victims from stalking or domestic violence;
- arrests or convictions of persons violating protection orders or charged with domestic violence; and
- protection orders for the protection of persons from stalking or domestic violence.

Supplemental funds may be used to support a States' efforts to transmit qualifying records to the NCIC Protection Order File, including assisting States to develop and enhance State registries that feed into the national database. Allowable expenditures may include costs of equipment, software, personnel training, and development and implementation of related operating and administrative procedures. **Note: Costs of regular operating expenditures are not covered under the program.** State registry files supported with NCHIP funds must be compatible with the FBI file. Funds are only allowable to support development of local registries where data in such files are or will become directly accessible throughout the State and available to the FBI's national system. Funds may be used to purchase equipment and develop software to permit the disclosure of registry data in connection with background checks or other purposes as authorized by State or Federal legislation. Funds may not be used to purchase equipment for use by individual law enforcement officers;

"Protection order" includes: (i) any injunction, restraining order, or any other order issued by a civil or criminal court for the purposes of preventing violent or threatening acts or harassment against, sexual violence or contact or communication with or physical proximity to, another person, including any temporary or final orders issued by civil or criminal courts whether obtained by filing an independent action or as a pendent elite order in another proceeding so long as any civil order was issued in response to a complaint, petition, or motion filed by or on behalf of a person seeking protection; and (ii) any support, child custody or visitation provisions, orders, remedies, or relief issued as part of a protection order, restraining order, or stay away injunction pursuant to State, tribal, territorial, or local law authorizing the issuance of protection orders, restraining orders, or injunctions for the protection of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

If an applicant seeks such supplemental funds, the Program Narrative must include documentation showing the need for grant funds and that State or local funding does not already cover these operations; intended use of supplemental grant funds including a plan of action to increase record input; and an estimate of expected results from the use of the funds.

Match Requirement (cash or in-kind)

Please note that a grant made under the FY 2009 NCHIP program may not cover more than 80% of the total costs of the project(s) being funded. The applicant must identify the source of the 20% non-federal portion of the budget and how match funds will be used. Applicants may satisfy this match requirement with either cash or in-kind services. The formula for calculating required match is:

Award amount = Adjusted project costs X Recipient's share = Required match

Federal share

Example: 80/20% match requirement

For Federal award amount of \$350,000, match would be calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\$350,000}{80\%} = \$437,500 \times 20\% = \$87,500 \text{ match}$$

Applicants are encouraged to propose matching and/or leveraging the NCHIP award to the maximum extent possible with other resources in their application. The narrative should include a description of cash contributions, in-kind services, or activities, with accompanying fiscal implications, which will serve as the match for activities funded under NCHIP.

Award Period

FY 2009 NCHIP awards will be “new” awards as opposed to supplemental awards, and will be made for up to 12 months. Since the program builds on long term NCHIP activity, States will have the flexibility to begin funded activities immediately upon award or as late as October 1, 2009. All activities must be scheduled to be completed by September 30, 2010. FY 2009 projects may overlap with FY 2008 projects or may run consecutively.

Performance Measures

Program Objectives	Performance Measures	Data to be Provided by Grantees
<p>Improve criminal history record systems in the States and territories to support background checks for the purposes of identifying ineligible firearms purchasers, as well as persons ineligible to hold positions involving the children, the elderly, or the disabled.</p>	<p>Percentage of recent state records which are automated.</p>	<p>Number of criminal history records, manual and automated, in the State's criminal history file.</p> <p>Number of fully automated records (records for which the master name index and entire criminal history are automated) in the State's criminal history database.</p>
	<p>Percentage of records accessible through Interstate Identification Index.</p>	<p>Number of records available through the Interstate Identification Index (III) System (including arrests and case outcomes).</p>
	<p>Number of quality records reported to the repository.</p>	<p>Number of arrests reported to the repository by mail, fax, electronic, and other means of submission; of these number communicated by automated interface.</p> <p>Number of court dispositions reported to the repository by mail, fax, electronic, and other means of submission.</p>
	<p>Percentage of applications for</p>	<p>Average elapsed time between arrest and final court disposition.</p>
	<p>Percentage of applications for</p>	<p>Number of applications for firearms</p>

	firearms transfers rejected primarily for the presence of a prior felony conviction.	transfers rejected for the presence of a prior felony conviction or other ineligibility factor. Number of appeals and outcomes of appeals. Number of retrievals by ATF and/or State and local law enforcement authorities.
Ensure that the infrastructure is developed to connect each State's records systems to national records and in turn, to connect each State's background check databases to one another.	Number of States participating in the FBI's Integrated Automated Fingerprint System (IAFIS). Number of States providing an Interface between State sex offender registry and other systems/agencies. Number of States participating in the FBI's protection order file (POF). Number of States in Interstate Identification Index (III) System.	Number of records submitted to the FBI's Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System (IAFIS). Interface between State sex offender registry and other systems/agencies. Number of records submitted to the FBI's POF. Number of records available through the Interstate Identification Index (III) System.

How to Apply

Grants Management System Instructions. Applications must be submitted through OJP's online Grants Management System (GMS) at <http://www.ojp.gov/gmscbt/>, which provides a step-by-step guide. To begin, refer to the section entitled "External Overview: Locating & Applying for Funding Opportunities." Applicants should begin the process a few weeks prior to the GMS registration deadline, especially if this is the first time using the system. Each application requires a separate GMS registration. For additional assistance, call the GMS Help Desk at 1-888-549-9901 from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. eastern time.

Note: OJP's Grants Management System (GMS) does not support Microsoft Vista or Microsoft 2007. Therefore, OJP will not review any application whose attachments are in Microsoft Vista or Microsoft 2007 format. GMS downloads applications from Grants.gov and is the system in which OJP reviews applications and manages awarded grants. Applications submitted via GMS must be in the following word processing formats: Microsoft Word (*.doc), PDF files (*.pdf), or text documents (*.txt). GMS is not yet compatible with Vista and cannot yet process Microsoft Word 2007 documents saved in the new default format with the extensions of ".docx." Please ensure the documents you are submitting in GMS are saved using "Word 97-2003 Document (*.doc)" format. Additionally, GMS does not accept executable file types as application attachments. These disallowed file types include, but are not limited to, the following extensions: ".com," ".bat," ".exe," ".vbs," ".cfg," ".dat," ".db," ".dbf," ".dll," ".ini," ".log," ".ora," ".sys," and ".zip."

A DUNS number is required: The Office of Management and Budget requires that all businesses and nonprofit applicants for Federal funds include a DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number in their application for a new award or renewal of an award. Applications without a DUNS number are incomplete. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of entities receiving Federal funds. The identifier is used for tracking purposes and to validate address

and point of contact information for federal assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. The DUNS number will be used throughout the grant life cycle. Obtaining a DUNS number is a free, simple, one-time activity. Obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or by applying online at <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com>. Individuals are exempt from this requirement.

CFDA Number: The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number for this solicitation is 16.554, titled “National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP),” and the funding opportunity number is 2009-BJS-2027.

What an Application Must Include

Applicants must submit the following:

- Standard Form 424;
- Program Attachment #1: Budget Detail Worksheet and budget narrative;
- Program Attachment #2: Program Narrative - including background and identification of needs, description of tasks to be funded, unexpended funds, and coordination activities;
- Other Program Attachments – Can include documentation relating to court participation, one-year timeline, notification letter to the State Information Technology Point of Contact (POC), and other written certifications; and,
- Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable).

Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424). The SF 424 is a standard form used by most Federal agencies. It contains 18 items that are to be completed online in the Overview, Application Information, and Project Information sections of the OJP GMS.

Assurances and Certificates. Applicants are required to review, accept, and “sign off” on these assurances and certifications electronically through GMS. Please verify that the name, address, phone number, fax number, and e-mail address of the authorizing official on these online forms are correct.

Assurances. The applicant must comply with assurances in order to receive Federal funds under this program. It is the responsibility of the recipient of Federal funds to fully understand and comply with these requirements. Failure to comply may result in withholding of funds, termination of the award, or other sanctions.

Certifications Regarding Lobbying: Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters; and the Drug-Free Workplace Requirement. Applicants are required to review and check off the box on the certification form included in their online application process. This form commits the applicant to compliance with the certification requirements under 28 CFR Part 69, “New Restrictions on Lobbying,” and 28 CFR Part 67, “A Government-Wide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and Government-Wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants).”

Budget Detail Worksheet and Budget Narrative (Attachment #1)

The Budget Detail Worksheet may be found through the Internet at < http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/forms/budget_detail.pdf>, OJP Standard Forms & Instructions. The OJP Financial Guide, which governs the administration of funds, contains information on allowable costs, methods of payment, audit requirements, accounting systems, and financial records, is available on the OJP website at

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/financialguide/index.htm>>. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of the Comptroller's Customer Service Center at 1-800-458-0786.

Match. There is a 20% cash or in-kind match requirement in connection with the FY 2009 NCHIP program. The narrative should include a description of cash contributions, in-kind services, or activities, with accompanying fiscal implications, which will serve as the match for activities funded under NCHIP. BJS will consider all documented efforts underway in the State which are designed to contribute to or meet NCHIP program goals to be allowable in support of the 20% match requirement. BJS will work with the States to insure that they properly identify and quantify all records improvement activities being undertaken within the State so as to include, where appropriate, these improvement efforts within the match definition. A waiver of the increased match requirement may be sought from the BJS director.

Budget Detail Worksheet. The budget should provide details for expenses in required categories (including match) and by individual task. A summary should be included with the 20% match clearly indicated as non-federal match. The application should identify those agencies to receive direct funding and indicate the fiscal arrangements to accomplish fund transfer. Applicants seeking supplemental funds in connection with protection order initiatives must also include additional documentation showing that State or local funding does not already cover these operations.

Budget Narrative. The budget narrative should detail costs included in each budget category for the Federal and the non-Federal (match) share. The purpose of the budget narrative is to relate items budgeted to project activities and to provide justification and explanation for budget items, including criteria and data used to arrive at the estimates for each budget category. The budget narrative should also indicate amounts to be made available to subrecipient agencies (under Contractual/Contracts category) other than the direct award recipient.

Program Narrative (Attachment #2)

The program narrative must include the following three sections.

Section 1: Background and identification of needs

Accomplishments. Applicants must provide a detailed summary of the accomplishments achieved with funding under NCHIP. This section should describe, in quantifiable terms if possible, results achieved and advances made since the inception of NCHIP. Specifically address accomplishments relating to participation in each of the national databases and initiatives (i.e. III, NICS, NCIC Protection Order File, National Sex Offender Registry, IAFIS, mental health records, and livescan/AFIS capability). Where relevant, reference should be made to surveys and data quality audits.

Progress on record improvement goals. This section should include a short update of current efforts relating to improvement of criminal history records, protection order data, or sex offender registries (including efforts supported under OJP and other Federal or State funded programs) and should discuss any evaluative efforts undertaken to identify the key areas of weakness in the State's criminal record system since submission of previous NCHIP applications.

Current status in specific subject areas. Please describe the status of the Applicant's participation in each of the following subject areas in your application and include current number of records in each system, where applicable.

- Mental health records availability. Applicants should indicate whether their mental health records are checked, either by the State POC or the FBI, during a NICS check. Where mental health records are accessible, please include the number of records currently available and any plans to improve availability. If mental health records are not currently accessible at the time of a background check, please describe factors which limit or prohibit exchange of mental health records.
- Protection order files. Applicants should indicate whether they submit information for inclusion in the FBI's NCIC Protection Order file. States that submit protection orders should indicate the number of active protection orders provided to the FBI. States that do not submit protection orders should describe the prohibiting factors and any plans to overcome them.
- Sex offender registry. Applications should discuss the extent to which the State provides information to the FBI's NCIC Convicted Sexual Offender Registry file. States that do not submit sex offender information should describe the prohibiting factors and any plans to overcome them.
- Denied persons file. Applications should discuss the extent to which the State provides information to the FBI's Denied Persons File in the NICS Index. States that do not submit information to this file should describe the prohibiting factors and any plans to overcome them.
- NICS inquiries. The application must also discuss the extent to which dispositions requested in connection with a NICS inquiry have not been provided within the required time frame, and must identify any problems that are delaying instant responses to NICS inquiries and identify proposed solutions to these problems. Particular attention should be directed at needs of courts in connection with capture of disposition data.

Section 2: Description of tasks to be funded under NCHIP

Please describe the activities to be conducted with NCHIP funds over the project period and specifically address each of the priority areas (identified under Priority areas for grant funding). Dollar amounts must be included for each funded task.

Courts. In recognition of the importance of court reporting to the development of complete and accurate criminal records, all applications must describe tasks and indicate the level of funds that will be made directly available to the courts. Where no funds are provided for court-directed disposition reporting activities, a certification by the appropriate State court official declining participation must be included with this section.

Unexpended funds. The application should describe the specific reasons that previously awarded NCHIP funds remain unexpended.

Compatibility with other systems. The application should describe the extent to which proposed activities are compatible with NIBRS, NCIC 2000, NICS, IAFIS, and other applicable statewide or regional criminal justice information sharing standards or plans, including State anti-terrorism plans.

Section 3: Coordination

The administering NCHIP agency should coordinate efforts with relevant emergency management task forces and agencies to ensure that records development activities are compatible with security measures for preventing acts of terrorism. NCHIP activities will be coordinated with other OJP efforts authorized and funded under CITA.

To encourage coordination and information sharing among criminal justice systems, all OJP awards supporting information technology development are being special conditioned to require that a description of the project be submitted to the State Information Technology POC, if one has been designated. A copy of the correspondence can be submitted as part of Other Attachments (see below) or sent directly to BJS prior to fund drawdown.

There is no requirement that the point of contact concur with the information technology project. The intent of this condition is to facilitate communication within the State.

Other Program Attachments

The following documents are required and should be submitted as attachments:

- letter of support/commitment from the courts (if no funds are going to the courts);
- statement/memo indicating that funds are going to the courts (including amount of funds);
- letter to the State Information Technology POC describing the current application request, as referenced above;
- as required by CITA, the authorizing legislation for the NCHIP program, a statement certifying that: (1) the State is either currently participating in the Interstate Identification Index (III) or actively working toward such membership; and (2) has initiated, or will initiate, a comprehensive strategy for statewide information sharing which emphasizes the integration of all criminal justice system components, including law enforcement, courts, prosecution, corrections, and probation and parole;
- NCHIP funds may be supplemented for a State that certifies that it has or intends to establish a program that enters into the National Crime Information Center (a) warrants for the arrest of persons violating protection orders intended to protect victims from stalking or domestic violence; (b) arrests or convictions of persons violating protection orders or charged with domestic violence; and (c) protection orders for the protection of persons from stalking or domestic violence. The Program Narrative must include documentation showing the need for grant funds and that State or local funding does not already cover these operations; intended use of supplemental grant funds including a plan of action to increase record input; and an estimate of expected results from the use of the funds; and,
- a 1-year project timeline outlining each activity, completion time, and responsible party.

Selection Criteria

All applications must be responsive to this Program Announcement. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the evaluation criteria BJS will use in making funding decisions before deciding whether to submit an application for this competitive solicitation. States should understand that applications must respond to priorities identified and that full funding may not be possible for all proposed activities. For FY 2009, NCHIP grants will be made on a competitive

basis. Completeness of the application in terms of all required information will be a key consideration for BJS. Awards will also be based on the following review criteria:

(1) Statement of the Problem as Described in the Program Narrative

- the application proposes to address one or more of the priorities identified.

(2) Project/Program Design and Implementation

- the extent to which the application recognizes the role of the courts in ensuring complete records.
- the extent to which the proposal appears reasonable in light of the State's current level of system development and statutory framework.
- the technical feasibility of the proposal.

(3) Capabilities/Competencies

- evidence of State progress in record quality improvement efforts.
- the extent to which the State has fulfilled goals of previous NCHIP awards, including consideration of the total funds already awarded and expended funds from previous awards, and the State's cooperation with BJS-sponsored NCHIP evaluation efforts.
- the State commitment to the national record system as evidenced by membership in III and participation in the FBI's NFF, and the current status of development of its criminal records.

(4) Budget

- the reasonableness of the budget, including the nature of the proposed expenditures and their relation to the priorities identified herein.
- the extent to which the applicant proposes to match and/or leverage the NCHIP award with other resources.

(5) Impact/Outcomes and Evaluation

- the extent to which proposed project(s), by virtue of the State's record numbers, levels of technical development, or operating procedures, will have a significant impact on availability of records throughout the national system.

Review Process

OJP is committed to ensuring a standardized process for awarding grants. The Bureau of Justice Statistics will review the applications internally to make sure that the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, and achievable, as well as consistent with program or legislative requirements as stated in the solicitation.

Applications will be screened initially to determine whether the applicant meets all eligibility requirements. Only applications submitted by eligible applicants that meet all other requirements will be evaluated, scored, and rated by a reviewer. Reviewers' ratings and any resulting recommendations are advisory only. In addition to review ratings, considerations may include, but are not limited to, underserved populations, strategic priorities, past performance, and available funding.

After the review is finalized, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), in consultation with the Bureau of Justice Statistics, conducts a financial review of all potential discretionary awards and cooperative agreements to evaluate the fiscal integrity and financial capability of applicants; examines proposed costs to determine if the budget and budget narrative accurately explain project costs; and determines whether costs are reasonable, necessary, and allowable under applicable Federal cost principles and agency regulations. OCFO also reviews the award document and verifies the OJP Vendor Number.

Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, all final grant award decisions will be made by the Assistant Attorney General (AAG), who may also give consideration to factors including, but not limited to, underserved populations, strategic priorities, past performance, and available funding when making awards.

Additional Requirements

Successful applicants selected for award must agree to comply with some or all of the additional requirements below prior to receiving grant funding. We strongly encourage you to review the information pertaining to these additional requirements prior to submitting your application.

Additional information for each can be found at

http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/funding/other_requirements.htm.

- Civil Rights Compliance
- Funding to Faith-Based Organizations
- Confidentiality and Human Subjects Protections Regulations
- Anti-Lobbying Act
- Financial and Government Audit Requirements
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Compliance
- DOJ Information Technology Standards
- Single Point of Contact Review
- Non-Supplanting of State or Local Funds
- Criminal Penalty for False Statements
- Compliance with Office of the Chief Financial Officer Financial Guide, which is available online at: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/financialguide/index.htm>.
- Suspension or Termination of Funding

- Non-Profit Organizations
- Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)
- Rights in Intellectual Property
- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) of 2006