

Federal Reporting.gov Webinar Questions and Answers for the 2009 COPS Hiring Recovery Program

October 1, 2009

- 1) **Question:** When an officer is hired under the grant and leaves employment of the City another officer is hired to take his/her place in the grant. Does the second officer merely complete the remaining months of the 36-months period then start the 12-month retention period?

Answer: Yes, the grant applies to the officer position, not the individual officer. The second officer will complete the 36-months period and start the 12-month retention period. If there is a qualified delay in hiring the replacement officer, your agency may apply to the COPS Office for a no-cost time extension for your award. Such an extension will give your agency additional time to expend grant funds that complete the 36-months award period for each position. See "Extensions" in the following link for more information:

www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/chrp_gom.pdf

- 2) **Question:** If an officer funded by CHRP works overtime, but the overtime was not budgeted or charged to the CHRP grant do we need to include it in the FTE calculation?

Answer: No. Overtime is an unallowable cost under the grant and should not be included in your FTE calculation for reporting purposes under CHRP. Note: Agencies can pay for OT for CHRP funded officers, but the OT has to be paid using local funds.

- 3) **Question:** I am trying to familiarize myself with the FederalReporting form for the Recovery grant and it asks for a Funding Agency Code which is a four digit number. I went to the drop down menu and the COPS Office was not listed but the Office of Justice Programs was listed. Can you tell me what the correct number would be to use.

Answer: The funding agency code for your CHRP grant is Department of Justice (DOJ) code 1500.

- 4) **Question:** Block asks for "Award Date" and instructions say "date when the award is signed" Award signed by whom? The awarding agency or the recipient (those dates differ)?

Answer: For the award date, enter the project start date which is 07/01/2009 for all CHRP grants.

- 5) **Question:** What if your agency has been awarded a grant with an official letter but the agency has not officially accepted the grant by the Oct. 10 reporting deadline. How does that effect the ARRA federal reporting requirement? What should the agency report?

Answer: If the agency has not officially accepted the grant by 10/1/2009, then they are not required submit a quarterly progress report for quarter number 1.

- 6) **Question:** When should we expect the funding to be available to hire the COPS officer?

Answer: Within a few weeks after returning your signed Award Document to the COPS Office, you should receive an important package from the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Office of Justice Programs, that will contain the forms and instructions necessary to begin drawing down funds for your grant. See the following links for more information:

<http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=2265#19>, or
www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/chrp_gom.pdf

- 7) **Question:** We received a COPS grant to retain 2 officers. If our city's economy improves can we hire new officers (not using grant money) but our own city's funds and still be in compliance of the grant rules?

Answer: Yes. Although your agency received a CHRP award to rehire two officers that have been laid off and/or are scheduled to be laid off at a specific future date due to local funding cuts, if your city's economy improves, the city may hire new officers with city funds during the CHRP award grant period. Your agency should proceed with the hiring of officers just as it would have in the absence of receiving the CHRP grant. Please be aware that CHRP-funded officers must be in addition to any officers funded in your agency's local budget. Therefore, if your agency's local budget for law enforcement officers increases during the life of the grant, the CHRP-funded officers must be over and above the increased baseline of locally-funded sworn officer positions (See answer to Question #17 for a specific example of this scenario).

- 8) **Question:** We received the COPS grant to retain 2 officers. If our city's economy improves will we be able to hire new officers, separate from the COPS grant, without having to give the grant money back?

Answer: Yes. Although your agency received a CHRP award to rehire two officers that have been laid off and/or are scheduled to be laid off at a specific future date due to local funding cuts, if your city's economy improves, the city may hire new officers with city funds during the CHRP award grant period. Your agency should proceed with the hiring of officers just as it would have in the absence of receiving the CHRP grant. Please be aware that CHRP-funded officers must be in addition to any officers funded in your agency's local budget. Therefore, if your agency's local budget for law enforcement officers increases during the life of the grant, the CHRP-funded officers must be over and above the increased baseline of locally-funded sworn officer positions (See answer to Question #17 for a specific example of this scenario).

- 9) **Question:** Are sample programmatic reports for the COPS grant available?

Answer: Yes a sample programmatic FederalReporting.gov report can be found on the COPS website at <https://www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=2284>

- 10) **Question:** We were awarded a CHRP award to rehire 13 police officers. How much of the police officers daily activity should be reported due to the fact that reporting what 13 police officers have accomplished on each of their shifts for each 3-month reporting period can be extremely long.

Answer: You are not required to detail out the activities of each officer for the quarter. A brief summary of the type of community policing activities your awarded officers were engaged in during the quarter will suffice.

- 11) **Question:** Through the grant award we will be hiring 11 new officers. These new officers will be hired as police recruits and subsequently sent to a 6 month police academy. Will the COPS office allow grant funds use to pay for these recruits to attend the academy prior to becoming fully sworn police officers or can the funds only be used after their official swearing in?

Answer: Yes, your agency may use CHRP grant funds to pay the approved entry-level salaries and fringe benefits of newly hired officer recruits while they are in basic academy training prior to swearing them in, if it is your agency's standard practice to pay recruits while in training. For more details, please see the information on page 10 on "Allowable Costs" in the document at the attached link: www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/chrp_gom.pdf

- 12) **Question:** We are in the hiring process for the CHRP Officers. They will not be employed during the first quarter of this grant. Are we permitted to request for an

extension of the grant so that we can access the total amount of funds under the award? If so, can we submit that request now?

Answer: Yes, your agency may apply to the COPS Office for a no-cost time extension for your award near the end of your grant period. An extension request form will be mailed to your agency during the last quarter of your grant. Such an extension will give your agency additional time to expend grant funds and complete the 36-month award period for each position. Please be aware; however, that only those grantees that can provide a reasonable justification for project delays will be granted no-cost extensions. Reasonable justifications may include setbacks in hiring CHRP-funded positions, officer turnover, or other circumstances that interrupt the 36-month grant funding period. If you choose to request an extension for your CHRP grant, it must be received at the COPS Office prior to the end date of the award. See the following link for more information: www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/chrp_gom.pdf

- 13) **Question:** When calculating hours worked and the CHRP employee has overtime as part of the calculation that causes the calculation for FTE to exceed that FTE as awarded under the grant, will the reimbursement of the FTE above that of the award be disallowed.

Answer: YES, overtime pay is not an allowable cost for COPS CHRP grant funds, and should not be included in FTE calculations under the grant. Note: Agencies can pay for OT for CHRP funded officers, but the OT has been paid by with local funds. Only actual allowable costs incurred during the grant award period will be eligible for reimbursement and drawdown. For more details, please see the information on page 10 on "Allowable Costs" in the document at the following link: www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/chrp_gom.pdf

- 14) **Question:** Just to make sure, this will cover reporting guidelines for both the COPS Program and the Recovery JAG Grant.

Answer: If you were awarded a grant under both the COPS Office's CHRP program and the Office of Justice Program's JAG program you will be required to submit a separate progress report for each program.

- 15) **Question:** We were approved two new hire police officers through CHRP to be involved in community policing programs. Since they will be new officers, can we place two veteran officers in the program and put the two CHRP officers in patrol. Understanding that we will be required to keep them for at least one year after grant ends. Or, do we need to do a grant modification.

Answer: Your agency may choose to deploy an equal number of veteran locally-funded officers into community policing activities as a result of the CHRP grant, while using the COPS grant funds to hire new officers or re-hire officers who were laid off or are scheduled to be laid-off. In this scenario, the COPS funds may be spent only on the newly hired/rehired additional officer positions and may not be spent to pay for the veteran locally-funded officers who are deployed into community policing activities as a result of the grant. The veteran officers must be deployed into the grant related functions as a direct result of the CHRP grant program and must increase your agency's previous commitment of officers used for this purpose. For agencies that opt to redeploy veteran officers instead of using new officers for community policing activities, an equal number of redeployed veteran officers under the CHRP grant programs must engage in community policing activities, although the funding under the grant will be used for the newly hired/rehired positions.

16) **Question:** My police department was awarded two officers under the CHRP grant. Our current budget reflects a staffing level of 151 full time police officers, although we have 7 frozen positions which are not funded in the City's final budget. What is the minimum staffing level that we must maintain so that supplanting does not become an issue?

17) **Answer:** To comply with the nonsupplanting requirement of the CHRP program, the officer positions awarded under CHRP must be in addition to the number of positions funded in an agency's local budget (its "locally-funded baseline") in the absence of CHRP grant funding. If your agency experiences a reduction in its locally-funded baseline during the grant award period, your agency must be able to provide supporting documentation demonstrating that the reduction-in-force occurred for reasons unrelated to the receipt of CHRP funding. In this question, your department's baseline is currently 144 locally-funded positions (do not include the 7 unfunded positions). If during the life of the grant, however, your city restores funding for the 7 "frozen" positions, your locally-funded baseline will increase to 151 positions (with the CHRP positions over and above this increased baseline).

18) **Question:** Does winning a COPS award make our City a federal contractor?

Answer: No, the granting of COPS funds does not make your agency a federal contractor. Your agency would be a federal grant recipient.

19) **Question:** What is the final date to submit a signed acceptance letter for a CHRP grant? The date on the award letter was July 28 and the signature by the Acting

Director was July 6. There are only 90 days to submit a signed award letter. Which day do we use to start the 90 day turn around?

Answer: Your agency has 90 days from the date listed on the award congratulatory letter enclosed in your official grant award package to return a signed acceptance to the COPS Office. Please note that this date may be different from the date shown on the award document; therefore, the date on the congratulatory letter should be used since it reflects the actual mailing date from the COPS Office (thus, starting the 90-day acceptance period.) You may refer to the following links for more information: www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/chrp_gom.pdf

- 20) **Question:** We hired 4 officers from the CHRP grant. They started mid August, but not exactly at the beginning of the federal reporting 1st quarter. So, if I have to use the date of grant approval as the quarter begin date (for calculating FTE hours), our 1st quarter will have a smaller # of hours in the FTE than the 2nd (and subsequent) quarters, which would be full quarters. The 2nd and subsequent quarters are actually 1 full FTE each, not the 1st quarter, which was shorter. Now I'm totally confused.

Answer: The COPS Office understands that the first quarter reporting period will likely show fewer officers hired as it takes law enforcement agencies time to recruit and hire officers. The COPS Office strongly encourages all grantees to track the FTEs through the life of the grant by using the CHRP FTE calculation tool found at: www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=2283

- 21) **Question:** I am pretty sure that I have to report for my recovery grants for COPS and DOJ; however, we received an AmeriCorps recovery grant in which we are the subgrantee from a state-run program. Do I have an obligation to report on federal reporting.gov for this recovery grant as well? Also, some of the questions asked were good but I did not have a chance to absorb a lot of the info effectively. Will these be presented in a transcript format? Specifically confirming the answer that we can pay for recruits' academy training under the COPS umbrella.

Answer: As a sub-recipient of a Recovery Act grant we recommend that you contact the prime recipient (e.g., the state) to obtain guidance on if they want you to provide reporting data directly to them or submit a sub-recipient report separately via the FederalReporting.gov website.

- 22) **Question:** Are positions created by the CHRP grant counter as newly created jobs for the JAG grant, i.e., equipment?

Answer: No. Your CHRP grant and JAG grant are separate programs administered under two separate Department of Justice agencies. Thus, you must calculate the FTEs separately and submit a separate report for each grant.

23) **Question:** Can I count the CHRP grant officers as newly created positions for the cars I am purchasing under the JAG grant?

Answer: No. Your CHRP grant and JAG grant are separate programs administered under two separate Department of Justice agencies. Thus, you must calculate the FTEs separately and submit a separate report for each grant.