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Connecting Constituents to Federal Assistance for Law Enforcement

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Connecting Constituents to Federal Assistance for Law Enforcement

This report provides information on selected federal agencies that provide grants, technical assistance, training or other support targeted to state and local law enforcement agencies. This report also provides information on selected grant and loan programs with broader purposes that could potentially be used for law enforcement purposes.

SUMMARY

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Law enforcement agencies frequently contact congressional offices for information on federal assistance for a wide range of agency needs. This report provides information on selected federal agencies that provide grants, technical assistance, training, or other support targeted for state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies. It also provides information on selected grant and loan programs with broader purpose areas that could potentially fund activities related to law enforcement and public safety. Current program availability and areas of focus may depend on several factors, including appropriations, the priorities of Congress and the Administration, and award cycles. Monitoring funding opportunities through these agencies can help congressional staff track available funding for their constituents' projects.

Funding from the grant programs described in this report can be provided through formula or discretionary grant programs. Federal formula grant programs allocate funds to eligible entities (often state and local governments), which in turn may issue subgrants or contracts with other entities. Federal discretionary grant programs make awards to eligible entities directly on a competitive basis.[1]

This report provides resources that can help congressional staff access information for their constituents on funding via federal agency websites. Where applicable, program websites are included. This list should not be considered comprehensive.

Federal Agencies Providing Targeted Support to Law Enforcement

Department of Justice (DOJ)

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP), the Office of Violence Against Women (OVW), and the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office are the three agencies that administer DOJ's grant programs.[2]

Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

OJP is the largest of DOJ's three grant administering agencies and administers the widest portfolio of public-safety-related grant programs. OJP is comprised of six bureaus and agencies that are responsible for administering certain portfolios of grant programs.[3] The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) within OJP administers the broadest range of programs, including many focusing on law enforcement. Grant opportunities recently available from BJA include support for rural police departments, immigration enforcement, law enforcement agency accreditation, forensic science improvements, and violence prevention. BJA grant opportunities have also been available for purchasing certain equipment and other support for law enforcement agencies, including body-worn cameras, fentanyl and methamphetamine detection equipment, and canines.

[1] For more information, see CRS Report R42769, *Federal Grants-in-Aid Administration: A Primer*.

[2] For more information, see CRS Report R48898, *Department of Justice Grants: History, Authorizations, and Appropriations*.

[3] OJP bureaus and agencies include the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA); Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS); Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP); National Institute of Justice (NIJ); Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART); and Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). These agencies provide resources for the collection, compilation, and processing of statistical information; support state and local efforts to prevent juvenile delinquency; conduct research and development to promote public safety; provide assistance to jurisdictions to monitor sex offenders; and help victims of crime.

The largest source of federal funding to state and local law enforcement is through the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program (JAG)[4] administered by BJA. States and some local governments are eligible to apply for JAG grants.[5] Funding must be used for purposes related to one of the 11 programs areas,[6] including hiring personnel, purchasing equipment and supplies, information systems, and training, among others.

For more information see https://www.ojp.gov/funding/explore/current-funding-opportunities.

Community Oriented Policing Services Office (COPS)

The COPS Office provides grants and information to advance the practice of community policing by the nation's state, local, territorial and tribal law enforcement agencies.[7] Grants awarded by the COPS Office are used to hire law enforcement officers; develop and test innovative policing strategies; and provide training and technical assistance to community members, local government leaders, and all levels of law enforcement.[8]

For more information see https://cops.usdoj.gov/grants.

Office of Violence Against Women (OVW)

OVW administers grant programs to "address domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking, support victims and survivors, and hold offenders accountable."[9] Some OVW grants are targeted to support law enforcement agencies, and others are open to state and local government agencies, which could include law enforcement.

For more information see https://www.justice.gov/ovw/funding-opportunities.

Department of Defense (DOD)

Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO)

LESO's 1033 program allows the transfer of excess DOD equipment that might otherwise be destroyed to law enforcement agencies within the United States and territories. Participation in the program requires approval by a state's governor and a memorandum of understanding regarding the requirements of program participation.

[4] BJA, "Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program," https://bja.ojp.gov/program/jag/overview.

[5] Local governments whose calculated award is $10,000 or more are eligible to apply for direct grant awards from BJA. A grant for a local government whose allocation is less than $10,000 is awarded to the state, and the state is responsible for managing these funds by awarding them either to the local government or to a state law enforcement agency that provides law enforcement services for the local government.

[6] JAG funds may be used for law enforcement, prosecution and courts, prevention and education, correction and community corrections, drug treatment, crime victim and witness programs, planning, mental health programs, evaluation and technology improvement, implementation of state crisis intervention programs, and the purchase of drones and counter-drone technology. For further information see BJA, *BJA FY2026 Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program—State Formula*, p. 3, https://www.ojp.gov/funding/docs/bja-2026-172704.pdf.

[7] For further information on COPS, see CRS Report RL33308, *Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS): In Brief*, and CRS In Focus IF10922, *Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program*.

[8] See Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, "About the COPS Office," https://cops.usdoj.gov/aboutcops.

[9] See OVW, "Grants," https://www.justice.gov/ovw/grants.

The program allows for the transfer of controlled and uncontrolled property. Controlled property includes small arms and personal weapons, night vison equipment, and demilitarized vehicles and aircraft. These items are on loan to agencies and must be returned when no longer being used.

Uncontrolled property consists of general use items that could be sold to the public. Examples include computers, digital cameras, first-aid kits and supplies, and sleeping bags. When transferred to a law enforcement agency, the equipment becomes property of the law enforcement agency and does not have to be returned to DOD.

According to DOD, most of the equipment issued to local law enforcement is uncontrolled.[10]

For more information see https://www.dla.mil/Disposition-Services/Offers/Law-Enforcement/.

For state coordinators see https://www.dla.mil/Disposition-Services/Offers/Law-Enforcement/State-Coordinators/.

Broad Federal Assistance Programs

The following programs are administered by a range of federal agencies and are not specifically for law enforcement agencies, but they could be used to support various activities related to public safety.

Homeland Security Grant Program

The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS's) Homeland Security Grant Program is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Administration and provides grants to state, local, tribal, and territorial entities to assist in preventing, protecting against, mitigating, responding to, and recovering from acts of terrorism and other threats. Funds may be used for organizing and planning training, scenario-based exercises, equipment purchases, and management costs.

For more information see https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/homeland-security.

Federal Surplus Property Donation Programs

The U.S. General Services Administration's (GSA's) Office of Personal Property Management helps state and local government agencies and nonprofits acquire surplus federal property, which may include office equipment, furniture, and vehicles, among other items.

For additional program information see https://www.gsa.gov/buy-through-us/government-property-for-sale-or-lease/personal-property-for-reuse-and-sale/for-state-agencies-and-public-organizations.

The Public Benefit Conveyance Program allows surplus federal land, buildings, and military bases closed under Base Realignment and Closure to be conveyed to public entities at no cost. Eligible applicants for this property include states or political subdivisions or instrumentalities of states that propose to use the property for law enforcement or correctional facility purposes. Applications for these purposes are submitted to DOJ to ensure that the properties meet the statutory requirements for law enforcement or correctional use. DOJ also ensures that potential environmental impacts are assessed under the National Environmental Policy Act. Once DOJ

[10] See Defense Logistics Agency, "LESO/1033 Program FAQs," https://www.dla.mil/Disposition-Services/Offers/Law-Enforcement/Program-FAQs/.

approves the application, it is forwarded to GSA or DOD for consideration. Final approval is determined by the agency owning the property.

For more information see https://bja.ojp.gov/program/public-benefit-conveyance-program/overview.

Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program provides affordable funding and grants to develop essential community facilities in rural areas.[11] Funds can be used to purchase, construct, and/or improve essential community facilities; purchase equipment; and pay related project expenses. Examples of essential community facilities related to public safety include fire departments, police stations, prisons, police vehicles, fire trucks, and public works vehicles or equipment.

For more information see https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's CDBG program provides funds to address a wide range of unique community development needs. CDBG-funded activities must be tied to one of three national objectives: (1) principally benefit low/moderate-income persons, (2) aid in preventing or alleviating blight, and/or (3) address some kind of "imminent threat" to health/safety. Crime prevention and public safety may be considered an eligible public service activity. Certain police equipment and facilities may be eligible for funding under the Public Facilities and Improvements category of the program. Funds are administered at the state and local levels.

For more information see https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg/.

Training and Technical Assistance

Several agencies support training and technical assistance activities and training centers to aid law enforcement agencies in preparing for and responding to issues such as terrorist threats, hate crimes, and active shooters, as well as crime prevention, conflict resolution, and officer safety and wellness efforts.

BJA National Training Technical Assistance (BJA NTTAC)

The BJA NTTAC provides access to resources for free training and technical assistance to law enforcement agencies, prosecutors' offices, corrections departments, and city or county commissioners on a wide variety of criminal justice issues. Examples of available training and technical assistance programs include critical response training, forensic science support, peer support for police, and survivor programs for families of officers killed in the line of duty. Training can be provided in person or virtually.

[11] *Essential community facility* is defined as "a facility that provides an essential service to the local community for the orderly development of the community in a primarily rural area, and does not include private, commercial, or business undertakings." Rural areas—including cities, villages, townships, and towns, as well as Federally Recognized Tribal Lands—with no more than 20,000 residents are eligible for this program.

For more information see https://bja.ojp.gov/training-technical-assistance.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) National Training and Technical Assistance (NTTAC)

OJJDP's NTTAC provides no cost training and technical assistance to juvenile justice practitioners, providers, and communities. Topics covered include combating gangs, mentoring youth, preventing violence, reducing youth drug use and more.

For more information see https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/national-training-and-technical-assistance-center.

Preventing Violence Against Law Enforcement Officers and Ensuring Officer Resilience and Survivability (VALOR) Initiative

The focus of this BJA initiative is to improve officer safety, wellness, and resiliency. The program provides comprehensive training on officer safety, suicide prevention, and resiliency. Services are provided at no cost.

For more information see https://bja.ojp.gov/program/valor/overview#3-0.

State and Local Anti-Terrorism Training (SLATT) Program

BJA's SLATT program offers free targeted training to law enforcement on terrorism and violent extremism. Programs focus on providing law enforcement with the necessary skills and knowledge to prevent, detect, and investigate attacks.

For more information see https://www.slatt.org/.

Collaborative Reform Initiative Technical Assistance Center (CRI-TAC)

The COPS office oversees the CRI-TAC program, which provides a variety of no-cost resources, training, and technical assistance to state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies. Topics are identified by participating agencies based on local needs.

For more information see https://cops.usdoj.gov/critac.

Community Relations Service

The DOJ Community Relations Service provides free training, consultation, mediation, and other support to law enforcement agencies to improve community relations, conflict resolution, and cultural awareness.

For more information see https://www.justice.gov/crs.

Mass Violence Advisory Initiative (MVAI)

In conjunction with the International Association of Police Chiefs (IACP), MVAI assists law enforcement agencies in communities that have experienced incidents of mass violence. The program offers peer-to-peer support to law enforcement leaders from professionals who have also experienced mass violence incidents. Teams include law enforcement leadership, faith-based and

community representatives and psychological service providers. Services are free to communities in need.

For more information see https://bja.ojp.gov/program/mass-violence-advisory-initiative/overview.

Office for State and Local Law Enforcement (OSLLE)

OSLLE coordinates and partners with state, local, tribal, territorial, and campus law enforcement agencies to disseminate information and ensure two-way communication regarding the formulation of DHS policies, programs, initiatives and operations. OSLLE issues guidance and conducts compliance reviews focused on terrorism prevention activities funded through DHS grants.

For more information see https://www.dhs.gov/office-state-and-local-law-enforcement.

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