

Certification Form Quick Tips: Use of Funds for New Facilities

Bureau of Justice Assistance, Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program – Formula

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) seeks to fund improvements to forensic science and medical examiner/coroner (ME/C) services through the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program (Coverdell Program). Under the Formula Coverdell Program, [State Administering Agencies](#) (SAAs) may apply for funds to improve forensic science and ME/C services provided by laboratories operated by the state or units of local government. The Coverdell law requires that each applicant certify that the amount of the grant used for the cost of any new facility constructed as part of a program to improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science or ME/C services will not exceed certain limitations set forth in the Coverdell law. All applicants are required to submit this certification, even if no funds are proposed to be used for new facilities. The certification form submitted to BJA must be executed by an official who is both familiar with the requirements of the certification and authorized to make the certification on behalf of the applicant agency. Certifications made on behalf of subrecipients of award funds—rather than those made on behalf of the applicant agency—are not acceptable to satisfy the requirement.



Refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for details on certification requirements and the link to the certification template. Additional questions regarding certification and authorization requirements should be directed to your assigned BJA Policy and Programs Office representatives.

Using Coverdell Program Funds for New Facilities – Key Considerations

Identify whether funds will be used to support the construction of a new facility. If award funds are requested for costs of a new facility, the applicant must specifically describe the new facility to be constructed and the estimated costs associated with the facility.

Define how forensic science or ME/C services will be improved. Expenses used for facilities, renovations, or construction must be directly attributable to the improvement of forensic or ME/C services.

Describe organization(s) that will receive award funds through a subaward or procurement contract. The applicant should submit a coversheet and BJA Programmatic Checklist for any organization identified in the budget worksheet that will receive funds through a subaward or procurement contract for any new construction or renovations that change the basic prior use of a facility or significantly change the size.

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Understand and adhere to limitations on use of funds for costs of new facilities.

The Coverdell law limits the amount of funds that may be used for the costs of a new facility or facilities. Maximum amounts are determined by the total amount of the Coverdell funds received (including both formula and competitive funds) and the total amount of funds available for Coverdell grants nationwide. Costs for any new facility that exceed the maximum limit are not a permissible expense.



Formula Coverdell Program

Fast Fact

Program expenses relating to facilities, renovation, or construction are all permissible uses of funds, provided that the expenses are directly attributable to improving forensic science or ME/C services.

Preparing to Submit the Certification Form – Key Considerations

Ensure that the certification template is used. BJA provides a template certification form that must be signed by the individual authorized to complete the certification.

Review the certification requirements. Applicants must review the requirements of the certification before determining whether the certification can be properly completed.

Verify qualifications prior to submission. The form should be executed and signed by someone familiar with the requirements of the certification and authorized to sign the certification.

Important Reminder: A false statement in the certification or in the grant application that it supports may be the subject of criminal prosecution, including under 18 U.S.C. § 1001 and/or 1621 and 34 U.S.C. §§ 10271–10273. Office of Justice Programs grants, including certification provided in connection with such grants, are subject to review by the Office of Justice Programs and/or by the Department of Justice’s Office of the Inspector General.