BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE (BJA)

FY 2023 STRENGTHENING THE MEDICAL EXAMINER-CORONER (ME/C) SYSTEM PROGRAM NEW GRANTEE ORIENTATION





Presenters

- Thurston Bryant BJA Policy Office
- Monte Evans II BJA Programs Office
- Nichole Norvesh BJA Operations Office
- Erica Christensen RTI International



Agenda

Section 1: OJP and BJA Overview Information

Section 2: ME/C Program – BJA Team Introductions

Section 3: Program Overview Information

Section 4: Grant Management Overview

Section 5: Performance Measurement Overview

Section 6: BJA's Forensics Training & Technical Assistance Program

Webinar Conclusion – Questions and Answer Session



Poll Question What do you hope to learn from this webinar?

I want to learn more about the program itself.

I want to learn more about award acceptance and award conditions.

I want to learn more about the programmatic requirements.

I want to learn more about how to make budgetary or programmatic changes and associated JustGrants actions.

I was told attendance was mandatory.

SECTION 1

OJP AND BJA OVERVIEW INFORMATION





What is the Office of Justice Programs?

- The Office of Justice Programs
 (OJP) provides grant funding,
 training, research, and statistics
 to the criminal justice
 community.
- OJP is one of three grantmaking components of the Department of Justice along with the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS).

BJA – Bureau of Justice Assistance



BJS – Bureau of Justice Statistics



NIJ - National Institute of Justice



OVC - Office for Victims of Crime



OJJDP – Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention



SMART – Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking





U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance

Mission: BJA's mission is to provide leadership and services in grant administration and criminal justice policy development to support state, local, and tribal justice strategies to achieve safer communities. BJA works with communities, governments, and nonprofit organizations to reduce crime, recidivism, and unnecessary confinement, and promote a safe and fair criminal justice system.

Karhlton F. Moore, BJA Director



https://bja.ojp.gov/





How BJA Supports the Field



Investments

Provide diverse funding to accomplish goals.



Sharing Knowledge

Research, develop, and deliver what works to build capacity and improve outcomes.



Engagement

Consult, connect, and convene.

SECTION 2

BJA STRENGTHENING THE ME/C SYSTEM **PROGRAM TEAM MEMBER** INTRODUCTIONS





Award Management Structure Programs Office Award **Policy Operations** Office Office



Meet Your BJA ME/C Team!



Thurston Bryant Senior Policy Advisor BJA Policy Office



Lindsay DePalma Associate (Contractor) BJA Policy Office



Esmeralda Woche Division Chief BJA Programs Office



Monte Evans II State Policy Advisor BJA Programs Office



Michael Adams
Senior Research Associate (Contractor)
BJA Operations Office



Nichole Norvesh Research Associate (Contractor) BJA Operations Office



BJA ME/C Team – Contact Information

Name	Email	Phone
Thurston Bryant Senior Policy Advisor, BJA Policy Office	Thurston.Bryant@usdoj.gov	(202) 598-0379
Lindsay DePalma Associate (Contractor), BJA Policy Office	<u>Lindsay.DePalma@usdoj.gov</u>	(401) 741-1796
Esmeralda Woche Division Chief, BJA Programs Office	Esmeralda.Woche@usdoj.gov	(202) 353-3450
Monte Evans II State Policy Advisor, BJA Programs Office	Monte.E.Evans@usdoj.gov	(202) 307-5822
Michael Adams Senior Research Associate (Contractor), BJA Operations Office	Michael.Adams@usdoj.gov	(240) 463-0092
Nichole Norvesh Research Associate (Contractor), BJA Performance Metrics	Nichole.R.Norvesh@usdoj.gov	(678) 231-3438

SECTION 3

ME/C PROGRAM OVERVIEW INFORMATION

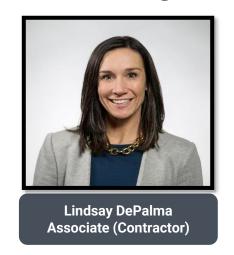
BJA Policy Office





ME/C Program – BJA Policy Office





The **BJA Policy Office** develops the solicitation, steers the overall grant program and peer review process, and is responsible for providing subject matter expertise on progress reports and any requested programmatic changes to the awards.

Strengthening the ME/C System Program Overview Information



Program Summary

Created in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, the ME/C Program is a competitive and discretionary grant program designed to help address medical death investigation workforce needs to increase the number of practicing board-certified forensic pathologists, and ME/C offices need to implement and follow quality standards and performance criteria, in an effort, to provide consistent and equitable application of death investigation services.

ME/C Program - Two Purpose Areas

- 1) Forensic pathology fellowships
- 2) ME/C office accreditation

Goals of These Purpose Areas

- Contribute to increasing the number of trained and board-certified forensic pathology practitioners.
- Strengthen the quality and consistency of ME/C services in their respective office, thereby increasing public trust in these services.



Program Funding and Awards

- Congratulations to our new FY 2023 ME/C Grantees!
- To date, 98 awards totaling \$14,400,000 have been made.
- Under FY 2023, the following new 14 awards were made totaling \$2,050,000.

No. of Awards	State	Applicant Legal Name	Federal Amount Awarded
PURPOSE AREA 1: FELLOWSHIPS			
1	WA	KING COUNTY	\$150,000
2	CT	CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER, CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF THE	\$300,000
3	OH	COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY	\$150,000
4	FL	BROWARD, COUNTY OF	\$300,000
5	CA	LOS ANGELES, COUNTY OF	\$150,000
6	NY	NEW YORK, CITY OF	\$300,000
		TOTAL FOR PURPOSE AREA 1	\$1,350,000
	PURPOSE AREA 2: ACCREDITATION		
7	WI	COUNTY OF BROWN	\$101,460
8	IL	KANE, COUNTY OF	\$101,459
9	CO	COUNTY OF BOULDER	\$101,460
10	SC	ANDERSON COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OFFICE	\$101,460
11	PA	ALLEGHENY, COUNTY OF	\$72,367
12	PA	COUNTY OF LEHIGH	\$53,878
13	TX	BEXAR COUNTY AUDITOR	\$101,458
14	FL	ST. LUCIE, COUNTY OF	\$66,458
		TOTAL FOR PURPOSE AREA 2	\$700,000
TOTAL FOR ENTIRE MEC PROGRAM - 14 Awards			\$2,050,000



Permissible Expenses

Purpose Area 1: Fellowships

- Salaries/Stipends and Fringe Benefits
- Loan Repayments
- Recruitment Travel
- Minor Equipment and Supplies
- Training including travel for fellows attending training activities
- Medical License Reimbursement





Permissible Expenses

Purpose Area 2: ME/C Office Accreditation

- Equipment and Supplies
- Personnel
- Travel If it is incurred while supporting the ME/C office's accreditation
- Microgrants
- Used to support new accreditation <u>AND</u> maintain existing accreditation as well





Permissible Expenses

For Both Purpose Areas:

- Training BJA forensics grantee's meeting
- No-Cost Extensions
- Certification Fees





Budget/Financial: Unallowable Costs

All costs must be allowable, reasonable, allocable, and necessary to the project per the **DOJ Grants Financial Guide** and **2 C.F.R. 200**. **Examples of unallowable costs include but may not be limited to:**

General costs that are not pertinent for meeting the PA 1 Fellows project

General costs that are not pertinent for meeting the PA 2 Accreditation project

Construction

NEW! Prohibited and controlled equipment, consistent with Executive Order (EO) 14074, per OJP policy Security enhancements or equipment to any nongovernmental entity that is not engaged in criminal justice or public safety

Food and beverages

Lobbying or fundraising

Gift cards, prizes, rewards, entertainment, trinkets, or any monetary incentive

Unmanned aerial vehicles/systems (UAVs/UASs)

Supplanting state or local funds

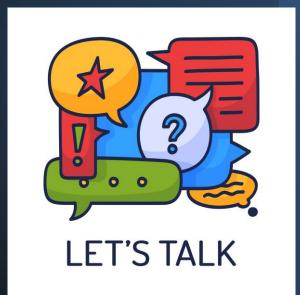


BJA Team Grantee Check-In Calls and Project Updates

Working together for success!

Periodic check-ins (twice/year).

Please contact us anytime!



SECTION 4

STRENGTHENING THE ME/C SYSTEM PROGRAM GRANT MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

BJA Programs Office





ME/C Program – BJA Programs Office



Esmeralda Woche Division Chief



Monte Evans II State Policy Advisor



Role of the BJA Programs Office

Programs Office staff members are committed to ensuring that the highest level of service is provided to our customers.

Programs Office staff members provide timely and accurate information and assistance to their customers on the broad array of grant programs and other activities we support.

Programs Office staff members develop and maintain mutual and professional relationships with all customers and provide prompt, courteous, and well-informed responses to grant applicants and recipients; local, state, and federal agencies and organizations; American Indian tribes; OJP; and the general public.



State Policy Advisor/Grant Manager Role

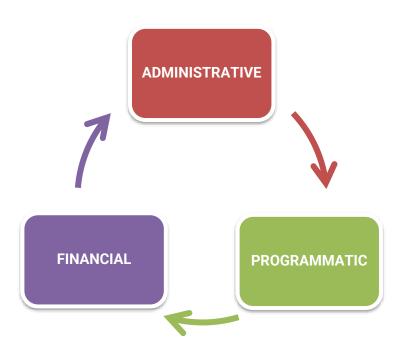
First line of direct communication with grantees within BJA. Is responsible for reviewing and approving grantee reports and grant adjustment modifications, and processes grant closeouts.

Addresses all questions regarding programmatic, financial, and administrative elements of your grant.

Communicates about all the award conditions, including the award release conditions related to the program's requirements.



Three Areas of Grant Management



Administrative

- Award acceptance
- Award condition compliance
- Semi-Annual progress reports
- Grant award modifications

Programmatic

- > Implementation of project
- Goals, objectives, and activities

Financial

- Federal financial reports
- Budget clearance, modifications, and reallocations



Working Effectively Together!

Share updates about your project—we appreciate those emails!

We are available to troubleshoot or talk through issues you encounter.

Programs Office
State Policy Advisors
talk to the BJA Policy
Office and the TTA
provider all the time.
The more we know,
the better we can
support you.

If a request is a little unusual, it's okay to email or call and talk it through before you spend time submitting it.



Grant Management Cycle







Award Acceptance

- The grant award agreement is a legally binding contract with the federal government.
- The Authorized Representative accepts the award electronically in JustGrants.
- <u>TIP</u>: Before the award can be accepted, the Entity Administrator must assign key roles in JustGrants.



Award Acceptance

Award conditions may be attached to an award for financial and/or programmatic issues requiring resolution, referred to as withholding conditions.

Applicants have 45 days to accept the award through JustGrants from the date of award notification. The following training video regarding acceptance/denial may be helpful: https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/training/training-grant-award-acceptance.

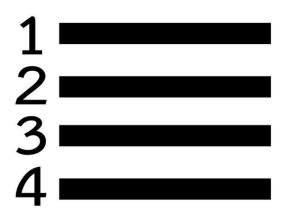
Program-specific award conditions may be applied based on the individual needs, goals, and objectives of each grantee.

Please contact your State Policy Advisor/Grant Manager for any questions regarding the award acceptance process, or for any programmatic, financial, or administrative questions.



Award Conditions

- You are responsible for adhering to all award conditions.
- The award conditions numbered 1 through 30 are the OJP standard conditions.
- Information on the standard OJP conditions is available at the following link: https://www.ojp.gov/funding/explore/legal-overview-fy-2023-awards.
- BJA specific award conditions begin at number 30 in the award agreement.





Award Conditions: Withholding

Withholding award conditions prohibit expenditure or draw down of funds until:

- Specified action or document is approved by BJA.
- Award Condition Modification (ACM) approved.

Most common withholding conditions:

- Budget not cleared/approved or questioned costs.
 - Note: This condition allows access to up to 10 percent of funding.
- Missing or insufficient application information (for example, missing proposal narrative).
- Additional approvals needed based on type of project (for example, projects with environmental impact).

Your BJA Grant Manager will provide guidance on how to address active withholding conditions.

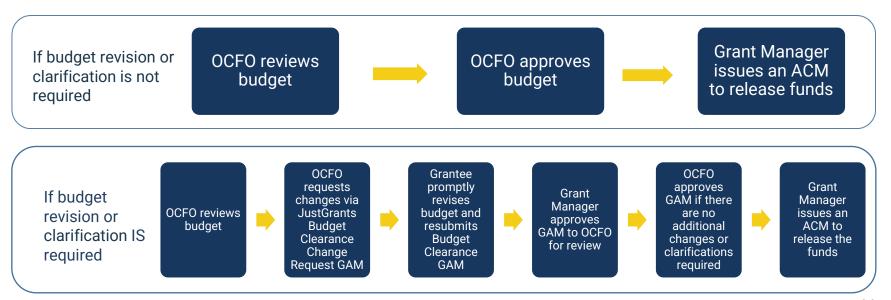
Resource: https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh296/files/media/document/FINAL_EXT_Awd-Conditions-JARG_072021.pdf





Budget Clearance Process

All new awards include a withholding award condition for budget approval. A Grant Award Modification (GAM) and subsequent Award Condition Modification (ACM) must be processed in order to access funds.





Grants Financial Management Training

The Grant Award Administrator and Financial Manager assigned to your award must complete training within 120 days of grant acceptance.

- If the Grant Award Administrator and/or Financial Manager change, they will have 120 days to complete their training from the day they are added within the JustGrants system.
- For certain recipients, funds will be withheld until completed.
- Must be completed every three years.
- Available online at https://onlinegfmt.training.ojp.gov/.
- Submit Grants Financial Management Training certificates to your BJA Grant Manager.





Poll Question

Is there an award condition that your agency has difficulty with or questions on?

Conditional Budget Clearance

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Indirect Costs

Deliverables

Accessing Funds

To access funds, the following actions must be completed:

- Award accepted in JustGrants.
- Entity registration in the U.S.
 Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP)
 system (https://www.fiscal.treasury.gov/asap/).
- Addressing holds on funds related to withholding award conditions, if applicable.
- Addressing suspension of ASAP account (System for Award Management (SAM) registration expired or delinquent reports), if applicable.







Grant Award Modifications (GAM) Overview

- A GAM is used to request changes that require prior approval.
- The assigned GAA must submit GAMs in JustGrants.

Programmatic

- Programmatic Costs GAM (costs requiring prior approval).
- Scope Change GAMs (alter programmatic activities, add subaward, change the project site, or change key staff).

Financial

- · Budget Clearance GAM.
- Budget Modification GAM (moving more than 10 percent of funds or adding \$ into category previously \$0).
- Sole Source GAM for any sole source procurement in excess of simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000).

BEST PRACTICE: Contact your BJA Grant Manager if you have questions prior to submitting a GAM.

Resource: https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/training/training-grant-award-modifications



Grant Award Modifications

Programmatic

- Programmatic Costs GAM.
- A Scope Change GAM alters programmatic activities, changes the purpose of the project, changes the project site, or changes key staff.

Financial

- Budget Clearance GAM.
- Budget Modification GAM.
- A Sole Source Approval GAM requires substantial justification, and it must receive prior approval for any sole source procurement in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000).



GAM: Project Period Extension

- Must be requested through JustGrants at least 30 days prior to the current end date.
- Must include narrative justification and a revised timeline. Extensions should not be requested solely to expend remaining funds.
- Generally, no more than one extension not to exceed 12-months is approved.
- See Financial Guide for all requirements.
- OJP will consider exceptions on a case-bycase basis.





Reporting Requirements: Overview

Report Type	Reporting Period	Due Date	JustGrants Role
Federal Financial Report (FFR) (SF-425) – Submitted in JustGrants	 Jan 1 - Mar 31 Apr 1 - Jun 30 Jul 1 - Sep 30 Oct 1 - Dec 31 	April 30July 30October 30January 30	Financial Manager
Semi-Annual Performance Report – Submitted in JustGrants	Jan 1 – Jun 30Jul 1 – Dec 31	July 30January 30	Grant Award Administrator (Alternate GAA can edit but not submit.)

NOTE - The Final FFR and Final Performance Reports will be due 120 days from the project end date.



Important Reporting Reminders

	Federal Financial Reports (SF-425)	Performance Reports
	draw-down amounts. Ensure funds that have been obligated align with the approved budget. Report for every quarter regardless of whether or not expenses were incurred.	 Answer performance measures questions specifically written in the solicitation. Provide the BJA Grant Manager with an accurate snapshot of implementation. The report must be submitted even if no activities occurred during the report
•	Report CUMULATIVE amounts each quarter.	period.

JustGrants automatically freezes grant funds if reports are delinquent. It is important to submit reports on time. Late reports also influence how your award risk is assessed by OJP and may affect subsequent applications.



Semi-Annual Question Sets

The performance measure questions found in the solicitation are imbedded in your progress report.

You must answer these questions even if there was no activity.

Do not submit a blank report.

If you have questions, please reach out to your Grant Manager prior to submitting your report.

Submission Tip: Make sure to complete the question set, after submitting scroll down to the bottom of the performance report and hit submit.

Grant Monitoring



- Monitoring activities can be conducted by Program and/or OCFO staff on-site or remote through an Enhanced Programmatic Desk Review (EPDR).
- Monitoring allows Grant Managers to:
 - Observe compliance with requirements and progress against project goals.
 - Identify opportunities to provide technical assistance.
 - Ensure that adequate controls are in place to improve accountability of federal funds.
- Per the Uniform Guidance, recipients are required to monitor subrecipients.



Subrecipient Monitoring and FFATA Reporting Requirements

Recipients must have written policies and procedures for subrecipient award process per 2 C.F.R. § 200.303 and 200.331. Post-award procedures must include:

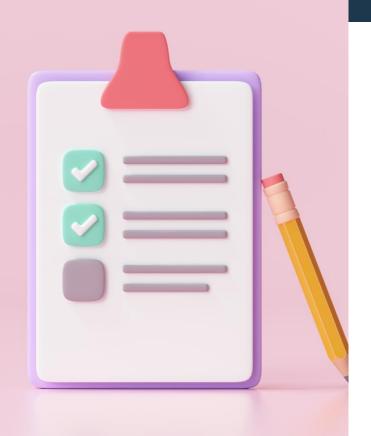
- A risk-based approach for selecting subrecipients to monitor.
- A process for monitoring.
- A monitoring checklist that satisfies administrative, financial, and programmatic elements.
- Process for documenting findings in a report.
- Procedures for follow-up on issues for resolution.

The grantee's subrecipient policies and procedures should include a process for closing out subawards.

FFATA Reporting:

- Prime recipients of awards \$30,000.00 or more, must report on any first-tier subawards and subcontracts of \$30,000.00 within one month following subaward.
- To help navigate the submission process, user guides, FAQs, and online demos are available at: www.fsrs.gov/resources.





Closeout

- All obligations must be incurred on or before the last day of the period of performance.
- Liquidation period of up to 120 days after to make any remaining payments.
- After submitting the Final Performance Report, Final FFR, and last drawdown in ASAP, the GAA submits the closeout.
- Note: the ASAP account will be suspended automatically upon submission of the closeout or 120-days after the project end date.

SECTION 5

STRENGTHENING THE **ME/C SYSTEM PROGRAM PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT OVERVIEW**

BJA Operations Office





ME/C Program – BJA Operations Office



Michael Adams
Senior Research Associate
(Contractor)



Nichole Norvesh Research Associate (Contractor)

The **BJA Operations Office (Planning, Performance, and Impact Analyst Team)** provides performance measure development, solicitation reviews, analytical support, visualization and graphical support, and data quality assurance.



What is Performance Management?

- Performance management is the process by which grantees regularly collect data on their grant activities to determine whether they are implementing activities as intended and achieving their desired goals and objectives.
- **Performance measures** are the data that are collected using a questionnaire established by the BJA for each individual program.
- Each program's questionnaire can be found on the BJA Performance Measures Webpage: https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/performance-measures.



Why Performance Measures?

Purpose for BJA



To identify areas of success and potential areas of improvement.



To track grant activity and progress toward program goals.



To understand how funds are being distributed.



To comply with the law.

Benefit to Grantees



Identify areas for improvement to focus internal efforts.



Promote the ability to proactively request training and technical assistance to address challenges.



Generates evidence of progress toward program goals, which can enhance resource advocacy for sustainability.



Overview of Performance Metrics and Progress Reports

- Metric questions can be found here: https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/performance-measures/MEC-Measures.pdf
- Due: Semi-Annually Include:
 - Successes
 - Challenges
 - Any links to publications/media coverage of cases
- Ensure your narrative matches your numeric metrics
- Your FINAL report will be cumulative of the entire award
 - You will submit your last 6 month (semi annual) regular report + a FINAL report



What are the ME/C Performance Measures?

Purpose Area Selection Area

- In the Just Grants performance reporting system, grantees will select whether their agency's purpose area is dedicated for fellowship or accreditation activities.
- Once this selection is provided, only performance metric questions dedicated to that purpose area will be viewable.

Purpose Area 1: BJA Forensic Pathology Fellowship

- 10 performance metrics regarding participants and activities performed using grant funds.
- Question type: Integer.

Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation

- 14 performance metrics regarding training, accreditation, and other activities performed using grant funds.
- Mixture of yes/no, narrative, option selection, and integer questions.

Questionnaire Structure (Static)

- · BJA Award Administration questions remain consistent.
- BJA Narrative questions remain consistent.

Link: https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/performance-measures/MEC-Measures.pdf



Performance Measures Accomplishments (Updated November 2023)

Some program accomplishments recorded by performance measures submitted by the ME/C Grantees:

Fellowships (Purpose Area 1)

- 58 fellowships funded by this program.
- 41 participants have completed fellowship training using program funds.
- 10,129 deaths were investigated by the program-funded fellows.
- 11,162 autopsies were performed by the program-funded fellows.

Accreditation (Purpose Area 2)

- 107 individuals seeking certification using program funds.
- 25 individuals achieved certification using program funds.
- 13 organizations have achieved accreditation using program funds.

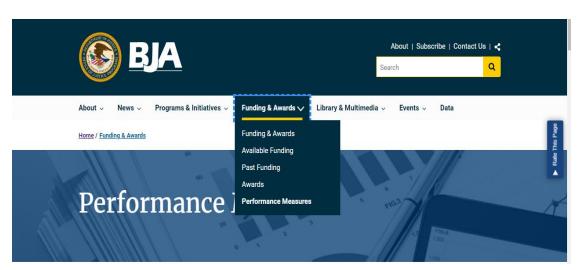
Data submitted by grantees is reviewed and reported publicly to help show the success of the program.



BJA Performance Measures Webpage

Resources Available to BJA Grantees

- Specific performance measure reporting guidance
- Training videos
- Data collection best practices
- Managing subrecipient reporting tip sheet
- And more!



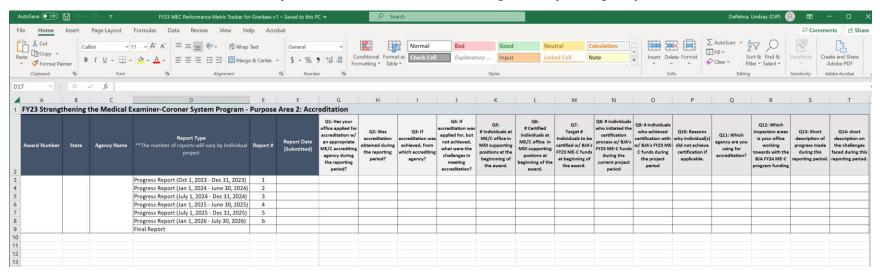
- https://bja.ojp.gov/funding/performance-measures
- https://www.youtube.com/dojbja YouTube Channel



BJA Performance Measures

Additional Resource

- Internal performance metric tracking and record keeping can make reporting easier and improve accuracy (thus
 decreasing change requests).
- BJA will share the below template to use for internal tracking if you choose to. Please note this is not mandatory and will
 not be sent back to BJA it is strictly to assist with internal tracking within your agency.





Contact Information and Resources

JustGrants Helpdesk

Monday-Friday 5:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. ET

Saturday-Sunday and Federal Holidays 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. ET

1-833-872-5175 | JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov

JustGrants Training and Resources

https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/

SECTION 6

STRENGTHENING THE ME/C SYSTEM PROGRAM FORENSICS TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

RTI International





The Who

- Led by RTI International
- Cadre of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)



The What

- Provide TTA in support of grantees' strategic goals and objectives across forensic disciplines
- Proactively engage grantees to develop materials based upon agency needs
- Support sustainability through TTA surrounding the implementation of new policies/practices and enhancement of existing policies/practices

The How

- National Grantees Meeting
- Virtual TTA engagements
- Peer-to-peer connections
- Online learning (webinars, written briefs, working groups)
- Social media



Contact RTI International





forensicstta@rti.org



Forensics TTA



Forensics TTA



www.forensicstta.org



Stay Connected!

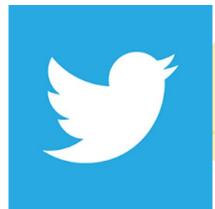
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/DOJBJA

Twitter: https://twitter.com/DOJBJA

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/dojbja

- Use the QR code to subscribe to "Justice Matters" and "News From BJA" to receive the latest information from BJA and the field.
- For information on funding opportunities, publications, and initiatives, visit BJA's website: www.bja.ojp.gov.













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Thurston Bryant Senior Policy Advisor, BJA Policy Office	Thurston.Bryant@usdoj.gov	(202) 598-0379
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Questions?