

BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

# New Grantee Orientation Webinar

## FY 2022 Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner System Program

February 22, 2023



**BJA**  
Bureau of Justice Assistance  
U.S. Department of Justice

# Presenters

- **Thurston Bryant - BJA Policy Office**
- **Monte Evans II - BJA Programs Office**
- **Michael Adams - BJA Operations Office**
- **RTI International**

# Polling Question #1

## 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 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

# Agenda

- Introduction (Webinar Logistics): WebEx Assistance and Submitting Webinar Questions
- SECTION 1: Office of Justice Programs (OJP) and Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) – Overview Information
- SECTION 2: BJA Strengthening the Medical Examiner-Coroner (ME/C) System Program – Team Introduction
- SECTION 3: Program Overview Information
- SECTION 4: Grant Management Overview
- SECTION 5: Performance Measurement Overview
- SECTION 6: RTI International – New Forensics Training and Technical Assistance Program Introduction
- Webinar Conclusion: Questions and Answer Session



# SECTION 1

## OJP AND BJA OVERVIEW



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U.S. Department of Justice

# 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 grant-making components of the Department of Justice along with the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS).

## Office of Justice Programs

**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.



[www.bja.ojp.gov](http://www.bja.ojp.gov)





Appointed by President Biden in February 2022, Director Moore leads BJA's programmatic and policy efforts on providing a wide range of resources, including training and technical assistance, to law enforcement, courts, corrections, treatment, reentry, justice information sharing, and community-based partners to address chronic and emerging criminal justice challenges nationwide.

### Policy Office

provides national leadership to criminal justice organizations that partner with BJA to identify effective program models for replication and infuse data-driven, evidence-based strategies into operational models, practices, and programs.

### Programs Office

administers state, local, tribal, and territorial grant programs. It acts as BJA's direct line of communication to states, local jurisdictions, territories, and tribal governments by providing customer-focused grants management support and careful stewardship over federal funds.

### Operations Office

coordinates all communication, formulates and executes the budget, manages contracts, measures grantees' performance, and provides administrative support to BJA.

### Public Safety Officer Benefits Office

provides death and education benefits to survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other public safety officers, and disability benefits to officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty.

**BJA Director  
Karhlton F. Moore**

# Five Major Strategic Focus Areas

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Improve public safety through measures which build trust with the community and ensure an effective criminal justice system

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Reduction in recidivism and prevention of unnecessary confinement and interactions with the criminal justice system

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Integration of evidence-based, research-driven strategies into the day-to-day operations of BJA and the programs BJA administers and supports

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Increasing program effectiveness with a renewed emphasis on data analysis, information sharing, and performance management

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Ensuring organizational excellence through outstanding administration and oversight of all of BJA's strategic investments

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**Fund** – Invest diverse funding streams to accomplish goals.

**Educate** – Research, develop, and deliver what works.

**Equip** – Create tools and products to build capacity and improve outcomes.

**Partner** – Consult, connect, and convene.

## SECTION 2

# BJA STRENGTHENING THE MEDICAL EXAMINER-CORONER (ME/C) SYSTEM PROGRAM

## TEAM INTRODUCTION



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# Award Management Structure



# Meet Your BJA ME/C Team!



**Thurston Bryant**  
Senior Policy Advisor  
BJA Policy Office



**Alan Spanbauer**  
Division Chief  
BJA Programs Office



**Michael Adams**  
Senior Research Associate (Contractor)  
BJA Operations Office



**Lindsay DePalma**  
Associate (Contractor)  
BJA Policy Office



**Monte Evans II**  
State Policy Advisor  
BJA Programs Office



**Nichole Norvesh**  
Research Associate (Contractor)  
BJA Operations Office

# BJA Team – Contact Information

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## SECTION 3

# STRENGTHENING THE ME/C SYSTEM PROGRAM

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW INFORMATION

BJA Policy Office



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# ME/C Program – BJA Policy Office Team



**Thurston Bryant**  
Senior Policy Advisor



**Lindsay DePalma**  
Associate (Contractor)

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 by grantees.

# Strengthening the ME/C System Program Overview



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## 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 ME/C Grantees!**
- To date, 84 awards totaling \$12,400,000 have been made.
- Under FY 2022, the following new 13 awards were made totaling \$2,040,695:
  - 1) Alaska Dept. of Health & Social Services (AK) – PA 2
  - 2) Alameda County (CA) – PA 2
  - 3) Broward County (FL) – PA 1
  - 4) Connecticut Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (CT) – PA 1
  - 5) District One Medical Examiner Support Inc. (FL) – PA 2
  - 6) Dorchester County (SC) – PA 2
  - 7) King County (WA) – PA 1
  - 8) Los Angeles County (CA) – PA 1
  - 9) Milwaukee County (WI) – PA 1
  - 10) Montgomery County (TX) – PA 2
  - 11) University of Tennessee (TN) – PA 1
  - 12) Western Michigan School of Medicine (MI) – PA 1
  - 13) Western Michigan School of Medicine (MI) – PA 2

# Allowable Uses of Funds

## Purpose Area 1: Fellowships

- Salaries/Stipends and Fringe Benefits
- Loan Repayments
- Recruitment Travel
- Minor Equipment and Supplies
- Training
- Medical License Reimbursement



# Allowable Uses of Funds

## Purpose Area 2: Accreditation

- Equipment and Supplies
- Personnel
- Travel
- Microgrants
- Used to support new accreditation and maintain existing accreditation as well



# Allowable Uses of Funds

## Budget Information: Both Purpose Areas

- Training – To attend the annual 2-day BJA forensics workshop in the Washington, D.C. area
- No-Cost Extensions
- Certification Fees



# Unallowable Uses of Funds

**Construction**

**Supplanting**

**Unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), including unmanned aircraft vehicles (UAV), and all accompanying accessories to support UAS or UAV**



**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**



# Policy Office - Grantee Check-In Calls and Project Updates

- **We look forward to working with you and making your project successful!**
- **We'd like to setup periodic "check-ins" with you to provide any solutions to issues you may have. In addition, we'd like to use this time to learn about the status of your project.**
- **As a result, we'll be reaching out to you to schedule calls during the summer of 2023, and towards the end of calendar year 2023.**
- **However, please DO NOT HESITATE to contact us if you have any questions or issues throughout the duration of your project!**

## SECTION 4

# STRENGTHENING THE ME/C SYSTEM PROGRAM

## GRANT MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

BJA Programs Office



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# ME/C Programs Office Team



**Alan Spanbauer**  
Division Chief



**Monte Evans II**  
State Policy Advisor

# Role of the Programs Office Team

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

Programs Office staff 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.

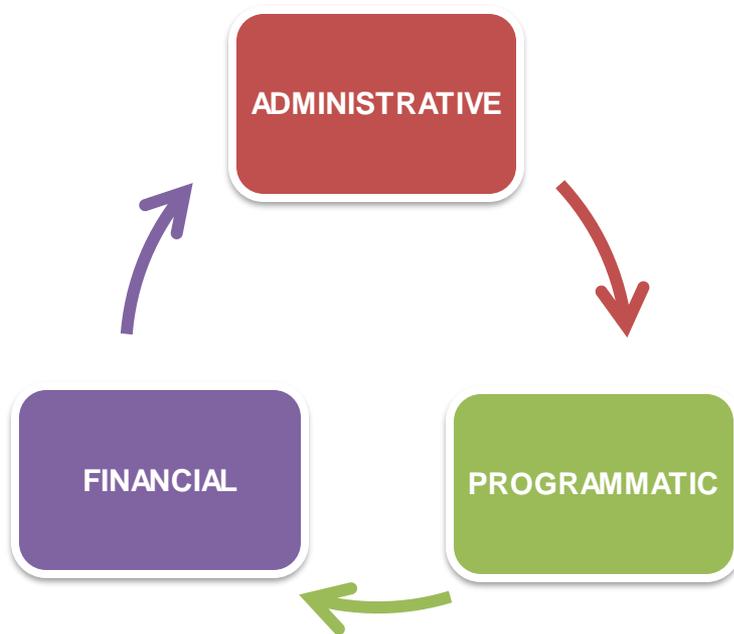
# State Policy Advisor/Grant Manager Role

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 the of all award conditions, including the award release conditions related to program 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 e-mails!

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

Programs Office State Policy Advisors talk to Policy 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 e-mail or call and talk through it 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.**
- **TIP:** 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:

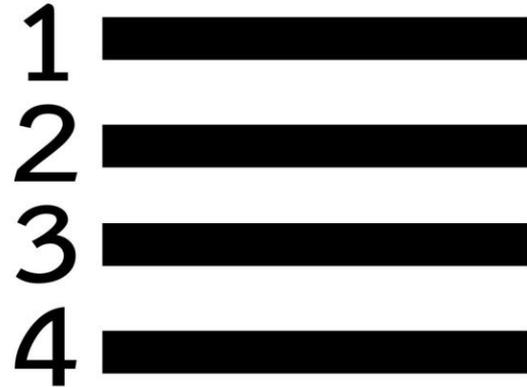
<https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/training/training-grant-award-acceptance>.

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 29 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-2022-awards>
- BJA specific award conditions begin at number 30 in the award agreement.



# Award Conditions



The most common award withholding conditions

## Uncleared budget

Conditional Clearance

## Missing documents

- Disclosure of Duplication
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)
- Application Attachments

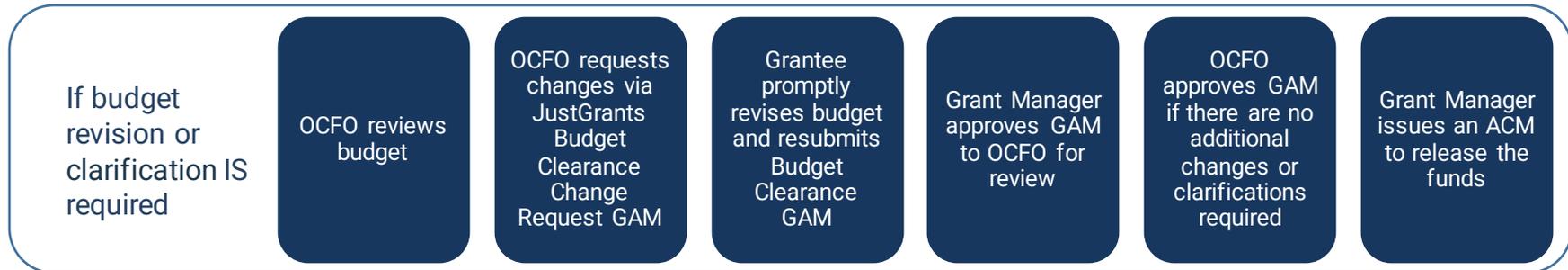
Program specific conditions, including withholdings will typically be found on the last page of your conditions.

Withholding conditions must be removed/resolved before funds can be obligated, expended, or drawn down.

Regular communication with your assigned Grant Manager is critical. You cannot begin activities until these holds have been cleared.

# 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 it was not previously completed on/after 1/1/2020).
  - 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, this will be a withholding condition.
- Must be completed every three years.
- Available online at <https://onlinegfmt.training.ojp.gov/>
- Submit Grants Financial Management Training certificates to your BJA State Policy Advisor/Grant Manager.



## Polling Question #2

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

- Conditional Budget Clearance
- NEPA
- Indirect Costs
- Deliverables

# Accessing Funds

In order to access funds, the following actions must be completed:

- Valid award acceptance in JustGrants.
- Removal of all withholding award conditions, if applicable.
- Entity registration in the U.S. Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) system.
- Submission of any delinquent reports, if applicable.



# Grant Award Modifications (GAM) Overview



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- A GAM is used to request project changes that require prior approval.
- The assigned GAA must submit GAMs in JustGrants.
- GAM types include:
  - Budget Modification
  - Change Project Scope
  - Project Period Extension
  - Sole Source Approval
  - Programmatic Costs



***BEST PRACTICE: Contact your State Policy Advisor/Grant Manager if you have questions prior to submitting a GAM.***

# Grant Award Modifications (GAM)

## Programmatic

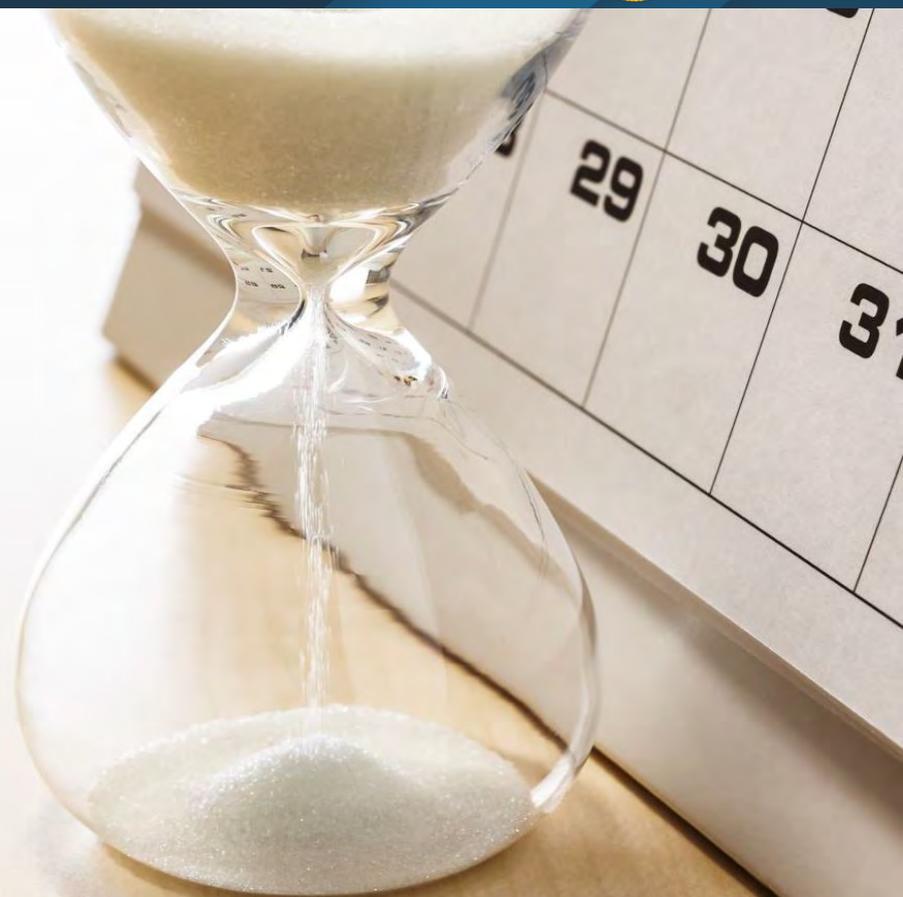
- Programmatic Costs GAM
- Scope Change GAMs alter programmatic activities, change the purpose of the project, change the project site, or change key staff

## Financial

- Budget Clearance GAM
- Budget Modification GAM
- Sole Source GAM requires substantial justification, must receive prior approval for any sole source procurement in excess of 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-by-case basis.



# Reporting Requirements: Overview

Report Type	Reporting Period	Due Date	JustGrants Role
<b>Federal Financial Report (SF-425) – Submitted in JustGrants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jan 1 – Mar 31</li> <li>• Apr 1 – Jun 30</li> <li>• Jul 1 – Sep 30</li> <li>• Oct 1 – Dec 31</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• April 30</li> <li>• July 30</li> <li>• October 30</li> <li>• January 30</li> </ul>	Financial Manager
<b>Semi-Annual Performance Report - Submitted in JustGrants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jan 1 – Jun 30</li> <li>• Jul 1 – Dec 31</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• July 30</li> <li>• January 30</li> </ul>	Grant Award Administrator (Alternate GAA can edit but not submit)

**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)

- Report funds obligated and/or expended, NOT draw-down amounts.
- Ensure funds that have been obligated align with approved budget.
- Report for every quarter regardless of whether or not expenses were incurred.
- Report CUMULATIVE amounts each quarter.

## Performance Reports

- Answer performance measure questions specifically written in the solicitation.
- Provide BJA Grant Manager accurate snapshot of implementation.
- Report must be submitted even if no activities occurred in report period.

JustGrants automatically freezes grant funds for delinquent reports. 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 EPDR (Enhanced Programmatic Desk Review).
- Monitoring allows Grant Managers to:
  - Observe compliance with requirements and progress against project goals,
  - Identify opportunities to provide technical assistance, and
  - Ensure that adequate controls are in place to improve accountability of federal funds.
- Per the Uniform Guidance, recipients are required to monitor subrecipients.



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# 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:

- Contain 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, and
- 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](http://www.fsrs.gov/resources).

# Closeout

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- 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



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U.S. Department of Justice

# 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://bj.a.ojp.gov/funding/performance-measures>.

# Overview of Performance Metrics and Progress Reports

- Metric questions can be located here:  
<https://bja.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh186/files/media/document/Cold-Case-Measures.pdf>
- **Due: Semi-Annually** –Include:
  - **Successes**
  - **Challenges**
  - **Any links** to publications/media coverage of cases
- Ensure your narrative matches your numeric Metric
- Metric **questions 1 and 2 will be the same #** for every progress report.
- Your **FINAL** report will be cumulative of the entire award
  - You will submit your last 6 month (semi annual) regular report + a FINAL report

# 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:



Identifies areas for improvement to focus internal efforts.



Promotes 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.

# Performance Measures Accomplishments (Updated January 2023)

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

## Fellowships (Purpose Area 1)

- 55 fellowships funded by this program.
- 26 participants have completed fellowship training using program funds.
- 8,145 deaths were investigated by the program-funded fellows.
- 7,621 autopsies were performed by the program-funded fellows.

## Accreditation (Purpose Area 2)

- 94 individuals seeking certification using program funds.
- 24 individuals achieved certification using program funds.
- 9 organizations have achieved accreditation using program funds.

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



# 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

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

## Purpose Area 2: Medical Examiner-Coroner Office Accreditation

- 15 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)

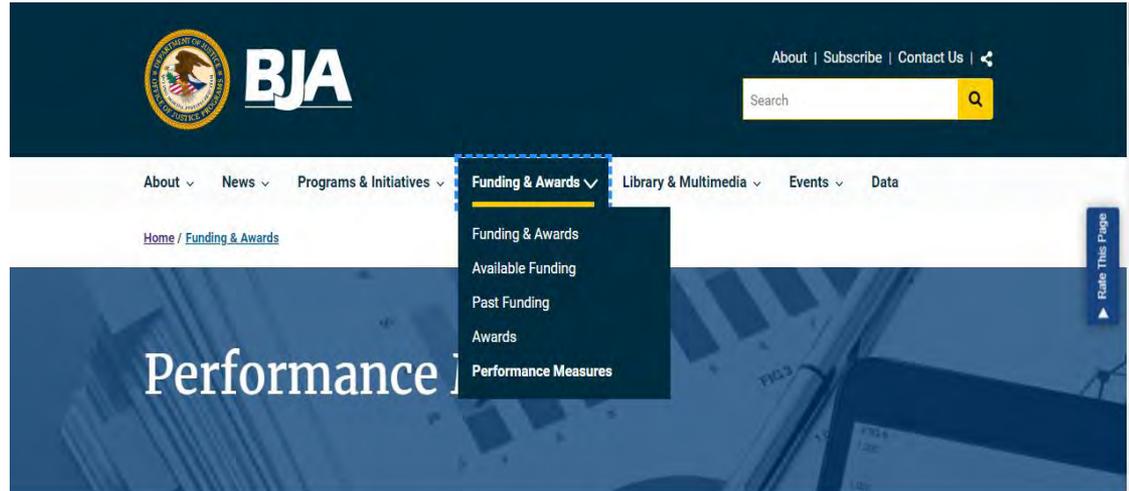
- BJA Award Administration questions remain consistent
- BJA Narrative questions remain consistent

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

# 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!



The screenshot shows the BJA website header with the logo and navigation menu. The 'Funding & Awards' menu is open, highlighting 'Performance Measures'. The main content area features a large blue banner with the word 'Performance' in white text. A search bar is located in the top right corner, and a 'Rate This Page' button is on the right side.

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

# Contact Information and Resources

## JustGrants Helpdesk

Monday–Friday 5:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time (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

### *NEW* - BJA FORENSICS TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

RTI International



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# Forensics Training and Technical Assistance Team (Forensics TTA)



## The Who

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

## The What

- Assisting BJA grantees in accomplishing strategic goals and objectives across forensic disciplines
- Proactively engaging grantees to monitor progress and develop materials based upon agency needs
- Supporting sustainability through implementation of new and enhancement of existing policies/practices

## The How

- National Grantees Meeting
  - On-site and virtual engagements
  - Peer-to-peer connections
  - Online learning (webinars, written briefs, working groups)
  - Social media
-

# Coming Soon...

- Follow us on Social Media!
  - *Twitter:* @Forensics\_TTA
  - *Facebook:* Forensics TTA
- Forensics TTA Website
- Webinars
- ...and much more!



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<b>Michael Adams</b> Senior Research Associate (Contractor) BJA Operations Office	<a href="mailto:Michael.Adams@usdoj.gov">Michael.Adams@usdoj.gov</a>	(240) 463-0092
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# Webinar Conclusion

Thank you for your hard work and dedication!

**QUESTIONS?**