

**Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)
FY 2011 Second Chance Act Reentry Program for Adult Offenders with Co-
Occurring Substance Abuse and Mental Health Disorders
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

General

1. What are the purposes and expectations for this program?

The Second Chance Act aims to assist people with successfully returning to their communities from prisons, jails and juvenile residential facilities. Section 201 of the Second Chance Act authorizes federal awards to states, units of local government, and Indian tribes to improve the provision of treatment to adult offenders in prisons and jails during the period of incarceration and through the completion of parole or other court supervision after release into the community.

2. What are the eligibility requirements under this program?

Applications are limited to states, units of local government, territories, and federally- recognized Indian tribes (as determined by the Secretary of the Interior).

3. What is the deadline for applying?

All applications are due by 11:59 p.m. eastern time on June 23, 2011. Please remember that all applicants must register with Grants.gov prior to submitting an application. Please register with grants.gov several weeks prior to the application submission deadline.

5. What is the potential project length for an award?

Awards under this grant period may be made for a period of up to 24 months.

6. What are the award amounts for projects?

Awards of up to \$600,000 will be made, contingent upon the availability of funds and number of offenders projected to be served.

7. When will applicants be notified if they are successful?

Awards will be announced prior to the end of the fiscal year on September 30, 2011.

8. How quickly after receiving notice will a grant recipient be expected to launch their program?

Access to funds is dependent on final budget clearance and possibly in adherence to Special Condition requirements. Award recipients should anticipate providing services no later than 90 days after receiving notice.

9. Can agencies that received Fiscal Year 2010 awards under the Second Chance Act Section 201 also apply for funding again under the Fiscal Year 2011 solicitation?

Yes, FY 2010 award recipients could apply for funding under the FY 2011 solicitation. However, it would be difficult receive another immediate FY 2011 award since these applicants received a prior FY 2010 award. In addition, it may also be difficult to receive both a FY 2010 and 2011 award under this program in relation to overall funding availability and attempts at geographic distribution.

10. How do I find out which agency is my state's Single State Agency?

To find your Single State Agency for substance abuse, please visit the following website:
www.samhsa.gov/Grants/ssadirectory.pdf.

11. What documentation is considered certification that the program is "clinically appropriate?"

Official documentation is a copy of each services provider organization's license, accreditation, and certification.

12. If we have to issue a competitive bid process when contracting for substance abuse or mental health treatment services, are we required to identify the treatment provider in the application?

No. If a jurisdiction requires a competitive bid process for contracting with providers and services, please state that in the application and provide some discussion regarding the process and timeline for selecting providers and services.

Target Population

13. What is the target population for this program?

The target population would include incarcerated adults with co-occurring substance use and mental health disorders who will return to their communities from prisons or jails. Applicants must provide information on the target population with the proposal materials. Priority consideration will be given to applicants that target medium- to high-risk offenders, as identified through use of a validated risk and needs assessment instrument, which have been dually diagnosed with serious mental health disorders and substance abuse addictions.

14. Is the target population the total number of offenders with co-occurring disorders, or the total able to be served through this project?

The target population would include the individuals served through the project.

15. Is there a recommended number of participants?

No. Jurisdictions should provide information around the estimated number of program participants and the reasoning behind the number of program participants.

16. What is the definition of a “higher-risk” offender?

There is no official definition contained in the Second Chance Act for “higher-risk” offenders. However, an applicant should use the definition adopted by their particular jurisdiction. Common definitions of “higher-risk” include assessing for criminogenic factors that increase the likelihood of recidivism unless addressed.

17. What constitutes a Serious Mental Health disorder?

There is no official definition contained in the Second Chance Act for “serious” mental health disorder. Applicants should refer to the definition adopted by their State Mental Health Authority.

Program- Specific Requirements

18. What are the priority considerations?

Priority consideration will be given to applicants that consider the following in the development of their program:

- Target medium- to high-risk offenders, as identified through use of a validated risk and needs assessment instrument, who have been dually diagnosed with serious mental health disorders and substance abuse addictions.
- Target female offenders.
- Focus their program on geographic areas with high rates of offenders returning from prisons or jails.
- Jurisdictions implementing specialized probation services for the target population, as described in The Consensus Project’s “Improving Responses to People with Mental Illnesses: The Essential Elements of Specialized Probation Initiatives”:
http://consensusproject.org/jc_publications/probation-essential-elements.
- Jurisdictions proposing to partner with a research organization to conduct a rigorous local evaluation of their strategies (including community corrections supervision approaches) will also receive priority consideration.

20. What are the approved uses of funds for the program?

- Applicants are required to clearly articulate how the following six principles of evidence-based correctional practice are integrated into the program design:
 - Objectively Assess Criminogenic Risks and Needs
 - Enhance Intrinsic Motivation
 - Target Higher- Risk Offenders
 - Address Offenders' Greatest Criminogenic Needs
 - Use Cognitive-Behavioral interventions
 - Determine Dosage and intensity of Services

- Applicants should address the following program design elements in the proposal:
 - Use Actuarial-Based Assessment Instruments for Reentry Planning
 - Provision of Evidence-based Substance Abuse and Mental Health Treatment Services
 - Pharmacological Drug Treatment Services
 - Transition Planning Procedures
 - Support of a Comprehensive Range of Recovery Support Services
 - Provision of Sustained Aftercare, Case Planning/ Management in the Community
 - Provision of Community Supervision, Services which Follow Evidence-Based Practices

Please review the solicitation for additional detailed information on each of the six principles evidence-based correctional practice, and the program design elements.

Performance Measures

21. What are the performance measures for this grant?

All applicants must demonstrate their methods for collecting data for performance measures. All performance measures will help determine the program's effectiveness to increase public safety and reduce recidivism. More information on performance measures can be found on pages 10-12 in the solicitation.

Please note that performance measures are finalized after jurisdictions apply for funding. By applying for the solicitation, all applicants agree that they will report on these measures when they are released in their final form.

22. What software or tools should grantees use to track performance measures? Are these tools provided by BJA?

Applicants will either be required to report their performance measures in BJA's Performance Measurement Tool (PMT). Performance measurement training, materials, and sessions will be provided to all award recipients at a later date.

23. How often are performance measures reported?

Grant recipients are required to submit three different types of reports to BJA: Financial Status Reports, Performance Reports, and Progress Reports. Progress reports are done semi-annually, while Financial Status Reports and Performance Reports are completed quarterly.

24. Is there a specific amount of recidivism reduction as the goal for this project?

The Second Chance Act only requires applicants to include as a "goal" of their strategic reentry plan that they reduce recidivism by 50 percent over five years. Applicants are not required to achieve a 50 percent reduction in recidivism rates. The 50 percent reduction in recidivism goal will be applied to the target population identified in the application. This 50 percent reduction is a "goal" and not a requirement.

25. Are grantees required to interpret and evaluate the data collected through the performance measures?

Yes. Applicants are required to discuss their methods for collecting data for performance measures and describe how the program performance will be documented, monitored and evaluated, and identify the impact of the strategy once implemented. For more information, please refer to the solicitation.

Budget/ Allowable Uses

26. Is there a matching requirement for this grant?

No.

27. Are there any limitations on how award funds can be used for employee compensation?

With respect to any award of more than \$250,000 made under this solicitation, federal funds may not be used to pay total cash compensation (salary plus bonuses) to any employee of the award recipient at a rate that exceeds 110 percent of the maximum annual salary payable to a member of the Federal Government's Senior Executive Service (SES) at an agency with a Certified SES Performance Appraisal System for that year.

A recipient may compensate an employee at a higher rate, provided the amount in excess of this compensation limitation is paid with non-federal funds.

28. Should grant applicants budget for any particular training or technical assistance?

Applicants must budget funding to travel to Department of Justice-sponsored grant meetings. Applicants should estimate the costs of travel and accommodations for three staff to attend two meetings in Washington D.C.

29. Can the grant be extended beyond 24 months?

Jurisdictions can apply for a no-cost extension at the end of the grant period if additional time is needed to spend awarded grant funds.

30. Will there be an opportunity to renew this funding to extend the program?

BJA does not offer supplemental funding under this program. Additional funding for programs is subject to the availability of funds within BJA's budget.

31. Will there be future opportunities to apply for funding under this program?

All future BJA funding opportunities will be based on congressional approved appropriations.

32. Does the project have to include both pre- and post-release components, or can funds be used for one or the other?

Applicants must indicate how treatment will begin prior to release and be continued after participating offenders are released into the community.

33. Can grant programs be used to enhance existing reentry programs, or are funds limited to new programs?

Federal funds cannot be used to supplant existing services. The objective of this program is to establish or enhance the provision of treatment to adult offenders reentering the community.

Collaboration

34. Can a collaboration of entities apply as one applicant?

Yes. Please note that only one state, unit of local government, territory or federally recognized Indian tribe must be designated as the "official" lead applicant. Priority consideration will be given to those applicants who demonstrate a high degree of collaboration among a variety of public, private, and faith-based organizations, to include at a minimum the state substance Abuse Authority, the State

Mental Health Authority, and a provider organization for direct client integrated substance abuse and mental health treatment services appropriate to the proposed project.

Technical Application Questions

35. Does the budget narrative count against the 20 page application limit?

No.

36. What is the selection process for awards under this program?

OJP is committed to ensuring a fair and open process for awarding grants. BJA reviews the application to make sure that the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, and achievable, as well as consistent with the solicitation. Peer reviewers will review the applications submitted under this solicitation that meet basic minimum requirements. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), in consultation with BJA, conducts a financial review of applications for potential discretionary awards to evaluate the fiscal integrity, financial capability of applicants, and other areas. Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, all final award decisions will be made by the Assistant Attorney General (AAG), who also may give consideration to factors including, but not limited to, underserved populations, geographic diversity, strategic priorities, past performance, and available funding when making awards.

37. If the state is not applying, can more than one local jurisdiction apply in that state?

Yes, it is possible for several cities, counties, and the state to apply since all are independent jurisdictions.

38. Is there a percentage breakdown for allocation to state versus local governments?

No. BJA is cognizant of the need for geographical distribution as well as some level of equity among states, localities, and tribes.

39. How are submissions from multiple jurisdictions in the same state viewed?

Submissions from multiple jurisdictions in the same state will be viewed on the individual merit of each application that meets solicitation requirements.

Application Assistance

40. Is there someone specific to contact with questions about the process or program?

For technical assistance with submitting the application, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726 or via e-mail to support@grants.gov. The Grants.gov Support Hotline hours of operation are 24 hours, 7 days a week, except federal holidays.

For assistance with any other requirement of this solicitation, contact the BJA Justice Information Center at 1-877-927-5657. The BJA Justice Information Center hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, and 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. eastern time on the solicitation close date.

41. What resources are available to assist me with submitting a competitive grant application?

BJA Grant Writing and Management Academy provides several training modules, including Before Applying for BJA Funds and Applying for BJA funds. These training modules assist you with developing an application and provide information on what steps to take prior to submitting an application. Those and additional modules can be found at <http://bja.ncjrs.gov/gwma/index.html>, or by going to <http://bja.ncjrs.gov/gwma/index.html>.

BJA also developed a Guide to Grants FY10 edition Grant Manual. This manual assists with successful grant writing and includes information on topics such as Developing a Plan, Project Strategy and Design, To Apply or Not To Apply, Writing the Proposal, Submitting the Application and Grant Writing Tips. You can access the manual at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/resource/GrantWritingManual.pdf.

Additional FAQs and informational resources for grant applicants can be found at www.grants.gov/applicants/resources.jsp.