

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUSTICE ASSISTANCE FORMULA GRANT PROGRAM
STATEWIDE PLAN FFY 2015
CFDA #16.738
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Connecticut's **FFY15 Justice Assistance Formula Grant (JAG) Plan** will provide state agencies and local governments with critical funding necessary to support a range of program areas including law enforcement, prosecution and court programs, prevention programs, community corrections, drug treatment and enforcement, crime victim initiatives, and planning, evaluation, and technology improvement programs.

Allocation priorities include: reduction in gun violence, interventions for mentally ill offenders, law enforcement response to felony level drug crime, criminal justice system response to violent victim crimes, technology improvements and compliance with Civil Rights Act.

STATE LEVEL JAG FUNDS (63.2% JAG 2015 AWARD)

The federal JAG program requires the **State's Administrative Agency (SAA)** to "pass-through" a federally-determined percentage of the State's JAG award to local governments. The funds remaining may be allocated to "state-level" or "state-wide" projects operated by a state agency. The "**state level**" projects are a critical component of the JAG Plan given the structure of Connecticut's criminal justice system. Connecticut is a small state with a single-tiered, unified court system and **all criminal justice functions are funded and administered at the state level except for municipal law enforcement**. Unlike many other states, Connecticut has **no county or local government systems** responsible for jails, prison, parole, probation, indigent defense, victim services, prosecution and enforcement. Therefore, the JAG State-level funds must address a multitude of inter-related functions and operations while the Local Pass-through funds are used for local government law enforcement functions.

The federal formula for the JAG 2015 allows the SAA to retain 63.2% of the federal award for "state-level" projects and 10% for administrative costs.

FFY2015 State-Level JAG Priorities:

As the State Administering Agency (SAA) for five federal criminal justice grants, OPM is responsible for assuring that all sub-recipients are in compliance with applicable federal and state financial and programmatic requirements. The SAA must verify that funds are expended within federal program policies and ensure those funds are used to achieve maximum results while supporting priority policy objectives through a strategic planning approach.

Connecticut's FFY2015 State-Level JAG funds will focus on issue areas addressed by the [*Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission \(CJPAC\)*](#), which is a multi-disciplinary planning group of stakeholders representing state and local government agencies as well as community-based organizations and service providers.

A. Funding Priorities and Objectives

Priorities and objectives are based on issues identified and discussed at the *Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission (CJPAC)* during the period of September 2014 through May 2015.

Systems Improvement

- **Improve capacity of state agencies to undertake evidence-based planning** of resources and services. Provide tools and training to assess cost-efficient uses of public funds and evaluate existing services to determine the most effective practices for reducing recidivism.
- **Ensure compliance with federal civil rights laws:** State Administering Agencies (SAAs) have a responsibility to monitor their sub-recipients to ensure compliance with federal civil rights laws. Recipients of federal financial assistance have an obligation to reduce language barriers that can preclude persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) from meaningful access to important benefits, rights, programs, information, and services. The SAA must provide periodic training sessions for its sub-recipients on their obligations to comply with the applicable civil rights laws and nondiscrimination provisions and DOJ implementing regulations.

Public Safety and Accountability

- **Support Governor Malloy's Second Chance Initiative** to reduce recidivism and provide low-risk offenders with opportunities to be productive members of society.
- **Ensure community safety and prevent gun violence** through enforcement of firearms laws and reduction in trafficking of illegal firearms; support evidence-based gun violence intervention and prevention strategies.
- **Improve policies, procedures and protocols** for police, prosecutors, probation and parole response to mentally ill offenders through specialized intervention units and training initiatives involving collaborations between criminal justice agencies and mental health providers.
- **Improve criminal justice system response to victims of violent crime** including sexual assault victims and domestic violence victims. Reduce risk of recidivism in cases involving high-risk offenders through evidence-based protocols and practices.
- **Expand interventions and treatment options for women offenders** held in jail and prison facilities as well as women offenders in a community-based corrections program.

The ***Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission (CJPAC)*** identified and discussed policy priorities, gaps in services and emerging needs as follows:

June 2015: CJPAC identified the priority issues areas for JAG planning purposes: gun violence and trafficking of firearms, community re-entry support services and recidivism prevention strategies, specialized interventions for women offenders and mentally ill offenders and monitoring of high-risk violent offenders.

April 2015: CJPAC identified need to expand and improve addictions services for offenders to prevent future criminal activity and deeper involvement in the criminal justice system. CJPAC reviewed data on women offenders and recidivism.

March 2015: CJPAC examined recidivism data for offenders released from prison and discussed re-entry options for low-risk offenders.

February 2015: CJPAC discussed priority areas of Governor Malloy's Second Chance Initiative. The commission members discussed impact of re-entry and recidivism reduction strategies and indicated need to implement evidence based programs. CJPAC identified and discussed specific policies and procedure improvements needed to increase opportunities for offenders to succeed in society upon release from prison.

January 2015: CJPAC examined data trends in the criminal justice system with a special focus on reduction in gun violence, shootings and homicides. CJPAC identified priority needs to prevent gun violence through enforcement of firearms laws and reduction in trafficking of illegal firearms; and support evidence-based gun violence intervention and prevention strategies.

December 2014: CJPAC identified need to develop policies and interventions to improve oversight of high-risk offenders and identified priority services needs for the "pre-trial" population. CJPAC discussed ways to improve monitoring and control of violent offenders, particularly domestic violence offenders. CJPAC members discussed priority need to develop and implement cross-disciplinary interventions for mentally ill offenders with specialized focus on young adult population and police emergency response.

November 2014: CJPAC continued to discuss need for improvements in community re-entry services as well as priorities areas of addressing mentally offenders and high risk offenders.

October 2014: CJPAC discussed priority need to reduce gun violence particularly in the largest urban areas with higher number of shooting incidents. CJPAC discussed the need to develop new approaches to intervening in high-risk domestic violence cases as well as develop policies and protocols to respond to other violent crimes and implement evidence-based interventions.

September 2014: CJPAC continued to identify and discuss the need to dedicate resources to addressing gun violence including policies and protocols to reduce domestic violence homicides as well as implement evidence-based practices to prevent recidivism for violent crime related to drugs and gangs. CJPAC discussed need to develop policies and services in response to

mentally offenders. CJPAC also discussed priority need to improve policies and protocols to support victim's access to services and enforce the victim's rights.

B. Sub-Grant Process and Timeline

September 2015 – December 2015: OPM will convene inter-agency workgroups to identify options for activities and services that address the JAG objectives and priorities, establish an allocation plan and coordinate development of an inter-agency implementation strategy.

January 2016 – OPM will sub-grant funds to agencies and organizations to launch projects contingent on receipt of the federal grant funds.

LOCAL PASS-THROUGH FUNDS (36.8% JAG 2015 AWARD)

The State's SAA is required to "pass-through" 36.8% of its federal grant award to local governments plus an additional 8% to a set of very small local governments, many of which receive their police services from the State Police.

C. Funding Priorities and Objectives

Consistent with the overall priorities of the federal JAG program, the local-pass-through funds will be allocated to address policies, practices and services that are evidence-based as demonstrated through assessment data or national research. Allocation decisions will be based on needs as well as impact on other components of the criminal justice system.

- Ensure compliance with federal civil rights laws.
- Improve and expand information systems, and communications technology for local governments participating in a regional initiative involving shared resources and collaboration; with priority focus on enforcement of firearms laws.
- Expand evidence-based law enforcement initiatives targeting reduction in gun crime and violent crime and intervention with high-risk offenders.
- Provide access and resources for in-state training for local police departments with a priority focus on first responders to mentally ill offenders and de-escalation techniques.
- Provide equipment and support to local police agencies to improve operational efficiencies through expanded participation in the states E-Citation electronic traffic ticket and infraction program.
- Provide equipment and support to local police agencies to meet statewide mandate to develop a new standardized method to more efficiently and effectively collect racial profiling data from traffic stops.

D. Local Level Planning Process

October 2015 – December 2015: OPM will convene an Advisory Committee to provide recommendations and options for strategies and activities to address the objectives for the 2015

JAG Local Pass-Through funds and funds referred to as the “less than \$10K”. The Committee will include the Connecticut Police Chief Association, police department representatives from different regions throughout the state and other stakeholders.

January 2016– March 2016: The Advisory committee will review data indicative of the “gaps” and needs in the criminal justice system at the local level; and recommend options for grant funded strategies.

April 2016 – June 2016: OPM will develop an allocation plan based on the options proposed by the Advisory Committee; and determine the contracting process.

E. COORDINATION EFFORTS

Connecticut has a very centralized and unified criminal justice system. Connecticut is divided into 169 municipalities. There is no county government. There is no overlap of functions such as might arise with county government or a multi-tier court system. The Judicial Branch operates a single tier, unified court system with an intermediate appellate court and a supreme court. With the exception of local police services in the larger communities, all criminal justice functions are provided by state agencies.

All of the criminal and juvenile justice formula grant programs emanating from the U. S. Department of Justice, except the Victims of Crime Act, are administered by the same unit within the Office of Policy and Management (OPM). The Office of Policy and Management, the state administrative agency (SAA) for the JAG Grant, is well positioned to coordinate JAG Grant activities with other federal and state initiatives given that it is the state’s budget and planning agency.

In addition to serving as the SAA for the JAG grant, the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division (CJPPD) of OPM is statutorily required to develop strategic plans to improve the outcomes and operation of the criminal justice system. The CJPPD collaborates with the state criminal justice agencies and local governments in assessing and analyzing existing functions and identifying opportunities for improvements in services to promote greater public safety. The CJPPD Undersecretary serves as the chair of the Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission (CJPAC) which is charged with developing strategies to prevent prison and jail overcrowding and creating an offender community reentry strategy.

F. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

OPM requires the JAG sub-grantees to submit performance data as well as financial data on a quarterly basis. Both the programmatic data and financial data are aggregated into “state-wide” reports which are submitted to the federal agency via GMS.

G. Governing Body Review

The SAA for Connecticut’s JAG grant is a sub-division of the “governing body of the state”.

H. Public Comment

In accordance with past practice, the JAG 2015 Plan will be posted in the Connecticut Law Journal as well as posted on the SAA website. In addition, community members are provided opportunity to comment on criminal justice policy issues via monthly meetings of the Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission (CJPAC).