



DCJS

Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

Competitive Grants Subaward Selection Policy

Policy Type: Grants

Responsible Office: Grants Management Section, Division of Programs and Services, Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety

Effective Date: February 1, 2021

POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to delineate each step in the solicitation development and subaward selection process for competitive grants.

WHO SHOULD KNOW THIS POLICY

This policy applies to all grant program coordinators responsible for competitive federal and state grants, their managers and division directors, and Grants Management staff.

DEFINITIONS

Criminal Justice Services Board (CJSB) – The policy board of the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). This board is responsible, among other duties, for approving most of the grants that DCJS awards.

Grants Committee of the CJSB – A subcommittee of the CJSB, responsible for reviewing most of grant application assessments and making grant award recommendations to the CJSB.

Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice and Prevention (ACJJP) – A committee established by the Code of Virginia responsible, among other duties, for reviewing and making recommendations to the CJSB on grants funded by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act.

Grant Program Coordinator – The staff member responsible for shepherding the grant solicitation and application review process. This individual could be a grant monitor, program coordinator, or other position at the agency designated to serve as the grant program coordinator for the purposes of this grant solicitation and application process.

Grant Solicitation – The document issued to the public inviting applicants to apply for a DCJS grant. The solicitation includes information on how to apply, background of the grant, eligible applicants, funds available, a description of allowable costs, and other relevant information needed for applicants. (Also referred to as *Grant Guidelines*)

Application Assessment – A summary of grant application review and scoring, the proposed funding level, proposed special conditions, developed by DCJS staff and external reviewers. The application assessments are provided to the Grants Committee of the CJSB, or the ACJJP if applicable, for their consideration in making recommendations to the CJSB.

POLICY

It is the responsibility of the respective programmatic division staff and the grants management section, collectively, to be good stewards of the federal and state funds entrusted to DCJS. The subaward selection procedures ensure fairness for applicants, clarity of roles and responsibilities, and consistency of practice among the various sections of the agency in the grant subaward selection process. Each application is assessed by DCJS staff and external reviewers. The final grant decisions are made by the CJSB.

PROCEDURES

Grants Solicitation

The grants manager, and respective section manager and division directors, collectively, determine the grant schedule, including dates when grant applications are due, when the applications are assessed, when agency leadership is briefed, and when the grants committee receives the staff assessments of applications.

The grant program coordinator works with the grants management and finance sections to determine how much money is available to award, tracks the federal awards cycle, and monitors funding levels for each federal award.

The grant program coordinator identifies current needs and priorities, based on input from the field and stakeholders, to inform funding priorities or the specific focus for the grant solicitation.

The grant program coordinator drafts the grant solicitation using the approved agency model. Once drafted, the solicitation is reviewed and approved by the respective section manager and division director, and reviewed by the grants manager, prior to being sent to the agency director or designee for final approval.

Once approved, the grant program coordinator sends the final version to the grants management section and arranges for posting on the website. The links to the conditions related to the specific funding year for the awards, other requirements, and forms must be posted to the web page concurrently with the solicitation, or as soon as this information is available.

In addition to being posted on the website, the grant program coordinator disseminates the solicitation to known constituent groups (existing grant recipients, past training registrants, etc.) as well as those who subscribed to receive grant notices.

Potential applicants should be given at least 45 days to develop their applications, unless exceptional circumstances exist. If less than 45 days is necessary, the timeframe must be approved by the respective division director.

The grant program coordinator schedules and conducts a grant application webinar to instruct potential applicants on the application process and to answer questions that they may have. If desired and conditions allow, in-person training may be offered.

Grant Conditions

Concurrently with the development of the solicitation, a member of the grants management section, in consultation with the grant program coordinator, reviews the award conditions based on the federal funding year (only applicable for federal grant solicitations) and updates the conditions. Prior to posting on the website, the revised conditions will be reviewed by the respective manager and division director.

Application Assessments

Once grant applications are received, an assigned fiscal technician ensures that the grants management system is properly set up, including the grant number, grant monitor, and funds requested.

Program staff review each applicant for eligibility and notify their respective section manager, division director, and the grants manager if they identify eligibility concerns. Collectively, the section manager, division director, and grants manager determine if the application is eligible for consideration. If ineligible, the grants management section notifies the applicant that their application is not being considered due to ineligibility.

Each application is assessed and scored by at least one internal staff and at least one outside reviewer with subject matter expertise. The panel of reviewers may meet to discuss the assessments, or aggregate their respective scores. The review teams may also propose special conditions, funding amounts, and decreases in funding for unallowable or unjustified costs.

The grant program coordinator ensures that project descriptions, proposed funding levels, and special conditions are entered into the grants management database.

After the applications are reviewed and assessed, the grant program coordinator (and section manager or division director if applicable) meets with the grants management staff to review proposed funding levels and the budget for the full grant program. Grants management staff note any special conditions regarding budgets in the grants management database.

The grant assessments (including scores, special conditions, and proposed funding levels) must be approved by the respective section manager and division director, before review and approval by the agency director or designee.

Grants management section sends the grant application assessments to the Grants Committee of the CJSB (or the ACJJP¹ for JJDP Act funded grants) at least 10 days prior to the committee meetings.

The Grants Committee of the CJSB reviews the assessments and makes funding recommendations to the CJSB, which makes final award decisions.

Award decisions are posted on the DCJS website.

¹ The JJDP Act requires that the ACJJP have an opportunity to review and comment on grant applications submitted. This takes the place of the Grants Committee for JJDP Act funded grants. Grant recommendations go from the ACJJP through the Grants Committee to the CJSB.

Grants management section electronically sends award packages (including Statement of Grant Awards and Special Conditions) or denial letters to the applicants' Project Administrator, copying the applicants' Project Director and Finance Manager, and copying the DCJS grant monitor.

The award decisions made by the CJSB are final. Appeal requests are not accepted.



Shannon Dion
Director

January 28, 2021

Date