

BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE FACT SHEET

PAUL COVERDELL FORENSIC SCIENCE IMPROVEMENT GRANTS PROGRAM

The Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants Program (the Coverdell program) awards grants to states and units of local government to help improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science and medical examiner/coroner services. Among other things, funds may be used to eliminate a backlog in the analysis of forensic evidence and to train and employ forensic laboratory personnel, as needed, to eliminate such a backlog.

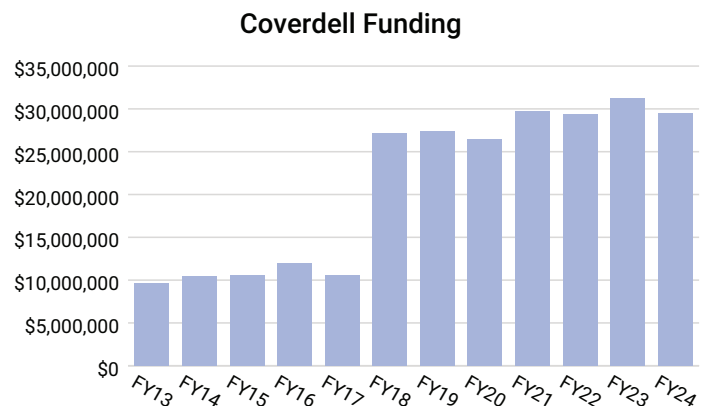
State Administering Agencies (SAAs) may apply for both “base” (formula) and competitive funds. Units of local government may apply for competitive funds.

Program Goals

Coverdell grants must be used for one or more of these six purposes:

1. To improve the quality and timeliness of forensic science or medical examiner/coroner services in the state.
2. To eliminate a backlog in the analysis of forensic science evidence.
3. To train, assist, and employ forensic laboratory personnel.
4. To address emerging forensic science issues (such as statistics, contextual bias, and uncertainty of measurement) and emerging forensic science technology.
5. To educate and train forensic pathologists.
6. To facilitate accreditation and certification to medicolegal death investigators.

Program Funding and Awards



Program Accomplishments

Funded awards from FY 2002 to FY 2024:

- More than 1,780 Coverdell awards funded since FY02.
- More than 1,110 formula awards to states.
- More than 120 states and 540 units of local government received competitive awards.

Additional Information

- BJA Program Web Page: <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/coverdell/overview>
- Subscribe: <https://bja.ojp.gov/subscribe>



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Case Analysis FY2011 - FY2021	No. of awards that improved timeliness in case analysis	More than 400
	No. of awards that decreased their backlogged cases	More than 350
	No. of backlogged cases analyzed with Coverdell funds	More than 1.8 million
Training FY2011 - FY2021	Forensic personnel attended training	More than 19,000
	Medical examiners/coroners attended training	More than 2,000
	Pathologists attended training (FY21 funds only)	More than 40
Certification FY21	Forensic personnel completed certification with Coverdell funds	More than 40
Accreditation FY2017 - FY2021	Agencies/organizations obtaining initial accreditation with Coverdell funding	More than 20
Seized Drug analysis FY21	Percentage of cases tested identifying the presence of controlled substances	More than 85%

ABOUT BJA

BJA helps America's state, local, and tribal jurisdictions reduce and prevent crime, lower recidivism, and promote a fair and safe criminal justice system. BJA provides a wide range of resources—including grants, funding, and training and technical assistance—to law enforcement, courts and corrections agencies, treatment providers, reentry practitioners, justice information sharing professionals, and community-based partners to address chronic and emerging criminal justice challenges nationwide. To learn more about BJA, visit bja.ojp.gov or follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/DOJBJA) and X (@DOJBJA). BJA is a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs.

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