



Department of Justice



Office of Justice Programs

**REMARKS OF
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OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS**

**FISCAL YEAR 2022 PRESIDENT'S BUDGET ROLLOUT
STAKEHOLDERS BRIEFING**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 3, 2021
WASHINGTON, DC**

Good afternoon, and welcome to OJP. I'm Amy Solomon, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs. I want to thank you all for joining us today. We're here to discuss the Fiscal Year 2022 President's Budget for the grant-making components of the Department of Justice.

I want to recognize and thank our speakers:

- Jolene Lauria, the DOJ Controller and Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Administration;
- Nadine Neufville, Acting Director of the Office on Violence Against Women; and
- Rob Chapman, Acting Director of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

We also have, in our virtual audience, the heads of OJP's program offices:

- Kristen Mahoney, Acting Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance;
- Doris James, Acting Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics;
- Jennifer Scherer, Acting Director of the National Institute of Justice;
- Janet Chiancone, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention;
- Katherine Darke-Schmitt, Acting Director of the Office for Victims of Crime; and
- Dawn Doran, Acting Director of the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking, or the SMART Office.

I also want to thank the budget staff from the Justice Management Division, COPS, OVW and, of course, OJP. They've been working closely with each other and with the Office of Management and Budget over many hours preparing a budget that reflects the priorities of the Administration. Of course, they had help from staff across the Department's grant program and business offices. I'm grateful for all the hard work they put into this effort.

I want to begin our discussion by saying that we have a President and an Attorney General who appreciate the critical role our state, local and tribal partners play in reducing crime, protecting communities and ensuring equal justice for all Americans.

This budget request reflects that understanding, and it proposes a number of significant investments that will advance public safety while promoting strategic reforms to our justice system. I'll just add that we know that many communities are facing a troubling increase in violent crime, and this budget addresses that challenge while ensuring the fairness and integrity of the justice system.

Today, we'll discuss some of the highlights of the budget. We'll begin with Jolene, who'll provide an overview of the overall Department's budget request. Jolene will then hand it over to Nadine to discuss the OVW budget request, then Rob will speak on the COPS budget. I'll close with an overview of OJP's request, and then we'll open the program to questions.

And one word about questions: We're eager to hear from you and ask that you submit your questions at any time using the "Q&A" box. Please send the questions to All Panelists so the moderators can see them. We'll do our best to answer as many as we can today, but if we can't get to every one, we will get back to you after the briefing.

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Thank you all. Turning to OJP, I'm pleased that the President's budget clearly reflects this Administration's priorities – in particular, advancing civil rights, promoting justice reform, providing second chances and investing in community-based solutions. These are objectives that I've worked for throughout my career, so I'm really excited about the chance to work with Rob and Nadine and our teams to put these principles into action.

The Administration requests \$5.8 billion to support OJP's budget priorities, which fall into seven major categories:

- Promoting criminal and juvenile system reform and enhancing civil rights;
- Preventing and reducing gun violence;
- Combating sexual assault;
- Supporting effective reentry;
- Addressing substance use disorders through diversion and treatment;
- Supporting victims of crime; and
- Advancing criminal justice research.

These priorities are linked to the ideals of equal justice and equality of opportunity, which are principles that animate OJP's work. President Biden has made it clear that advancing equity and racial justice is the responsibility of the whole of our government, and OJP expects to play a central role in achieving this important goal. I'll add that, as we develop new programs, we'll be looking for opportunities to support communities that have been historically underserved and marginalized.

Of the total OJP budget, \$2.97 billion supports discretionary program funding. That's over \$2 billion for state and local law enforcement assistance, nearly \$800 million for juvenile justice, \$86 million for research, evaluation, and statistics – which increases to \$143 million once the 2% set-aside is taken into account – and the remainder for Public Safety Officers' Benefits programs for disability and educational assistance.

Approximately \$2.85 billion supports OJP's mandatory programs, which are funded automatically on an annual basis unless Congress intervenes. Ninety-three percent of that, or

\$2.65 billion, is requested for the Crime Victims Fund, and that includes funds for OVW programs. The rest of the mandatory funding is for the death benefit portion of the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program, as well as the Domestic Trafficking Victims Fund.

Now I'd like to highlight some of our priority programs.

I see this budget as a first step in incentivizing reforms across the full spectrum of the criminal justice system, specifically to reduce incarceration rates, promote equitable justice and support youth at the front end of the system. Some of the highlights:

- \$100 million for Community-Based Alternatives to Youth Incarceration. This is a new program that will offer incentives to states, localities and tribes that introduce reforms designed to reduce youth incarceration, like mentorship, counseling and jobs. This program will also help grantees address non-construction costs (such as staffing and/or equipment) associated with repurposing empty juvenile detention facilities for the benefit of youth. Another \$3 million is also requested to promote alternatives to incarceration aimed at improving youth and family outcomes.
- \$35 million is requested for the Justice Reinvestment Initiative. As many of you know, the purpose of JRI is to help state and local justice stakeholders develop, implement and test innovative and research-based responses to criminal justice system problems. This has been very successful. A number of jurisdictions have been able to reduce corrections populations and recidivism while freeing up resources for proven public safety strategies.
- A combined \$80 million is included for programs that will help ensure fair access to justice and legal representation.
- \$60 million is for other programs that will improve community trust in the criminal justice system, including the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation program, which supports localized, community-oriented strategies. Body-worn camera programs are also included here.
- There's also \$9 million for a hate crimes prevention training program and \$3 million to support investigation and prosecution of cold case murders associated with civil rights violations.

Of course, an equitable system of justice depends on an effective system of justice. The budget requests over \$513 million for Justice Assistance Grants, which is the primary source of flexible funding for state, local and tribal jurisdictions across all components of the criminal justice system. The Byrne JAG request includes funding to:

- Support training, both to improve law enforcement responses and to prevent actions that contribute to racial and economic disparities in the justice system.
- It also encourages law enforcement and prosecutors to build evidence-based, data-driven tactics and strategies that are effective, efficient and economical.
- And it includes funding to educate and train the next generation of juvenile and criminal justice leaders, with the goal of broadening their understanding of criminal justice systems and restorative approaches.

The budget also requests \$10 million to support agencies responding to public safety emergencies that threaten to overwhelm their own resources.

The Administration is committed to reforms that give children and youth involved with the justice system a chance to live up to their potential. The budget requests \$796 million for juvenile justice programs, which more than doubles existing funding. The budget proposes investments in programs that will provide effective alternatives to incarceration for youth and support evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies for juvenile justice system-involved youth.

It also proposes to improve the response to missing and exploited children. You see a run-down of those investments:

- \$250 million for Part B: Formula grants, which is a key source funding for states seeking to implement comprehensive juvenile justice plans. Within the program purpose areas, states can provide job training, mental health and substance use disorder treatment, community-based programs and services, reentry/aftercare services, and school programs to prevent truancy among other programs.
- \$120 million for youth mentoring programs to reduce juvenile delinquency and gang involvement.
- \$100 million for delinquency prevention programs that help keep youth out of the justice system and on a path toward success. This includes \$15 million for a Girls in the Juvenile Justice System program that supports comprehensive, community-based prevention and early intervention for girls involved, or at risk of becoming involved, in the juvenile justice system.
- And \$120 million for Missing and Exploited Children programs.

You also see here the \$100 million effort for the Community-Based Alternatives to Youth Incarceration program that I highlighted earlier. In sum, this budget greatly expands our commitment to youth, keeping them out of the justice system and supported in their communities whenever possible.

The budget request also takes on the epidemic of gun violence in our country. Almost 40,000 people die as a result of firearm injuries in the United States every year, and homicide is the third leading cause of death for people ages 10-24. This budget will support one of the Administration's top domestic priorities – preventing and reducing gun violence.

One hundred million dollars is requested for a new community violence intervention initiative that will support local efforts to interrupt and prevent violence through non-law enforcement street outreach strategies. The funds will support community-based organizations that are working on the front lines to keep their neighborhoods safe. In addition, \$100 million is requested for the CDC for a complementary Community Violence Intervention initiative.

In fact, the Administration's proposed investments in community violence intervention – through the American Jobs Plan – will extend beyond the Department of Justice and CDC, to include historic investments and changes to federal funding streams across 26 programs in the Departments of Justice, Health and Human Services, Education, Housing and Urban Development, and Labor.

There's also \$40 million for a program to incentivize and promote the adoption of gun licensing laws that could restrict access to firearms by individuals who are suicidal or dealing with mental illness. And the budget requests \$89 million to improve the quality, timeliness and accessibility of criminal history records and related information. Improvements in background

check systems can reduce delays for law-abiding gun purchasers and keep guns out of the wrong hands.

And then there's Project Safe Neighborhoods, or PSN. As many of you know, the Attorney General recently announced the Department's violent crime strategy. This strategy enhances PSN by directing all U.S. Attorneys to update their PSN programs to be aligned with the Department's guiding principles to improve community engagement, support proven community-violence intervention programs, develop strategic enforcement plans in coordination with state, local and Tribal law enforcement partners as well as community groups, and measure the effectiveness of these collective efforts to reduce violence.

OJP and our grant-making partners are uniquely positioned to support this violent crime strategy through many of our grant-funding vehicles, technical assistance and ability to convene stakeholders and participate in difficult conversations regarding the causes of and solutions to violent crime and its disparate impact on our communities.

Moving to the next slide, sexual assault survivors need to feel confident that when they report an assault, they will be taken seriously and the crime will be investigated thoroughly. OJP supports a multidisciplinary approach built around supporting survivors, improving the law enforcement response and improving training for law enforcement and other justice system personnel.

One hundred million dollars is proposed for the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative. SAKI allows grantees to inventory their unsubmitted sexual assault kits, then test those kits and pursue leads. There's also a victim support component. And \$20 million is requested for a new program for training to improve the investigation of and response to sexual assault cases.

A clear message of this budget is that we must rethink – and reduce – the scale of incarceration as a justice system response. Front-end supports that keep people out of the justice system in the first place are essential to this goal. It is also vital that we improve how people are treated while they're incarcerated, and give them better access to health care, education, jobs and housing during incarceration and upon release.

Along those lines, this budget proposes increased support, totaling \$418 million for diversion, substance use disorder treatment and connections to mental health services. This includes \$190 million for OJP's Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant and Substance Abuse Program, or COSSAP. COSSAP's goal is to reduce overdose-related deaths and provide substance use disorder treatment, reentry services and alternatives to incarceration for people addicted to opioids and stimulants.

The budget also includes increased support, totaling \$125 million, for Second Chance Act programs. The goal here, of course, is to help people returning from prison and jail reintegrate and be equipped to fully participate in their communities after release. The budget also continues to support grants that foster positive family engagement between incarcerated parents and their children.

The Crime Victims Fund remains an essential funding source, and the budget requests \$2.65 billion. Our budget would continue the up to five-percent set aside from the Crime Victims Fund for tribal victim assistance. We're also looking to expand access to services for all victims. The budget supports outreach to underserved communities through discretionary

programs, like the recent OVC solicitation to create a National Center for Culturally Responsive Victim Services.

We're also providing technical assistance resources to state formula grantees to help them identify and serve underserved populations. The budget also requests \$50 million for a new victim advocate program that will provide grants to localities to train and hire victim advocates and support their professional development.

Finally, I firmly believe that sound strategies rest on strong science. This budget reflects a commitment on the part of this Administration to improve our knowledge and understanding of crime and justice issues through research and scientific innovation. The budget includes \$143 million for research, evaluation and statistics, which will greatly inform our policy and program work here at OJP and around the country. I'll also point out that within that amount, the budget includes \$10 million to support research related to prevention and intervention strategies related to domestic terrorism.

These are the highlights. I'd like to end my remarks by saying how very humbled and excited I am to be back at OJP and to be able to engage, once again, with so many leaders here in the Department and with stakeholders from all over the country. Stakeholder engagement will be a priority at OJP while I'm serving in this role. You are in the field, you understand the needs in this moment and you are driving innovations for safer and more just communities. I look forward to working with all of you.

We're also eager to hear your feedback about this budget. I think we'll open it up to questions now. We will lean on our colleagues across the offices to get you clear answers, and we'll be sure to address questions we can't get to today after the session.

- Thank you.

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