

TO: External OJP Active Grant Recipients:

From: Office of Justice Programs

Subject: Important Notification: Potential Lapse in Federal Government Funding

Dear OJP Award Recipient –

Fiscal Year 2015 appropriations to fund Federal government operations expire at midnight EST on Wednesday, September 30, 2015. As you may know, there is the potential that a lapse in appropriations beginning October 1, 2015 may occur. If this lapse in funding occurs, however, a determination has been made that the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) has sufficient resources to remain operational through 5:00 p.m. (EDT) Friday, October 2, 2015. This means that OJP staff will be available to assist grantees, stakeholders, and the public during this period. Likewise, OJP systems* and services will be available.

*Please note that under the normal payment system schedule associated with end of the fiscal year activities, there are no grant payments between September 25th and October 1st. Payments requested through the Grant Payment Request System (GPRS) from September 25th through October 1st will be paid October 2nd.

We are providing the following information, in question and answer format, regarding the availability of OJP systems and services **should the lapse continue past October 2, 2015**. Please note that should the lapse continue past October 2, 2015, OJP will not have sufficient resources to remain operational and will therefore convert to a furlough and shut down status, ceasing all operations.

Continuation of Grantee Activities under Existing Grants after October 2, 2015

1) Will I be able to continue activities and projects already funded under my existing OJP grants or cooperative agreements during a period of a funding lapse?

Response: Yes. Grantee activities and projects already funded under existing grants will generally be able to continue to the extent the grantee has funding available (see note above regarding the status of OJP's payment system and the question below regarding payment requests post October 2nd). The exception to this guidance would be if Federal employee involvement is **critical** to the project being carried out or proceeding to the next step. For example, under a cooperative agreement, there may be actions that a Federal employee has to take for a project to continue; that is, the project has arrived at a decision point that requires Federal government approval or other determination in order for the project to proceed to the next step. This is a determination that shall be made by OJP when necessary and OJP would notify the grantee of this determination.

2) Will grantee-sponsored events (such as conferences, meetings, and trainings) scheduled during the period of a funding lapse be affected?

Response: No. Grantee-sponsored events (e.g., conferences, meetings, trainings)

scheduled during a potential funding lapse generally will not be affected and can proceed as planned, if already approved by OJP as applicable. The exception to this guidance would be if Federal employee participation in these meetings or training is **critical** in order for these events to proceed. This could include Federal employee involvement to carry out the event or provide oversight/guidance. This is a determination that shall be made by OJP when necessary and OJP will notify the grantee of this determination. Please note: Time limits for new conference approval submissions from cooperative agreement recipients will not change or be extended because of a lapse in funding. OJP will still need allowable timeframes for approval, once the government is reopened.

Grantee Requests for Payments after October 2, 2015

- 1) Will I be able to request payments and draw down funds during a period of a funding lapse?**

Response: No. The following payment request systems will not be available to users during a period of a funding lapse –

Grant Payment Request System (GPRS)

State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP) Payment System

Border Prosecution Initiative Payment System (BPS)

Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP) Payment System

Grants Management System (GMS) and Grant Administration Activities after October 2, 2015

- 1) Will GMS and the GMS Help Desk be available during a period of a funding lapse?**

Response: No. GMS will not be available to users. Users will not have access to apply for funds, submit progress and Federal Financial Reports (FFRs), request grant adjustment notices, submit closeout actions, or respond to on-site monitoring issues for resolution. Likewise, the GMS Help Desk will not be available to users.

- 2) Will the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's (OCFO) Customer Service Desk or my OJP grant manager be available to answer questions or provide assistance during a period of a funding lapse?**

Response: No. The OCFO Customer Service Desk and OJP grant managers will not be available during the period of a funding lapse.

- 3) Will I be able to submit Federal Financial Reports (FFRs), progress reports, or performance measurement reports?**

Response: No. GMS will not be available to accept progress reports and Federal Financial Reports (FFRs) during a period of a Federal government funding lapse. *Please note: To provide adequate time to grantees to prepare and submit their Federal Financial Reports (FFR) due on October 30, 2015 for the period July 1–September 30,*

the deadline will be extended by the number of days GMS is not available due to the funding lapse.

Systems and tools that support the submission of OJP performance measurement data will not be available (such as, the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Performance Measurement Tool (PMT) and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Data Reporting Tool (also referred to as DCTAT or the Data Collection and Technical Assistance Tool)).

OJP On-site Monitoring Visits and Enhanced Desk Reviews Scheduled during a Lapse

- 1) Will an OJP programmatic or financial on-site monitoring visit or enhanced programmatic desk review scheduled during the period of a funding lapse still occur?**

Response: No. All on-site monitoring visits and enhanced programmatic desk reviews scheduled during the period of a funding lapse will be postponed or cancelled. Please expect your OJP grant manager or an OCFO financial monitor to contact you to reschedule the monitoring.

Applying for OJP Open Solicitations after October 2, 2015

- 1) Will I be able to submit funding applications for open solicitations through the Grants Management System (GMS) during a period of a funding lapse?**

Response: No. GMS will not be available to accept funding applications. To provide adequate time for an applicant to prepare and submit an application, OJP will extend deadlines for open solicitations that are impacted by a Federal government funding lapse.

OJP-Sponsored Websites after October 2, 2015

- 2) If we operate a ".gov" website, are there any special notices that we are required to post on the site and can we continue to update the site?**

Response: Yes. Grantees operating a ".gov" website are required, by 5:00 p.m. (EDT) on Friday, October 2nd, to post the following banner on the front page of the website and to cease updating the site (including e-blasts, RSS feeds, etc.) until funding is restored:

"Due to the lapse in federal funding, this website will not be regularly updated. Transactions submitted via these websites may not be processed, and we are not able to respond to inquiries until federal funding has been restored. We thank you for your patience and understanding during this period."

- 3) If we operate a non-.gov website (e.g., .org) with full or partial grant funding from OJP, are any special actions required?**

Response: No. However, OJP requests that you not push new content or notifications on behalf of OJP until federal funding has been restored.

Questions about this Guidance

- 1) **If I have a question relating to this guidance or the impact of a funding lapse on my grants, who can I contact to assist me?**

Response: OJP employees will be available to assist you while OJP is in operation through October 2, 2015. Please contact your OJP grant manager using contact information provided in your award document. If your grant manager is not available, please contact the grants management help desk at GMSTier2@usdoj.gov. **Please note that after October 2, 2015 while in a lapse of appropriation, OJP staff will not be available to respond to questions.**

We realize the inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your cooperation.

Ralph E. Martin
Director
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Office of Justice Programs
U.S. Department of Justice