

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Bureau of Justice Statistics



FY 2021 NICS Act Record Improvement Program (NARIP)

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JustGrants Deadline:	April 29, 2021 11:59 PM

Overview

The [U.S. Department of Justice](#) (DOJ), [Office of Justice Programs](#) (OJP), [Bureau of Justice Statistics](#) (BJS) is seeking applications for funding for the 2021 National Instant Criminal Background Check (NICS) Act Record Improvement Program (NARIP). This program furthers the Department's mission by enhancing the completeness, automation, and transmittal of records to state and federal systems used by the NICS. Eligible states and tribes may receive grant funding to improve the completeness, automation, and transmittal of records to state and federal systems. For the purpose of this solicitation, the term "state" includes the District of Columbia and U.S. territories.

This solicitation incorporates the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) by reference. The OJP Grant Application Resource Guide provides guidance to applicants on how to prepare and submit applications for funding to OJP. **If this solicitation expressly modifies any provision in the OJP Grant Application Resource Guide, the applicant is to follow the guidelines in this solicitation as to that provision.**

Solicitation Categories

This solicitation does not include Solicitation Categories.

Eligible Applicants:

Other

Other

The following entities are eligible to apply:

- The agency designated by the Governor in each state to administer the National Criminal History Improvement Program (34 U.S.C. § 40301)
- The state or territory central administrative office or similar entity designated by statute or regulation to administer federal grant funds on behalf of the jurisdiction's court system
- Federally recognized tribal governments.

To advance Executive Order 13929 Safe Policing for Safe Communities, the Attorney General determined that all state, local, and university or college law enforcement agencies must be certified by an approved independent credentialing body or have started the certification process to be eligible for FY 2021 DOJ discretionary grant funding. To become certified, the law enforcement agency must meet two mandatory conditions: (1) the agency's use of force policies adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws; and (2) the agency's use of force policies prohibit chokeholds except in situations where use of deadly force is allowed by law. The certification requirement also applies to law enforcement agencies receiving DOJ discretionary grant funding through a subaward. For detailed information on this new certification requirement, please visit <https://cops.usdoj.gov/SafePolicingEO> to access the Standards for Certification on Safe Policing for Safe Communities, Implementation Fact Sheet, and List of Designated Independent Credentialing Bodies.

For additional information on eligibility, see Eligibility Information.

All recipients and subrecipients (including any for-profit organization) must forgo any profit or management fee.

Contact Information

For technical assistance with submitting the **SF-424 and SF- LLL** in Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov Customer Support Hotline at 800-518-4726, 606-545-5035, at [Grants.gov customer support webpage](#), or email at support@grants.gov. The Grants.gov Support Hotline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.

For technical assistance with submitting the **full application** in DOJ's Justice Grants System (JustGrants), contact the JustGrants Service Desk at JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov or at 833-872-5175. The JustGrants Service Desk operates 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. EST Monday - Friday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, and Federal holidays.

An applicant that experiences unforeseen Grants.gov or JustGrants technical issues beyond its control that prevent it from submitting its application by the deadline must email the BJS contact identified below **within 24 hours after the application deadline** to request approval to submit its application after the deadline.

For assistance with any other requirements of this solicitation, contact Devon Adams, Chief, Criminal Justice Data Improvement Program, by telephone at 202-307-0765, or by email at [As kBJS@usdoj.gov](mailto:kBJS@usdoj.gov). Include "NARIP21" in the subject line.

Submission Information

In FY 2021, applications will be submitted to DOJ in a **NEW** two-step process.

Step 1: Applicants will submit an **SF-424 and an SF-LLL** in Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>. To register in Grants.gov, applicants will need to obtain a Data Universal Numeric System (DUNS) and System of Award Management (SAM) registration or renewal.

Step 2: Applicants will submit the **full application** including attachments in JustGrants at JustGrants.usdoj.gov.

To be considered timely, the full application must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline.

OJP encourages applicants to review, the "How to Apply" section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

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Program Description

Overview

Pursuant to 34 U.S.C. § 40912, the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007 (NIAA) addresses the gap in information available to NICS about prohibiting mental health adjudications and commitments and other prohibiting factors. Filling these information gaps will better enable the system to operate as intended to keep guns out of the hands of persons prohibited by federal or state law from receiving or possessing firearms. The automation of records also reduces delays for law-abiding persons to purchase firearms.

The NIAA authorized a grant program to assist states in providing certain information to the NICS and prescribes grant penalties for noncompliance with the NIAA's record completeness goals. Additionally, pursuant to the Act, there are certain conditions, described under Eligibility Information that a state must satisfy in advance of receiving grants under the Act.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is publishing this notice to announce the continuation of the NICS Act Record Improvement Program (NARIP) in fiscal year (FY) 2021, identify the program priorities, and provide information on application requirements. This year, BJS is prioritizing the use of funds for two purposes: (1) to enhance the completeness, automation, and transmittal of records to state and federal systems used by the NICS, and (2) to improve the overall reporting of persons prohibited from possessing firearms for reasons related to domestic violence and mental health to the NICS.

Statutory Authority

34 U.S.C. § 40913, the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007

Specific Information

Pursuant to 34 U.S.C. §10132(c)(19), BJS is authorized to "provide for improvements in the accuracy, quality, timeliness, immediate accessibility, and integration of State and tribal criminal history and related records, support the development and enhancement of national systems of criminal history and related records including the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, the National Incident-Based Reporting System, and the records of the National Crime Information Center, facilitate State and tribal participation in national records and information systems, and support statistical research for critical analysis of the improvement and utilization of criminal history records." The National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP) and the NARIP are two means by which BJS provides for such improvements.

The NARIP is authorized by the NIAA (34 U.S.C. § 40912), which provides that grants be made in a manner consistent with the NCHIP. Therefore, NARIP application procedures parallel the provisions of the Crime Identification Technology Act of 1998 (34 U.S.C. § 40301), which guide the NCHIP. Both the NCHIP and NARIP were reauthorized under division S, title VI of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-141).

The provisions for which this program is authorized requires states to meet specific goals for completeness of the records submitted to the Attorney General identifying individuals prohibited by federal law from possessing firearms.

Goals

This funding will assist states and tribes with finding ways to make more records available to NICS, including records in the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), criminal history record information available through the Interstate Identification Index (III), and records in the NICS Indices. Therefore, through the funded activities, BJS expects that more records (including improved quality, completeness, and timeliness) will become available in these systems.

Objectives

The NARIP was developed to improve the completeness, automation, and transmittal of records to state and federal systems used by the NICS. These include records of criminal history, felony convictions, warrants, protective orders, convictions for misdemeanors involving domestic violence and stalking, drug arrests and convictions, mental health adjudications, and other information that may disqualify an individual from possessing or receiving a firearm under federal law.

Awards under this solicitation will include a condition (the specific terms of which will govern the award) related to supplying records to the NICS. The condition will, generally speaking, require recipients that use the award for a project or program that results in court dispositions, information or other “eligible records” relevant to the NICS, or that has a purpose of establishing or improving any of the foregoing, to promptly make available (and, as appropriate, update, correct, modify, remove) to the NICS or the state repository accessed by the NICS all such dispositions, information, and other “eligible records.”

Deliverables

FY 2021 Priority Areas—Improve Identification and Reporting of Convictions of Domestic Violence and Mental Health Submissions to the NICS

Applicants should focus efforts on (1) identifying, flagging, and making immediately accessible to NICS records of persons prohibited from purchasing or possessing firearms for domestic violence convictions and (2) reporting records of persons prohibited from possessing firearms for mental health reasons. Therefore, recipients must agree to use a portion of awarded funds to make such records accessible to the NICS, unless the state certifies in the application that it—

1. already makes available to the NICS information on all persons prohibited from possessing firearms due to a domestic violence conviction or prohibiting mental health reason; or
2. will focus funds on another category of qualifying NICS records that the state reasonably argues represents a greater information gap.

State Grants

Section 103 of the NIAA (codified at 34 U.S.C. 40913(a)) provides that the grants “shall be used by the States and Indian tribal governments, in conjunction with units of local government and State and local courts, to establish or upgrade information and identification technologies for firearms eligibility determinations.” In accordance with the NIAA, a grant to a state, which includes territories, or Indian tribe may only be used to—

- Supply accurate and timely information to the Attorney General concerning the identity of persons who have a federally prohibiting mental health adjudication or commitment
- Create electronic systems that provide accurate and up-to-date information directly related to checks under the NICS, including court disposition and corrections records
- Assist states in establishing or enhancing their own capacities to perform NICS background checks
- Supply accurate and timely information to the Attorney General concerning final dispositions of criminal records to databases accessed by the NICS
- Supply accurate and timely court orders and records of misdemeanor crimes of domestic violence for inclusion in federal and state law enforcement databases used to conduct NICS background checks
- Collect and analyze data needed to demonstrate levels of state compliance with the NIAA
- Maintain the required relief from disabilities program in accordance with the NIAA (however, by statute, not less than 3% and no more than 10% of each grant shall be used for this purpose).

State Court Grants

Section 301 of the NIAA (codified at 34 U.S.C. 40941) provides that grants shall be made to each state or tribal government, consistent with plans for the integration, automation, and accessibility of criminal history records, for use by the court systems to improve automation and transmittal to federal and state repositories of: (1) criminal history dispositions; (2) records relevant to determining whether a person has been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence or whether a person is a subject of a prohibiting domestic violence protection order; and (3) prohibiting mental health adjudications and commitments.

Further, the law provides that the amounts granted shall be used by the court system only to implement—

Assessments, as necessary, of the capabilities of state courts to automate and transmit arrest and conviction records, court orders, and mental health adjudications or commitments to federal and state record repositories; and

Policies, systems, and procedures to automate and transmit arrest and conviction records, court orders, and mental health adjudications or commitments to federal and state record repositories.

The Goals, Objectives, and Deliverables are directly related to the performance measures that demonstrate the results of the work completed, as discussed under Application and Submission Information.

Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities

OJP may conduct or support an evaluation of the programs and activities funded under this solicitation. For additional information, see the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) section entitled “Information Regarding Potential Evaluation of Programs and Activities.”

Federal Award Information

Awards, Amounts and Durations

Total Federal Awards

26

Maximum Dollar Amount for Awards

Period of Performance Start Date

10/1/21 12:00 AM

Period of Performance Duration (Months)

24

Total Amount to be Awarded Under Solicitation

\$25,000,000.00

Continuation Funding Intent

BJS may, in certain cases, provide additional funding in future years to awards made under this solicitation, through continuation awards. OJP will consider, among other factors, OJP's strategic priorities, a recipient's overall management of the award, and progress of award-funded work, when making continuation-award decisions.

Availability of Funds

All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

Type of Award

BJS expects to make awards under this solicitation as cooperative agreements, which provide for OJP to have substantial involvement in carrying out award activities. See the "Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements" section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Financial Management and System of Internal Controls

Award recipients and subrecipients (including recipients or subrecipients that are pass-through entities) must, as described in the Part 200 Uniform Requirements as set out at 2 C.F.R. 200.303, comply with standards for financial and program management. The "Part 200 Uniform Requirements" means the DOJ regulation at 2 C.F.R. Part 2800, which adopts (with certain modifications) the provisions of 2 C.F.R. Part 200. See [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

This solicitation does not require a match.

Pre-agreement Costs (also known as Pre-award Costs)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) information on Pre-agreement Costs (also known as Pre-award Costs).

Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation: Waiver

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) information on Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation: Waiver.

Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on Prior Approval, Planning, and Reporting of Conference/Meeting/Training Costs.

Costs Associated with Language Assistance (if applicable)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on Costs Associated with Language Assistance.

Eligibility Information

The NARIP application must be submitted by (a) the agency designated by the governor in each state to administer the NCHIP/NARIP, (b) the state or territory central administrative office or similar entity designated by statute or regulation to administer federal grant funds on behalf of the jurisdiction's court system, or (c) federally recognized Indian tribal governments.

In accordance with the NIAA, each state must satisfy these conditions to receive grants:

1. First, "each State shall provide the Attorney General with a reasonable estimate, as calculated by a method determined by the Attorney General...of the number of the records" subject to the NIAA completeness requirements. The last round of estimates was collected in 2011. States may also meet this eligibility by submitting a NICS Implementation Plan as outlined in the reauthorization of the NIAA (Fix NICS Act of 2018, in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018, div. S, title VI; P.L. 115-141). Applicants under this solicitation should confirm with BJS whether this eligibility criterion has been met.
2. Second, "to be eligible for a grant under this [program], a State shall certify, to the satisfaction of the Attorney General, that the State has implemented a relief from disabilities program." For the purpose of this solicitation, a "relief from disabilities program" is a program that permits persons who have been adjudicated a mental defective or committed to a mental institution to obtain relief from the firearms disabilities imposed by law as a result of such adjudication or commitment. This relief must be based on a finding, in accordance with principles of due process, by a state court, board, commission, or other lawful authority, that the circumstances of the disability and the person's record and reputation are such that the person will not be likely to act in a manner dangerous to the public safety and that the granting of relief would not be contrary to the public interest. The certification form is available on the Bureau Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) website at <https://www.atf.gov/files/forms/download/atf-f-3210-12.pdf>.

Further, applications submitted on behalf of state court systems must specifically assure that (1) the court system has the capability to contribute and will transmit pertinent information to

the NICS established under section 103(b) of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act (34 U.S.C. § 40901), and (2) it will coordinate the programs proposed for NARIP funding with other federally funded information technology programs, including directly funded local programs.

Application and Submission Information

The following application elements **MUST** be included in the application submission for an application to meet the basic minimum requirements (BMR) to advance to peer review and receive consideration for funding:

- Project Abstract,
- Program Narrative,
- Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (web-based form)

See the “Application Elements and Formatting Instructions” section of the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on what happens to an application that does not contain all the specified elements or that is nonresponsive to the scope of the solicitation.

Information to Complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)

The SF-424 will be submitted in Grants.gov. The SF-424 is a required standard form used as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications, applications, and related information. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on completing the SF-424.

Intergovernmental Review: This solicitation (“funding opportunity”) **is not** subject to [Executive Order 12372](#). (In completing the SF-424, an applicant is to answer question 19 by selecting the response that the “Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.”)

Standard Applicant Information (JustGrants 424 and General Agency Information)

The Standard Applicant Information section of the JustGrants application is pre-populated with the SF-424 data submitted in Grants.gov. Applicants will need to review the Standard Applicant Information in JustGrants and make edits as needed. Within this section, applicants will need to: add zip codes for areas affected by the project; confirm their Authorized Representative; and verify the organization's legal name and address.

Proposal Abstract

A project abstract (no more than 400 words) summarizing the proposed project including primary activities, products and deliverables, the service area, and who will benefit from the proposed project, will be completed in the JustGrants Web-based form.

Proposal Narrative

The program narrative should be submitted as an attachment in JustGrants. The attached document should be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point Times New

Roman font; have no less than 1-inch margins; and **should not exceed 30 pages**. Pages should be numbered and submitted as an attachment. If the program narrative fails to comply with these length restrictions, BJS may negatively consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

a. Description of the Issue—Background and Identification of Needs

Accomplishments and progress on record improvement goals. Applicants must provide a summary of the major accomplishments achieved with funding under the NARIP. This section should describe, in quantifiable terms if possible, results achieved and advances made in the last decade of NARIP funding (2010-2020). **Specifically address accomplishments relating to participation in each of the national databases and initiatives (i.e., III, NICS, NCIC Protection Order File (POF), domestic violence records, mental health records, and Livescan/Automated Fingerprint Identification System capability).** Where relevant, reference should be made to surveys and data quality audits. This section should also include any evaluative efforts undertaken to identify the key areas of weakness in the state's criminal record system since submission of previous NARIP applications. Tribal applicants should discuss progress related to record automation and improvement funded by other federal sources applicable to the above areas.

Current status in specific subject areas. Describe the status of the applicant's participation in each of the following subject areas in your application, and include the current number of records in each system, where applicable:

1. **Dispositions available to the III (including felonies and domestic violence misdemeanor convictions).** All applicants should discuss the percentage of state records with final dispositions or case outcomes linked to arrests and available at the time of a firearm background check. Applicants should provide information on efforts to improve reporting and availability at the national level. The application should also discuss the extent to which dispositions requested in connection with a NICS inquiry have not been provided within the required timeframe and must identify any problems that are delaying instant responses to NICS inquiries and identify proposed solutions to these problems.
 - ***Provide the number and percentage of arrests (felonies and misdemeanors) available in the state criminal history repository that are missing final dispositions.***
 - ***Report the percentage of arrests (felonies and misdemeanors) missing final dispositions accessible to the III.***
2. **NICS Indices and mental health record availability.** All applications should discuss the extent to which the applicant provides information to the NICS Indices administered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Applicants that do not submit information to this file should describe the prohibiting factors and any plans to overcome them. (Note: Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is not considered to

be a prohibiting factor.) Additionally, all applicants should indicate whether mental health records are checked, either by the state point of contact (POC) or the FBI, during a NICS check. Where mental health records are accessible, include the number of records currently available and any plans to improve availability. If mental health records are not currently accessible at the time of a background check, describe factors that limit or prohibit the exchange of mental health records. States that are not currently eligible for funding under NARIP should discuss plans, if any, to establish a relief from disabilities program and progress toward eligibility. If a state has no immediate plans to pursue development of a relief program, include a statement outlining the reasons for not pursuing one.

- ***Provide the current number of submissions, by prohibitor, in the NICS Indices.*** Counts for the following prohibitors should be addressed in the application: (1) felony conviction, (2) active felony indictment/information, (3) fugitive from justice, (4) controlled substance, (5) protection/restraining order, (6) MCDV, and (7) state prohibitor.
3. **Protection Order File.** All applicants should indicate whether they submit information for inclusion in the FBI's NCIC POF. Applicants that submit protection orders should indicate the number of active protection orders provided to the FBI. Applicants that do not submit all active protection orders to NCIC should describe the prohibiting factors and any plans to overcome them.
- ***Provide the current number of records in the NCIC POF and a description of any known gaps in reporting.***
4. **Warrants/wanted person records.** All applicants should indicate whether they submit records for inclusion in the FBI's NCIC Wanted Persons file. Applicants that submit such records should indicate the number provided to the FBI for the last full calendar year. Applicants that do not submit such records (or do not submit all qualifying records that are maintained at the state or local level) should describe the prohibiting factors and any plans to overcome them.
- ***Provide the current number of active warrants in the NCIC Wanted Persons File and a description of any known gaps in reporting.***

b. Project Design and Implementation—Description of Tasks to be Funded

Describe the activities to be conducted with NARIP funds during the project period and specifically address how activities relate to each of the NARIP priority areas identified under "FY 2021 Priority Areas—Improve Identification and Reporting of Convictions of Domestic Violence and Mental Health Submissions to the NICS."

- ***Include dollar amounts for each funded task.***
- ***Provide quantitative measures to assess or describe the impact each project will have on the quality, completeness, and availability of records***

at the national level.

- ***Specifically address the priority areas regarding the improvement of submitting domestic violence convictions and mental health submissions to the NICS.***
- ***Submit a detailed project period timeline covering all proposed activities.***

c. Capabilities and Competencies—Coordination

The administering NARIP agency should coordinate efforts with relevant emergency management task forces and agencies to ensure that records development activities are compatible with security measures for preventing acts of terrorism.

To encourage coordination and information sharing among criminal justice systems, all OJP awards that support information technology development are subject to a special condition requiring submission of a description of the project to the state Information Technology POC, if designated. Submit a copy of the correspondence as part of “Additional Attachments,” or send directly to BJS prior to fund drawdown.

The POC is not required to concur with the information technology project. This condition intends to facilitate communication within the state.

Recipients of funds under this solicitation should ensure that any funded activities will be coordinated with related activities supported with OJP funding, including awards under OJP’s Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Program, Drug Court Program, or Mentally Ill Offender Act Program. BJS is particularly interested in awards under these programs that may involve reportable records that can be shared with state and national record systems. To the extent feasible under state law and regulations, such records should be made available to the state criminal history record repository and federal files managed by the FBI, including the III, NCIC, and NICS Indices.

Tribal applicants should provide documentation that activities proposed for funding will be coordinated with tribal consortia, the state, or directly with the FBI.

Unexpended funds. The application should describe the specific reasons that previously awarded NARIP funds remain unexpended (if applicable) and include the current unexpended balance.

- *Include the current status of open NARIP awards such as the current unexpended balance, projected end date, and description of any challenges or delays encountered, if applicable.*

Compatibility with other systems. The application should describe the extent to

which proposed activities are compatible with NIBRS, NCIC, NICS, Next Generation Identification (NGI), and other applicable statewide or regional criminal justice information sharing standards or plans, including state anti-terrorism.

d. NICS Record Improvement Plan

FY 2021 NARIP grant applications must provide for the development and implementation of comprehensive strategic planning. Such planning must include activities designed to examine the current condition of the involved state, local, and tribal records; explore problems associated with incomplete reporting and/or records availability; and demonstrate a commitment to a long-range planning process to achieve NIAA goals.

Therefore, FY 2021 NARIP applications should include funding, as needed, for the development and/or modification of the NARIP through a four-step process:

Step 1. Establishment of a NICS Record Improvement Task Force. Complete reporting and transmission of state or tribal records to national files may only be achieved through the cooperative efforts of all record originating entities. Therefore, BJS recommends that the applicant propose to use some FY 2021 NARIP funding to establish and/or support a NICS Record Improvement Task Force to guide the development and implementation of an ongoing long-range records improvement plan. The task force may include representatives from the central record repository and source agencies, including state, local, and tribal law enforcement; prosecuting attorneys; the courts; local jails; state correctional facilities; probation and parole agencies; and state mental health program agencies.

The task force can review the results of the assessment and problem identification phases (steps 2 and 3) and develop recommendations to improve the quality, completeness, and availability of NICS records. It can review and assess the adequacy of current legislation and administrative procedures related to reporting, maintaining, sharing, and use of relevant records. The preliminary plan should include a list of proposed task force members and the agencies they represent. If components of the system listed above are not included in the task force, the plan should describe how they can participate and provide input. If a task force will not be established, the applicant should propose instituting other mechanisms for input from and participation of all affected components of the criminal justice system.

Step 2. Assessment of the quality, completeness, and availability of NICS records. For the purposes of long-term strategic planning, an applicant may wish to use the task force to examine (and address) issues surrounding the accuracy, completeness, and availability of such records as part of its assessment. The ongoing assessment must result in a comprehensive understanding of the following:

- Availability of the records from entities that originate, maintain, and/or receive such records.
- How relevant records are currently transmitted to the state's central

- repository and/or how they are otherwise made available to the NICS.
- Completeness of the records in the various categories described (what portion of the records is actually made available to the NICS).

Such an assessment may involve an examination of records in the state central record repository, surveys of local reporting/originating agencies, analysis of court statistics, data collection from sample(s) of local agency records, estimates derived from audits of local reporting agencies, or other analytical work that may or may not have been performed to support the development of record estimates.

Step 3. Identification of reasons for incomplete and/or unavailable NICS records. The task force may also identify challenges or obstacles encountered in efforts to ensure that all qualifying records are made available to the NICS. Understanding these challenges may help focus improvement strategies and may include factors such as the type and number of state, local, and tribal agencies that originally create such records; and typical life cycle of such original records, including when and where they are created, whether they are maintained in paper or electronic form, if and how they are transmitted to state and national files, and when and how they are ultimately disposed of, deleted, or otherwise made unavailable. The task force might identify factors that affect the availability of records for state and national files, including whether categories of records can be protected from disclosure under a provision of state, tribal, or federal law.

Step 4. Development of a NICS Record Improvement Plan. The final step develops strategies for addressing each of the challenges identified in step 3, including the use of federal grant funds appropriated under the NIAA. The plan should clearly identify goals, objectives, and a general timetable for achievements. Subsequent iterations of the plan should include a progress report on the strategies previously employed.

e. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures

The application should demonstrate the applicant's understanding of the performance data reporting requirements for this grant program and detail how the applicant will gather the required data should it receive funding.

Note: applicants are **not** required to submit performance data with the application. Rather, performance measures information is included as an alert that successful applicants will be required to submit performance data as part of the reporting requirements under an award.

OJP will require each successful applicant to submit regular performance data that demonstrate the results of the work carried out under the award. The performance data directly relate to the goals, objectives, and deliverables identified under "Goals, Objectives, Deliverables" on page 3.

Performance measures for this solicitation are listed in Appendix A: Performance Measures Table.

Award recipients will be required to provide relevant data addressing performance measures information as part of their semi-annual performance reports in JustGrants. All performance measures should be fully addressed in these semi-annual reports.

Note on Project Evaluations

An applicant that proposes to use award funds through this solicitation to conduct project evaluations must follow the guidance under “Note on Project Evaluations” in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Goals, Objectives, Deliverables, and Timeline

Applicants will submit NARIP's goals, objectives, deliverables, and timelines in the JustGrants Web-based form. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Budget and Associated Documentation

Budget Worksheet and Budget Narrative (attachment)

Applicants will attach a budget worksheet and budget narrative in JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

Applicants will submit their indirect cost rate agreement by uploading the agreement as an attachment in JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Financial Management Questionnaire (including applicant disclosure of high-risk status)

Applicants will download the questionnaire in JustGrants and submit by uploading the completed questionnaire as an attachment in JustGrants. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Additional Application Components

The following documents should be submitted either as a single file attachment or as separate attachments:

- a. A copy of the approved application for certification of the state's relief from disabilities program or indication that certification is being sought from the ATF. (The certification

- form must be approved by ATF to be eligible for funding.)
- b. A complete project timeline outlining each activity, completion time, and responsible party.

Tribal Authorizing Resolution

If applicable, applicants will submit the Tribal Authorizing Resolution by uploading the resolution as an attachment in JustGrants. An application in response to this solicitation may require inclusion of information related to a tribal authorizing resolution as an attachment. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on tribal authorizing resolutions.

Disclosures and Assurances

Applicants will complete the following disclosures and assurances.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Applicants will complete and submit the SF-LLL in Grants.gov. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items

Applicants will complete the JustGrants web-based Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items form. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information.

DOJ Certified Standard Assurances

See the DOJ Certified Standard Assurances in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

DOJ Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements

Applicants will review and accept the DOJ Certified Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements. See [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

How to Apply

Applicants will submit an **SF-424** and an **SF-LLL** in Grants.gov at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>.

Applicants will submit the **full application** including attachments in JustGrants at JustGrants.usdoj.gov.

For additional information, see the “How to Apply” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Submission Dates and Time

The **SF-424** and the **SF-LLL** will be submitted in Grants.gov by April 22, 2021. OJP urges applicants to submit applications at least 72 hours prior to the application due date to allow time for the applicant to receive validation messages or rejection notifications from Grants.gov and to correct in a timely fashion any problems that may have caused a rejection notification.

The **full application** will be submitted in JustGrants by April 29, 2021.

To be considered timely, the full application must be submitted in JustGrants by the JustGrants application deadline.

Application Review Information

Review Criteria

Applications that meet basic minimum requirements will be evaluated by peer reviewers. Applications will be evaluated on how the proposed project/program addresses the following criteria:

1. Statement of the Problem/Description of the Issue (30%)

The extent to which the application—

- describes each proposed task in accordance with the priority program goals and how the proposed activities directly relate to the improvement of the NICS
- proposes to directly address one or more of the priorities as identified in the solicitation. Specifically address the “FY 2021 Priority Areas – Improve Identification and Reporting of Domestic Violence Convictions and Mental Health Submissions to NICS” section
- addresses the scope of the need and identify quantifiable measures to demonstrate how the funds will improve the quality, completeness, and accessibility of records at the national level, particularly with regard to the NICS.

2. Project Design and Implementation (30%)

The extent to which the application—

- addresses how proposed activities will increase the availability of records to systems queried by the NICS, including through federal and state criminal history records, the NCIC, and NICS Indices
- includes dollar amounts for each proposed project
- demonstrates how the NICS Improvement Task Force is facilitating efforts to address gaps in record completeness and reporting
- includes a detailed project period timeline covering all the proposed projects to demonstrate the technical feasibility of the proposed task(s), and detail the

specific implementation plan to achieve the intended deliverables.

3. Capabilities and Competencies (25%)

- Demonstrate progress in record quality improvement efforts by making relevant records available for national background checks, and provide the reported number of records currently available in the national files.
- Fulfill goals of previous NARIP awards (or related criminal record improvement awards), including consideration of the total funds already awarded and expended funds from previous awards, if applicable.
- Demonstrate commitment to the national record system, through membership in the III and participation in the FBI's National Fingerprint File, and report the current status of development of its criminal records.

4. Plan for Collecting the Data Required for this Solicitation's Performance Measures (5%)

- Supply key performance measures for the award period.
- Provide a sufficient plan for collecting and reporting these performance measures.

5. Budget (10%): complete, cost effective, and allowable (e.g., reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities)

Budget narratives should demonstrate generally how applicants will maximize cost effectiveness of grant expenditures. Budget narratives should demonstrate cost effectiveness in relation to potential alternatives and the goals of the project.

- Provide a reasonable budget, including the basis of the estimates, nature of the proposed expenditures, and their relation to the priorities identified herein.
- Propose to leverage funds to directly support activities associated with the proposed tasks.

Review Process

Applications submitted under this solicitation that meet basic minimum requirements, will be evaluated for technical merit by a peer review panel(s) in accordance with OJP peer review policy and procedures using the stated review criteria above.

OJP screens applications to ensure they meet the basic minimum requirements prior to conducting peer review. Although specific requirements may vary, the following are common requirements applicable to all solicitations for funding under OJP programs:

- The application must be submitted by an eligible type of applicant.
- The application must request funding within programmatic funding constraints (if applicable).
- The application must be responsive to the scope of the solicitation.
- The application must include all items necessary to meet the basic minimum requirements.

Pursuant to the Part 200 Uniform Requirements, before award decisions are made, OJP also reviews information related to the degree of risk posed by the applicant. Among other things to help assess whether an applicant that has one or more prior federal awards has a satisfactory record with respect to performance, integrity, and business ethics, OJP checks whether the applicant is listed in SAM as excluded from receiving a federal award.

In addition, if OJP anticipates that an award will exceed \$250,000 in federal funds, OJP also must review and consider any information about the applicant that appears in the non-public segment of the integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently, the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System, FAPIIS).

Important note on FAPIIS: An applicant, may review and comment on any information about itself that currently appears in FAPIIS and was entered by a federal awarding agency. OJP will consider any such comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in its assessment of the risk posed by the applicant.

Absent explicit statutory authorization or written delegation of authority to the contrary, all final award decisions will be made by the Director of BJS, who may take into account not only peer review ratings and BJS recommendations, but also other factors as indicated in this section.

Federal Award Administration Information

Federal Award Notices

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on award notifications and instructions.

Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements

If selected for funding, in addition to implementing the funded project consistent with the OJP-approved application, the recipient must comply with all award conditions, and all applicable requirements of federal statutes and regulations (including applicable requirements referred to in the assurances and certifications executed in connection with award acceptance).

For additional information on these legal requirements, see the “Administrative, National Policy, and Other Legal Requirements” section in the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#).

Information Technology (IT) Security Clauses

An application in response to this solicitation may require inclusion of information related to information technology security. See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on information technology security.

General Information about Post-Federal Award Reporting Requirements

In addition to the deliverables described in the Program Description section, any recipient of an award under this solicitation will be required to submit certain reports and data.

Required reports. Recipients typically must submit quarterly financial reports, semi-annual progress reports, final financial and progress reports, and, if applicable, an annual audit report in accordance with the Part 200 Uniform Requirements or specific award conditions. Future awards and fund

drawdowns may be withheld if reports are delinquent. (In appropriate cases, OJP may require additional reports.)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for additional information on specific post-award reporting requirements, including performance measures data.

Progress Reporting Frequency

semi-annual

Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

For OJP contact(s), see page 2.

For contact information for Grants.gov, see page 2.

Other Information

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552 and 5 U.S.C. 552a)

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552 and 5 U.S.C. 552a).

Provide Feedback to OJP

See the [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#) for information on how to provide feedback to OJP.

Performance Measures

Objective	Performance Measure(s)	Data Recipient Provides
<p>Ensure that the infrastructure is developed to connect each state's and tribe's records systems to the national records systems operated by the FBI, including the NCIC, NGI, III, and NICS Indices.</p>	<p>Number of states and tribes participating or making records available to the NICS.</p> <p>Number of records available in the NICS.</p> <p>Percentage of complete records made available to the NICS.</p> <p>Percentage of applications for firearm transfers rejected due to data made available to the NICS.</p>	<p>Total number of states and tribes participating and total number of state and tribal records available to the NICS.</p> <p>Number of state and tribal records made available for use by the NICS.</p> <p>Number of complete records submitted by states and tribes made available to the NICS.</p> <p>Number of applications for firearm transfers.</p> <p>Number of applications for firearm transfers rejected due to a domestic violence misdemeanor conviction.</p> <p>Number of applications for firearm transfers rejected due to a mental health prohibitor.</p>

Application Checklist

FY 2021 NICS Act Record Improvement Program

This application checklist has been created as an aid in developing an application.

What an Applicant Must Do:

Prior to Registering in Grants.gov:

- Acquire a DUNS Number

- (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Acquire or renew registration with SAM (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

To Register with Grants.gov:

- Acquire AOR and Grants.gov username/password (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Acquire AOR confirmation from the E-Biz POC (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

To Find Funding Opportunity:

- Search for the Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Access Funding Opportunity and Application Package (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Sign up for Grants.gov email [notifications](#) (optional) (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Read [Important Notice: Applying for Grants in Grants.gov](#)
- Read OJP policy and guidance on conference approval, planning, and reporting available at ojp.gov/financialguide/DOJ/PostawardRequirements/chapter3.10a.htm (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

After Grants.gov Application Submission, Receive Grants.gov Email Notifications That:

- Application has been received in Grants.gov
- Application has either been successfully validated or rejected with errors (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

If Grants.gov Receipt and Validation or Error Notifications are Received:

- Contact BJS regarding technical difficulties (see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Complete Application Sections Listed Below in JustGrants:

- Receive email notification to complete application in JustGrants

Overview of Post-Award Legal Requirements:

- Review the “[Overview of Legal Requirements Generally Applicable to OJP Grants and Cooperative Agreements - FY 2021 Awards](#)” in the [OJP Funding Resource Center](#).

Scope Requirement:

- The federal amount requested is within the allowable limit(s)
(see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Eligibility Requirement:

- Agency designated by the Governor to administer NARIP or federally recognized Indian tribal government
- State or territory central administrative office or similar entity designated by statute or regulation to administer federal grant funds on behalf of the jurisdiction's court system
- Federally recognized Indian tribal governments

Content of Application Submission:

The following items are critical application elements required to pass Basic Minimum Requirements review. An application that OJP determines does not include the application elements that must be included in the application submission in order for the application to meet the basic minimum requirements, will neither proceed to peer review, nor receive further consideration.

- Project Abstract
- Program Narrative
- Budget Worksheet including Narrative (Web-based Form)
(see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

- Information to Complete the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
(see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Standard Applicant Information (SF-424 information from Grants.gov)

Budget and Associated Documentation

- Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)
(see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire
(see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Additional Application Components

- Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable)
(see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Request and Justification for Employee Compensation; Waiver (if applicable)
(see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Project Period Timeline
- NICS Record Improvement Plan

Disclosures and Assurances

- [Disclosure of Lobbying Activities \(SF-LLL\)](#)
(see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Applicant Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items
(see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- DOJ Certified Standard Assurances
(see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- DOJ Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements
(see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))
- Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High Risk Grantees (if applicable)
(see [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#))

Submit Application in JustGrants:

- Application has been successfully submitted in JustGrants

If JustGrants Application Submission, Validation, or Error Notifications are Received:

- Contact JustGrants Service Desk at 833-872-5175, JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov regarding technical difficulties