

# Pre-Award Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for 2018 COPS Office STOP School Violence: School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP)

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**Q: What is the purpose of COPS Office STOP School Violence: School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP) funding?**

A: The COPS Office Stop School Violence: School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP) is a competitive award program designed to provide funding to improve security at schools and on school grounds in the grantee's jurisdiction through evidence-based school safety programs. FY 2018 SVPP funding may be used for coordination with local law enforcement; training for local law enforcement officers to prevent school violence against others and self; placement and use of metal detectors, locks, lighting, and other deterrent measures; acquisition and installation of technology for expedited notification of local law enforcement during an emergency; and any other measure that, in the determination of the director of the COPS Office, may provide a significant improvement in security.

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**Q: Who is eligible to apply?**

A: All states, units of local government, and Indian tribes are eligible to apply under the SVPP. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit an application that demonstrates a comprehensive approach to school safety.

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**Q. Are school districts eligible to apply?**

A: School districts are not eligible as the primary applicant under this program. Any school district interesting in this program is encouraged to partner with their State, unit of local government, or Indian tribe to submit an application.

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**Q: How long is the award period for SVPP?**

A: The SVPP is a two-year (24-month) award program with an opportunity for a no-cost time extension. Budget requests must not exceed this two-year period.

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## Getting Started

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**Q: What software is recommended to complete my SVPP application in the COPS Office Online Application System?**

A: Applicants should use Internet Explorer 11 or newer. When using Internet Explorer 11, users should add the COPS Office website to the Compatibility View settings in the browser by following the instructions found at <https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/Compatibility-IE11.pdf> or contacting the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770.

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**Q: Should any documents be printed in preparation to complete the SVPP application?**

A: Yes. Applicants should print the section 13 Project Narrative and Budget Narrative forms to view the

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required questions. To access this PDF form, please go to the COPS Office website at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov) and click on the “Grants and Funding” link. Once you access the “Grants and Funding” page, click the link for the “COPS School Violence Prevention Program,” and a copy of the section 13 Project Narrative and Budget Narrative forms will be posted there. There is also a link to the section 13 Project Narrative and Budget Narrative forms in the Standard Application and the SVPP Application Guide.

## COPS Office Online Application System

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### **Q: What is my username?**

A: In the new COPS Office Agency Portal, your username is the login email address you used to set up your account. At that time, you also established a 12-character password for logging into the COPS Office Online Account Access site. If you need assistance in accessing the site, you may contact the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770 for assistance.

### **Q: How does my agency obtain its password if it is lost or forgotten?**

A: To obtain your password, click on the “Account Access” link on the COPS Office website. The logon page has a “Reset Password” link that will ask you to enter your username, and if an account is recognized, you will receive an email with a link and instructions on how to rebuild your password.

### **Q: I do not know my agency’s ORI number; how can I obtain it?**

A: If you’ve had awards with the COPS Office before and do not know your ORI number, please contact the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770, and a representative will be able to look up your ORI number.

### **Q: My agency does not have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number; how do I get one?**

A: All applicants must have a DUNS number prior to submitting an application for COPS Office funding. A DUNS number is a unique nine- or thirteen-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and tracking entities receiving federal funds. To get a DUNS number, please call 866-705-5711 or visit [www.dnb.com/us](http://www.dnb.com/us).

### **Q: My System for Award Management (SAM) registration is about to expire; how do I renew it?**

*ALERT: You must submit a [notarized letter](#) appointing the authorized Entity Administrator before your registration will be activated. This requirement now applies to both new and existing entities. ([www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov))*

A: All applicants for federal financial assistance must be registered in the SAM database prior to submitting an application for COPS Office funding. The SAM database is the repository for standard information about federal financial assistance applicants, recipients, and subrecipients. Applicants must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during the award application process. If awarded, you must also maintain the currency of your information in the SAM database until you submit the final financial report or receive the final payment under this award, whichever is later.

This requires that you review and update your information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required by changes in your information or another award term. If you have an active

SAM registration that is set to expire before September 30, 2018, you must renew your SAM registration before completing the application. To verify the expiration date of your SAM registration, please visit [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov).

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**Q: How do I add or change our agency's authorized contacts?**

A: The COPS Office Agency Portal, located at <https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov>, is where we manage your agency's contacts. For new contacts you will need to set-up an account as a user, assign them the appropriate role (government executive (GE) or contact and enable their electronic signature.

Detailed instructions on how to manage your contacts are included in the Agency Portal User Manual located on the COPS Office website at <https://cops.usdoj.gov/default.asp?Item=2450>. For assistance, please call the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770.

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**Q: Is there any way to print the finished application so that I can review a hard copy prior to submission?**

A: Yes. Before submitting the application on the last page of the online application, you will be able to print a copy for review; you will be able to print the entire application or individual sections. After submission, you will also be able to print the entire completed application.

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**Q: How much time do I have before the application times out?**

A: The applications will time out after 20 minutes of inactivity. If your application times out, you will only lose the current page of data. It is advisable to click the "Save" button once you complete each page of the application. This will prevent you from losing data in the event your application is timed out. You will only be able to save pages that are completely filled out.

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## Allowable Costs under the SVPP

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**Q: What may my agency request funding for under the SVPP award program?**

A: Agencies may request funding for costs related to the SVPP project and support one of the authorized purpose areas under Students, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence Act of 2018, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018, Public Law 115-141, Division S-Other matters, Title V, as amended, 34 U.S.C. § 10551(b)(5)-(9), which may include costs for:

- **Coordination.** Civilian/Nonsworn Personnel (Salaries and Benefits)—Please note that personnel hired under the COPS Office SVPP must function in a role directly related to the COPS Office SVPP project (examples of allowable personnel may include project coordinators, project managers, technology managers, emergency management coordinators, or trainers)
  - **Equipment.** Entry control equipment, school site alarm, and protection systems
  - **Technology.** Communication technology, emergency alerts, identification technology, laptops, maps of schools and bus routes, printers, social media monitoring, tracking systems, and video surveillance technology
  - **Supplies.** Manuals, paper, pens, and postage
  - **Travel/Training** for law enforcement officers to prevent school violence against others and self
  - **Contracts and subawards**
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- **Consultants**
- **Other costs.** Allowable overtime, other office supplies not already listed, and shipping costs for Alaska only

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**Partnership with Bureau of Justice Programs (BJA)**

The following initiatives are unallowable under the COPS Office SVPP; however, funding for these projects may be available through the Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA) authorized purpose areas under the STOP School Violence Act of 2018, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018, Public Law 115-141, Division S-Other matters, Title V, as amended, 34 U.S.C. § 10551(b)(1)-(4) :

- Development and operation of anonymous reporting systems for threats of school violence such as
  - hotlines;
  - internet websites;
  - mobile telephone applications
- Development and operation of a school threat assessment and intervention teams that may include coordination with law enforcement agencies and school personnel
- Specialized training for school officials in responding to mental health crises
- Training for school personnel and students to prevent student violence against others and self
- Other measures that the director of BJA determines may provide a significant improvement in training, threat assessments and reporting, and violence prevention

Please refer to the SVPP Application Guide for a nonexhaustive list of allowable and unallowable costs.

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**Q: May SVPP funding be used to fund security officer positions?**

A: No. Security officers are not an allowable cost under the SVPP.

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**Q: What is the maximum amount to be awarded per award?**

A: Each award will be capped at \$500,000.

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**Q: Is there a match requirement?**

A: Yes, there is an at least 25 percent local match requirement.

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**Q: Is there an MOU (memorandum of understanding) requirement under this program?**

A: We encourage applicants to develop partnerships with their local school districts for the purposes of the application. However, it is not required for applicants to develop or submit specific MOUs with the districts.

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**Q: May a group of agencies (units of local government and their corresponding school districts) apply as a consortium?**

A: Consortium applications are not eligible to apply. Cities and municipalities are encouraged to partner and work together as a single applicant if they choose. Units of local government may also be listed as subawardees.

# Preparing Your Application

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**Q: For the narrative sections, does the 4,000-character limit include spaces and special characters, or just letters?**

A: Yes, the 4,000-character limit includes letters, numbers, spaces, and special characters.

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**Q: What documents are required to be uploaded to our application in the COPS Office Online Application System?**

A: In addition to completing the SF-424 and COPS Office Attachment to the SF-424, applicants are required to upload as attachments (1) a project narrative description, (2) a budget narrative description, and (3) up to five letters of support from partners and other significant stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies. These documents must be uploaded to section 13 in the COPS Office Online Application System. Any application that does not include these three documents may be determined as incomplete and may be removed from consideration.

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**Q: What is the deadline for this solicitation?**

A: Applications for this program require a two-step process. It is strongly recommended that applicants complete the SF-424 through the Grants.gov website as soon as possible. The SF-424 is a government-wide standard application for federal assistance. Once the SF-424 has been submitted via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), the COPS Office will send an invitation email to the applicant with instructions on completing the second part of the SVPP application process through the COPS Office Online Application System (see “Registration” and “How to Apply” sections of the SVPP Application Guide). If you have not renewed your COPS Office Account Access information, contact the COPS Office Response Center at [AskCopsRC@usdoj.gov](mailto:AskCopsRC@usdoj.gov) or 800-421-6770. An application is not considered submitted until both of these steps are completed. Complete application packages for the SVPP 2018 solicitation are due by July 30, 2018, at 7:59 p.m. EDT.

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**Q: What happens if I do not receive an email from the COPS Office after I submit my SF-424 and section 1 on Grants.gov?**

A: If you do not receive an email from the COPS Office within 24 hours of submitting your SF-424 and section 1 on Grants.gov, please verify with Grants.gov that your information was correctly submitted. You can verify that there are no errors in your submission through your Grants.gov account by calling the Grants.gov Contact Center at 800-518-4726 or emailing [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). Once you have verified that the submission was successful, please contact the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770 or send questions via email to [AskCopsRC@usdoj.gov](mailto:AskCopsRC@usdoj.gov).

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**Q: What should be included in the Project Narrative?**

A: The project narrative must address the following four elements: School Safety Planning Efforts, Funding Request and Integration, Management and Implementation Plan, and Sustainability Plan. Please refer to the SVPP Application Guide for detailed information on the project narrative requirements.

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**Q: Is there a page limit to the project narrative?**

A: Agencies that seek funding under this program are required to submit a project description (narrative). The project narrative must respond to the solicitation and include the sections described in the program-specific application guide. Submit this narrative as an attachment under section 13 of the application. The narrative will be a significant factor in the application review and approval process. Failure to provide this information may eliminate your application from consideration. The project narrative should meet the following requirements:

- 8.5 x 11-inch pages
- One-inch margins
- Type no smaller or larger than 12 point, Times New Roman font
- Page numbers. The COPS Office recommends numbering pages as follows: “1 of 20,” “2 of 20,” etc.
- Word documents in the following formats: Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) or PDF files (.pdf)
- Headings and subheadings that correspond to the sections identified in this section of the solicitation.
- A total of no more than 12 pages and no fewer than 2 pages. Table of contents and cover pages will not count toward the overall page limit. Executive summaries, abstracts, timelines, graphs, and charts (regardless of pagination in front matter) will count toward overall page limit. Appendices are strongly discouraged.
- Up to five letters of support from partners and other significant stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies (if applicable) may be included and should be separate attachments and do not count towards the narrative page limit.
- If the project narrative fails to comply with these length-related restrictions, the COPS Office may consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

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**Q: Should a timeline be included in the 20-page project narrative?**

A: Yes, applicants should include a brief timeline with a list of key activities and milestones to take place within the award period, grouped by month or quarter. The timeline should be detailed enough to include each project goal, related objective, activity, expected completion date, and responsible person or organization.

## **Budget-Related Questions**

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**Q: What are allowable fringe benefits?**

A: In addition to Social Security, Medicare, health insurance, life insurance, vacation (enter value for line item only if funds are not included in the base salary listed in “Allowable Costs under SVPP” on page 3), sick leave (enter value for line item only if funds are not included in the base salary listed in “Allowable Costs under SVPP” on page 3), retirement, Worker’s Compensation, and unemployment insurance, the following are allowable fringe benefits: (1) dental insurance, (2) vision insurance, (3) prescription drugs, (4) holiday pay, (5) disability insurance, (6) accidental death and disability, (7) 401(k) plan, (8) liability insurance, (9) shift differential payments, (10) accident insurance, (11) bonding insurance, (12) state funded retirement system, (13) professional liability insurance, and (14) Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) tax. Other

benefits, such as severance pay, hazard pay, etc., are not allowed. The COPS Office will not pay for any fringe benefits not listed, and if your agency pays those benefits for locally funded positions, your agency will be required to do so for SVPP-funded officer positions with local funds.

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**Q: Are fringe benefits allowable for requested overtime costs?**

A: Yes, but the only fringe benefits allowable for requested overtime compensation are FICA, Worker’s Compensation, and unemployment insurance. The COPS Office will not pay for any other fringe benefits for requested overtime costs. If your agency pays for additional benefits for officer overtime, then your agency will be required to do so with local funds.

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**Q: Are subawards allowed under the SVPP program?**

A: Yes, eligible applicants may use award funds to contract with or make one or more subawards to one or more of the following: local educational agencies, nonprofit organizations excluding schools, or units of local government or tribal organizations.

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**Q: How do I determine the health care and fringe benefits costs for my agency?**

A: An agency should contact its Human Resources/Benefits Office to help determine their costs for healthcare and fringe benefits.

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**Q: Are indirect costs allowable under the SVPP award?**

A: No, the SVPP does not pay for any indirect costs.

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## **Nonsupplanting requirement**

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**Q: Does the FY 2018 COPS Office STOP School Violence: School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP) have a nonsupplanting requirement?**

A: No. The FY 2018 COPS Office SVPP does not have a nonsupplanting requirement.

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## **Other Questions**

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**Q: What is the formula for disbursing SVPP award funds?**

A: SVPP is not a “formula” award program. All applications will be reviewed based on their answers to the background information questions, improved security need questions, need for federal assistance questions, submitted project and budget narratives, and other relevant factors determined by the COPS Office. Awards will be made on a competitive basis.

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**Q: How does an agency verify their application was received?**

A: Agencies should log back in to their accounts via the “Account Access” tab on the COPS Office website and click on the “SVPP” link to access their application and verify that their application was submitted and received by the COPS Office before the application deadline (the current application status will be

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“Completed and submitted”). Agencies whose applications were not received by the COPS Office before the deadline will receive a message in red stating that the application deadline has passed and they will not be able to proceed further.

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**Q: When should I expect notification if awarded SVPP funding?**

A: The COPS Office anticipates making award announcements prior to September 30, 2018.

Questions? Please call the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770.