

Pre-Award Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for 2019 COPS Office STOP School Violence: School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP)

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 K-12 schools and on school grounds in the grantee's jurisdiction through evidence-based school safety programs. FY 2019 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.

Q: Who is eligible to apply?

A: All states, units of local government, Indian tribes, and public agencies (police departments, sheriff's departments, school districts, etc.) are eligible to apply under the SVPP. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit an application that demonstrates a comprehensive approach to school safety.

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.

Getting Started

Q: What software is recommended to complete my 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.

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

A: Yes. Applicants should print the section 13 Narrative Attachment (combined project and budget narrative) form to view the required questions. To access this PDF form, please go to the COPS Office website at www.cops.usdoj.gov and click the link for the “COPS School Violence Prevention Program,” and a copy of the section 13 Narrative Attachment instructions will be posted there under Program Documents.

COPS Office Online Application System

Q: What is my username?

A: In the 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 your agency needs an ORI number for SVPP, please submit a request for one via <https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/ORIRequest.aspx> or the COPS Office Response Center at AskCopsRC@usdoj.gov or 800-421-6770.

If you have applied for SVPP funding 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.

If your registered name in DUNS is different from your COPS legal name, please enter the registered name. For more information about how to obtain a DUNS name, please refer to <https://www.dnb.com/duns-number/lookup.html>.

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)

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, 2019, you must renew your SAM registration before completing the application. To verify the expiration date of your SAM registration, please visit www.sam.gov.

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/pdf/2019AwardDocs/Agency_Portal_GrantsMgt_Manual.pdf. For assistance, please call the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770.

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. **Note: hard copy or emailed applications will not be accepted.**

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.

Allowable Costs under the SVPP

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, 34 U.S.C. § 10551(b)(5)–(9), which may include costs for the following:

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.

Consultants.

Other costs. Allowable overtime, other office supplies not already listed, and shipping costs for Alaska only.

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, 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 non-exhaustive list of allowable and unallowable costs.

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

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

Q: May SVPP funding be used to fund School Resource Officers (SRO)?

A: No. School Resource Officers are not allowable under the SVPP.

Q: Can SVPP funds be used to improve security at institutions of higher learning (community colleges, universities, etc.) which provide facilities or services to K–12 students?

A: Generally no. SVPP funds are expressly intended to improve security at K–12 schools and on school grounds. Requests involving institutions of higher learning may be considered in certain cases where K–12 students regularly attend classes in a structure/facility exclusively designated for K–12 students. Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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

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

Q: Is there a match requirement?

A: Yes, there is an at least 25 percent local match requirement. The local match must be a cash match and must be paid during the award period.

Q: Am I able to apply for a waiver of the local match under SVPP?

A: Yes. Applicants may request a waiver in the application. The COPS Office may waive the 25 percent local cash match requirement in the case of a recipient with a demonstrated severe financial need. During the application process, your agency’s waiver request will be evaluated on the availability of funding, a demonstration of severe financial need as reflected through the fiscal health data in section 7 of this application, and a comparison of your fiscal health data with that of the overall applicant pool. The COPS Office anticipates that local match waivers will be limited.

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. While SVPP does not require an MOU, the COPS Office reserves the right to request that an agency develop one under certain circumstances.

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

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

A: Yes, the character limit includes letters, numbers, spaces, and special characters. In section 7, the character limit is 1,000 characters. In Section 10, the character limit is 2,000 characters.

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) Narrative attachment (combined project narrative and budget narrative descriptions) **Any application that does not include a narrative attachment that contains both the project narrative and budget narrative may be determined as incomplete and may be removed from consideration;** (2) Letters of support are required from major partners and other significant stakeholders when a proposed project involves coordination with another jurisdiction or agency (city, county, law enforcement agency, school district, etc); (3) Sole Source Justification (if applicable); and (4) Additional Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) form (if applicable). Please upload these documents in section 13 of the COPS Office Online Application System.

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, 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 or 800-421-6770. An application is not considered submitted until both of these steps are completed. Complete application packages for the SVPP solicitation are due by May 31, 2019, at 7:59 p.m. EDT.

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. 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.

Q: What should be included in the Narrative Attachment (Combined Project Narrative and Budget Narrative) Descriptions?

A: The project narrative portion of the narrative attachment 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 narrative attachment requirements.

The budget narrative portion of your narrative attachment must (1) describe each item requested or group of similar items requested; and (2) link each item or group of items to the proposed SVPP project. Provide a brief description of the item(s) proposed for purchase, their purpose, and how the item(s) relate to the overall project. **Every item included on the budget detail worksheets must be included in the budget narrative description.** All items will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and in context of the allowable and unallowable costs lists. For more information, please see the “Allowable and Unallowable Costs” section of the complete program-specific application guide.

Q: Is there a page limit to the project narrative portion of the narrative attachment?

A: Agencies that seek funding under this program are required to submit a project description. The project description must respond to the solicitation and include the sections outlined here. Failure to provide this information may eliminate your application from consideration. The project description must meet the following requirements:

Formatting

- Double-spaced
- 8.5 x 11-inch page
- One-inch margins
- Type no smaller or larger than 12 point, Times New Roman font
- Page numbers. The COPS Office recommends numbering pages “1 of 8,” “2 of 8,” etc.
- PDF files (.pdf) when possible
- Headings and subheadings that correspond to the sections identified in this section of the solicitation.

The project description portion must be no fewer than two pages and must not exceed eight 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. In cases where the applicant’s project narrative exceeds eight pages, reviewers will be instructed to consider *only the first eight pages of the project narrative* in their evaluation.

Letters of support are required from major partners and other significant stakeholders when a proposed project involves coordination with another jurisdiction or agency (city, county, law enforcement agency, school district, etc.). Letters of support should confirm major partners/significant stakeholders planned involvement and support of the project. Letters of support should be separate attachments and do not count towards the narrative page limit.

If the project narrative description fails to comply with these length-related restrictions, the COPS Office may consider such noncompliance in peer review and in final award decisions.

Q: Should a timeline be included in the 8-page project narrative description?

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.

Q: When is a Letter of Support Required?

A: Letters of support are required from major partners and other significant stakeholders when a proposed project involves coordination with another jurisdiction or agency (city, county, law enforcement agency, school district, etc.). For example: A law enforcement agency submits a proposal for officer training to prevent violence at local schools. The affected local school district would be considered a major partner. The law enforcement agency applicant would be required to submit a Letter of Support from the affected school district confirming the district’s planned involvement and support of the project.

Budget-Related Questions

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 4), 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 4), 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.

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.

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.

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.

Q: Are indirect costs allowable under the SVPP award?

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

Nonsupplanting requirement

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

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

Other Questions

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 descriptions, and other relevant factors determined by the COPS Office. Awards will be made on a competitive basis.

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 “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.

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

A: The COPS Office anticipates making award announcements prior to September 30, 2019.

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