

U.S. Department of Justice Tribal Resources Grant Program (TRGP) and COPS Hiring Program (CHP)

*Fiscal Year 2020 Guidance on Background Investigations and Basic Training
Condition Requirements for Tribal Resources Grant Program Hiring (TRGP-
HIRE) and COPS Hiring Program (CHP) Award Recipients*

External Background Investigations FAQs

1. Do I need to complete a background investigation for the COPS Office-funded officer(s) I hire?

Yes. For your award to comply with the award condition on officer background investigations, the COPS Office requires that you complete a background investigation for *all* officers hired (including rehired officers) with COPS Office grant program funds to reduce the risk of hiring officers with past convictions of domestic violence, sexual assault, and other serious crimes.

2. What is a background investigation?

For purposes of COPS Office programs, a background check or background investigation is the process of compiling and analyzing the employment history, criminal records, commercial records, financial records, and other relevant information of an individual to be hired with COPS Office funding.

3. What type of background investigation is required for officers funded by the COPS Office?

Background investigations can include the following as well as other types of investigation:

- Credit checks
- Criminal history checks
- Resume validation
- Work history verification

4. Where should I go to have a background investigation completed for the awarded officer(s)?

Many agencies have specially trained staff who perform background investigations in-house. Others contract with outside security professionals for background investigation services. The choice is up to individual award recipients as to how background investigations are handled.

5. What should I do with the information received back from the background investigation?

You should review the results of the background investigation to determine whether it is appropriate to hire the applicant based on your agency's hiring policies and procedures. Award recipients should maintain all relevant documentation required to demonstrate award compliance.

6. Should I send background investigation information to the COPS Office?

Please *do not* send the COPS Office background investigation information for potential hires by your agency. The COPS Office does not review or evaluate background investigation information. In addition, the COPS Office will not review or maintain background investigation results.

7. How do I report to the COPS Office that I have satisfied the special award condition of completing a background investigation for the awarded officer(s)?

Please report the status of the background investigation completion in your required programmatic progress reports. In addition, you may contact your Grant Program Specialist to let them know the completion date(s) of the background investigations.

8. If the awarded officer leaves, do I complete a new background investigation on his or her replacement?

Yes. You are required to complete a background investigation for each person who ultimately fills the COPS Office-funded position(s).

9. While applying for officers, I did not request costs for background investigations or officer training in my budget worksheet. Now that I am awarded, is there an opportunity that I can receive an increase in my grant award?

No, award amounts cannot be increased. However, if local, state, or Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) funds are not currently allocated for background investigations or training, you may request an award modification to reallocate other award funds for these purposes. Please contact your Grant Program Specialist to assist with requesting a post-award budget modification.

10. What happens if I do not complete a background investigation for the awarded officer(s)?

If the COPS Office determines that funds have been used to pay the salary and fringe benefits of an officer who has not undergone a background investigation, the COPS Office may exercise appropriate remedies (including the suspension of grant funds) in accordance with 2 C.F.R. §200.338 until the agency can demonstrate that the background investigation has been completed.

Basic Training Condition Requirements FAQs

1. Does the COPS Office pay for basic law enforcement training?

Yes, the COPS Office does pay for basic law enforcement training for newly hired officers. Basic law enforcement training is required for all career law enforcement officer positions funded under the Tribal Resources Grant Program and COPS Hiring Program. Applicants that request career law enforcement officer positions must also request funds for the officer(s) to attend basic law enforcement training in their budget.

2. Who provides basic law enforcement training?

Basic law enforcement training may be performed by the provider of your choosing. Basic law enforcement training can be completed at a BIA, state, or local academy as determined by the tribe or agency.

3. Does the COPS Office pay for costs associated with the basic law enforcement training?

Yes. Applicants must budget for—and, if awarded, complete—basic law enforcement training for all full-time career law enforcement officers funded by the grant. Eligible costs include any applicable training costs, airfare, lodging, and mileage reimbursement for training costs related to basic law enforcement training.

However, please note that you are not to supplant existing local funds for background investigations or basic law enforcement training purposes. For example, if the department already budgets for the background checks or officer training, do not request these funds from our office but rather confirm you will comply with these requirements using your own funds.

4. How do I report to the COPS Office that I have satisfied the award condition of completing basic training for the awarded officer(s)?

Please report the status of the basic training completion in your required programmatic progress reports. In addition, you may contact your Grant Program Specialist to let them know the completion date(s) of the basic training.

5. If the awarded officer leaves, do I complete new basic training for his or her replacement?

Yes. You are required to complete basic training for each person who ultimately fills the COPS Office–funded position(s).

6. What happens if I do not complete basic training for the awarded officer(s)?

If the COPS Office determines that funds have been used to pay the salary and fringe benefits of an officer who has not undergone basic training, the COPS Office may exercise appropriate remedies (including the suspension of grant funds) in accordance with 2 C.F.R. §200.338 until the agency can demonstrate that the basic training has been completed.