COPS Hiring Program (CHP)—How Decisions were Made to Allocate $157 Million When more than $267 Million was Requested

The CHP solicitation for FY 2024 opened on April 11, 2024, and applications were accepted through June 12, 2024. The COPS Office received 573 applications from law enforcement agencies requesting $267,754,398 in federal funding for 2,227 officer positions.

The COPS Office focused on several priority areas for additional consideration

Applicants who chose areas such as Building Legitimacy and Trust, Violent Crime / Gun Violence, Combating Hate and Domestic Extremism, or Police-Based Response to Persons in Crisis as their problem focus area received additional consideration for CHP funding.

Additional consideration was also given to applicants that met any of the following criteria:

- Applicants in an area with persistent poverty

- Applicants seeking support for screening and counseling programs to identify and prevent the radicalization of applicants and personnel who endorse violent and hateful extremist movements

- Applicants that commit to recruiting officers from the community in which they will serve

- Applicants that commit to recruiting officers who are willing to relocate to areas characterized by fragmented relations between police and community residents, or areas of high crime

- Agencies that require evidence-based cultural sensitivity training for officers

- Applicants that experienced an unanticipated catastrophic event

- Applicants that commit to hiring at least one military veteran

- Applicants from rural areas

- Applicants that did not receive a CHP award in FY 2023

- Applicants that implement elements identified in the U.S. Department of Justice's [Inventory of Federal Priorities for Policing](#)

The COPS Office developed a streamlined application to meet the requirements of the law

The COPS Office developed a streamlined application for CHP funding that met the requirements of the statute and mission of the COPS Office. The application was designed to lessen the burden of applying while increasing the ability of law enforcement to implement community-policing strategies within the three primary elements of community policing: (1) problem solving, (2) partnerships, and (3) organizational transformation.

The COPS Office balanced scoring indicators

To measure and compare the necessary scoring indicators, the COPS Office consulted with experts in the fields of policing, criminology, and public finance to develop appropriate application questions. Applicants were asked to submit information on the following indicators:

- Reported crime for the previous two years

- Current commitment to community policing

- Planned community policing activities

- Poverty and unemployment rates

The COPS Office checked and double-checked, verifying the data applicants provided

COPS Office application systems contain numerous built-in validation and logic checks to help prevent the submission of erroneous data. In addition, specialists in the COPS Office reviewed submitted application data for irregularities. The COPS Office reviewed more than 350 data points within each application. In warranted cases, the COPS Office contacted applicant agencies to verify information provided in their application. This data verification process, though time-consuming, was crucial to ensuring that all applicants were properly evaluated based on accurate economic, crime, and community policing data.

The COPS Office developed a uniform system of evaluating the information that applicants submitted

The COPS Office focused on balancing applicants' need for federal assistance with crime rates and applicants' current commitment to community policing and their proposed community policing strategy. Each of these areas accounted for one third of the overall score, prior to including additional consideration factors.

Statutory considerations

Two long-standing statutory requirements designed to ensure national distribution of COPS Office funding had an impact on which applications were ultimately funded. The COPS Office is statutorily required to distribute half of all hiring funds to agencies serving populations of more than 150,000 and half to those serving 150,000 or fewer. In addition, the COPS Office is statutorily required to ensure that at least one-half of one percent of hiring funds are allocated to each state or territory with eligible applications.