



FY24 COPS Office Anti-Heroin Task Force (AHTF) Program

Pre-Award Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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Overview and Eligibility

Q. What is the purpose of COPS Anti-Heroin Task Force (AHTF) program funding?

- A. The AHTF is a competitive award program designed to advance public safety by providing funds to state law enforcement agencies in states with high per capita rates of primary treatment admissions, for the purpose of locating or investigating illicit activities, through statewide collaboration, relating to the distribution of heroin, fentanyl, or carfentanil or unlawful distribution of prescription opioids.

Q. Who is eligible to apply for funding?

- A. State law enforcement agencies with primary authority over state seizures of heroin and other opioids with multijurisdictional reach and an interdisciplinary team (e.g., task force) structure are eligible to apply.

Q. Are recipients of AHTF program awards required to coordinate with other law enforcement entities?

- A. Yes. Recipients are required to coordinate with federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to maximize the impact and effectiveness of the award. The recipients must coordinate and work with U.S. Attorneys’ Offices in their states, coordinate and work with local and tribal law enforcement agencies in any area impacted by the work of the COPS Office AHTF program, and coordinate as appropriate with other federal law enforcement partners such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation or Drug Enforcement Administration to assist tribal law enforcement agencies.

Q. How long is the award period for AHTF?

- A. AHTF is a three-year (36-month) award program with an opportunity for a no-cost time extension. Budget requests must not exceed this three-year period.

Q. Is there a cost share or matching funds requirement?

A. No. There is no cost share or matching funds requirement.

Q. Is there a nonsupplanting requirement for this program?

A. Yes. The nonsupplanting requirement is a legal requirement in the Public Safety and Community Policing Act, which is the COPS Office’s authorizing statute. See Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended, and the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, Title I, Part Q, Public Law 103-322, 34 U.S.C. § 10381 et seq. The nonsupplanting requirement means COPS Office award funds must be used to supplement (not replace) state, local, or Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) funds that would have been dedicated toward law enforcement if federal funding had not been awarded. As it applies to your agency’s AHTF award, recipients must not reduce the level of state, local, or BIA funding that would have been dedicated toward any hiring or procurement as a result of receiving federal funding. 34 U.S.C. § 10384(a).

Q. What is the formula for disbursing AHTF program award funds?

A. The AHTF program is not a “formula” award program. All applications will be reviewed based on the information provided in the solicitation; the statewide primary treatment admission data for heroin, fentanyl, carfentanil, and other opioids; and other relevant factors determined by the COPS Office. Awards will be made on a competitive basis.

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

A. Each award will be capped at \$4,000,000.

Q. How much funding is anticipated to be awarded under the AHTF program and how many awards does COPS expect make under the AHTF program in FY24?

A. Up to \$35,000,000 is anticipated to be awarded under the AHTF program with 15 awards anticipated in FY24.

Q. When will AHTF program awards be announced?

A. It is anticipated that awards will be announced on or after September 30, 2024. Any public announcements will be posted on the [COPS Office website](#).

Q. May our agency request funding under AHTF if we have an active COPS Office Hiring Program (CHP) award for sworn officer positions?

A. Yes. Agencies with an active CHP award are not disqualified from applying for an AHTF award, but the AHTF-funded position(s) must be over and above the number of officer positions funded in the agency’s local budget and under any other CHP award.

Q. May AHTF funding be used to retain officers to fulfill a retention requirement under other COPS Office awards?

- A.** No. AHTF funding may not be used to comply with the retention requirement of other COPS office awards, such as the COPS Hiring Program or U.S. Department of Justice Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation Purpose Area 1. Instead, your agency must use state, territorial, local, or tribal funding to retain the COPS Office-funded positions for the required retention period following the conclusion of the award period. In addition, the retained officer position(s) must be over and above your agency's locally funded sworn force and any full-time sworn positions awarded under the AHTF award.

Application Process and Requirements

Q. What is the application process?

AHTF program applications are a two-part process. Applicants will submit the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) and the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) Grants.gov and the full application, including attachments, in JustGrants. For further guidance and resources, read the solicitation document carefully, access the [DOJ Application Submission Checklist](#) and see the [JustGrants Application Submission training page](#).

Note: Active registration with the [System for Award Management \(SAM\) database](#) is required in order to register for Grants.gov. Go to [SAM.gov | Entity Registrations](#) for additional information.

Q. What am I required to submit in the application?

- A.** In addition to the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) and the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) submitted in Grants.gov, applicants will be required to submit the application in JustGrants that consists of a series of questions and a budget worksheet with accompanying narrative justifications. The complete list of questions is located <https://cops.usdoj.gov/ahtf>. Applicants are encouraged to read through the online application questions in advance to ensure sufficient time to prepare answers to the questions.

See the AHTF program solicitation at <https://cops.usdoj.gov/ahtf> for a complete list of required and optional attachments.

Q. When are applications due under the AHTF program?

- A.** Applicants are urged to begin the application process in Grants.gov as soon as your agency believes it will apply for AHTF program funding.

The Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) and the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) must be submitted in Grants.gov by 4:59 p.m. ET on June 20, 2024.

The complete application package must be submitted in JustGrants by 4:59 p.m. ET on June 26, 2024.

Note: Hard copy or emailed applications will not be accepted.

Q. Should any documents be printed in preparation to complete the AHTF program application?

- A. Hard copy applications are not accepted. However, applicants may print the solicitation to review the solicitation and required questions and, if applicable, the attachments. A PDF version of the solicitation may be found on the [AHTF program page](#).

Q. Is the AHTF program subject to subject to Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs?

- A. Yes. The AHTF program is subject to E.O. 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs,” which requires applicants from state and local units of government or other organizations providing services within a state to submit a copy of the application to the state single point of contact (SPOC) if one exists and if the program has been selected for review. Applicants must contact their state SPOCs (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/SPOC-list-as-of-2023.pdf>) to determine whether their programs have been selected for state review. The applicant should enter the date that the application was sent to the SPOC or the reason such submission is not required in the section of the SF 424 that refers to EO 12372.

Allowable Activities and Costs

Q. What may my agency request funding for under the AHTF award program?

- A. Agencies may request funding to pay for the following:
- Personnel and fringe benefits
 - New civilian personnel to work directly on anti-heroin and other opioids investigation activities
 - New entry-level sworn personnel to work directly on anti-heroin and other opioids investigation activities
 - Equipment directly related to anti-heroin and other opioids investigation activities
 - Supplies directly related to anti-heroin and other opioids investigation activities
 - Travel/training directly related to anti-heroin and other opioids investigation activities
 - Contracts/consultants directly related to anti-heroin and other opioids investigation activities
 - Other costs, including overtime for sworn officers and civilians engaging in anti-heroin and other opioids investigation activities

Agencies may elect to redeploy locally funded sworn personnel to engage in AHTF activities and assign newly hired AHTF-funded officers to backfill their positions.

Funding requests are not limited to your agency's entry-level salary and benefits. AHTF award funds will pay for experience level salaries as reflected in your agency's approved pay-scale.

AHTF will pay only for costs not already funded in the applicant's local budget. Please refer to the AHTF solicitation for a nonexhaustive list of allowable and unallowable costs.

Q. May AHTF funding be used to fund treatment programs or prosecution of heroin and other opioids related activities?

- A. No. Agencies may only request funding for costs directly related to anti-heroin and other opioids investigative activities. However, applicants are encouraged to pursue collaboration with agencies involved with treatment, prevention, and even prosecution. Collaborative work by public safety and public health can not only improve the outcome of investigations but also help bridge the gap between overdose and treatment. As an example, local law enforcement agencies have stepped up across the United States to implement protocols to transition overdose victims to treatment programs provided by the public health sector. It has also laid the groundwork for accurate assessment of drug trends which is critical to strategic deployment of investigative resources.

Q. May AHTF funding be used to fund overtime for sworn officers?

- A. Yes. Agencies may request funding for overtime for sworn officers engaging in anti-heroin and other opioids investigation activities under the Other Costs budget category.

Q. May AHTF funding be used to fund overtime for civilian positions?

- A. Yes. Agencies may request funding for overtime for civilians engaging in heroin and other opioid investigative activities under the Other Costs budget category.

Q. May AHTF funding be used to rehire sworn officers previously employed by our agency?

- A. Yes. Officers previously employed by your agency may be rehired using AHTF program funds.

Q. May AHTF funding be used to fill sworn officer positions that are vacant at the time we apply for AHTF program funding?

- A. No. Officers funded with AHTF program funds must be in addition to any officers funded in your agency's local budget. However, AHTF program funding may be used to fill vacant sworn officer positions if the positions are unfunded in the law enforcement budget (i.e., state, local, or BIA funding has not been budgeted to pay for the salary and benefits costs of the positions) because of a hiring freeze or budget cuts due to local fiscal distress.

Q. Is there a retention requirement for officers hired under the AHTF program?

- A. No. There is no retention requirement for officers hired using AHTF program funding. However, recipients will be subject to the nonsupplanting requirement.

Q. If awarded funding from the AHTF program, will our agency be obligated to keep the total number of officers on staff at the time the funds were awarded?

- A. To comply with the nonsupplanting requirement of the AHTF award, the recipient must maintain its locally funded sworn force baseline and any planned increases of officer positions during the award period.

Q. What fringe benefits are allowable?

- A.** In addition to Social Security, Medicare, health insurance, life insurance, vacation, sick, 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) Police Trust, (13) state funded retirement system, (14) professional liability insurance, (15) Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) tax, and (16) survivor benefit. Other benefits, such as severance pay, hazard pay, etc., are not allowable.

The COPS Office will not pay for any fringe benefits not listed, and if your agency pays those benefits for locally funded officer positions, your agency will be required to do so for AHTF-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 Social Security, Medicare, 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 overtime, then your agency will be required to do so with its own funds.

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 health care and fringe benefits.

Q. How should an agency calculate the first-year salary and benefit package of officers who will be recruits promoted to sworn officer positions, given that a recruit and sworn officer fall under different pay and benefit levels?

- A.** The first-year salary and benefits package should cover the sworn officer salary and benefits of the officer post-graduation.

Q. My agency has officers who are exempt from Social Security benefit deductions. How should I address this in the AHTF application?

- A.** Agencies that have officers that are exempt from Social Security benefit deductions should check the “Exempt” option on the application. By checking “Exempt,” the agency is not required to submit additional information.

Q. Are indirect costs allowable under the AHTF program?

- A.** No. Indirect costs are not allowable under the AHTF program.

Q. Are subawards allowable under the AHTF program?

- A.** No. Subawards are not an allowable under the AHTF program.

Q. Are academy costs allowable under the AHTF program?

A. No. Academy costs are not allowable under the AHTF program.

Contact Information and Resources

Q. Who can I contact for assistance with Grants.gov?

A. For technical assistance with submitting the Application for Federal Assistance, Standard Form 424 (SF-424), please call the Grants.gov customer service hotline at 800-518-4726, send questions via email to support@Grants.gov or consult the [Grants.gov Organization Applicant User Guide](#). The Grants.gov Support Hotline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays.

Q. Who can I contact for assistance with JustGrants?

A. For technical support with the Justice Grants System (JustGrants) application, please contact JustGrants Support at JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov or 833-872-5175. JustGrants Support operates Monday through Friday between the hours of 5:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) and Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET. Training on JustGrants can also be found at <https://justicegrants.usdoj.gov/training-resources>.

Q. Who can I contact for programmatic assistance with the requirements of the AHTF program?

A. For programmatic assistance with the requirements of this program, please call the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770 or send questions via email to AskCopsRC@usdoj.gov. The COPS Office Response Center operates Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET, except on federal holidays.

Q. Is the list of anticipated FY24 AHTF program award conditions and requirements available online?

A. Yes. See the [FY24 Application Resource Guide](#).

Q. Does the COPS Office have a website that contains application resources, fact sheets, and instructions?

A. Yes. See [How To Apply | COPS OFFICE \(usdoj.gov\)](#).

Q. How do I stay up to date on other COPS Office funding opportunities?

A. COPS Office funding opportunities are posted at [GRANTS | COPS OFFICE \(usdoj.gov\)](#). To receive notifications on funding opportunities and announcements, [subscribe to GovDelivery](#) email updates.