

**U.S. Department of Justice**  
**Tribal Resources Grant Program (TRGP)—**  
**Hire, COPS Hiring Program (CHP), COPS Office**  
**Anti-Heroin Task Force (AHTF) Program,**  
**and COPS Anti-Methamphetamine**  
**Program (CAMP)**

*Guidance on Background Investigations Condition Requirements for Tribal Resources Grant Program (TRGP)—Hire, COPS Hiring Program (CHP), COPS Office Anti-Heroin Task Force (AHTF) Program, and COPS Anti-Methamphetamine Program (CAMP) Award Recipients*

**External Background Investigations FAQs**

**1. Do I need to complete a background investigation for COPS Office-funded officers?**

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* career law enforcement officers (including rehired officers) or village public safety officers hired 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 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. Are there any national databases that may assist state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement agencies with obtaining information on officer misconduct as part of the background investigation process?**

Yes. To support law enforcement officer accountability efforts at the state and local level, the U.S. Department of Justice awarded funding to the [International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training](#) (IADLEST) to expand its [National Decertification Index](#) (NDI). The NDI is a national registry of law enforcement decertification and revocation actions relating to officer misconduct.

### **5. 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. Background investigations may be conducted by the provider of your choosing.

### **6. 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.

### **7. 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.

**8. 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 Manager to let them know the completion date(s) of the background investigations.

**9. 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).

**10. While applying for officers, I did not request costs for background investigations 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, and this is an unallowable cost for CHP, CAMP, and the AHTF program. The COPS Office requires background investigations for all career law enforcement officers or village public safety officers hired with COPS Office funding. For TRGP–Hire recipients, if grant funds were not allocated for the required officer background investigations at the time of your Tribal Resources Grant Program—Equipment/Training (TRGP–E/T) application, you may request a budget modification on your TRGP–E/T award to reallocate other award funds for this purpose. Your Grant Manager can provide more information after you have accepted the award.

**11. 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.