



FY26 COPS Hiring Program (CHP)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Applicants

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Overview and Eligibility

Q. What is the purpose of the COPS Hiring Program (CHP)?

A. The goal of the COPS Hiring Program is to provide funding directly to law enforcement agencies to hire and/or rehire additional full-time sworn career law enforcement officers/deputies in an effort to increase their community policing capacity and crime prevention efforts. Anticipated outcomes of CHP awards include engagement in planned community partnerships, implementation of projects to analyze and assess problems, implementation of changes to personnel and agency management in support of community policing, and increased capacity of agencies to engage in community policing activities.

Q. Who is eligible to apply for funding?

A. All state, local, territorial, and tribal law enforcement agencies that have primary law enforcement authority are eligible to apply. An agency with primary law enforcement authority is defined as the first responder to calls for service for all types of criminal incidents within the jurisdiction served.

In addition, state and local governmental entities must comply with 8 U.S.C. § 1373, which provides that state and local government entities may not prohibit, or in any way restrict, any government entity or official from sending to, receiving from, maintaining, or exchanging information regarding citizenship or immigration status, lawful or unlawful, of any individual with components of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security or any other federal, state or local government entity. This includes any prohibitions or restrictions imposed or established by a State or local government entity or official.

Q. How long is the period of performance for CHP?

- A. The funding under CHP is for the payment of three years (36 months) of approved full-time entry-level salaries and fringe benefits during the five-year (60-month) period of performance.

Q. Is there a cost share (matching funds) requirement under CHP?

- A. Yes. A minimum 25 percent local cost share (matching funds) is required, which must be in the form of cash, unless a waiver is approved. See the section “Maximum Federal Share and Local Cost Share (Matching Funds)” for additional information.

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. The nonsupplanting requirement means COPS Office award funds must be used to supplement (not replace) state, territorial, 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 CHP award, recipients must not reduce the level of state, local, or BIA funding that would have been dedicated toward sworn officer/deputy positions as a result of receiving federal funding. Requests may be made only for positions that are not otherwise budgeted with state, territorial, local, or BIA funds and that would not be funded in the absence of the CHP award.

Q. What is the formula for disbursing CHP awards?

- A. CHP is not a “formula” program, but rather, a competitive discretionary program. All applications will be reviewed based on answers to the fiscal health questions, crime statistics, community policing strategy, and other relevant factors determined by the COPS Office. See the [FY26 CHP Application Resource Guide](#) for detailed information on the application review process.

Q. How much funding is anticipated to be awarded under CHP and how many awards does COPS expect to make under CHP in FY26?

- A. More than \$150 million is anticipated to be awarded under CHP through an estimated 250 awards in FY26.

Q. Are there priority focus areas in FY26?

- A. Yes. Additional consideration in the application review process will be given to applicants that propose a common sense community policing approach to the following Problem/Focus Areas: Violent Crime, Squatting and Encampment Enforcement, Homeland and Border Security, Nuisance Abatement and Quality of Life, School-Based Policing, and Combatting Domestic Terrorism. If awarded CHP funding, recipients that chose any of these specific common sense community policing Problem/Focus Areas will not be allowed to change the problem/focus area post-award.

Additional consideration will also be given to applicants that meet any of the following criteria:

- **Ending Deadly Sanctuary City Policies:** Agencies that cooperate with federal law enforcement to address illegal immigration (state and local government applicants only).
- **Homeland Security Task Force Coordination and Participation:** Agencies that coordinate and participate with the Homeland Security Task Force (HSTF) or, if awarded, plan to coordinate and participate with the HSTF (law enforcement applicants only).
- **Safe Harbor:** Applicants in states with certain anti-human trafficking laws that treat minors engaged in commercial sex as victims (referred to as “safe harbor” laws) and permit individuals to vacate arrest or prosecution records for nonviolent offenses as a result of being trafficked.
- **Catastrophic Incident:** Applicants that experienced an unanticipated catastrophic event that had a significant impact on the delivery of law enforcement services and which occurred in the time period from January 1, 2025, to present. This includes mass shootings, terrorist attacks, natural disasters, or other events leading to mass casualties.
- **Rural Designation:** Applicants in self-identified rural jurisdictions.
- **Hiring Veterans:** Applicants that commit to hiring at least one military veteran.
- **Unfunded in Previous Year:** Applicants that did not receive a CHP award in FY 2025 due to the limited availability of funding who submit a quality application in FY 2026.
- **Community-based Hires:** Applicants that commit to recruiting officers/deputies from the community in which they will serve.
- **National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) Data Accuracy:** Agencies that submit accurate race and ethnicity information in NIBRS for each offender, victim, and arrestee involved in each incident.
- **Critically Understaffed Law Enforcement Agencies:** Agencies operating below their budgeted strength due to local fiscal distress or other conditions.

Q. When will CHP awards be announced?

- A.** It is anticipated that awards will be announced on or after October 1, 2026. Any public announcements will be posted on the [COPS Office website](#).

Q. May our agency request funding under CHP if we have an active CHP or Tribal Resources Grant Program –Hire (TRGP–Hire) award for sworn officer/deputy positions?

- A.** Yes. Agencies with an active CHP or TRGP–Hire award are not disqualified from applying for a CHP award, but the CHP or TRGP–Hire-funded position(s) must be over and above the number of officer/deputy positions funded in the agency’s local budget and under any other COPS Office hiring award.

Note: Recipients may not use COPS Office funding for the same item or service also funded by another U.S. Department of Justice award.

Application Process and Requirements

Q. What is the application process?

- A.** Applying is a two-part process.

To apply for any federal funding, your organization must have an active registration in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) and be assigned a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Go to [SAM.gov | Entity Registrations](#) for additional information.

Step 1: Applicants must submit the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) in [Grants.gov](#).

Step 2: The full application, including attachments, must be completed in [JustGrants](#).

For further guidance and resources, please refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), and view the [DOJ Application Submission Checklist](#) and training resources via [Training: Application Submission | JustGrants Resources](#).

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

- A.** In addition to the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) submitted in Grants.gov, applicants will be required to submit the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) if applicable, answer a series of survey questions, and complete the budget worksheet with accompanying narrative justifications in JustGrants. Applicants are encouraged to read through the survey questions in advance to ensure sufficient time to prepare answers to the questions.

Please visit the [COPS Office website](#) to view the CHP NOFO, complete list of survey questions, and any required and optional attachments.

Q. I found the application on Grants.gov but the “Apply” button is not active.

- A.** If the “Apply” button is greyed out, it means the person who logged in has not been given the rights to apply on behalf of the organization in Grants.gov. Please contact your organization’s Grants.gov E-Biz POC. That person may need to assign you a role, add you to a workspace, or authorize you to create a workspace.
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Q. How do I determine if my agency needs to complete the Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) form?

- A.** JustGrants will prompt each applicant to indicate if it is required to complete and submit a lobbying disclosure under 31 U.S.C. § 1352. The applicant is required by law to complete the SF-LLL if the agency has paid or will pay any person to lobby in connection with the award for which it is applying AND this application is for an award in excess of \$100,000. This disclosure requirement is not applicable to such payments by an Indian Tribe, Tribal organization, or any other Indian organization that are permitted by other federal law.
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Q. When are CHP applications due?

- A.** Applicants are urged to begin the application process in Grants.gov as soon as your agency believes it will apply for CHP funding.
- The Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) must be submitted in Grants.gov by 4:59 p.m. ET on July 23, 2026.
 - The complete application package must be submitted in JustGrants by 4:59 p.m. ET on July 29, 2026.

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

- A.** Hard copy applications are not accepted. However, applicants may print the NOFO to review the NOFO and required questions and, if applicable, the attachments. A PDF version of the NOFO may be found at [COPS Hiring Program \(CHP\) | COPS OFFICE](#).

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

- A.** Yes. CHP 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.ojp.gov/IntergovernmentalReviewSPOCList.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.

Q. What is the budget submission process?

- A.** Applicants will first enter the estimated federal and local budget request on the SF-424. The federal amount should not exceed \$125,000 per requested officer/deputy, and the local share must be at least 25 percent of the total cost. Applicants must then complete the web-based budget worksheet form, including the associated narrative justifications, in JustGrants. No separate budget narrative attachment is required. It is important to enter accurate information in the budget worksheet, as the information provided will be used to determine the amount of your CHP grant, if awarded.

Budget requests may be made in the following categories:

- **Sworn Officer/Deputy Personnel**
- **Fringe Benefits**
- **Other Costs – Direct Administrative Costs:** Up to 2 percent of the federal share may be used for direct administrative costs associated with administering the award. Examples of direct administrative costs may include directly assignable salaries and fringe benefits for administrative staff that collect performance measurement data and submit performance reports in JustGrants and/or Federal Financial Reports.

In the JustGrants budget, enter the number of officers/deputies requested and provide the current entry-level salary, fringe benefits, and direct administrative costs for one full-time sworn officer/deputy.

The total request, including the local cost share (matching funds), will calculate automatically once the total salary, fringe benefits, and direct administrative costs are entered. There is a minimum local (matching funds) requirement of 25 percent. The local cost share (matching funds) requirement may exceed 25 percent if the entry-level salary, fringe, and direct administrative costs total more than \$167,000 over three years.

Q. Will my agency receive additional information following submission of my grant application?

- A.** Once the application is submitted, the Application Submitter, Authorized Representatives, and Entity Administrator will receive an email confirming submission. During the review process, the COPS Office may contact applicants regarding budget or financial questions or to verify application survey data; these contacts will be directed to the Application Submitter. It is important to ensure that the Application Submitter's email is current to allow for timely communication following the close of the NOFO, including any requests for additional information or certification of submitted data. Please note that being contacted does not indicate an award decision.

Allowable Activities and Costs

Q. What may my agency request funding for under CHP?

- A.** CHP awards will cover up to 75 percent of the entry-level salary and fringe benefits, for each approved position for a three-year period, based on the applicant's current entry-level salary for sworn full-time officers/deputies, and direct administrative costs of up to 2 percent of the federal amount. There is a *minimum* 25 percent local cost share (matching funds) requirement, which must be in the form of cash, unless a waiver is approved. The maximum federal share per officer/deputy position is \$125,000 over the three-year period (not \$125,000 per year) unless a local cost share (matching funds) waiver is approved. Any additional costs for higher than entry-level salaries and fringe benefits will be the responsibility of the recipient agency.

Funding under this program will support three years of officer/deputy salaries within a five-year period of performance to accommodate time needed for recruitment and hiring. Agencies must retain each CHP-funded position for 12 months following the three years of funding for that position. The additional officer/deputy positions should be added to your agency's law enforcement budget with state and/or local funds over and above the number of locally-funded officer/deputy positions that would have existed in the absence of the award. Absorbing CHP-funded positions through attrition (rather than adding the extra positions to your budget with additional funding) does not meet the retention requirement.

Funding under this program may be used to hire or rehire career law enforcement officers/deputies in the following categories:

- **Hire new full-time officers/deputies**, which includes filling existing officer/deputy vacancies

that are no longer funded in your agency's budget. These positions must be in addition to your current budgeted (funded) level of sworn positions, and the officers/deputies must be hired on or after the official award start date on the notice of award.

- **Rehire full-time officers/deputies** laid off by any jurisdiction as a result of state, territorial, local, or Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) budget reductions. The rehired officers/deputies must be rehired on or after the official award start date on the notice of award. Documentation must be maintained showing the date(s) that the positions were laid off and rehired.
- **Rehire full-time officers/deputies who are (at the time of application) currently scheduled to be laid off** by your jurisdiction on a specific future date as a result of state, territorial, local, or Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) budget reductions.
 - › Recipients will be required to continue funding the positions with local funding until the date(s) of the scheduled layoffs. The dates of the scheduled layoffs and the number of positions affected must be identified in the CHP application.
 - › The recipient may rehire the officers/deputies with CHP funding on or immediately after the date of the scheduled layoff. Unless required by a recipient jurisdiction, the agency is not required to formally complete the administrative steps associated with the layoff of the individual officers/deputies it is seeking to rehire so long as the agency can document that a final, approved budget decision was made to lay off those individual positions on the identified layoff date.
 - › Documentation must be maintained detailing the dates and reason(s) for the layoffs. Furthermore, agencies awarded will be required to maintain documentation that demonstrates that the scheduled layoffs are occurring for local economic reasons unrelated to the availability of CHP award funds; such documentation may include local council meeting minutes, memoranda, notices, or orders discussing the layoffs; budget documents ordering jurisdiction-wide budget reductions; and/or notices provided to the individual officers/deputies regarding the layoffs.

Note: An applicant may request funding in one or more of the above-referenced hiring categories under CHP. If an application is approved for funding, the notice of award will specify the number of positions approved in each category. Once awarded, recipient agencies may not move funded positions between the hiring categories without receiving written prior approval from the COPS Office.

- **Direct Administrative Costs:** Up to 2 percent of the federal share may be used for direct administrative costs. See 34 U.S.C. § 10381(i).
 - › Recipients may use up to 2 percent of the grant award amount for administrative costs, which encompasses costs directly associated with administering the grant.
 - › Examples of direct administrative costs may include directly assignable salaries and fringe benefits for administrative staff that collect performance measurement data and submit performance reports in JustGrants and/or Federal Financial Reports.

- › Direct costs are those costs that can be “identified specifically with a particular final cost objective, such as a Federal award, or other internally or externally funded activity, or that can be directly assigned to such activities relatively easily with a high degree of accuracy.” See 2 C.F.R. § 200.413.
- › Any direct administrative costs proposed must be specific and directly assignable to the award activities. Any lump sum line item of 2 percent will be removed from the budget, and the award amount will be reduced accordingly.

Note: The current appropriations act cap is \$125,000 per sworn officer/deputy position. Including 2 percent for direct administrative costs would not increase the grant award amount. **Any amount used for direct administrative costs will reduce the amount of funding available for sworn officer/deputy salaries and benefits.** However, if the local match is waived, the 2 percent would apply to the full federal share. Administrative costs encompass expenses directly associated with administering the grant.

All items other than entry-level personnel costs (salaries, fringe benefits, and direct administrative costs), as described in the NOFO, are considered unallowable under CHP. Therefore, requests for equipment, training, uniforms, and vehicles are not permitted under CHP.

In addition, the following personnel costs are unallowable:

- Salaries and fringe benefits of existing locally funded officers/deputies, unless those officers/deputies are currently scheduled to be laid off on a specific future date
- Salaries and fringe benefits over and above an agency’s entry-level salary and fringe benefits for officers/deputies
- Salaries and fringe benefits for civilian or nonsworn personnel
- Salaries and fringe benefits for part-time officer/deputy positions
- Salaries and fringe benefits for furloughed officers/deputies
- Overtime costs
- Severance pay
- Hazard pay

See the [FY26 CHP Application Resource Guide](#) for a non-exhaustive list of allowable and unallowable costs. The COPS Office reserves the right to deny funding for items that may not be included on this list. Agencies are expected to request items that show a direct link between the requested item and the applicant’s CHP project. All requests must contribute directly to the specific purpose of the award project and relate to the appropriations language enacted for FY26.

Q. Can my agency still apply if we are currently working below our budgeted strength?

- A. Yes. A law enforcement agency operating below its budgeted strength is eligible to apply for funding so long as the applicant attests that awarded funds will be used in compliance with the

nonsupplanting requirement and not used to supplant state, local, or Bureau of Indian Affairs funds that are already budgeted for sworn law enforcement officer/deputy positions. Budgeted strength is the maximum number of sworn law enforcement officers/deputies that a law enforcement agency is authorized to employ in their budget. See the Guidance for Understaffed Law Enforcement Agencies Operating below Budgeted Strength under the COPS Hiring Program (CHP) and Tribal Resources Grant Program—Hire (TRGP—Hire) Fact Sheet on the CHP website at [COPS Hiring Program \(CHP\) | COPS OFFICE](#) for additional information.

Q. Is there a limit to how many officers/deputies an agency can request?

A. Yes. Requests will be capped at 20 percent of the agency’s actual sworn force, with a maximum of 50 officers/deputies for any agency. For example, agencies with an actual sworn force of 30 will be allowed to request up to 6 positions. Agencies with fewer than 10 officers/deputies may request one position.

Q. May CHP funding be used to pay for officer/deputy overtime or eliminate officer/deputy furloughs?

A. No. CHP funding may only be used to hire and rehire full-time career sworn law enforcement officers/deputies in order to increase law enforcement agencies’ community policing capacity.

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

A. No. Officers/deputies funded with CHP funds must be in addition to any officers/deputies funded in your agency’s local budget. However, CHP funding may be used to fill vacant sworn officer/deputy positions if the positions are unfunded in the law enforcement budget (i.e., if state, territorial, 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 reductions due to local fiscal distress. The officers/deputies must be hired on or after the official award start date on the notice of award.

Q. How does the COPS Office define a “career law enforcement officer?”

A. The COPS Office statute defines a “career law enforcement officer” as a person hired on a permanent basis who is authorized by law or by a state, territorial, or local public agency to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, or investigation of violations of criminal laws. 34 U.S.C. §10389(1). A recipient agency may use officer/deputy hiring funds to pay the salary and benefits of recruits while in academy training to become “career law enforcement officers” if it is the standard practice of the agency to do so with locally funded recruits. The State of Alaska, and any Indian tribe or tribal organization in that State, may also use officer hiring funds for a “village public safety officer” defined as “an individual employed as a village public safety officer under the program established by the State pursuant to Alaska Statute 18.65.670.” Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010, Pub. L. 111-211, title II, § 247 (a)(2).

Q. Can my agency request funding for hiring correctional officers?

- A. Only correctional officers that meet the definition of “career law enforcement officers” and are deployed into community-oriented policing are eligible under this program. See 34 U.S.C. § 10381(b)(1)-(2)).

Q. Is there a retention requirement for the officers/deputies hired under CHP?

- A. Yes. All applicants are required to affirm that their agency plans to retain all officer/deputy positions awarded, following three years of federally funded salary, for at least 12 months and to identify their planned source(s) of retention funding. The retention period may begin during the five-year period of performance of the award and may extend beyond the end date of the award. Agencies that do not plan to retain all officer/deputy positions under this award program at the time of application are ineligible to apply for CHP funding. The retention requirement cannot be satisfied through attrition. The retained CHP-funded officer positions should be added to your agency’s law enforcement budget with state and/or local funds for at least 12 months over and above the number of locally funded officer/deputy positions that would have existed in the absence of the award. At the conclusion of federal funding, agencies that fail to retain the additional officer/deputy positions awarded under the CHP award for a period of 12 months may be ineligible to receive future COPS Office awards for a period of one to three years.

Q. What documentation does my agency need to maintain in the event of an audit or monitoring site visit to demonstrate compliance with the retention requirement?

- A. Your agency should maintain documentation demonstrating its intent to retain the CHP-funded officer/deputy position(s), the anticipated funding source(s), the employment dates for each position funded under the CHP award, and the date each officer/deputy position started the retention period.

Q. How are fringe benefits defined under CHP?

- A. Fringe benefits typically covered by the applicant agency, as specified in agency personnel and salary policies or contractual agreements, and allowable under 2 C.F.R. 200, will be allowed. Examples of allowable fringe benefits include Social Security, Medicare, insurance (life, health, dental, etc.), shift differential, retirement plans, and holiday pay.

The following are considered unallowable costs under CHP: overtime costs, training, equipment (e.g., uniforms, weapons, or vehicles), severance pay, and hazard pay. If your agency pays these benefits for locally funded officer/deputy positions, your agency will be required to use local funds to do so for CHP-funded officer positions.

For agencies that do not include fringe benefits (e.g., vacation, holiday, shift differential) as part of the base salary costs and typically calculate these separately, the allowable expenditures may be included with personnel costs. Any fringe benefits that are already included as part of the agency’s base salary should not be repeated in the separate fringe listing.

Q. What is shift differential?

- A.** Shift differential pay is a premium hourly rate paid for those hours that are not considered normal day work hours as defined by your agency. Typically, shift differential pay is for the hours worked outside of normal day work hours, where the majority of hours worked are from 3:00 p.m. of one day until 8:00 a.m. of the following day. This would include the evening shift, midnight shift, overlap shift or power shift, or any other designated shift between those hours that would qualify for the shift differential pay as defined by your agency and/or a contractual or union agreement. Overtime beyond any defined shift work hours is an unallowable cost under CHP.

Q. How do I determine the entry-level health care and other fringe benefits costs for my agency?

- A.** An agency should contact its human resources/benefits office to determine the entry-level costs for health care and fringe benefits to assist with developing the grant application budget.

Q. May award funds be used to pay the salaries and benefits of officer/deputy recruits while they are in the academy, prior to being sworn in?

- A.** Yes. An agency may use CHP funding to pay salary and benefits of recruits for the CHP-funded positions the while in academy training to become “career law enforcement officers” if it is the standard practice of the agency to do so with locally funded recruits. To comply with the nonsupplanting requirement, the agency should hire the recruits post-award.

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

- A.** The first-year salary and benefits package should cover the “blend” of both the recruitment academy and the post-graduation amounts, with the sworn officer/deputy salary and benefits amount used to cover the salary and benefits of the officer/deputy post-graduate.

Q. Are indirect costs allowable under the CHP award?

- A.** No. CHP funding may not be used for indirect costs. CHP only pays for approved entry-level salaries, fringe benefits of full-time sworn officers over three years, and direct administrative costs.

Q. May CHP funding be used to retain officers/deputies hired under other COPS Office hiring programs?

- A.** No. CHP funding may not be used to comply with the retention requirement of your other COPS Office hiring awards. Instead, your agency must use state, 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/deputy position(s) must be over and above your agency’s locally funded sworn force and any full-time sworn positions awarded under the CHP award.

Q. Are School Resource Officers (SROs) allowable under CHP?

- A. Yes. SROs are allowable under CHP, but must fall under the hiring categories as outlined above in the “What may my agency request funding for under CHP?” question.

Q. May I apply for both SRO and non-SRO positions?

- A. In general, applicants can request a combination of SRO and non-SRO positions. However, applicants that select the School-Based Policing Problem/Focus Area may only fund SRO positions, as applicants under this Problem/Focus Area receive additional consideration and must devote 100 percent of their funded positions to this Problem/Focus Area.

Q. Can school police officers be funded under the School-Based Policing Problem/Focus area?

- A. No. A School Resource Officer (SRO) is defined as a career law enforcement officer, with sworn authority, deployed in community-oriented policing, and assigned by the employing police department or agency to work in collaboration with schools and community-based organizations— (A) to address crime and disorder problems, gangs, and drug activities affecting or occurring in or around an elementary or secondary school; (B) to develop or expand crime prevention efforts for students;(C) to educate likely school-age victims in crime prevention and safety; (D) to develop or expand community justice initiatives for students; (E) to train students in conflict resolution, restorative justice, and crime awareness; (F) to assist in the identification of physical changes in the environment that may reduce crime in or around the school; and (G) to assist in developing school policy that addresses crime and to recommend procedural changes. 34 U.S.C §10389.

School police officers that do not meet the definition as an SRO as defined above are ineligible for funding under the School Based Policing Problem/Focus Area. However, applicants may request school/campus police officers under other Problem/Focus Areas.

Q. Are there any other application requirements if my agency wants to request funds to hire SROs?

- A. Recipients awarded funding to hire and/or deploy School Resource Officers (SRO) into schools will be required to submit to the COPS Office a signed MOU between the law enforcement agency and the school partner(s) within 90 days of the date shown on the award congratulatory letter. An MOU is not required at time of application; however, if the law enforcement agency already has an MOU in place that is applicable to the partnership, the MOU can be uploaded as an attachment under the Section in JustGrants titled “MOUs and Other Supporting Documents.”

The MOU must contain the following: the purpose of the MOU; clearly defined roles and responsibilities of the school district and the law enforcement agency, with officers’ roles focusing on safety, information sharing, supervision responsibility, and chain of command for the SRO; and signatures. The MOU is an agreement among parties that defines the roles and responsibilities of the individuals and partners involved, including SROs, school administrators, law enforcement and education departments, students, and parents. The MOU should explicitly state the proposed programs and daily activities that the SRO will develop and/or administer. It should also address the policies and procedures and the extent to which information will be shared between the law

enforcement agency and school or school district partners throughout the course of the award. The MOU should be signed by the law enforcement executive and designated representative for the school or school district who has general educational oversight within that jurisdiction.

Please refer to the MOU fact sheet at <https://cops.usdoj.gov/chp> for a full description of the MOU requirements.

Applicants requesting funding for SROs should enter in contact information for each school partner where the SROs will be deployed, if known at the time of application. This information is not required at the time of application but will be required for any agency awarded CHP funding for officers to be deployed as SROs.

Q. Are there any mandatory training requirements for SROs?

- A.** Yes. COPS Office-funded SRO(s) are required to complete a basic 40-hour SRO training course from the COPS Office–approved provider. Training must be completed no later than nine months after the date shown on the award congratulatory letter or six months from the SRO hire date, whichever comes first. If a COPS Office–funded SRO leaves the recipient agency after completing the training, the recipient agrees to pay for the new SRO, who is assigned to backfill this position, to attend a 40-hour basic training course. The new SRO must complete the training no later than nine months after being placed in the school. If the officer has completed the 40-hour basic training within the last 12 months prior to the award date, the requirement has been fulfilled. Any gap longer than 12 months will require the officer(s) to retake the course. The agency must coordinate with the training provider if they want funds to cover registration and travel costs.

If your agency fails to comply with the SRO basic training within the specified timeframe, the COPS Office may temporarily suspend grant funds or take other remedial actions in accordance with 2 C.F.R. §200.339 until your agency complies with this requirement.

Q. Are new hire officer/deputy positions required to be military veterans under CHP?

- A.** No. Under FY26 CHP, new-hire officer/deputy positions are not required to be military veterans. The COPS Office supports the priority to hire military veterans whenever possible and applicants who commit to hiring or rehiring at least one military veteran under CHP will receive additional consideration for funding. The military veterans must fall within one of the three hiring categories described above in the question, “What may my agency request funding for under CHP.”

Q. How do you define a military veteran?

- A.** Under the CHP NOFO, a military veteran is defined as a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable.

Q. If a CHP-funded officer/deputy is called to active military deployment during the grant period, what are the requirements for award implementation to remain in compliance with the CHP requirements?

A. If a CHP-funded officer/deputy is deployed for military service, the agency should follow its standard operating policies and procedures that apply to locally funded officers/deputies in the same situation.

Hiring/Layoff Guidance

Q. If my agency receives CHP funding to rehire officers/deputies who were laid off at the time of our application, do we need to maintain documentation in the CHP award file regarding the layoffs?

A. Yes. Your agency should keep a record of the date(s) the officers/deputies were laid off and the date(s) the positions were rehired with CHP funding in your award file for future monitoring or audit purposes. Please note that CHP funding is based on your agency's entry-level salary and benefits package and that any additional costs beyond entry-level for rehired officers/deputies are the responsibility of your agency.

Q. If my agency is awarded CHP funding to rehire officers/deputies who were laid off, when may we rehire those officers/deputies?

A. Your agency may rehire the officers/deputies on or after the official award start date. In addition, your agency should maintain documentation showing the date(s) that the positions were laid off and rehired.

Q. If my agency receives CHP funding to rehire officers/deputies that are scheduled to be laid off on a specific date in the future, do we need to maintain documentation in the CHP award file regarding the layoffs?

A. Yes. Your agency must keep documentation in your award file for future monitoring or audit purposes that shows the following:

- The date(s) and reasons for the scheduled layoff(s)
- The number of officers/deputies scheduled to be laid off
- The number of officers/deputies rehired with CHP funds
- The date of the rehire(s)
- The reason(s) for the scheduled layoff(s)

Only layoffs that will occur for reasons unrelated to the receipt of CHP funds may be rehired with CHP funds.

Q. What kind of documentation may be helpful to demonstrate that the layoff(s) is not related to the receipt of CHP funds?

- A.** Recipients must demonstrate with supporting documentation any records showing that the layoff(s) occurred as a result of state, territorial, local, tribal, or BIA budget reductions. To show that the layoffs did not occur as a direct result of the availability of CHP funds, it is especially helpful to demonstrate that budget reductions occurred in the entire (or at least additional) municipal or tribal governmental departments, not just the law enforcement department—or, if budget reductions occurred only in the law enforcement agency’s budget, that they were across all categories and not just sworn officer/deputy positions. Such documents might include, but are not limited to, (a) council meeting minutes discussing the budget reductions and layoffs; (b) budget orders directing municipal departments to reduce their operating budgets; (c) personnel directives given to the officers/deputies who are scheduled for layoff(s); (d) any other local documents explaining why the layoffs occurred; or (e) notices provided to the individual officers/deputies regarding the date(s) of the layoffs.

Q. Our agency has applied for CHP funding to rehire officers/deputies who are scheduled to be laid off on a specific date in the future. Do we need to actually lay off officers/deputies before using COPS funds and then rehire them?

- A.** Unless required by your jurisdiction, your agency is not required to formally complete the administrative steps associated with the layoff of the individual officers/deputies you are seeking to rehire. If your agency can document that a final, approved budget decision, unrelated to the receipt of CHP funding, was made to lay off those particular individual officers/deputies on the identified layoff date(s), it may transfer the officers/deputies to the CHP award on or after the date of the layoff. However, agencies must continue funding the officers/deputies with local funds from the award start date until the date of the scheduled layoff. For example, if the COPS Office award start date is September 1 and the layoff is scheduled for November 1, then the COPS Office funds may not be used to fund the officers/deputies until November 1, the date of the scheduled layoff.

Q. If our agency’s economic conditions change after receiving a CHP award and we want to change the hiring categories from what we identified in our CHP application due to post-application layoffs, what should our agency do?

- A.** If your agency receives a CHP award and after receipt your agency needs to change the funded hiring category(s), your agency must request a post-award modification and must receive prior written approval before spending CHP funding. To be considered for a post-application modification into the rehire post-application layoff category, an agency must demonstrate that the officers/deputies to be rehired were officially laid off post-application or are now officially scheduled for layoff on a specific future date as the result of financial reasons unrelated to the receipt of COPS Office funding.

The COPS Office will only consider a modification request into the rehire category for post-application layoffs after an agency has made final, approved budget or personnel decisions. To obtain information on modifying an award, please contact the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770 or email AskCOPsRC@usdoj.gov.

Q. What should my agency do if a CHP-funded position(s) becomes vacant during the grant implementation period?

A. The agency is required to take active and timely steps to backfill any grant-funded vacancies to complete the implementation period.

Q. How will the COPS Office monitor my agency's use of CHP funds for rehiring laid-off officers/deputies?

A. The COPS Office monitors recipient compliance with all award requirements in a variety of ways. For example, your agency may receive either a desk review or onsite monitoring visit from the COPS Office during the award period or an onsite financial monitoring visit from the Office of Justice Programs, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, or it may be audited by the Office of the Inspector General's Audit Division. Your agency also may be asked to submit written documentation demonstrating its compliance with the award conditions or in response to evaluations by outside organizations.

Q. How long must we keep copies of all these records to demonstrate when and why we rehired laid-off officers?

A. Your agency is required to maintain award records to demonstrate your proper use of award funds throughout the active award period and then for at least an additional three years after the submission date for the final expenditure report.

Maximum Federal Share and Local Cost Share (Matching Funds)

Q. What is the maximum federal share and the local cost share (matching funds) under CHP?

A. The maximum federal amount of funding per officer/deputy is \$125,000 over three years; any costs above that are covered by the applicant's local cost share (matching funds), unless waived. The local cost share (matching funds) requirement is a minimum of 25 percent, but in many cases it is higher.

Local Cost Share (Matching Funds) Progression Table. Recipients are also required to pay a progressively larger share of the cost of the award with local funds over the award period. The applicant will also be asked for a projection of the planned federal and local shares of the total project costs over the three years of funding for each position. While your agency may deviate from these specific projections during the award period, it must still ensure that the federal share decreases, and the local share increases over the three years.

Q. How do I calculate the local cost share (matching funds)?

A. When completing the SF-424, applicants must enter an estimated federal and local share in Grants.gov. The maximum federal share is \$125,000 per officer/deputy over three years; any costs above that are covered by the applicant's local cost share or matching funds. The local cost share or matching funds must be at least 25 percent of the total project cost for all officers requested. The original estimates will carry over into JustGrants, and you may be asked to update those original

estimates in the JustGrants “Standard Applicant Information” section once you have completed the web-based budget. You do not need to submit an updated SF-424 in Grants.gov after completing the update in JustGrants.

In JustGrants, applicants will complete the budget by entering the following:

- Number of officers/deputies requested
- Entry-level salary, allowable fringe for one officer for each of the three years, and any direct administrative costs

The system will automatically calculate the total for the number of officers/deputies requested and the local cost share or matching funds.

Q. Why is the local cost share (matching funds) on the budget higher than 25 percent?

- A.** The 25 percent local cost share (matching funds) is a minimum requirement. In some cases, the local cost share (matching funds) will be higher because the federal share of costs cannot exceed \$125,000 per officer/deputies over three years. Any other costs above \$125,000 must be covered by an applicant’s local cost share (matching funds).

Q. Can the local cost share (matching funds) requirement be waived?

- A.** The COPS Office may waive some or all of an applicant’s local cost share (matching funds) requirement. During the application review process, your agency’s waiver request will be evaluated based on the availability of funding, a demonstration of severe fiscal distress as supported by the fiscal health data provided in the application, and comparison of your fiscal health data with that of the overall CHP applicant pool. If your agency wishes to be considered for a waiver, you must respond to the applicable question in the application budget section. The question will ask you to indicate the maximum local share (dollar amount) your agency would be able to contribute to the total project cost in order to implement the award. Please indicate whether the COPS Office should continue to consider your application if the waiver request is not granted or whether it should be removed from consideration. If a full or partial waiver is granted, and your application is funded for a reduced number of officer/deputy positions, the percentage of local share provided will be applied to the total project cost of the awarded officers/deputies.

Q. The officers/deputies we plan to rehire are experienced officers/deputies and are paid a higher than entry-level salary and benefits package. May we use the CHP funds to pay their salaries?

- A.** Yes, but only up to the entry-level portion of their salary and benefits package and up to \$125,000 per officer/deputy over three years. CHP funds are awarded based on your agency’s current entry-level sworn officer/deputy salary and benefits package. You may use CHP funding to hire or rehire experienced officers/deputies, but any additional costs higher than entry-level must be paid with local agency funds, not CHP funds.

Q. CHP states it will provide “up to 75 percent of funding for approved entry-level salaries and fringe benefits of full-time officers/deputies.” How does this apply in cases where law enforcement agencies have various base pay rates based on the prior education level of the officer/deputy?

A. In the limited cases of agencies that offer more than one entry-level salary and benefits package based on prior education for new officers/deputies with no prior law enforcement experience, you may average those salaries and benefits to report your entry-level salary and benefits. Please note, however, that any higher salaries and benefits that are paid to compensate for prior law enforcement experience are not considered entry-level and should not be included in this average or otherwise reported as entry-level. If awarded CHP funding, an agency must only use CHP funding to pay the actual entry-level salary and benefits, and any CHP funds remaining after the five-year period of performance will be deobligated.

Q. If awarded, are we required to maintain the funded sworn force staffing levels identified in the grant application throughout the award and retention period or is our obligation limited to retaining the COPS Office—funded positions?

A. To comply with the nonsupplanting requirement of the CHP award, the recipient must maintain its locally funded sworn force baseline and any planned increases of officer/deputy positions during the award period through the retention period. To comply with the retention requirement of the CHP award, the recipient must add all awarded officer/deputy positions to its law enforcement budget with state and/or local funds for at least 12 months at the conclusion of 36 months of federal funding for each position over and above the locally funded sworn force baseline. The purpose of CHP is to increase the total number of sworn officer/deputy positions above what would have otherwise existed in the absence of the award.

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 7:00 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 award requirements?

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 FY26 CHP award conditions and requirements available online?

A. Yes. Please see the [FY26 CHP Application Resource Guide](#).

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](#). To receive notifications on funding opportunities and announcements, subscribe to [GovDelivery](#) email updates.