

2011 SOS FAQs

Pre – Award Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Secure Our Schools

Program Overview

Q: What is the purpose of the Secure Our School program funding?

A: Secure Our Schools (SOS) grants provide funding to enable law enforcement agencies to partner with schools or school districts to prevent school violence and enhance school safety efforts within their communities. The SOS program will provide funding for 50% of the total project cost. Approximately \$13 million is available for SOS in Fiscal Year 2011.

Getting Started

Q: Who is eligible to apply?

A: All state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies that have primary law enforcement authority within a partner public primary or secondary school (kindergarten through 12th grade) are eligible to apply. The targeted school(s) must teach a basic curriculum (i.e. Math, Science, English, etc.)

Q: What is my username?

A: Your user name is your law enforcement agency's Originating Agency Identifier, assigned by the FBI and commonly referred to as the ORI number. The ORI number is the first two letters of your state abbreviation, the next three numbers are your county's code, and the final two numbers identify your jurisdiction within your county. You should provide your ORI number when you contact the COPS Office for assistance. If you are a previous COPS grant recipient, you may have been assigned an ORI number through the COPS Office if the FBI had not previously assigned your agency this identifier number. In such cases, the last two digits will be "ZZ." In the new COPS Agency Portal, your user name would be the log-in E-mail Address you used to set up your account. At that time, you would have also established a 12 character password for logging into the COPS Online Account Access site. If you need assistance in accessing the site, you may contact the COPS Office Response Center at 1-800-421-6770 for assistance.

Q: I do not know my agency's ORI number, how can I obtain it?

A: The ORI number, assigned by the FBI, as your agency's identifier consist of the first two letters of your state abbreviation, the next three numbers are your county's code, and the final two numbers identify your jurisdiction within your county. When you contact the COPS Office with a question, you can use the ORI number, and we will be able to assist you. If you are a previous COPS grant recipient, you may have been assigned an ORI number through the COPS Office if the FBI had not previously assigned your agency this identifier number. In such cases, the last two digits will be "ZZ." If you've had grants with the COPS Office before and do not

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know your ORI number, please contact the COPS Office Response Center at 800.421.6770 and a representative will be able to look up your ORI number.

Q: How does my agency obtain its password if it is lost or forgotten?

A: To obtain your password, click on the "Account Access" link on the COPS website, the log-on page has a "Forgot your password?" link that will enable you to have your password emailed to the current law enforcement executive on file with the COPS Office.

Q: My agency's Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is about to expire, how do I renew it?

A: All Applicants must have a DUNS number prior to submitting an application for COPS funding. A DUNS number is a unique nine or thirteen-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and tracking entities receiving federal funds. If your DUNS number is due to expire on or before September 30, 2010, you should renew it as soon as possible. To verify the expiration date of your DUNS number, please call 1.866.705.5711 or visit www.dnb.com/us.

Q: My Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is about to expire, how do I renew it?

A: All applicants for federal financial assistance must be registered in the CCR database prior to submitting an application for COPS funding. The CCR database is the repository for standard information about federal financial assistance applicants, recipients, and sub-recipients. Applicants must maintain an active CCR registration with current information at all times during the grant application process. If awarded, you must also maintain the currency of your information in the CCR until you submit the final financial report or receive the final payment under this grant, whichever is later. This requires that you review and update your information at least annually after the initial registration, and more frequently if required by changes in your information or another award term. If you have an active CCR registration that is set to expire before September 30, 2011, you must renew your CCR registration before completing the application. To verify the expiration date of your CCR registration, please visit www.ccr.gov.

Q: Can I print out a blank SOS application so I can see it on paper first?

A: Yes. The COPS website has provided a link to a PDF version of the application for agencies to use for reference only. To access the PDF version of the application, please go to the COPS website at www.cops.usdoj.gov and click on the "Grants and Funding" link. Once you access the grants and funding page, click the link for the "COP Hiring Program" and a copy of the application will be posted there. As a reminder, applications are only accepted online via the COPS website. The PDF version of the application serves as a reference document only and should not be used to submit your application. Please note that not all fields in the printed PDF

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version of the application are required; the required fields will be specified in the online application.

Q: How much time do I have before the application times out?

A: The applications will time out after 20 minutes of non-activity. If your application times out, you will only lose the current page of data. It is advisable to click the save button once you complete each page of the application. This will prevent you from losing data in the event your application is timed out. You will only be able to save pages that are completely filled out.

Eligibility Questions

Q: Is the SOS grant program an open solicitation?

A: Yes, all law enforcement agencies with primary law enforcement authority within a partner public primary or secondary school that teaches a basic curriculum (i.e. Math, Science, English, etc.) are eligible to apply.

Q: As a law enforcement agency, can I partner with a private primary or secondary school?

A: No, per the SOS statute, the term “school” means a PUBLIC primary or secondary school (kindergarten through 12th grade).

Q: Is a college or university eligible to apply?

A: Public universities and colleges may apply if (1) they have a dedicated primary and/or secondary school on campus; (2) they have primary jurisdiction for those schools; and (3) the budget items requested will solely benefit those primary and/or secondary schools.

Q: May I request items to decrease violence in areas frequented by students?

A: Grants awarded under the SOS program shall improve security at schools and on immediate school grounds, i.e., the property on which the schools are located. This does not extend to bus stops, community and recreational centers, public parks, etc. For any additional questions, please contact your state assigned [Grant Program Specialist](#) for further clarification.

Q: Can we use in-kind contributions (donated good or service in lieu of monetary funds) to support the 50% cash match?

A: No, while the COPS office encourages partnerships with community groups, nonprofits, and local business, the 50% match requirement must be a CASH match.

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Community Policing Narrative

Q: What needs to be addressed in my agency's community policing narrative?

A: The community policing narrative which comprises community partnerships, organizational transformation, and problem solving, should be written from the perspective of the law enforcement applicant and should focus on how the law enforcement agency will address the prevention of school violence through its comprehensive community policing plan.

Community partnerships should address collaborative agreements between the applying law enforcement agency and the individuals and organizations they serve to address solutions to the prevention of school violence. Partnerships may include but are not limited to government agencies, community groups, nonprofits, private business, and media outlets.

Organizational transformation should address how the law enforcement agency will develop or enhance the alignment of management, department structure, personnel, and/ or information systems to support partnerships and proactive problem solving to address the prevention of school violence.

Problem solving should address the process of engaging in proactive and systematic examination of problems to develop effective responses using the SARA model (Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment) and crime triangle (victim/offender/location).

For additional clarification on community policing, please refer to [Community Policing Defined](#).

School Safety Assessment

Q: If my agency has completed a school safety assessment, do I need to attach my assessment for review?

A: No, your agency will be required to answer a series of questions related to the completed school safety assessment. You will be required to keep a copy of your school safety assessment on file in the event of a site visit or audit. In addition, it should also be made available upon request.

Q: If my agency has not conducted a school safety assessment within the last three years, are we still eligible to apply?

A: Yes, but your agency will have to complete an assessment for the targeted partner school(s) within the two-year grant implementation period and answer questions related to your planned assessment in the grant application. If your agency has not conducted an assessment, you may request funding to have an assessment completed. If your agency has not conducted an assessment and will not request funding for an assessment, you will be asked to provide a

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detailed explanation in the grant application demonstrating how your department will conduct an assessment.

Q: Is there a particular school safety assessment that is required by the COPS office?

A: The COPS office recognizes the strengths of both formal and informal school safety assessments. Despite the method used, the assessment should be able to document and substantiate the following information:

1. When was the assessment completed within the last three years or when do you plan to complete the assessment within the two-year grant implementation period?
2. Who was or will be involved in the assessment?
3. What was or will be assessed?
4. What aspects of preventing school violence were or will be assessed?
5. Did or does your agency plan to include any staff, teacher, student, or parent survey data related to school climate?
6. What were the findings of the completed assessment? If you haven't conducted the assessment yet, how did you decide what items to request under the grant?

Budget Narrative and Budget Detail Worksheets

Q: Do I need to attach a budget narrative in the 2011 Secure Our Schools program?

A: The FY 2011 budget detail worksheets have been updated to include a description section linked to every line item to be requested.

Q: Can we request sworn officers under the SOS program?

A: No, sworn officer positions are an unallowable cost under the SOS program.

Q: Are indirect costs allowable under the SOS grant?

A: No, indirect costs in an unallowable cost under the SOS program.

General Questions

Q: What is the difference between the priority and secondary deadline?

A: All applications received by the priority deadline will be reviewed for funding consideration. All applications received after the priority deadline and up to the secondary deadline may be reviewed based on the availability of any remaining funding.

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Q: Will my agency be able to adjust my application once it has been submitted?

A: No, once it has been submitted it will be considered a final submission.

Questions?

Please call the COPS Office Response Center at 800.421.6770.