

Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Questions and Answers

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive
Office of Public Safety and Security
Office of Grants and Research



Posted June 3, 2025

Q: Will this grant fund combat gear (shields / helmets)?

A: Yes, shields and helmets are allowable items.

Q: I see that this grant does not fund Bulletproof Vests because funding is available through Patrick Leahy. This past year, because our population was slightly over 100K, for the first time we were not awarded Patrick Leahy funding. That said, will this grant consider funding for Bulletproof vests for departments who are not eligible for Patrick Leahy?

A: Yes, based on this information, Local Law Enforcement Agencies serving communities with a population of 100,000 or more may request Byrne JAG funds for bulletproof vests, since these larger communities are not prioritized applicants for the federal [Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership \(BVP\) funding](#).

Q: Is this funding opportunity replacing the BJA JAG opportunity that comes out annually or is it in addition to (can one department apply for both)?

A: This funding opportunity is not replacing the federal BJA JAG. It's a separate program, and your department can apply for both, if eligible.

Q: I do see language encouraging smaller cities/towns to apply and am trying to get a sense if municipalities with over 10,000 residents should be applying. We are usually eligible for the BJA JAG opportunity as well but there is a lot of need and the opportunity to apply for equipment especially (vests or shields etc.) through this opportunity would be really beneficial.

A: Both smaller and larger communities are encouraged to apply to this Byrne JAG funding opportunity regardless of population. OGR is required by the federal government to **allocate a percentage** of these funds for smaller communities that are not eligible to receive a direct JAG award from the BJA. Byrne JAG funds will be available to communities of all sizes.

However, bulletproof vests are not an eligible request for cities/towns with a population size under 100,000. These smaller communities are encouraged to apply for the federal [Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership \(BVP\)](#) when made available, as these communities are given priority by the federal program. Upon receiving reimbursement through the federal program, a department is eligible for additional reimbursement through the state-funded [Bulletproof Vest Program](#).

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Q: Reviewing the SFY2025 Edward J. Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant guidelines, I noticed that, unlike the 2023 grant, this year's documentation does not explicitly reference "Electronic Control Weapons (e.g., Taser)." Could you please confirm whether ECWs are still eligible for funding under the 2025 grant cycle?

A: Yes, Tasers or other electronic control weapons are allowable.

Q. We are having some issues at our schools. Could we apply for this grant towards cameras on the outside of our schools that would be monitored at the police department?

A: Yes, local law enforcement agencies may apply for cameras to be placed at the schools that will be monitored and maintained by the police department. The cameras must be for a law enforcement purpose, and the police department must retain ownership of all equipment purchased through this grant (i.e., the cameras may not be owned by the school department or other agency).

Q. I was wondering if the Byrne Grant can be used to purchase in-car camera systems?

A: Yes, in-car camera systems are an allowable purchase.

Q. Active Shooter Training

- a. Do we need to have a company or instructor selected prior to submitting the grant?**
- b. Are there any restrictions on who can provide the training (e.g., certified instructors, approved vendors)?**
- c. Do we need to have the training location selected and include associated rental costs in the application?**
- d. Can we include supply costs such as water, food, or other items necessary during the training?**

A: Applicants do not need to select specific vendors prior to the application submission. Please use your best estimate of **all costs** by conducting thorough research on offered trainings. Regarding restrictions, you must follow your local and/or state procurement policies when choosing vendors. For supplies, please review the AGF carefully, as meals, food, water, etc. are unallowable expenses.

Q: Objectives, Activities, and Timeline Section

- a. Should we list dates based on when we expect to receive the grant (if awarded)?**
- b. Should we also include estimated dates for when training and/or equipment will be received or conducted?**

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A: Please read through this section carefully and provide the information requested in each section with your best estimate. Please note that no funded activity may occur before contracts (for municipal agencies) or Interdepartmental Service Agreements (for state agencies) are signed.

Q: Overtime - Should we calculate overtime costs based on an average rate for our officers?

A: Due to the competitive nature of this AGF, it is best for your agency to decide. Both are allowable as overtime rates have been submitted as actual and as an average cost in the past.

Q: Are ballistic shields and computer monitors allowable items under this grant?

A: Yes, ballistic shields and computer monitors are allowable items.

Q: Is a drone considered an unmanned aerial "aircraft"?

A: Yes, and thus, drones are an unallowable item.

Q: Is a phone system upgrade eligible for this grant? Our department's current system is antiquated where we don't even have caller ID.

A: Phone system upgrades are allowable, but it must primarily serve a law enforcement purpose, which will need to be thoroughly described in the application.

Q: Part of the grant is for missing persons. We have a lot of powerlines and wooded area and we have had several instances of missing or suicidal people lost in the woods or going into the power lines area. We also have MBTA tracks, and recently had a missing person who was struck and killed by the train quite a distance from any roadways. Our current 6 wheeler is broken. Do you think a side by side 4 wheeler that would access the remote woods, powerlines and train tracks would qualify under that reasoning?

A: Yes, it is allowed, provided the vehicle is primarily used for law enforcement. Vehicles used as "police cruisers" (including motorcycles, SUVs, pickup trucks, ATVs, and UTVs) are allowable under Byrne JAG, and therefore may be acquired with these funds, to the extent otherwise allowable under the award.

Q: Is a trailer considered a vehicle for the purposes of this grant?

A: A trailer is not considered a vehicle, but a trailer that serves a law enforcement need is allowable.

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Q: Can a State Agency subaward the entire \$60,000 to a local municipal law enforcement agency?

A: No, there is a separate [Byrne JAG Local Law Enforcement opportunity](#) that is available for municipalities.

Q: Do all applicants need to upload a subrecipient risk assessment form, or only those including a subaward in their budget?

A: All primary applicants need to complete and upload a subrecipient risk assessment form.

Q: Are ID cards with duress buttons considered interoperable communication?

A: This item may not be considered interoperable communication, but please review the [ICIP form](#) for further guidance.

Q: Can this grant funding be used to pay for multiple smaller equipment needs?

A: Yes, as long as the items are allowable Byrne JAG expenses.

Q: For local law enforcement agencies with a population over 100,000 interested in bullet proof vests, what documentation do we need to provide showing that we have been denied federal funding?

A: This has been revised in our AGF, all Local Law Enforcement Agencies serving communities with a population of 100,000 or more may request Byrne JAG funds for bulletproof vests, since these larger communities are not prioritized applicants for the federal [Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership \(BVP\) funding](#).

Q: Can this grant be used for LPR's which would be fully contracted/leased annually?

A: Yes, License Plate Readers are allowable. Please keep in mind that any contracts or leases paid with Byrne JAG funds cannot be longer than your potential subaward period, which can be a maximum of 12 months.

Q: Do anti-ramming barriers qualify for equipment?

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A: Anti-ramming barriers are permissible equipment, but any construction is unallowed.

Q: The application form says the ICIP is required. If it doesn't, do we still have to attach the form?

A: The Interoperable Communications Investment Proposal form is only necessary if you're requesting specific equipment or technology that requires it. The Byrne JAG online application form will indicate that the ICIP form is required if you indicate "yes" to the following question in the application:

“Are you requesting funds for interoperable communications? If so, your application requires the upload of the ICIP form to this application for SIEC review and approval.”

Q: How many quotes are needed for equipment?

A: Quotes are not required to be submitted with the application. Applicants are expected to do their own research in order to submit the best cost estimates in their application proposal, but proof of these quotes is not required.

Q: Is training simulator equipment eligible?

A: Yes, the training simulator must be used for law enforcement purposes and have a law enforcement nexus.

Q: Can the grant be used for an e-bike?

A: Yes, the e-bike must be used for law enforcement purposes, have a law enforcement nexus and it can be shown why the e-bike is needed for your project (compared to regular bikes traditionally used by law enforcement).

Q: Can we pay overtime costs for our 911 dispatchers for attendance at ASHER training?

A: Yes, this is an allowable cost.

Q: Are civilian employees such as a domestic violence advocate and a crime analyst allowable costs?

A: Yes, but supplanting is not allowed, which means replacing state or local funds already budgeted for a position with grant funds is prohibited.

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Q: If a department is going to purchase computer equipment, is it suggested to list it under supplies opposed to equipment?

A: It depends on the cost of the item and related accessories. Please refer to the budget Excel workbook and the list of allowable budget categories in the AGF for guidance.

Q: Is the contract template available so that applicants can review the federal terms & conditions prior to submission of our proposals?

A: Yes, federal terms and conditions for Byrne JAG federal awards have been posted to the Byrne JAG webpage. Awardees will be required to comply with the appropriate grant conditions document, depending on their funding source, after funds are awarded. This is subject to any changes made by the federal government.

Q: As recipients of DOJ pass through funding, are awardees required to adhere to the new terms and conditions in all DOJ funding opportunities?

A: This opportunity is made available using federal funds awarded to OGR in prior fiscal years. If awarded, subgrantees will be required to adhere to the federal terms and conditions in place at the time the funds were received by OGR. Subrecipients will receive the full terms and conditions associated with their specific award as part of their contract packet. OGR reserves the right to amend any awards, rules, regulations, or policies relevant to this opportunity if required by the federal government.

Q: What happens if we purchase a safety software/hardware that has an annual recurring cost? Can we still apply for this grant?

A: Byrne JAG funds may be used to pay for contracts or leases so long as they do not extend beyond the 12-month Byrne JAG contract period. If the costs extend beyond the grant contract period, applicants are encouraged to explain how they expect to cover the costs after this grant ends. Application reviewers may be hesitant to award funding if a funding continuation plan is not described.

Q: Are 4 wheel atv/gators and drones covered as police equipment?

A: Please refer to the AGF regarding allowable costs regarding vehicles. Police vehicles are allowed (including motorcycles, atv's, etc) as long as they are used for law enforcement purposes. Drones are unallowable.

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Q: Would a Police Department that falls under a quasi-state agency be considered a LLE or State Agency (for submission materials)?

A: The department would be considered a State Agency.

Q: I attended this morning's webinar and wanted to reach out with an additional question regarding an allowable cost. In the webinar, it was stated that bulletproof vests are not allowed for the State Agency funding opportunity. However, page 4 of the NOFO states something different.

A: State Agencies may use Byrne JAG funding for bulletproof vests.

Technology Upgrades, Investigative Tools, and Protective Gear: Applicants may address this by utilizing funds to upgrade a department's record management system, vehicle mobile terminals, purchase of license plate readers, surveillance cameras, *interoperable communications such as radios, bulletproof and tactical vests (for state agency law enforcement officials only)

Q. Can you please clarify if bulletproof and tactical vests are allowed or not allowed for the JAG State Agency Funding Opportunity?

A: Yes, State Agencies are eligible to purchase bulletproof vests. The statement in the AGF is correct. The PowerPoint presentation contained an error and has been corrected and reposted to our website.

Q: Currently we are considering a proposal which requests funding for 3 equipment purchases; vehicle mobile terminals for our 5 NSCC Police vehicles, portable radios and cell phones.

- 1. Are any of these items not allowable?**
- 2. Would any of these items be considered interoperable communications, and therefore require us to complete the additional form?**

A. These items are allowable if they have a law enforcement nexus. Please review the instructions and information contained in the ICIP form to determine if you should complete the document to ensure you have the correct information. Please visit the Statewide Interoperability Executive Committee [webpage here](#) for more information and a contact email for questions regarding completion of the form.

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Q: Will EOPSS make partial awards? In other words, fund some equipment requests and deny others? Or is the award all or nothing?

A: All applications are scored by reviewers based upon the quality of the proposal. In order to fund the greatest number of agencies, OGR may partially fund applicants.”

Q: Is there a recording or slide deck from this session available? If so, would you mind emailing these materials to me? Thanks so much!

A: The presentation was not recorded, but the PowerPoint along with all documents related to the AGF are located on our website here: [Byrne JAG State Agency Funding Opportunity | Mass.gov](#)

Q: I am in the process of completing the online application. I noticed that when I put my answer in the box, some of the answers are cut out. Also, I expanded the page as much as I could. Do you have recommendations on how to get around this? I am not sure if my answers are too long.

A: If you have expanded as far as it will go, then you have reached the character limit (with spaces). You can also view the character count by copying and pasting the narrative into Word.

Q: Can two LLEs submit applications for a combined regional purchase for a technology that exceeds the award amount?

A: Yes, you would need to submit two separate applications but explain in each that this is a combined request/project. You must explain who will hold the equipment (be responsible for it on a day-to-day basis), and how it will be used for the project.