

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



**John R. Justice Student Loan  
Repayment Program  
Availability of Grant Funds (AGF)  
Non-Competitive Continuation Opportunity**

**AGF Posting: April 27, 2026**

**Applications Due: May 22, 2026**

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# **John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment Program Availability of Grant Funds (AGF)**

## **Key Dates**

<b>Key Tasks</b>	<b>Dates</b>
AGF Released:	April 27, 2026
Deadline for FAQ Submission:	May 8, 2026
Application Due:	May 22, 2026
Award Notification (Tentative):	June 2026

## **I. Program Overview**

The Office of Grants and Research (OGR) will administer the John R. Justice (JRJ) Student Loan Repayment Program in accordance with the Congressionally enacted John R. Justice Prosecutors and Defenders Incentive Act, codified at 42 U.S.C. §3797cc-21 and named for the late John Reid Justice of South Carolina. The purpose of the JRJ program is to encourage qualified individuals to enter into employment as prosecutors and public defenders and remain employed within their respective fields.

The JRJ Student Loan Repayment Program is a federally funded initiative that provides repayment of eligible educational loans on behalf of selected state prosecutors and state and federal public defenders. Annual payment amounts are dependent on the availability of federal funds for that year. Using a combination of FY2023 and FY2024 John R. Justice federal funding, OGR will make approximately \$80,000 available to state prosecutors and state and federal public defenders for continuing beneficiaries to assist with student loan repayment. Award amounts are contingent upon the number of eligible applications received and funding availability. The repayment benefits for each beneficiary cannot exceed \$10,000.00 annually and will be contingent upon the number of qualified applicants.

## **II. Applicant Eligibility**

This AGF is open only to recipients of a SFY 2025 JRJ Grant Award for continuation. This is a continuation grant, not a competitive grant opportunity, so no new applicants will be considered. To be eligible for a JRJ award, an applicant must:

- be a continuing beneficiary applicant with an original service agreement signed no earlier than 36 months prior to this application submission.
- be a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen,
- be an eligible attorney,
- be a current prosecutor or public defender employed in Massachusetts,
- have eligible student loan expenses,

- not be in default of a federally guaranteed student loan,
- not owe a service obligation under another program,
- provide evidence of financial need.

**NOTE:** In the event the employment commitment is not fulfilled, any award amount received will be subject to repayment.

If applicants need to inquire about the date of their original 36-month service agreement or have any questions regarding their eligibility, please contact Allison Garvey at [Allison.C.Garvey@mass.gov](mailto:Allison.C.Garvey@mass.gov)

### **Eligible Attorney Definition**

For purposes of determining eligibility for a JRJ award, the applicant must be an “eligible attorney” who:

- is continually licensed to practice law;
- is a full-time employee working a minimum of 30 hours per week and has been employed full-time for at least 12 months (cumulatively) prior to application date;
- is currently a:
  - **Prosecutor** – full-time employee of a state or unit of local government (including tribal government) who is continually licensed to practice law and prosecutes criminal or juvenile delinquency cases at the state or local government level (including supervision, education, or training of other persons prosecuting such cases); prosecutors who are employees of the federal government are not eligible.
  - **Public defender** – an attorney who is continually licensed to practice law and is a full-time employee of a state or unit of local government (including tribal government) who provides legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases, including supervision, education, or training of other persons providing such representation.
  - A full-time employee of a nonprofit organization operating under a contract with a state or unit of local government who devotes substantially all of the employee’s full-time employment to provide legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases, including supervision, education, or training of other personnel providing such representations.
  - A full-time federal defender attorney in a defender organization pursuant to subsection (g) of section 3006A of Title 18, United States Code, that provides legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases.
- has an annual salary that may not exceed

- \$130,000 at the time of submitting the application
- is a Continuing Beneficiary:
  - **Continuing Beneficiaries:** Applicant agrees to remain employed full time (at least 30 hours per week) as an eligible prosecutor or public defender for a period of service not less than three years (i.e., 36 consecutive months unless extended by FMLA or other legally protected reason) from the execution of their initial Three-Year JRJ Service Agreement submitted with their first JRJ solicitation, unless involuntarily separated from employment.

### III. Loan Eligibility

Eligible student loan expenses are the remaining balance of a:

- loan made, insured, or guaranteed under the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program;
- loan made under the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program;
- Federal Perkins Loan; or
- Federal Consolidation Loan.

#### Ineligible Loans include:

- A loan made to the parents of a dependent student under section 428B of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1078-2);
- A Federal Direct PLUS Loan made to the parents of a dependent student; or
- A loan made under section 428C or 455 (g) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 [20 U.S.C. 1078-3 (Federal consolidation loans) and 1087e (g) (Federal Direct Consolidation loans)] to the extent that such loan was used to repay a loan described in clause 1 or 2.

### IV. How to Apply

The [John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment Program Online Application](#) must include the documents listed in this section and be submitted by **May 22, 2026**, no later than 4:00pm.

Application forms may be found on the webpage here: [John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment Program | Mass.gov](#)

- a. **Online Application:** Complete the online John R. Justice application and upload the necessary documentation outlined below with submission.
  - **Application/Proof of Loans (Attachment A):** Combine Attachment A and all supporting loan documentation into one (1) PDF before uploading to the application.

Please include documentation/statement from each lender or servicer of each loan listed on application.

1. A statement for each qualifying educational loan referenced in the application and statements must:
    - a. be recent (within the last two months);
    - b. show the loan to be in good standing (not in default); and
    - c. include the original balance, minimum monthly payment, and current loan balance.
  2. A National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) Report and/or the Federal Student Aid (FSA) Dashboard Report.
  3. **Employer Certification Form:** Applicants and their employer must complete and sign the JRJ Employer Certification Form.
  4. **Service Agreement (Attachment C):** Complete and sign the John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment Program Service Agreement.
- b. Submission: Submit the [Online Application](#) with your supporting documentation on or before Friday, May 22, 2026, no later than 4:00pm.

Scanned documents must be submitted as PDF attachments within the online application.

## V. Distribution of Funds

Proposals will be reviewed to ensure all applicants meet the eligibility requirements.

Also please note funding is contingent upon the availability and release of funds from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance. OGR will not provide alternative funding sources in the event these federal funds are not made available or released. OGR reserves the right to amend any rules, regulations or policies to this opportunity if required by the federal government.

## VI. Separation from Eligible Employment and Repayment of Funds

As soon as a beneficiary is aware of separation from eligible employment, they must inform the Office of Grants and Research. Consistent with the terms of the JRJ Service Agreement, in the event of a separation from a position as an eligible beneficiary prior to completion of the agreed upon period of service, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, the recipient will be indebted to and must reimburse the federal government for the full amount of any awards received under this solicitation and any prior solicitations under which the beneficiary is still serving under their signed Service Agreement.

A beneficiary who is separating from their qualified employment must send payment in the total

amount of the JRJ Student Loan Repayment benefits that have been made on their behalf as a JRJ Recipient to the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO). The mailing of the payment must include:

1. A notation of the applicable Grant Number from which the funds were derived,
2. Amount from the grant, and
3. A note stapled to the check with the award number(s) and amount(s) awarded from the grant for which they were unable to meet their term obligations.

This communication should be mailed to:

U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs  
Office of the Chief Financial Officer  
Attn: Accounting Control Branch  
810 Seventh Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20531

4. JRJ recipients are strongly encouraged to contact the United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of the Chief Financial Officer Accounting Control Branch to confirm the mailing address prior to mailing repayment.
5. JRJ recipients seeking a waiver of repayment obligations from the United States Attorney General should contact the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the United States Department of Justice for more information.

## **VII. Award Notification**

Eligible applicants will be notified by email if they are selected to receive a JRJ award and will be required to affirm acceptance of their award. OGR anticipates sending award notifications in June 2026.

## **VIII. Award Payment**

In accordance with federal requirements, OGR, as the State Administering Agency, will award the JRJ funds as payments made directly to the loan service provider of the JRJ Beneficiary only (not to the JRJ Beneficiary). The U.S. Department of Justice and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are not responsible for any late fees or penalties assessed by your lending institution. NOTE: Any Loan Repayment award may result in tax implications. Please consult with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or a tax advisor.

Applicants must continue to make their own regularly scheduled monthly payments.

### **Public Loan Forgiveness Program**

JRJ applicants may, in some cases, also be eligible for a Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. The

JRJ program will be used to supplement the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program (PSLF). [Learn more about PSLF Program.](#)

It is the Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA) understanding that eligibility for the PSLF Program states that a borrower must make 120 "separate, monthly" payments. However, when a loan servicer receives a lump sum payment:

- which is to say, a payment more than what the borrower is obligated to pay for the month, the loan servicer assumes that the excess, while immediately applied to reduce outstanding interest and principal on the loan, is intended to cover future installments. When future installments are satisfied, the borrower is no longer obligated to make monthly payments for the number of months for which the installment has been fully satisfied. BJA understands that this may present two problems for individuals who receive both JRJ and PSLF benefits:
  - The first is that the lump sum payment, while satisfying more than one month's payment obligation, is not a "separate payment." Therefore, it can only count as "one" PSLF payment.
  - The second problem is that, by removing the borrower's obligation to make future monthly payments, the borrower cannot, for those months, make a "monthly payment" in some cases – even if the borrower voluntarily remits money.

The second problem can be remedied by providing application of payment instructions with the payment. Specifically, the payor/borrower could state that they do not intend to apply the excess toward future installments, which will ensure that the borrower continues to be obligated to make future payments over subsequent months. Each loan servicer should provide, on the billing statement, information regarding how the borrower/payor is to provide payment instructions. Therefore, JRJ recipients may be advised (in order to maximize the amount of credit they may receive from PSLF program while working in employment that also entitles them to JRJ program benefits) to provide special payment instructions associated with their JRJ Program award. Borrowers should also be able to provide these instructions for a payment that has already been applied, provided it is done promptly after the payment is applied.

**NOTE:** This example is provided by the BJA solely for illustrative purposes and should not be construed as financial advice. All grantees and beneficiaries should independently consult with the U.S. Department of Education (and/or other sources) to learn how receipt of JRJ benefits may affect awards through the PSLF Program.

## **IX. Contact Information**

For general information regarding the JRJ Program, check the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, [Bureau of Justice Assistance website.](#)

Questions regarding the Massachusetts JRJ Program should be directed to OGR by contacting Allison Garvey, at [allison.c.garvey@mass.gov](mailto:allison.c.garvey@mass.gov).

All questions will be compiled and posted weekly until **May 8, 2026**, under the [John R. Justice program page](#) of OGR's website.