**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**Executive Office of Public Safety and Security**

**Office of Grants and Research**

**MASSACHUSETTS JOHN R. JUSTICE**

**STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM**

**Federal Fiscal Year 2017**

**BACKGROUND, ELIGIBILITY, REQUIREMENTS**

Congress enacted the John R. Justice Prosecutors and Defenders Incentive Act (hereinafter referred to as the “Act”) codified at 42 U.S.C. §3797cc-21 and named for the late John Reid Justice of South Carolina, to encourage qualified attorneys to choose careers as prosecutors and public defenders and to continue in that service. The John R. Justice (JRJ) Grant Program provides loan repayment assistance for local, state, and federal public defenders and local and state prosecutors who commit to continued employment as public defenders and prosecutors for at least three years – if a new beneficiary or continuing beneficiary - or an additional one year for prior beneficiaries who have fulfilled their initial 3 Year JRJ Service Agreement.. The Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) Office of Grants and Research is the State Administering Agency responsible for the administration of the Federal Fiscal Year 2017 JRJ Grant Award***.***

EOPSS intends to award a total of **$44,309.00** of the FY 2017 JRJ Grant Program funds. The total award will be allocated equally for the benefit of prosecutors and public defenders. It is anticipated that ten beneficiaries will be selected: five public defenders and five prosecutors. The anticipated total for each beneficiary will be up to **$4,430.90**. In accordance with federal requirements, EOPSS will award the funds to the employers of the beneficiaries for further disbursement to the holders of the beneficiaries’ loans. All individuals, including prior beneficiaries, who meet the eligibility requirements below may apply for the FY 2017 funds. All awards are contingent upon the release of FY 2017 JRJ Grant Program funds to Massachusetts by the United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance.

Questions regarding the Massachusetts JRJ application process and documents may only be submitted via e-mail to jenny.barron@state.ma.us by **Friday May 4, 2018**. All written questions and responses will be posted at the following website: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/justice-and-prevention-grants> by **Wednesday May 9, 2018.**

**Key Dates**

Application Posted: **Friday, April 20, 2018**

Applications Due: **Monday, May 21, 2018**

Anticipated Award Announcements: **Friday, June 15, 2018**

**Eligibility Requirements**

1. EOPSS will give top consideration to those eligible beneficiaries who have the least ability to repay their loans and those who have received the JRJ benefits in the prior fiscal year (and have less than three years remaining on their JRJSLRP Service Agreement).
2. EOPSS will distribute awards to ensure a range of geographic and demographic representatives.
3. Applicant is a full-time (at least 30 hours) staff attorney of one the Commonwealth’s District Attorneys’ Offices, the Attorney General’s Office, the Committee for Public Counsel Services, or the Federal Public Defender Office. (Note: Appellate defenders and ADAs and criminal appellate AAGs are eligible.)
4. Applicant must have been employed full-time (at least 30 hours per week) by one of the aforementioned employers for at least 36 months preceding submission of the application; or, applicant must have been employed full-time (at least 30 hours per week) by more than one of the employers cumulatively for at least 36 months preceding submission of the application are also eligible.
5. Applicant’s salary at the time of submitting the application may not exceed $78,000 annually.
6. **New 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 of 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 3 Year JRJ Service Agreement (Appendix B) submitted with this application, unless involuntarily separated from employment; or,

**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 of 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 3 Year JRJ Service Agreement (Appendix B) submitted with their first JRJ application, unless involuntarily separated from employment. (Continuing Beneficiary Applicants should complete Appendix D for this application.); or,

**Prior Beneficiaries:** An applicant who is a prior beneficiary who has completed the initial 3 Year JRJ Service Agreement, if selected, agrees to remain employed full time (at least 30 hours per week) as an eligible prosecutor or public defender for a period of service of not less than one year (i.e., 12 consecutive months unless extended by FMLA or other legally protected reason) from the additional 1 Year JRJ Service Agreement (Appendix C) submitted with this application, unless involuntarily separated from employment.

1. Loans – Eligible and Ineligible

**Loans eligible for repayment are defined as, and limited to the following**: (1) A loan made, insured, or guaranteed under part B of subchapter IV of chapter 28 of Title 20 (Federal Family Education Loan Program); (2) A loan made under part C or D of subchapter IV of chapter 28 of Title 20 (William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan and Federal Perkins Loans); (3) A loan made under section 1078-3 or 1087e (g) of Title 20 (Federal consolidation loans and Federal Direct Consolidation loans, respectively).

**Ineligible Loans include:** (1) 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). (2) A Federal Direct PLUS Loan made to the parents of a dependent student. (3) 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).

1. Applicant must not be in default on repayment of any federal student loan or no-interest Massachusetts state loan.
2. Applicant must be an eligible prosecutor or defender as defined below.

**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 unit of local government level (including supervision, education, or training of other persons prosecuting such cases). 42 U.S.C.§3797cc-21(b)(1). 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; is 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 providing legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases including supervision, education, or training of other persons providing such representation; or employed as 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. 42 U.S.C. §3797cc-21(b)(2).

**NOTE:** Attorneys in private practice and not full-time employees of a non-profit organization, even if individually or part of a firm that is under contract with a state or court-appointed to provide public defense services, do not qualify as “public defenders” and therefore are not considered to be eligible as beneficiaries under this solicitation.

It is the responsibility of applicants to consult with the holder of his/her loan(s) or other relevant financial institutions, tax or other financial advisor, or employer to understand the implications of being the beneficiary of JRJ Grant Program funds. For additional information from the U.S. Department of Justice on the JRJ Grant Program see: [https://www.bja.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?Program\_ID=65](https://www.bja.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?Program_ID=65#horizontalTab1)