



## CONSORTIUM OF FORENSIC SCIENCE ORGANIZATIONS (CFSO)

# FLASH BRIEF

MAY 2020

*The mission of the CFSO is to speak with a single forensic science voice in matters of mutual interest to its member organizations, to influence public policy at the national level, and to make a compelling case for greater federal funding for public crime laboratories and medical examiner offices. The primary focus of the CFSO is local, state, and national policymakers, as well as the United States Congress.*

## Legislative Corner

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The 117th Congress has been slow to start legislatively, however, in April bills began to move, and a “skinny budget” was delivered to Congress. Delivered on April 9, 2021, it lacks detail but the skinny budget does provide a narrative of priorities for the Administration (link below for actual text and excerpts that are likely of interest). It is important to remember that this is a proposal to Congress, and Congress will modify the detail as they move through the process. Of note, these are only topline figures, and no detail is expected until late May or early June. Despite the lack of detail budget hearings have begun. However, further delay in this full budget delivery, along with the focus on the Infrastructure Bill is likely to result in a continuing resolution, which will mean a delay in contracting for any FY22 government contracts. We will monitor this process and keep you informed as we move forward.

### Skinny Budget for FY22

The following is a summary of the FY22 “Skinny Budget” release for the Department of Justice and other agencies.

#### **Department of Justice**

The President’s 2022 discretionary request includes \$35.2 billion for DOJ, a \$1.8 billion or 5.3-percent increase from the 2021 enacted level. The focus of the budget is Criminal Justice Reform and Police Reform to address “systemic inequities.”

#### **Department of Commerce**

The Department of Commerce has a proposed increase of 27.7%. There is significant funding for manufacturing and trade assistance with export controls. There is also a

focus on research and development. Specifically, it provides \$916 million, an increase of \$128 million over the 2021 enacted level, to expand scientific and technological research at NIST.

### **Department of Homeland Security**

The DHS budget is \$52 billion which is essentially equal to FY21. There is no funding for a wall, and it requests the cancellation of previous years funding for that effort. There is \$2.1b for Cybersecurity which is a \$110 m increase from FY21.

## **BUDGET TEXT OF INTEREST AND LINK**

***(note the text below is taken directly from the budget document)***

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/FY2022-Discretionary-Request.pdf>

### **DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

The Department of Justice (DOJ) is responsible for defending the interests of the United States and protecting all Americans as the chief enforcer of Federal laws. The 2022 discretionary request: invests in Civil Rights and environmental justice; provides targeted funding to address domestic terrorism and gun violence; combats crimes that threaten community safety; increases funding to end violence against women; supports Federal, State, and local criminal justice reforms; and improves the immigration court system.

- **Reinvigorates Federal Civil Rights Enforcement.** In order to protect marginalized communities, the discretionary request invests \$209 million, an increase of \$33 million, in the Department's Civil Rights Division, Community Relations Service, and other programs. These funds would support: police reform; the prosecution of hate crimes across the Nation, and especially in communities uniquely impacted by bias, xenophobia, and hate driven by the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, such as Asian America communities; the enforcement of voting rights in the Civil Rights Division; mediation and conciliation services for community conflicts arising from discriminatory practices; and other activities.
- **Addresses Domestic Terrorism.** The discretionary request provides an additional \$101 million to address the rising threat of domestic terrorism while respecting civil rights and civil liberties. This increase includes \$45 million for the Federal Bureau of Investigation for domestic terrorism investigations, \$40 million for the U.S. Attorneys to manage increasing domestic terrorism caseloads, \$12 million for additional response capabilities at the United States Marshals Service, and \$4 million to the National Institute of Justice to support research on domestic terrorism threats. These investments complement funding provided for the Department of Homeland Security.
- **Combats the Gun Violence Public Health Epidemic.** The discretionary request includes \$2.1 billion, an increase of \$232 million above the 2021 enacted level, for DOJ to address the gun violence public health crisis plaguing communities across the Nation. Investments include \$401 million in State and local grants, an increase of \$162 million or 68 percent above the 2021 enacted level. This level supports existing programs to improve background check systems, provides \$100 million to support coordinated violence reduction programs through a new Community Violence Intervention initiative, and invests in new programs to incentivize State adoption of gun licensing laws and to establish voluntary gun buyback pilot programs. In addition, a total of \$1.6 billion is provided to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, an increase of \$70 million or 5 percent over 2021 enacted, to oversee the safe sale, storage, and ownership of firearms and to support the Agency's other work to fight violent crime.

- **Invests in Efforts to End Gender-Based Violence.** The discretionary request proposes a historic investment of \$1 billion to support Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) programs at DOJ, a \$487 million or 95-percent increase over the 2021 enacted level. This funding supports substantial increases for longstanding VAWA programs, in addition to funding for new programs to expand restorative justice efforts, protect transgender survivors, and support women at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges to ensure these institutions have the same resources as other schools to address this pervasive issue. The request also provides \$120 million, an increase of \$72 million above the 2021 enacted level, to the Office of Justice Programs to address the rape kit backlog and to fund a new Regional Sexual Assault Investigative Training Academies program. These investments complement the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021's efforts to combat increased risk of gender-based violence due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and additional investments in the Department of Health and Human Services.
- **Reforms the Federal Criminal Justice System.** Bold action is required to reform the Federal criminal justice system so that it serves and protects all Americans. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect American communities, the need for smart solutions to reduce prison populations has become even more pressing. The discretionary request supports key investments in First Step Act of 2018 (FSA) implementation, advancing the provision of high-quality substance use disorder treatment, reentry services, and recidivism-reducing programming to prisoners according to individual needs. Building on the bipartisan FSA, the discretionary request also incorporates savings from prison population reduction measures that prioritize incarceration alternatives for low-risk offenders. These measures would help correct levels of incarceration and enforcement that perpetuate racial and economic inequity.
- **Invests in Community Policing, Police Reform, and Other Efforts to Address Systemic Inequities.** Policies that create strong, positive ties between law enforcement and the communities they serve are critical to making the Nation's communities safer and to rooting out systemic inequities in the justice system. The discretionary request provides \$1.2 billion, an increase of \$304 million, to support a range of programs supporting police-community relationships, including the Community Oriented Policing Services hiring program and programs that support community-oriented policing policies and practices, such as racial sensitivity and implicit bias training and additional support for hate crime training and police innovation programs. In addition to these investments, the discretionary request proposes administrative action to apply new priority preferences and grant conditions to ensure resources are used to further reform efforts, including requirements that those funds be used to help law enforcement agencies mirror the racial diversity of the communities they serve. The request also provides \$1.5 billion, an increase of \$554 million, for grants that support efforts to reform State and local criminal justice systems, including funding to support Juvenile Justice Programs, drug courts and alternative court programs, public defenders, and Second Chance Act of 2007 programs.
- **Supports Efforts to Reduce the Immigration Court Backlog.** In order to address the nearly 1.3 million outstanding cases before the immigration courts, the discretionary request makes an investment of \$891 million, an increase of \$157 million or 21 percent over the 2021 enacted level, in the Executive Office for Immigration Review. This funding supports 100 new immigration judges, including support personnel, as well as other efficiency measures to reduce the backlog.
- **Supports Environmental Justice.** To ensure equal treatment and protection of all people under environmental policy and law, the discretionary request provides \$5 million for the Environmental and Natural Resources Division to tackle environmental justice issues and \$39 million for the Bureau of Prisons to repair aging facilities and infrastructure in a manner that improves conditions of confinement

and enhances environmental sustainability.

- **Protects American Next Generation Research and Development.** To maintain American leadership in emerging technology, which underpins America’s innovation, economic competitiveness, and national security, the United States must prevent adversaries from transferring intellectual property through theft and coercion. Within the discretionary request, DOJ would devote adequate resources to protect U.S. Government- supported Research and Development (R&D) against foreign government interference and exploitation, while maintaining the open and collaborative nature of the U.S. R&D enterprise.

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

The Department of Commerce (Commerce) is responsible for: promoting job creation; supporting and overseeing international trade; and providing economic, environmental, and scientific information needed by businesses, citizens, and governments. The 2022 discretionary request supports American manufacturing and research, advances economic recovery in underserved communities, invests in climate science and resilience, and strengthens American competitiveness and security.

- **Supports a Future Made in America.** To ensure the security and resilience of the Nation’s supply chain and foster a robust resurgence of American manufacturing, the discretionary request includes \$442 million for the National Institute of Standards and Technology’s (NIST) manufacturing programs—more than doubling the 2021 enacted level. This increase includes \$150 million to fully fund two new Manufacturing Innovation Institutes (MIIs), one of which is aimed at restoring the United States as a global leader in the design and manufacture of semiconductors. These MIIs would complement additional institutes launched by the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy as part of the growing Manufacturing USA network. The discretionary request also expands the Manufacturing Extension Partnership by providing \$275 million, an increase of \$125 million over the 2021 enacted level, to make America’s small and medium manufacturers more competitive and strengthen domestic supply chains.
- **Spurs Research and Technological Innovation.** The discretionary request includes a historic investment in American technological and scientific competitiveness. It provides \$916 million, an increase of \$128 million over the 2021 enacted level, to expand scientific and technological research at NIST, helping to spur a number of research advances in climate-resilient building codes, computing, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence, quantum information science, biotechnology, and advanced manufacturing, and to establish prize competitions to pursue key technology goals to benefit all Americans. It also includes \$39 million for advanced communications research at the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, which would support the development and deployment of broadband and 5G technologies by identifying innovative approaches to spectrum sharing.
- **Expands Opportunities for Minority-Owned Businesses.** To help address longstanding racial inequity and eliminate barriers for minority-owned firms, the discretionary request elevates the Minority Business Development Administration’s (MBDA) stature within Commerce by providing \$70 million, an increase of \$22 million above the 2021 enacted level, and supporting a dedicated Assistant Secretary. The additional funds would expand opportunities by investing in economic development grants, increasing MBDA’s staffing capacity, and supporting research to ensure policies effectively support the minority business community.

## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is responsible for safeguarding the American people. The 2022 discretionary request: invests in improvements in border security through the use of advanced technology; promotes a humane and efficient immigration system; provides enhanced civil rights protection; supports Federal, State, local, non-profit and private entities' efforts to detect, deter, and recover from malicious cyber-attacks; addresses the root causes of domestic terrorism; combats climate change; and fosters research and development.

- **Invests in Effective and Modern Border Security.** The discretionary request provides about \$1.2 billion for border infrastructure which includes: modernization of land ports of entry; investments in modern border security technology and assets; and efforts to ensure the safe and humane treatment of migrants in CBP custody. These investments would facilitate more robust and effective security screening to guard against human smuggling and trafficking, the movement of illicit drugs and weapons, the entry of undocumented migrants, and the import of unlawful goods, as well as provide for the more efficient processing of legal trade, travel, and commerce through the Nation's Land Ports of Entry. The discretionary request includes no additional funding for border wall construction and proposes the cancellation of prior-year balances that are unobligated at the end of 2021.
- **Improves Federal Cybersecurity across Government.** The discretionary request responds, in a variety of ways, to funding challenges precipitated by recent cybersecurity incidents. The discretionary request provides \$2.1 billion, a \$110 million increase from the 2021 enacted level, for the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), which builds on the \$650 million provided for CISA in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. This funding would allow CISA to enhance its cybersecurity tools, hire highly qualified experts, and obtain support services to protect and defend Federal information technology systems. The discretionary request also provides \$20 million for a new Cyber Response and Recovery Fund.
- **Responds to Domestic Terrorism.** The discretionary request provides a total of \$131 million to support diverse, innovative, and community-driven methods to prevent domestic terrorism while respecting civil rights and liberties. This funding, which builds on the 2021 enacted level, supports critical research on the root causes of radicalization and enhanced community outreach. The discretionary request includes \$20 million for grants to build local capacity to prevent targeted violence and all forms of terrorism, in addition to approximately \$75 million available under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Homeland Security Grant Program. These investments complement those that the discretionary request includes for the Department of Justice.
- **Confronts Climate Change and Other Disaster Challenges.** The discretionary request expands DHS's work with State and local communities to prepare for the impacts of climate change. The discretionary request invests an additional \$540 million above the 2021 enacted level to incorporate climate impacts into pre-disaster planning and resilience efforts. This funding level also supports a resilient infrastructure community grant program, which prioritizes climate resilience projects for vulnerable and historically underserved communities. In addition, the discretionary request continues investments in the incident response workforce to ensure sufficient personnel are trained and available for deployment to help communities respond to future disasters. The discretionary request would also increase the number of FEMA staff equipped to support communities in order to prepare and respond to disasters in an equitable manner.

- **Revitalizes Research and Development Capacity.** The discretionary request proposes \$599 million for investments in research, development, and innovation across the Department, to lay a strong foundation for securing the American public from future threats. These projects would focus primarily on climate resilience, cybersecurity data analytics, and transportation security technologies.
- **Supports Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Protection.** The discretionary request proposes increasing funding for the Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties to address the press of complaints the office has received, but has been unable to process because of staffing shortages.

## LEGISLATIVE OTHER THAN BUDGET

Currently, there are two programs that are under discussion and debate that directly affect forensic science—the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Act as part of the Justice for All Act and the Violence Against Women Act. There is also a piece of legislation that has passed and will likely be law at the publication of this bill.

### JUSTICE FOR ALL ACT, (Paul Coverdell Reauthorization)

The Justice for All Act (JFA) requires re-authorization this year, 2021. This re-authorization will address the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grants, the Innocence Protection Act of 2004, the Wrongful Conviction Review Program, the Kirk Bloodsworth Post-Conviction DNA Testing Grant Program and the DNA Sexual Assault Justice Act as all of these grants fall under the larger bill of JFA. Discussions on this re-authorization are on-going and the bill has not been introduced by the House or Senate as of yet. The CFSO is actively participating in this negotiation and upon completion will provide a detailed memo.

### VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) passed the House on March 17, 2021 and will now move to the Senate for debate. VAWA is a 1994 law that was written to provide resources for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. It passed 244-172. The authorization expired in 2018 and Congress has not been able to re-authorize it despite several attempts due to partisan disputes over gun and transgender language in the bill. The Senate Republicans are expected to introduce a counterproposal to the House Bill. This bill authorizes 19 grant programs (<https://www.justice.gov/ovw/grant-programs>). Of note if an authorization does not pass in time and if the funding is discretionary, which it is in forensic science grants, the government can continue to fund those grants while the authorization is being debated.

As we move through the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress we will provide details of each of these bills and others as they are introduced.

### [H.R. 2630 Extending Temporary Emergency Scheduling of Fentanyl Analogues Act](#)

H.R. 2630 (link below with text) passed the House on April 21, 2021 by a voice vote and the Senate on April 29, 2021 and was signed into law on May 4, 2021. This bill extends until October 22, 2021, the temporary scheduling order issued by the Drug Enforcement Administration to place fentanyl-related substances in schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act.

The previous order (PL 116-114) extended the last scheduling and also requested a GAO report to look at the matter. Titled “Synthetic Opioids, Considerations for the Class-Wide Scheduling of Fentanyl-Related Substances” (attached). The GAO report was sent to Congress in April 2021.

The GAO report provides analyzed documents, data and statements for Federal, state and local stakeholders. It focused on the “effects related to drug classification, research, and federal law enforcement and effects from the classification of similar substances.” Some highlights”

- The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports that there were more than 50,000 deaths involving all synthetic opioids in the 12-month period ending July 2020.
- Possible considerations for the next expiration:
  - Allow the temporary scheduling order to expire. DEA could individually schedule specific fentanyl substances.
  - Schedule as a class without modifications. The current temporary scheduling order could be made permanent through legislative scheduling.
  - Legislatively schedule as a class with modification.

There have been a series of hearings regarding this action (see hearing videos on the CFSO website).

Also, on the CFSO website is the transcript for the floor debate in the House and the Senate. Of note, Members expressed concern with “racial disparity in fentanyl analog prosecutions”. As the Congress considers a more permanent solution to this matter we will monitor the debate and provide updates.

[Click here](#) to read the full bill.

#### WHY SHOULD FORENSIC SCIENTISTS CARE ABOUT LEGISLATION?

But why should forensic scientists care about this and get involved? Simply put, money and how you are allowed to spend that money.

Congress has specific tasks, through legislative debate and compromise it makes laws and passes budgets, it is set up to be the voice of the people. While Congress may affect you in your daily life with the passage of legislation that change your taxes or dictates how you receive healthcare it also affects the field of forensic science and how you are able to do your job. Legislation is what creates grant programs and oversees its proper expenditure. Legislation can also dictate the operation of your lab. It can put restrictions and requirements on that grant and or the lab that may be helpful to a lab or it may hinder your ability to effectively do your job. Since legislation is a compromise and a process, however, the American people and more specifically the forensic science community has the ability to make its voice heard during this process and influence the outcome of the legislation by educating the policymakers. The Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations (CFSO) presents your positions on the legislation being debated and ensures that language and funding are beneficial and adequate for your community. But you can also help also by letting your Member of Congress know what the needs are in your lab. Keep any eye out for the advocacy packages on our website.

## NON-LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

### CEBR Grant Released

The CEBR FY2021 solicitation has been released on the Bureau of Justice Assistance website <https://bjaojp.gov/funding/opportunities/o-bja-2021-104004> Note the deadline of June 8<sup>th</sup> Grants.gov deadline and also the June 22<sup>nd</sup> JustGrants deadline for application.

### Update on Final Rule of Hemp Production

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced completion of its review of the Final Rule establishing the U.S. Domestic Hemp Production Program. The rule moves forward as published in the Federal Register on Jan. 19, 2021 and becomes effective March 22, 2021.

The final rule includes provisions for the USDA to approve hemp production plans developed by states and Indian tribes including requirements for maintaining information on the land where hemp is produced, testing the levels of delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol, disposing of plants not meeting necessary requirements and licensing requirements. It also establishes a federal plan for hemp producers in states or territories of Indian tribes that do not have their own USDA-approved hemp production plan.

The final rule incorporates modifications to regulations established under the interim final rule (IFR) published in October 2019. Key provisions of the final rule include licensing requirements; recordkeeping requirements for maintaining information about the land where hemp is produced; procedures for testing the THC concentration levels for hemp; procedures for disposing of non-compliant plants; compliance provisions; and procedures for handling violations.

### Executive Order on the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology

On Monday January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 President Biden set out the instructions for the formation of a new President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. The Executive Order can be found [here](#).

### DOJ Response to 2016 PCAST Report

On Wednesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021 the DOJ published a statement on the 2016 PCAST Report. The statement can be found [here](#).

### Research Assist Opportunity

Dr. Rachel Bolton-King and her colleagues are currently undertaking a research project which they hope will benefit forensic firearms examiners worldwide. They are attempting to obtain 10,000 test fires from 1,000 different 9mm firearms. Currently they only have about 30% of the number needed and have until July 2021 to obtain all of their samples. Please find Dr. Bolton-King's information below if interested.

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## [NIJ National Center on Forensics Survey](#)

The Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, recently awarded George Mason University and its partners, the National Association of Attorneys General, the American Society for Clinical Pathology, and the Montana Forensic Science Division, a three year grant to administer the [National Institute of Justice \(NIJ\) National Center on Forensics](#) (NIJ award number 2020-MU-CX-0001). The purpose of the NIJ National Center on Forensics is to:

- Provide medico-legal learning opportunities for medical students to train as deputy medical examiners/coroners in underserved rural areas;
- Provide forensic science and legal training to prosecutors, judges, and law enforcement; and
- Develop opportunities as appropriate amongst the designated partners to benefit current and future practitioners in the field

To ensure the NIJ National Center on Forensics meets the needs of these communities, we ask for a few minutes of your time to complete a short survey, linked below:

[https://gmu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_9FxFy9zJMe9fg](https://gmu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9FxFy9zJMe9fg)

This survey will provide you with an opportunity to request to be included in working/focus groups and to participate in a more substantive, subsequent needs assessment survey that will be developed with the assistance of the focus groups. By providing us with your input, you will help chart the course of the Center and ensure we effectively serve your community.

This short survey will be open from April 26 through May 10, 2021, and we encourage you to forward it to other members of the relevant communities.

## [Update from CFSO Organizations](#)

### [AAFS](#)



[The American Academy of Forensic Sciences has developed a new logo for its organization. See https://news.aafs.org/presidents-message/presidents-spotlight-presenting-the-exciting-new-aafs-logo/](https://news.aafs.org/presidents-message/presidents-spotlight-presenting-the-exciting-new-aafs-logo/)

[The Academy has also updated its vision, mission, and values. For the whole story see https://news.aafs.org/presidents-message/presidents-spotlight-what-a-year-what-a-meeting/](https://news.aafs.org/presidents-message/presidents-spotlight-what-a-year-what-a-meeting/)

## Vision

- To promote justice for all and integrity through forensic science.

## Mission

- The American Academy of Forensic Sciences is a global, multidisciplinary membership community that provides collaborative research, quality education, and recognized leadership to advance forensic science and to inform its application to the law.

## Values

- **Integrity:** The Academy places objectivity, honesty, transparency, honor, ethics, and unity at the center of all its policies and operations.
- **Leadership and Public Awareness:** The Academy is the leader in representing, serving, and advocating for forensic science, as well as a resource for providing reliable and sought-after information to the forensic science community, other partners, and the general public.
- **Scientific Rigor:** The Academy promotes quality research of scientific methods to ensure robust and unbiased experimental design, methodology, analysis, interpretation and reporting of results.
- **Collaboration and Excellence:** The Academy provides services and support of the highest quality to its members through its world-renowned *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, its professional scientific education and career development, its accreditation and consensus-based standards programs, and other initiatives that fulfill its members' evolving needs.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** The Academy serves all and is committed to providing an objective, unbiased framework for individuals through forensic science application, teaching, and research.
- **Engagement and Connectivity:** The Academy fosters a sense of community and responsiveness that facilitates engagement and networking through leadership and volunteer opportunities; activities; and outreach and professional educational programming.

## ABFT

The American Board of Forensic Toxicology currently certifies 477 Certificants as Fellows, Diplomates and Analysts. In addition, there are 32 ABFT accredited laboratories and 8 ISO/IEC 17025 ANAB accredited laboratories using the ABFT Laboratory Accreditation Standard. Certification exams have been restarted and will be offered remotely. Please check the ABFT website ([www.abft.org](http://www.abft.org)) for the city and date of the examinations.

## SOFT

In 2020, the Society of Forensic Toxicologists (SOFT) held a virtual learning event during the month of September, entitled SOFTember, which was in lieu of the in-person annual meeting. A number of items from SOFTember will be carried through 2021 and beyond, including the virtual networking series, SOFTopics. SOFT is currently planning for the in-person annual meeting in Nashville, TN, September 27-

October 1, 2021. In addition to planning the annual meeting, the committees of SOFT have been very active this year. The Continuing Education Committee is preparing to provide a number of virtual learning opportunities for members and non-members and will work to incorporate a SOFTopics session after each continuing education event. The Mentoring Committee has begun a new year with new mentor and mentee pairings, comprised of 83 participants. The Toxicology Resource Committee has begun assembling a list of Medical Examiner and Impaired Driving laboratories within the US to survey. The focus of the survey is for publicly funded forensic toxicology laboratories to identify needs and barriers in their ability to perform comprehensive and timely testing.

## ASCLD

2021 ASCLD SYMPOSIUM | August 22 - 26, 2021 | Together Toward Tomorrow | Boston, MA  
Symposium Website: [www.ascldsymposium.com](http://www.ascldsymposium.com)

The forensic science profession has advanced due to extraordinary laboratories, successful collaborations and partnerships among laboratories and stakeholders, and transformational, visionary, and servant leaders.

It was with a heavy heart that we canceled the 2020 Symposium in Denver, Colorado, due to Covid-19. We are looking towards the future, hopeful that we will be able to be together once again in August. Join us in The City on the Hill - Boston, Massachusetts - for the 2021 ASCLD Symposium! ASCLD 2021 will showcase collaborations and partnerships, obtaining buy-in, implementing new technology, transforming an organizational culture, strengthening morale, talent acquisition, and more with information, tips, and lessons we can apply to ourselves, our organizations, and our profession. Experiences workshops and presentations from dynamic experts and leaders from the forensic science profession and beyond.

The ASCLD Symposium is an industry-leading conference designed for leaders and managers in the forensic laboratory space. The Symposium consists of two days of optional pre-conference workshops and two and a half days of keynotes and plenary talks by industry-leading experts designed around all aspects of forensic science, but particularly focuses on enhancing leadership and management in a forensic laboratory. In addition to the workshops and plenary talks, the ASCLD Symposium is a key event for networking and interacting with the leading authorities in forensic science.

## IAI

The IAI is moving forward with its 105<sup>th</sup> Educational Conference. This year's conference will be held at Gaylord Opryland Resort in Nashville, Tennessee August 1-7, 2021. IAI member advanced registration is \$395 (U.S.) and \$445 (U.S.) on site. Non-member advanced registration is \$500 (U.S.) and \$550 (U.S.) on site. Individual workshops sessions are additional and range from \$35 to \$160 (U.S.). Student registration is \$200 (U.S.) for those students who qualify. Please visit our conference website for additional information and registration: [https://www.theiai.org/2021\\_iai\\_conference\\_nashville.php](https://www.theiai.org/2021_iai_conference_nashville.php).

## **Federal Grant Information**

### OJP

The grant application process with the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) involves two steps – completing the SF-424 and SF-LLL in Grants.gov and finalizing the full application in the Justice Grants System (JustGrants).

With Grants.gov, the workspace status will change from “In Progress” to “Submitted” once the application is submitted. Within 48 hours after submission, applicants should receive four notifications from Grants.gov, including a submission receipt and a validation receipt. Should an application be rejected and need corrected, applicants will be notified during this timeframe.

In JustGrants, applicants will be notified instantly if an application was successfully submitted once they complete the ‘Certify and Submit’ page. If there are validation errors that need to be addressed, details will be displayed onscreen and will describe which sections need to be reviewed.

More Resources for JustGrants:

- [DOJ Application Submission Checklist](#)
- [eLearning Video](#)
- [Job Aid Reference Guide](#)
- [OJP Grant Application Resource Guide](#)

## **BJA**

### **Grantee Webinar: Paul Coverdell and DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction Programs**

On February 25<sup>th</sup> 2021 the BJA offered a 75 minute webinar to introduce people to the BJA Programs and Policy offices. That webinar is presented below in a variety of formats.

- BJA YouTube: <https://youtu.be/mlu5LygG6BM>
- BJA site multimedia: <https://bja.ojp.gov/media/video/35456>
- Transcript: <https://bja.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh186/files/media/document/coverdell-cebr-welcome-webinar-transcript-3-2021.pdf>

## **NIJ**

**Please see below links regarding NIJ forensic science research.**

[NIJ Funding and Awards](#) – Main page of NIJ website where one can find general funding information and opportunities.

[JustGrants](#) – Main page of JustGrants website where one can log into their account, find informational updates, training, support, and FAQ’s.

[Needs Assessment Report](#) – Link to the 2016 NIJ “Needs Assessment”. One can find both the full downloadable file, as well as a summary of the most salient information if you scroll down.

[LIMS Report](#) – Link to the 2020 Forensic Technology Center of Excellence “Laboratory Information Management Systems” landscape study. This report provides background information on LIMS and their integration into the laboratory evidence management process, the product landscape of select commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) LIMS products, considerations for implementing or updating internally developed COTS, and finally the report uses profiles from end users illustrating best practices and lessons.

[Workforce Calculator](#) - The workforce calculator project follows a two-year timeline to produce a workforce calculator for metropolitan, regional, and state forensic crime laboratories or laboratory systems. The calculator permits laboratories to identify the personnel required to support a given level of casework

within each area of investigation and the associated investment in capital equipment to support that level of activity.

[Forensic Intelligence](#) – 2020 article published by the NIJ Journal regarding the implementation of Forensic evidence into the discipline of Forensic Intelligence which consists of gathering and using data earlier in the criminal inquiry cycle and across cases to help detect, prevent, investigate, and prosecute crime, concentrating mainly on serial and violent crime.

[Social Science in Forensic Science](#) – NIJ video of the impacts of Forensic Science on the Criminal Justice system.

[Webinar on Body Fluid Analysis](#) – Summary of webinar given on January 14<sup>th</sup>, topics include Raman Spectroscopy, Proteomics, and RNA.

[Where to Find Researcher Partners](#) – FTCOE website page where one can find researchers to partner with.

[Where to Find Labs to Partner With](#) – NIJ website page where one can find labs looking to connect with researchers.

### **How to subscribe to updates:**

- <https://nij.ojp.gov/subscribe>
- <https://bja.ojp.gov/subscribe-newsfrombj>

### **NIJ/OJP Funding Opportunities**

- NIJ Current Solicitations - <https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/current>
- NIJ Prior Solicitations - <https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/expired>
- NIJ Funded projects/awards (1995-2020)-  
<http://www.nij.gov/funding/awards/pages/welcome.aspx>
- NIJ Forthcoming Funding Opportunities - <https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/forthcoming>
- OJP Funding Resource Center - <https://www.ojp.gov/funding>

## **COPS Funding Opportunities**

### **COPS Anti-Methamphetamine Program (CAMP)**

The 2021 COPS Anti-Methamphetamine Program is a competitive grant program that advances public safety by providing funds directly to state law enforcement agencies to investigate illicit activities related to the manufacture and distribution of methamphetamine. Up to \$15 million is available for this program.

*Applications are due by June 10, 2021 at 7:59 PM EDT.* Please click [here](#) for more information on the 2021 COPS Anti-Methamphetamine Program.

### **Anti-Heroin Task Force (AHTF) Program**

The 2021 Anti-Heroin Task Force program is a competitive grant program that assists state law enforcement agencies in states with high per capita levels of primary treatment admissions for both heroin and other opioids. AHTF funds must be used for investigative purposes to locate or investigate illicit activities related to the distribution of heroin, fentanyl, carfentanil, or other opioids, or the unlawful distribution of prescription opioids. Up to \$35 million is available for this program.

*Applications are due by June 10, 2021 at 7:59 PM EDT.* Please click [here](#) for more information on the 2021 Anti-Heroin Task Force program.

### **Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA) Program**

The 2021 Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act program is a competitive grant program that provides funding to improve the delivery of and access to mental health and wellness services for law enforcement through the implementation of peer support, training, family resources, suicide prevention, and other promising practices for wellness programs. The LEMHWA solicitation is open to all public governmental agencies, federally recognized Indian tribes, for-profit and nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher education, community groups, and faith-based organizations. Up to \$8 million is available for this program.

*Applications are due by June 3, 2021 at 7:59 PM EDT.* Please click [here](#) for more information on the 2021 Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act program.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to refer to both the [LEMHWA Report to Congress](#) and the accompanying [Eleven Case Studies](#) for ideas to assist them in designing new or enhanced programs in support of wellness and resiliency in their agency. Programs must focus on providing training, programming, and support services in law enforcement emotional and mental health, including such things as suicide prevention, peer mentoring, clinical support, and family support services. Programs may also serve agency civilian staff such as crime scene technicians, dispatchers, and others who may regularly experience some of the same trauma exposure.