



Office of Justice Programs Grants

Topic Selection Background Information

March 2022

Program Overview	The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) within the Department of Public Safety was created in 2003 and brought together programs from several state agencies intended to reduce crime and provide support to crime victims. OJP administers grants, provides training and technical assistance, provides research and data to stakeholders, and issues reparations benefits to victims of violent crime.
Original Evaluation Questions	Does OJP have a reasonable process for awarding grants? What has been the impact of the office's programs?
Revised Questions	To what extent do OJP's processes for awarding grants comply with statutory, agency, or federal guidelines? What has been the impact of the office's programs?
State Resources <i>Medium</i>	OJP administered 424 active grants in Fiscal Year 2021, totaling an estimated \$117 million; OJP spent an additional \$9 million in operating expenses. More than \$75 million of OJP's expenditures came from federal funds.
State Control <i>Medium</i>	OJP administers both state and federal grants. Some federally funded OJP grants are tightly constrained and require OJP to closely adhere to federal guidelines, but others allow for more flexibility.
Impact <i>High</i>	OJP administers grants that impact thousands of people, including grants for youth crime prevention programs, domestic violence emergency shelter and assistance programs, and reparations for victims of violent crimes.
Timeliness <i>Medium</i>	There is no compelling reason to review OJP's grant administration process at this time, but there is also no compelling reason not to review it.
Feasibility <i>High</i>	OLA could look at OJP's process for awarding grants with typical research methods. Because OJP administers many different types of grants with varying criteria and levels of state control, we would likely select a subset of specific programs to examine in greater depth.
Balance <i>High</i>	OLA has not evaluated OJP before. OJP administers grants to some nonprofit organizations and, therefore, this topic may overlap with the proposed Grants to Nonprofit Organizations topic. One other topic being considered—Minnesota Department of Education Grants Oversight—would also focus on the administration of grants.
Discussion <i>Important topic, would need to be scoped</i>	OJP administers grants to programs that provide vital services, such as youth intervention, domestic violence emergency shelters, and crime prevention. This topic could provide useful information if scoped appropriately. OLA would consult with legislators when determining which particular OJP grant programs to examine more closely.