

## **BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE STRATEGY**

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The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) was created in 1984 to provide federal leadership in developing the nation's capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice, and assist crime victims. OJP is comprised of five components; the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) is one of these components.

BJA supports law enforcement, courts, corrections, treatment, victim services, technology, and prevention initiatives that strengthen the nation's criminal justice system. BJA provides leadership, services, and funding to America's communities by emphasizing local control; building relationships in the field; developing collaborations and partnerships; promoting capacity building through planning; streamlining the administration of grants; increasing training and technical assistance; creating accountability of projects; encouraging innovation; and ultimately communicating the value of justice efforts to decision makers at every level.

Toward this purpose, BJA administers a range of programs and initiatives that positively impact new and chronic crime concerns affecting communities nationwide. BJA administers formula programs such as the Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) to provide state and local jurisdictions with resources to enhance their ability to plan and implement law enforcement and justice programs based on local needs and conditions. Conversely, discretionary grants are often used to implement programs that target specific crime problems or system issues, or to generate new approaches to reducing and preventing crime. Evaluations of grant programs provide evidence-based information that allows states to refine or enhance existing initiatives—and even replicate effective strategies for multi-state use. Resource development and dissemination, through conferences and publications, promotes the latest data on best practices and the use of technology to large segments of the justice community. Finally, training and technical assistance provides tremendous opportunities for both grantees and nongrantees to enhance their skills and acquire practical knowledge regarding the latest innovations or strategies to raise the bar in their own community and generate tangible successes and outcomes.

Training and technical assistance is an essential component of BJA's mission; in fact, it is outlined in the Duties and Functions of the [BJA] Director (42 U.S.C. § 3742, 402). "...Providing technical assistance to States, units of local government, and other public and private organizations or international agencies involved in criminal justice activities" and "providing for the development of technical assistance and training programs for State and local criminal justice

agencies and fostering local participation in such activities” reference the responsibility of the BJA Director to employ training and technical assistance to achieve agency goals.

BJA’s training and technical assistance strategy involves three interrelated objectives:

1. To provide technical and programmatic direction to grantees who are implementing BJA funded programs and to other criminal justice professionals who are planning to replicate the program model using state, local, or private funds;
2. To ensure effective training opportunities are available to criminal justice practitioners to increase their knowledge of emerging technology, best practices, or new models of service unrelated to a specific grant program;
3. To assist state and local jurisdictions and criminal justice agencies as they define operational or programmatic problems specific to their area and to provide recommendations regarding solutions to these challenging issues.

### **Grantee and Program-Based Training and Technical Assistance**

While funding grant programs may be one of the most direct ways to target specific challenges within the criminal justice system, without technical assistance to grantees regarding state of the art knowledge about the challenge to be undertaken; lessons learned from others who have tried the same or similar approaches; guidance regarding the implementation of each component of the project; approaches to improve collaboration and community involvement with the program; and methods of evaluation to measure whether the project is achieving results, the likelihood for success diminishes. Training and technical assistance address these issues and assist grantees as they implement effective programs tailored to their specific community.

Beyond support to grantees, BJA provides training and technical assistance to state and local law enforcement and justice professionals who are planning to establish the same program model by using state, local, or private funds. This type of training and technical assistance is tailored to the customer and includes peer-to-peer mentoring, as provided by BJA’s Mental Health Courts Program, formal training by knowledgeable experts, as provided by BJA’s Drug Court Planning Initiative, and skills-based training, recently provided to Reentry grantees to facilitate their collaboration with local faith- and community-based organizations providing services to the same released offenders. Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) grantees also enjoy a variety of technical assistance resources, depending on their particular focus, to maximize the effectiveness of their

programs. In each of these cases, the purpose of the assistance is to provide the widest audience possible with the knowledge and skills to implement programs based on best practices.

### **Issue-Specific Training and Technical Assistance**

BJA also provides formal training to practitioners from topic areas within the criminal justice field. These subject matter trainings vary in length from a few hours to a full week and provide participants with the opportunity to increase their knowledge and skills to enhance their job performance and results to their own customer base. As specific trainings are developed in response to the field for information regarding critical and emerging issues, BJA employs nationally-recognized partners to reach diverse audiences in the law enforcement and justice communities. The following are just a few examples of specialized trainings currently available through BJA and its partners:

- Firearms Interdiction  
*International Association of Chiefs of Police*
- Foundations of Intelligence Analysis and Financial Crimes Against Seniors  
*Institute for Intergovernmental Research*
- Global Justice Extensible Markup Language Data Model (GJXDM) Mapping  
*Institute for Justice Information Sharing (IJIS) Institute*
- Handling Capital Cases  
*National Judicial College*
- Introduction to Extensible Markup Language  
*Institute for Justice Information Sharing (IJIS) Institute*
- Investigation of Computer Crime  
*SEARCH*
- Neighborhood Watch  
*National Sheriffs' Association*
- Sex Offender Management  
*Center for Effective Public Policy*
- Special Considerations for the Rural Court Judge  
*National Judicial College*
- State and Local Anti-Terrorism Training (SLATT)  
*Institute for Intergovernmental Research*
- Successful Offender Reentry  
*Center for Effective Public Policy*
- Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS)  
*International Association of Chiefs of Police*
- White Collar Crime and Terrorism  
*Institute for Intergovernmental Research*

By broadening the knowledge base of the justice community through courses such as these, BJA disseminates the latest cutting edge information to thousands of practitioners who return to their agencies and apply the skills learned to the daily challenges confronting the justice system in their communities. Many of these trainings also include a “train the trainer” component, increasing exponentially the opportunity for information and best practices to spread at an extraordinary speed through communities all across America.

### **Direct Technical Assistance**

The third way BJA offers technical assistance is through one-on-one consultations by known experts when requested by a specific jurisdiction or agency to assist in problem definition, analysis of an immediate operational or programmatic problem, and practical recommendations for effective responses. Technical assistance partners and consultants with expertise in the specific subject matter fill these requests. Using technical assistance to provide this individualized service to its customers, BJA is able to strengthen the nation’s capacity to prevent and control crime by assisting local communities as they confront and solve their very real crime problems. From a territory requiring assistance to solve the challenges of a maximum correctional facility to a highly-populated state requesting guidance to better understand its drug and gang crime, BJA is committed to identifying and providing the needed resources to support state, local, and tribal jurisdictions as they solve problems and create capacity for the future.

BJA will continue to implement its three-pronged strategy to provide needed training and technical assistance services to the field in FY 2007. A vital component of its own efforts to develop sound policy, BJA recognizes that training and technical assistance ultimately build stronger practices and partnerships that live far beyond a particular program or funding.