



Byrne JAG Grant Funding to Improve Indigent Defense

Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG)

The Byrne JAG program is a federal grant program that is available to local jurisdictions. The program provides funding in two ways: directly to jurisdictions and through a competitive grant process. In California, the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) is the designated state administering agency for the competitive grant process and all counties are eligible to apply. Approximately \$47 million over a period of three years is available in the competitive grant to California counties. Although the JAG program is commonly thought of as a law enforcement grant, **it can be used to fund and support indigent defense**; in fact, BSCC identifies “**innovations in indigent defense**” as a **priority area of need** to be addressed by Byrne JAG funds. Given the variety of other state and federal resources available for prosecution and policing, counties should consider prioritizing Byrne JAG funding for their indigent defense programs.

Using Byrne JAG to Improve Indigent Defense

Below is a list to spark ideas. The right program for your county will depend on your specific needs. Note that the application weighs the project description most heavily, so it is critical to describe your project in sufficient detail and consider all aspects that the application asks that you describe. In addition, it favors applications that rely on evidence-based practices.

- Improve the effectiveness of representation by strengthening delivery model (example: funding transition to a public defender or alternate defender office)
- Support or pilot early representation units
- Expand office to staff specialty courts and diversion programs
- Support collaborative multi-county efforts to improve defense in rural areas
- Create community outreach program for record clearance, DMV issues, and other collateral consequences

- Increase holistic defense services by hiring social workers and reentry services support
- Expand juvenile representation and advocacy (education attorney or youth diversion advocate)
- Build out county or multi-jurisdictional training units to increase training for lawyers and staff
- Pilot a forensic unit at the public defender’s office to build and provide specialized expertise in complex cases

Important Dates:

GRANT SERVICE PERIOD: June 1, 2023, to June 30, 2026.

RFP RELEASED: October 14, 2022.

LETTERS OF INTENT DUE (NOT REQUIRED): November 18, 2022.

PROPOSALS DUE: December 2, 2022, 5pm PST

Application Info:

BSCC Instructions:

https://www.bscc.ca.gov/s_bsccjag/

BSCC Application:

<https://bscc.submittable.com/submit>

OSPD Supports Indigent Defense

The Office of the State Public Defender’s Indigent Defense Improvement Division (IDID) provides technical assistance and training to indigent defense systems and engages in related efforts for the purpose of improving indigent defense across the state.

If you need assistance with ideas and research for your grant application, including evidence-based practices and ideas for evaluations, please contact us.

Contact Us

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In California, counties are delegated the constitutional and statutory requirement to provide quality indigent defense services under Penal Code 987.2. The California Legislative Analyst's Office recently published a [report](#) on the profound disparities in funding between prosecutor offices and indigent defense services and urged policymakers to correct the imbalance. **The JAG program is a unique opportunity for counties to use federal funding to improve their indigent defense systems.**

Who is eligible for JAG funding?

Every county in California is eligible. Applications must be submitted by the Board of Supervisors or the Chief County Administrative Officer. Each county can only submit one program proposal. Two or more counties may submit a collaborative proposal, and each receive their maximum grant amount.

FUNDING CATEGORIES	POPULATION	MAXIMUM GRANT	AVAILABLE FUNDING
SMALL COUNTIES	<200,001	\$660,000	\$9,463,277
MEDIUM COUNTIES	200,001-700,000	\$2,145,000	\$14,194,915
LARGE COUNTIES*	700,001+	\$3,136,875	\$23,658,192

*Los Angeles may apply for up to \$6,000,000 for the entire grant period within the Large County Category.

How is JAG funding awarded?

Program proposals must be completed and fall within an identified Program Purpose Area and relate to a Priority Area of Need. **Indigent defense falls under the Program Purpose Area of Prosecution and Court Programs. The Priority Area of Need is defined by BSCC as Innovations in Indigent Defense.** But you may find that your project meets multiple Priority Areas of Need. You can find those areas listed on page five of the instruction packet.

What do you need to do to apply?

- **Decide how JAG can be used to improve indigent defense services in your county.**
- **Form a JAG local steering committee.** Applicants must form a steering committee comprised of community stakeholders to identify the needs of the community as they relate to JAG.
- **Develop a project proposal and budget.** Ensure that you carefully read the directions and provide all the information that is needed.
- **Submit application to BSCC by December 2, 2022, 5pm PST.**