

BJA FY 2026 Tribal Civil and Criminal Legal Assistance

Grants.gov Funding Opportunity Number: O-BJA-2026-172775

Application Deadlines in Eastern Time (ET):

1. Complete SF-424 and submit in Grants.gov: **November 6, 2026, by 11:59 PM ET**
 2. Submit full application in JustGrants: **November 13, 2026, by 8:59 PM ET**
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1. BASIC INFORMATION

Purpose of the Funding

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP) is committed to advancing work that furthers the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) mission to keep our country safe and secure and uphold the rule of law and protect the rights of American citizens. OJP provides federal leadership, funding, and other critical resources to directly support law enforcement, combat violent crime, protect American children, provide services to American crime victims, and address public safety challenges, including human trafficking and the opioid crisis.

This is a notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for the **BJA FY 2026 Tribal Civil and Criminal Legal Assistance Program**. This opportunity will support legal assistance to eligible tribal members, federally recognized Indian tribes, and tribal justice systems that provide legal aid and indigent defense services to tribal communities located in rural and remote regions throughout the United States where legal services are sparse.

This NOFO will also support specialized training and technical assistance (TTA) to grantees for the development, enrichment, and enhancement of tribal courts and justice system operations. This includes tribal and state joint jurisdiction; veterans' clinics and legal assistance for Native American veterans; Missing Murdered and Indigenous People; Violence Against Women Act; Tribal Law and Order Act; and Special Tribal Criminal Jurisdiction.

This NOFO includes three categories:

- **Category 1: Tribal Civil Legal Assistance** Category 1 will support civil legal assistance to eligible tribal members, federally recognized Indian tribes, and tribal justice systems that provide legal aid and indigent defense services to tribal communities located in rural and remote regions throughout the United States where legal services are sparse.
- **Category 2: Tribal Criminal Legal Assistance** Category 2 will support criminal legal assistance to eligible tribal members, federally recognized Indian tribes, and tribal justice systems that provide legal aid and indigent defense services to tribal communities located in rural and remote regions throughout the United States where legal services are sparse.
- **Category 3: Tribal Courts and Justice System Direct Support** Category 3 will provide specialized TTA to grantees awarded funding in Categories 1 and 2 to provide civil and criminal legal services to tribes and tribal courts.

See the [Eligible Applicants](#) section for eligibility details.

Funding Details

Announcement Type	Initial
Assistance Listing Number	16.815
Statutory Authority	Pub. L. No. 106-559, Title I (codified at 25 U.S.C. 3661 – 3666); Department of Justice Appropriations Act, 2026 (Pub. L. No. 119-74, 140 Stat. 5, 32, para. 12)
Grants.gov Opportunity Number	O-BJA-2026-172775
Competition ID Number	Category 1, C-BJA-2026-00047-PROD: Tribal Civil Legal Assistance Category 2, C-BJA-2026-00048-PROD: Tribal Criminal Legal Assistance Category 3, C-BJA-2026-00049-PROD: Tribal Courts and Justice System Direct Support
Expected Total Amount of Funding	Approximately \$1,503,106
Anticipated Number of Awards	Category 1: 1 Category 2: 1 Category 3: 1
Award Type(s)	Grants and Cooperative Agreements
Anticipated Award Amount	Category 1: Up to \$600,000 Category 2: Up to \$600,000 Category 3: Up to \$303,106
Expected Award Period(s)	12 months starting on January 1, 2027

Key Dates and Times

NOFO Release Date	October 7, 2026
SAM.gov Registration/Renewal	Begin the process by October 7, 2026, and no later than October 22, 2026
Step 1: Grants.gov Deadline	11:59 p.m. ET on November 6, 2026
Step 2: JustGrants Deadline	8:59 p.m. ET on November 13, 2026

See [Questions?](#) at the end of this NOFO for agency contact information.

2. ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants

The types of entities that are eligible to apply are:

Categories 1 and 2:

- **Other:** non-profit entities, as defined under section 501(c)(3) of title 26, which provide legal assistance services for Indian tribes, members of Indian tribes, or tribal justice systems pursuant to federal poverty guidelines.

Category 3:

- o **Other:** national or regional membership organizations and associations whose membership consists of judicial system personnel within tribal justice systems.

Cost Sharing (Match) Requirement: This NOFO does **not** require cost sharing (match).

Limit on Number of Applications: You may submit more than one application if each application proposes a different project. Each application should apply to only one category of the NOFO.

If a project will be carried out by two or more entities (project partners), only one entity may submit the application. The other entities (project partners) must be proposed as subrecipients rather than co-applicants. An entity may be proposed as a subrecipient in more than one application. For additional information regarding subawards, see the [Application Resource Guide](#).

3. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Statutory Authority

Pub. L. No. 106-559, Title I (codified at 25 U.S.C. 3661 – 3666); Department of Justice Appropriations Act, 2026 (Pub. L. No. 119-74, 140 Stat. 5, 32, para. 12).

Agency Funding Priorities

To help meet its mission, OJP may give priority consideration to applications proposing (as applicable within the scope of this NOFO) projects designed to advance the goals listed below:

- Directly supporting law enforcement operations (including immigration law enforcement operations);
- Combatting violent crime;
- Supporting services to American citizens;
- Protecting American children; and
- Supporting American victims of trafficking and sexual assault.

Note: Addressing these priorities is one of many factors that OJP considers in making funding decisions. Receiving priority consideration does not guarantee funding.

Unallowable Activities: The following are certain unallowable costs and certain activities that are out of the program scope and will not be funded.

1. Out of program scope is any program or activity, at any tier that, directly or indirectly, violates (or promotes or facilitates the violation of) federal immigration law (including 8 U.S.C. § 1373) or impedes or hinders the enforcement of federal immigration law—including by failing to comply with 8 U.S.C. § 1373, give access to DHS agents, or honor DHS requests and provide requested notice to DHS agents.
2. Out of program scope is any program or activity, at any tier that violates any applicable federal civil rights or nondiscrimination law. This includes violations that – (1) indirectly violate the law, including by promoting or facilitating violations; or (2) unlawfully favor individuals in any race or protected group, including on a majority or minority, or privileged or unprivileged, basis, within a given area, population, or sector.
3. As specified in the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#), in Chapter 3.13 “Unallowable Costs” (“Legal Services for Aliens”), any obligations of funds, at any tier, under this award to provide (or to support the provision of) legal services to any removable alien or any alien otherwise unlawfully present in the United States shall be unallowable costs for purposes any award made under this notice, but the foregoing shall not be understood to apply— (1) to legal services to obtain protection orders for victims of crime; or (2) to immigration-related legal services that may be expressly authorized or required by any law, or any judicial ruling, governing or applicable to the award.

Goals and Objectives of This Funding Opportunity

Categories 1 and 2

Goal: Deliver civil and criminal legal services to enhance the civil and criminal operations of tribal justice systems and improve access to these systems by tribal members.

- **Objective 1:** Provide civil legal assistance services for tribal members, pursuant to federal poverty guidelines, federally recognized Indian tribes, and tribal justice systems.
- **Objective 2:** Provide criminal defense counsel services to individuals, pursuant to federal poverty guidelines, federally recognized Indian tribes, and tribal justice systems.

Category 3

Goal: Deliver specialized training and technical assistance to grantees awarded funding under Categories 1 and 2 to improve operations and capacity of indigent criminal defense services and civil defense strategies for tribal courts and justice systems.

- **Objective 1:** Ensure that indigent defendants and civil litigants in tribal courts have timely access to qualified and competent legal counsel.
- **Objective 2:** Enhance administrative, technological, and operational capacity of tribal defense programs to improve effectiveness for tribes and tribal courts.

For a description of how awards under this NOFO will contribute to achieving these goals and objectives, see the [Performance Reports](#) section below.

Expected Outcomes

OJP expects recipients to submit deliverables and performance reports, as described below. Read the [Application Resource Guide](#) for more information. OJP will measure success by reviewing a recipient's submission of performance reports and data and the extent to which project implementation reflects progress toward the goals and objectives of this NOFO.

Deliverables

Category 1 and Category 2 recipients do not need to submit any deliverables other than the standard items in the [Post-Award Requirements and Administration](#) section.

Category 3 recipients will be expected to submit the following deliverables in addition to the standard items in the [Post-Award Requirements and Administration](#) section:

- A grantee needs assessment tool to identify each grantee's technical assistance needs and preferred methods for delivery.
- Documentation of technical assistance provided to TCCLA grantees, including request management, assistance delivery methods, and outcomes, on topics that include, but are not limited to: veterans' clinics and legal assistance for Native American veterans; Missing Murdered and Indigenous People; Violence Against Women Act; Tribal Law and Order Act; and Special Tribal Criminal Jurisdiction.

Performance Reports

OJP requires recipients to submit regular performance reports that communicate progress toward achieving the [Program Goals and Objectives](#). Read information on [performance reporting](#).

Award recipients will receive further guidance on post award reporting requirements.

Substantial Involvement of Federal Agency: OJP expects to make the Category 3 award under this NOFO as a cooperative agreement, which allows OJP to have

substantial involvement in carrying out the project. Read the [Application Resource Guide](#) for a discussion of this involvement and related award conditions.

4. APPLICATION CONTENTS AND FORMAT

Application Contents List

OJP will only consider applications that contain all required parts, which are marked ***Required*** below. Refer to the [DOJ Grant Application Submission Checklist](#) for application instructions.

Application Item	Submission Type
Step 1: Grants.gov	
Application for Federal Assistance: SF-424 *Required*	Online Form
Step 2: JustGrants	
Standard Applicant Information *Required*	Online Form
Proposal Abstract	Text Box
Data Requested With Application - Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (including Applicant Disclosure of High-Risk Status) - Agency Funding Priorities Inventory	Online Form
Proposal Narrative *Required*	Attachment
Budget *Required*	Online Form
Other Budget/Financial Attachments - Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable) - Consultant Rate (if applicable) - Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation for Awards Over \$250,000; Waiver (if applicable) - Disclosure of Process Related to Executive Compensation (if applicable)	Attachment

Memorandum of Understanding	Attachment
Additional Application Components • Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable) • Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity Statement (if applicable) • Timeline *Required* • Curriculum Vitae and Resumes *Required for Category 3 only*	Attachment

In addition to the items marked ***Required*** in the table above, the following are considered basic minimum requirement elements that are considered in the responsiveness review:

- The application is submitted by an eligible applicant.
- The requested award amount does not exceed the award ceiling.
- The application is responsive to the scope of the NOFO.

Standard Applicant Information ***Required***

Review and edit as needed the information imported from the SF-424 submitted in Grants.gov. Add ZIP codes for areas affected by the project.

Proposal Abstract

In JustGrants, enter a proposal abstract (limited to 2,000 characters) summarizing the proposed project. As abstracts for funded projects are public, do not include any personally identifying information (e.g., staff names). The abstract should include the following information:

- The name of the applicant's proposed project.
- The purpose of the proposed project (*i.e.*, what the project will do and why it is necessary).
- Where the project will take place (*i.e.*, the service area, if applicable).
- Who will be served by the project (*i.e.*, who will be helped or have their needs addressed by the project).
- What activities will be carried out to complete the project.
- The subrecipient(s)/partner organizations or entities, if known.
- Deliverables and expected outcomes (*i.e.*, what the project will achieve).

View an example of a [proposal abstract](#).

Data Requested With Application

Financial Management and System of Internal Controls Questionnaire (including Applicant Disclosure of High-Risk Status)

Review information on this [questionnaire](#).

Agency Funding Priorities Inventory

Applicants seeking priority consideration under the [Agency Funding Priorities](#) section should answer the inventory questions in their entirety in the web-based form in JustGrants.

Proposal Narrative ***Required***

Format of the Proposal Narrative

Submit the narrative as an attachment in JustGrants. The document should:

- Be double-spaced, using a standard 12-point size font
- Have no less than 1-inch margins
- Have numbered pages
- Not exceed 10 pages

If the Proposal Narrative does not follow this format, OJP may reduce the score/ranking of the application. Please consider including info about tables, charts, etc.

Sections of the Proposal Narrative

The Proposal Narrative must include the four sections listed below. If you want priority consideration, the Proposal Narrative must state which [priority\(ies\)](#) your project will advance and describe how it will do so.

1. Description of the Need (5% of application score): What critical issue or problem do you propose to address with this project? Please include:

- A brief explanation of the need, gap, or issue to be addressed by the proposed project.
- Supporting information, data, or evidence to demonstrate the need's existence, size, and impact on the target population and community.
- How the need relates to the purpose of the NOFO.

2. Project Goals and Objectives (15% of application score): How will the proposed project address the need identified and address the purpose of the NOFO? Please include:

- Project goals (goals are broad, visionary statements on what you hope to accomplish).
- Project objectives (objectives are specific outcomes you plan to achieve through project activities).

- How your project goals and objectives relate to the [goals and objectives of the funding opportunity](#).

3. Project Design and Implementation (35% of application score): How will you implement project activities that meet the project goals and objectives?

Please include:

- What activities you will conduct to achieve the proposed goals and objectives.
- How you will deliver or complete those activities.
- When the activities will take place.
- Who in your organization will staff the activities, including key staff.
- Who will participate in and benefit from the activity.
- What deliverables, reports, and other items will be produced as part of the project.
- If you plan to use subrecipients to help conduct the project, please name them (if they are known) or describe how you will identify them. Please describe their role in conducting project activities.
- A description of the target population, including eligibility requirements for program participation, and the number proposed to be engaged, including explanation of how this number was determined, and can be served in the allotted grant timeframe. **(Categories 1 and 2 only)**

4. Capabilities and Competencies (30% of application score): What administrative and technical capacity and expertise do you bring to successfully complete this project? Please include:

- A short description of your capacity to deliver the proposed project and meet the post-award requirements, if funded.
- A description of projects or activities your organization has conducted, or is currently conducting, that demonstrates your ability to undertake the proposed project activities.
- A summary of relevant experience of team members with key responsibilities for implementing the project.

Project Evaluations: An applicant that proposes to use award funds to conduct project evaluations must follow the guidance on [project evaluations](#).

Budget and Associated Documentation

Budget (15% of application score) *Required*

Use the Budget Detail Worksheet (Web-Based Form) or Separate Attachment (attach file in JustGrants) to submit the budget. Read information on [budget preparation](#) and [JustGrants Application Submission Training](#).

- List each cost needed to implement the project under the appropriate cost category.

- Clearly name and describe each cost.
- Show the computation of each cost (e.g., cost per unit, number of units, and total cost).
- Enter narrative, as needed, to explain the cost calculations and connection to your project goals, objectives, and activities.
- Include only costs that are reasonable, allocable, and necessary to implement the project. They must be allowable under the funding statute and agency requirements.¹

Budget/Financial Attachments

- **Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable):** If the budget includes indirect costs calculated using a current, federally approved indirect cost rate, upload your indirect cost rate agreement. Read information about [indirect costs](#).
- **Consultant Rate (if applicable):** Read information on [limits to consultant rates](#) and whether you need to request approval to exceed those limits.
- **Limitation on Use of Award Funds for Employee Compensation for Awards Over \$250,000; Waiver (if applicable):** Read information on this [limitation](#) and to determine whether or not you need to submit a waiver.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Supporting Documents

Attach a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or letter of intent between the applicant and each of the project partner(s). Read information on what to include in an [MOU/letter of intent](#).

MOUs should be submitted as one separate attachment to the application. Unsigned draft MOUs may be submitted with the application, but you should describe in a cover page to the attachment why they are unsigned.

Additional Application Components

Attach these in JustGrants:

- **Tribal Authorizing Resolution (if applicable):** Read information on whether you may need to submit a [Tribal Authorizing Resolution](#).
- **Research and Evaluation Independence and Integrity Statement (if applicable):** Read information on whether you may need to submit this [statement](#).
- **Timeline:** Provide a timeline listing key activities and milestones, and the quarters during which they will take place. ***Required***
- **Curriculum Vitae and Resumes:** Provide resumes of key personnel who will work on the proposed project or a description of the experience and skills of key personnel necessary to implement the project. ***Required for Category 3 only***

¹ See [2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart E](#) and the [DOJ Grants Financial Guide](#). Read information on [unallowable costs](#) that apply to all funding opportunities.

Disclosures and Assurances

Read the [disclosures and assurances](#) and complete them in JustGrants:

- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
- Disclosure of Duplication in Cost Items (if applicable)
- DOJ Certified Standard Assurances
- DOJ Certifications
- Applicant Disclosure and Justification – DOJ High-Risk Grantees (if applicable)

5. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

The [DOJ Grant Application Submission Checklist](#) provides instructions for how to submit your application by the [deadlines](#). [Executive Order \(E.O.\) 12372](#) (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) does not apply to this funding opportunity: read the [Application Resource Guide](#) for details. Read OJP's policy for applicants to [request late submission](#) due to technical difficulties, severe weather, or natural or manmade disasters.

6. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

The [Application Resource Guide](#) explains the responsiveness review, review criteria, and review and selection process, including risk review, and deciding official. Refer to the [Application Contents List](#) for all required application components and other basic minimum requirement elements that are considered in the responsiveness review. The [Proposal Narrative](#) and [Budget](#) sections of this NOFO indicates the weight of peer review criteria.

7. AWARD NOTICES

Read about the [award notification](#) process.

8. POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS & ADMINISTRATION

Read the [Application Resource Guide](#) for more information about: standard award terms and conditions, administrative and national policy requirements, and post-award reporting requirements.

9. QUESTIONS?

NOFO Contact	Name: OJP Response Center Phone: 800-851-3420 or 202-353-5556 (TTY for hearing-impaired callers only) Email: OJP.ResponseCenter@usdoj.gov Hours: 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. ET, Monday–Friday
SAM.gov Help Desk	Website: sam.gov/help Hours: 8 a.m.–8 p.m. ET, Monday–Friday (closed federal holidays)
Grants.gov Help Desk	Phone: 800-518-4726 Email: support@grants.gov Website: grants.gov/support Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (closed federal holidays)
JustGrants Help Desk	Phone: 833-872-5175 Email: JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov Hours: 7:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m. ET, Monday–Friday and 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. ET on Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays.