

# Understanding the Second Chance Act

## Juvenile Mentoring Grants (Section 211)

### Background

On April 9, 2008, President Bush signed the Second Chance Act ([P.L. 110-199](#)) into law. The bill received bipartisan support from both chambers of Congress and a broad spectrum of leaders representing state and local government, law enforcement, corrections, and courts. This first-of-its-kind legislation authorizes various grants to government agencies and nonprofit organizations to provide employment assistance, substance abuse treatment, housing, family programming, mentoring, victims support, and other services that can help reduce recidivism.

This fact sheet is intended to help state, local and tribal governments and nonprofit organizations prepare to apply for mentoring grants to provide services to individuals under the age of 18.<sup>1</sup> The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice, released the first [mentoring grant solicitation for juvenile populations](#) on May 6, 2009, and applications were due on June 15, 2009.<sup>2</sup> The next solicitation for these grants is expected to be released in early 2010.

### Section 211

Section 211 of the Second Chance Act (42 U.S.C. § 17531) authorizes the U.S. Department of Justice to make grants for the purpose of providing mentoring and other transitional services essential to reintegrating individuals released from prisons or jails into the community. The mentoring grants are *authorized* at \$15 million per year, though the annual appropriations process will determine the actual funding level of the program. In fiscal year 2009, \$10 million was appropriated for the mentoring grant program.

### Who Can Apply?

Public agencies, including Indian tribes, and nonprofit organizations may apply for grants under the OJJDP solicitation.

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<sup>1</sup> For information about other grant programs authorized by the Second Chance Act, see [www.reentrypolicy.org/government-affairs/second-chance-act](http://www.reentrypolicy.org/government-affairs/second-chance-act).

<sup>2</sup> The solicitation is available at [ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/grants/solicitations/FY2009/SecondChanceMentoring.pdf](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/grants/solicitations/FY2009/SecondChanceMentoring.pdf).

## **Allowable Uses**

Funding under this solicitation is available to help public agencies, including federally recognized Indian tribes, and nonprofit organizations implement mentoring projects to promote the safe and successful reintegration into the community of individuals who have been incarcerated. Funding is only available for projects serving individuals under age 18.

## **Application Requirements**

Program components of a project proposal must include

- mentoring juveniles during confinement, through transition back to the community, and post-release;
- providing transitional services to assist in the reintegration of juveniles into the community;
- training regarding “offender and victims issues.”

Applicants must also include in their application a description of their understanding of the following mandatory performance measures and discuss their data collection methods:

- The number of program mentors recruited, as well as the percent of mentors successfully completing training and the percent of mentors with increased knowledge of the program area
- The number of youth enrolled since the beginning of the program and the total number of youth served
- The percent of program youth completing program requirements
- The percent of program youth with new offenses
- The percent of program youth exhibiting desired changes in targeted behavior
- The number of youth served using an evidence-based practice

## **Priority Considerations**

Priority consideration will be given to applications that

- seek to expand existing partnerships across a broad spectrum of organizations;
- pilot innovative approaches to mentoring;
- include a plan to implement activities that have been demonstrated effective in facilitating the successful reentry of youth;
- provide for an independent evaluation that includes, to the maximum extent feasible, random assignment of participating youth to program delivery and control groups.

## Budget

- Contingent upon the availability of funds and the number of offenders projected to be served, awards of up to \$625,000 will be made.
- Awards will be made for a period of up to 36 months.
- A 25 percent match is required, which may be cash or in-kind. A grant made under this program may not cover more than 75 percent of the total costs of the project being funded. The applicant must identify the source of the 25 percent non-federal portion of the budget and how match funds will be used.

### Matching Requirement Example

Total cost of project = \$100

Match equation:

\$75	Federal grant
+ \$25	Contribution from grantee (cash or in-kind)
\$100	Total cost of project

## For More Information

The [Council of State Governments Justice Center](#) is a national nonprofit organization that provides practical, nonpartisan advice and consensus-driven strategies, informed by available evidence, to increase public safety and strengthen communities. It established the [Reentry Policy Council](#) (RPC) in 2001 to assist state government officials grappling with the increasing number of people released from corrections facilities each year. The comprehensive *Report of the Reentry Policy Council*, published in 2005, includes 35 practical policy statements and recommendations to promote the safe and successful return of individuals from prison or jail to the community. The *Report* is available at [www.reentrypolicy.org](http://www.reentrypolicy.org), along with other helpful publications, including a reentry resource guide that includes links to other practical guides, tools, and reference materials. If you have not already done so, you may subscribe to the RPC newsletter at [www.reentrypolicy.org/subscribe](http://www.reentrypolicy.org/subscribe). For more information about the Second Chance Act, please visit [www.reentrypolicy.org](http://www.reentrypolicy.org) or email [scainfo@csg.org](mailto:scainfo@csg.org).