

JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, July 25, 2017

Attorney General Sessions Announces Immigration Compliance Requirements for Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Programs

The Department of Justice today posted a solicitation for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Programs ("Byrne JAG"). Recipients for FY 2017 will be notified of new conditions of their grants that will increase information sharing between federal, state, and local law enforcement, ensuring that federal immigration authorities have the information they need to enforce immigration laws and keep our communities safe.

"So-called 'sanctuary' policies make all of us less safe because they intentionally undermine our laws and protect illegal aliens who have committed crimes," Attorney General Jeff Sessions said. "These policies also encourage illegal immigration and even human trafficking by perpetuating the lie that in certain cities, illegal aliens can live outside the law. This can have tragic consequences, like the 10 deaths we saw in San Antonio this weekend. As part of accomplishing the Department of Justice's top priority of reducing violent crime, we must encourage these 'sanctuary' jurisdictions to change their policies and partner with federal law enforcement to remove criminals. From now on, the Department will only provide Byrne JAG grants to cities and states that comply with federal law, allow federal immigration access to detention facilities, and provide 48 hours notice before they release an illegal alien wanted by federal authorities. This is consistent with long-established cooperative principles among law enforcement agencies. This is what the American people should be able to expect from their cities and states, and these long overdue requirements will help us take down MS-13 and other violent transnational gangs, and make our country safer."

Attachment(s):

[Download Byrne JAG Grant Policy Backgrounder](#)

Topic(s):

Grants
Immigration

Component(s):

[Office of the Attorney General](#)

Press Release Number:

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BACKGROUNDER ON GRANT REQUIREMENTS

The following is on background, attributable to a DOJ official:

- Today, consistent with the goal of increasing information sharing between federal, state, and local law enforcement, Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program (“Byrne JAG”) recipients for FY 2017 have been notified that they will be required to do the following:
 - certify compliance with section 1373, a federal statute applicable to state and local governments that generally bars restrictions on communications between state and local agencies and officials at the Department of Homeland Security;
 - permit personnel of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (“DHS”) to access any detention facility in order to meet with an alien and inquire as to his or her right to be or remain in the United States; and
 - provide at least 48 hours advance notice to DHS regarding the scheduled release date and time of an alien in the jurisdiction’s custody when DHS requests such notice in order to take custody of the alien.

For background on the Byrne JAG program, please click [here](#).

For more information on Byrne JAG allocation for past fiscal years, please click [here](#).

For more information on Byrne JAG as it pertains to FY2017, please click [here](#).

- Improving the flow of information between federal and state law enforcement authorities is paramount to ensuring that federal immigration authorities have the information they need to enforce the law and keep our communities safe.
- 8 U.S.C. § 1373 is a federal statute applicable to state and local governments that generally bars restrictions on communication between state and local agencies and officials at the Department of Homeland Security (and certain other entities) with respect to information regarding the citizenship or immigration status of any individual.
- In March 2016, the Department’s Office of Justice Programs (“OJP”) notified recipients of Byrne JAG grants of the requirement to comply with 8 U.S.C. § 1373. The Department has also announced that it will take all lawful steps to claw back any funds awarded to a jurisdiction that violates its grant agreement, including the condition to comply with section 1373.
- These common-sense measures will improve the flow of information between federal, state, and local law enforcement, and help keep our communities safe. Every year, the Department of Justice awards billions of dollars in grants to state and local jurisdictions across the United States. Unfortunately, some of these jurisdictions have adopted policies and regulations that frustrate the enforcement of federal immigration law, including by refusing to cooperate with federal immigration authorities in information sharing about illegal aliens who commit crimes.
- These measures will also prevent the counterproductive use of federal funds for policies that frustrate federal immigration enforcement. By refusing to communicate with the federal officials, these jurisdictions jeopardize the safety of their residents and undermine the Department’s ability to protect the public and reduce crime and violence.