

BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE FACT SHEET

PATRICK LEAHY BULLETPROOF VEST PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The [Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership \(BVP\) Program](#), administered by the [Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs \(OJP\), Bureau of Justice Assistance \(BJA\)](#), reimburses states, units of local government, and federally recognized Indian tribes for up to 50 percent of the cost of body armor vests purchased for law enforcement officers. Since 1999, more than 13,000 jurisdictions have participated in the BVP Program, with a total of \$573 million in federal funds for the purchase of more than 1.5 million body armor vests. See the [BVP program resources](#) page for detailed award history.



Since FY 2015, body armor vests were directly attributable to saving the lives of at least 305 law enforcement and corrections officers (based on data collected by OJP). Forty-three of those body armor vests were purchased, in part, with BVP funds.

Program Requirements and Instructions

The following is an overview of the BVP requirements and instructions. Detailed information can be found in the [BVP Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#).

Eligible Applicants: States, units of local government, and federally recognized Indian tribes—that is, jurisdictions—that employ eligible law enforcement officers are eligible to apply for BVP funds. For the purposes of the BVP Program, “state” means each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the

United States Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands; “unit of local government” means a county, municipality, town, township, village, parish, borough, or other unit of general government below the state level.

Law Enforcement Officer Definition: “Law Enforcement Officer” is defined as any officer, agent, or employee of a state, unit of local government, or federally recognized Indian tribe authorized by law or by a government agency to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, or investigation of any violation of criminal law, or authorized by law to supervise sentenced criminal offenders. This includes full-time, part-time, and auxiliary personnel, whether paid or volunteer.

Small Jurisdiction Priority Funding: By [statute](#), funds are first allocated to qualifying units of local government with fewer than 100,000 residents. Any remaining funds are then awarded to other qualifying applicants.



Match Requirement: The federal portion of the costs for body armor vests purchased under the BVP Program may not exceed 50 percent.

Application Period: The annual BVP application period typically begins in April and closes six weeks from the opening date. The [BVP website](#) includes [user guides and checklists](#) for each step of the BVP application process.

How to Apply: Applications are accepted in OJP's BVP system, located at <https://vests.bja.ojp.gov/bvp/login/externalAccess.jsp>. An OJP [Digital Identity and Access Management Directory \(DIAMD\) account](#) is required to access the BVP system. See the DIAMD [OJP User Activation Job Aid](#) for more information.

Payment Process: When a BVP recipient is notified of an award amount, the funds are not disbursed until the recipient logs into the BVP site and provides the receipt information for the body armor vests. Once the payment request is made, BJA reviews the request for accuracy and completes payments on a monthly schedule. See [Submitting Payment Requests in BVP](#) for detailed information. An active registration in the System for Award Management at www.sam.gov is required to receive funds.

Body Armor Vest Requirements: Body armor vests purchased with BVP funds must have been tested through the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) [Compliance Testing Program \(CTP\)](#) and found to comply with the most current NIJ body armor standards; appear on the [NIJ Compliant Products List](#) as of the date the body armor was ordered be uniquely fitted; and made in the United States. In

addition, applicants must have a written mandatory wear policy for uniformed patrol officers in place at the time of application. See the [Mandatory Wear Requirement FAQs](#) for detailed information on the mandatory wear requirement.

Contact Information

The BVP Helpdesk can be contacted at 1-877-758-3787 or vests@usdoj.gov.

Media and Congressional inquiries should be directed to the OJP Office of Communications at 202-307-0703 or ojp.ocom@usdoj.gov.

ABOUT BJA

BJA helps America's state, local, and tribal jurisdictions reduce and prevent crime, lower recidivism, and promote a fair and safe criminal justice system. BJA provides a wide range of resources—including grants, funding, and training and technical assistance—to law enforcement, courts and corrections agencies, treatment providers, reentry practitioners, justice information sharing professionals, and community-based partners to address chronic and emerging criminal justice challenges nationwide. To learn more about BJA, visit bja.ojp.gov or follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/DOJBJA) and Twitter ([@DOJBJA](https://twitter.com/DOJBJA)). BJA is a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs.