



OJJDP FACT SHEET

Shay Bilchik, Administrator

May 1999 #107

Enforcing the Underage Drinking Laws Program

by Kay McKinney

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) is helping States address the problem of underage drinking through a \$50 million program of block grants, discretionary programs, and training and technical assistance. The Enforcing the Underage Drinking Laws program (formerly the Combating Underage Drinking program) is helping all 50 States and the District of Columbia develop comprehensive and coordinated initiatives to enforce State laws that prohibit the sale of alcoholic beverages to minors and to prevent the purchase or consumption of alcoholic beverages by minors (defined as individuals under 21 years of age). The Office awarded \$25 million in fiscal year (FY) 1998 through three separate solicitations and will solicit applications for the FY 1999 awards shortly.

Background

Congress appropriated \$25 million to OJJDP in FY 1998 to support and enhance efforts by States, in cooperation with local jurisdictions, to prohibit the sale of alcoholic beverages to or the consumption of alcoholic beverages by minors. OJJDP moved quickly to implement the new program, awarding \$18,360,000 in block grants, \$5 million in discretionary funds, and \$1,640,000 for training and technical assistance. The FY 1999 Appropriations Act for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State; the Judiciary; and related agencies (Pub. L. No. 105-277) allocated an additional \$25 million to continue the program in FY 1999.

Block Grant Funds

Each State and the District of Columbia received a block grant of \$360,000 in FY 1998 to develop programs to improve the enforcement of underage drinking laws. States are using these funds to support activities in 1 or more of the 3 areas outlined in the legislation: enforcement (35 States), public education activities (29 States), and innovative programs (33 States). An example of a law enforcement activity is creating statewide law enforcement and prosecution task forces to target establishments suspected of consistently selling alcohol to minors. Public education activities range from sponsoring media contests to

creating billboard messages. Innovative programs include creating youth task forces to examine community norms and messages young people are receiving, or hiring an individual to act as a liaison between youth and communities on the issue of underage drinking. Eligibility requirements for FY 1999 funds are the same as in FY 1998. Each governor and the mayor of the District of Columbia have designated an agency to serve as the point of contact to apply for, receive, and administer the block grant. The designated agency must design a comprehensive approach to address underage drinking and describe how Federal funds will be used to implement that approach. States are encouraged to join existing public and private efforts, including those of foundations and national organizations.

Discretionary Funds

OJJDP awarded 10 States and Puerto Rico discretionary funds in FY 1998 to help communities develop comprehensive approaches to the problem of underage drinking, with an emphasis on increasing law enforcement activity. California, Connecticut, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin each received up to \$400,000 to address underage drinking at the local level. The States are implementing strategic plans based on community needs assessments, increasing enforcement of underage drinking laws, developing youth leadership and involvement in prevention and public awareness efforts, and hiring project coordinators for communitywide task forces. Puerto Rico received \$25,000 to develop a pilot program with similar objectives.

Students Against Destructive Decisions of Marlboro, MA, received \$60,000 to develop a youth-adult partnership to work with alcohol distributors and law enforcement officials and to implement the "Not on Your Life Program" in Arizona, Florida, Louisiana, and New York. This program seeks to ensure compliance with State underage drinking laws. Native American Connections, Inc., of Phoenix, AZ, received \$400,000 to develop and demonstrate a model program to curtail the illegal sale of alcohol to American Indian youth.

Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC, received a grant of \$499,878 to evaluate how States and local communities are using their block and discretionary grants and to evaluate the impact of the program's first 2 years in a sample of communities.

OJJDP plans to award additional discretionary grants in FY 1999. To expand the number of States receiving discretionary funds and implementing comprehensive approaches to combat underage drinking at the local level, only States and Territories that did not receive discretionary funds under this program in FY 1998, and the District of Columbia, will be eligible to apply. Applications must be submitted by the State agency that administers the block grant. The State will select communities to implement a comprehensive approach to reduce underage drinking and make the discretionary funds available to those communities.

Training and Technical Assistance

OJJDP awarded four grants to support training and technical assistance in FY 1998. The National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives of Washington, DC, received \$232,293 to prepare States to implement underage drinking prevention initiatives. The Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) of Bethesda, MD, was awarded \$1,102,876 to help program grantees focus their efforts on prevention, intervention, and enforcement issues related to retail and social availability of alcohol to minors, possession of alcohol by minors, and drinking and driving by minors. Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) of Irving, TX, received \$142,000 to introduce youth leadership and program participation models to States and local communities. The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) of Washington, DC, was awarded \$145,000 to identify state-of-the-art law enforcement techniques related to underage drinking and to produce underage drinking enforcement resource materials for police executives.

In FY 1999, OJJDP will award up to \$1.6 million to PIRE and other nonprofit organizations that specialize in building coalitions, empowering youth, and strengthening enforcement of underage drinking laws to work together to provide training and technical assistance to program grantees. These organizations will conduct workshops, meetings, and conferences to educate

communities about underage drinking laws and implement strategies to combat underage drinking. PIRE will continue to provide technical assistance and produce printed materials to support State and local programs to reduce underage drinking.

Resource

To help States combat underage drinking and enforce underage drinking laws, OJJDP has developed *Enforcing the Underage Drinking Laws Program: A Compendium of Resources*. It includes information about the prevalence of and trends in underage drinking and its relationship to driving fatalities; contact information for Federal, State, and local agencies and national and private organizations; descriptions of initiatives, programs, strategies, and materials that address underage drinking; and an annotated bibliography.

Related Initiative

OJJDP and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration funded a PERF program to help law enforcement work with prosecutors and judges to build a comprehensive program to address underage drinking. The resulting publication, *Strategies for Success: Combating Juvenile DUI*, will be published later this year.

For Further Information

To obtain copies of *Enforcing the Underage Drinking Laws Program: A Compendium of Resources* or to receive funding information, contact OJJDP's Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse, 800-638-8736 (phone), 301-519-5212 (fax), askncjrs@ncjrs.org (e-mail), www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org (Internet).

Kay McKinney is a Writer-Editor in OJJDP's Information Dissemination Unit.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

FS-99107

FS-99107



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Washington, DC 20531

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
Office of Justice Programs
U.S. Department of Justice

