



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

U.S. Department of Justice

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Update: DOJ OIG Audit of the John R. Justice Grant Program Results in Significant Program Improvements; More Than \$1.4 Million in Repayment Obligations Identified

Department of Justice (DOJ) Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz announced today that, in response to an audit report from the DOJ Office of the Inspector General (OIG), the DOJ Office of Justice Programs (OJP) has made substantial improvements to its management of the John R. Justice (JRJ) grant program, and according to OJP it has collected or referred for collection more than \$1.4 million in repayments it has determined are owed to the federal government by grant beneficiaries. In recognition of OJP's actions, the OIG has closed all 12 recommendations from its audit.

The JRJ grant program provides student loan assistance to attorneys serving as state and local prosecutors, or as federal, state, and local public defenders. In May 2014, the OIG issued an audit report finding, among other things, that OJP did not closely monitor these awards or the amounts of grant funds awarded to these individuals, and that OJP had not established an effective process for collecting repayments from beneficiaries who left their public service positions prior to completing their 3-year service agreements. The OIG's audit estimated that at least \$1 million in such repayments had gone uncollected.

Since the audit, OJP has undertaken significant efforts to clarify guidance on program requirements, improve recordkeeping, and enhance its monitoring of grant spending. For example, OJP has improved its ability to identify and track program participants, awards, and repayments; clarified the respective grant administration responsibilities of the DOJ and of state administering agencies; and enhanced its enforcement of grant requirements. OJP has also received more than \$130,000 in direct repayments from JRJ beneficiaries, referred \$1.27 million in debts related to this program to the U.S. Department of the Treasury for collection, and addressed an additional \$651,000 in dollar-related findings identified by the OIG.

The OIG's May 2014 report is available on the OIG's website at the following link:

<https://oig.justice.gov/reports/2014/a1423.pdf>.

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