

Video Transcript: “A Message from the Inspector General: Audit of Efforts to Safeguard Minors in Department of Justice Youth-Centered Programs,” March 2019

Hello, I’m Michael Horowitz, Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Justice.

Today, we released a report that found the Department of Justice lacked consistent policies and procedures to best ensure the safeguarding of minors participating in youth-centered programs funded by DOJ grants. Specifically, we found that the DOJ does not consistently provide special requirements or specific guidance to grantees to ensure that they conduct a minimum level of due diligence with regard to background checks of individuals who work with minors.

This lack of consistent guidance can result in situations where youth interact with staff or volunteers with criminal records. For example, another report we released today examined DOJ grants made to the Cincinnati, Ohio, School District. That report focused on deficiencies related to financial and programmatic grant management. We also found that individuals with prior criminal records, including trafficking drugs near a school and endangering children, were allowed to work with elementary school-aged students. And these individuals were ultimately paid with DOJ grant funds.

The Department of Justice’s core mission includes protecting the public and providing federal leadership in preventing and controlling crime. We found that DOJ needs to take proactive steps that are aimed at safeguarding youth participating in its grant programs.

To read the reports and our recommendations, please visit our web page, oig.justice.gov, or go to oversight.gov. Thank you for joining us.

(Stock media provided by composer William Pearson and publisher Prolific Two Publishing/ Pond5.com, www.pond5.com.)