



Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Bureau of Justice Assistance

COPY

Washington, D.C. 20531

Memorandum To: Official Grant File

From: Orbin Terry, NEPA Coordinator

Subject: Incorporates NEPA Compliance in Further Developmental Stages for City of Laconia

The Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program (JAG) allows states and local governments to support a broad range of activities to prevent and control crime and to improve the criminal justice system, some of which could have environmental impacts. All recipients of JAG funding must assist BJA in complying with NEPA and other related federal environmental impact analyses requirements in the use of grant funds, whether the funds are used directly by the grantee or by a subgrantee or third party. Accordingly, prior to obligating funds for any of the specified activities, the grantee must first determine if any of the specified activities will be funded by the grant.

The specified activities requiring environmental analysis are:

- a. New construction;
- b. Any renovation or remodeling of a property located in an environmentally or historically sensitive area, including properties located within a 100-year flood plain, a wetland, or habitat for endangered species, or a property listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places;
- c. A renovation, lease, or any proposed use of a building or facility that will either (a) result in a change in its basic prior use or (b) significantly change its size;
- d. Implementation of a new program involving the use of chemicals other than chemicals that are (a) purchased as an incidental component of a funded activity and (b) traditionally used, for example, in office, household, recreational, or education environments; and
- e. Implementation of a program relating to clandestine methamphetamine laboratory operations, including the identification, seizure, or closure of clandestine methamphetamine laboratories.

Complying with NEPA may require the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement, as directed by BJA. Further, for programs relating to methamphetamine laboratory operations, the preparation of a detailed Mitigation Plan will be required. For more information about Mitigation Plan requirements, please see <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/resource/nepa.html>.

Please be sure to carefully review the grant conditions on your award document, as it may contain more specific information about environmental compliance.

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Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Office for Civil Rights

Washington, D.C. 20531

August 30, 2011

Chairman Warren Clement
City of Laconia
City Hall
45 Beacon Street East
Laconia, NH 03246

Dear Chairman Clement:

Congratulations on your recent award. In establishing financial assistance programs, Congress linked the receipt of Federal funding to compliance with Federal civil rights laws. The Office for Civil Rights (OCR), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), U.S. Department of Justice is responsible for ensuring that recipients of financial aid from OJP, its component offices and bureaus, the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) comply with applicable Federal civil rights statutes and regulations. We at OCR are available to help you and your organization meet the civil rights requirements that come with Justice Department funding.

Ensuring Access to Federally Assisted Programs

As you know, Federal laws prohibit recipients of financial assistance from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, or disability in funded programs or activities, not only in respect to employment practices but also in the delivery of services or benefits. Federal law also prohibits funded programs or activities from discriminating on the basis of age in the delivery of services or benefits.

Providing Services to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Individuals

In accordance with Department of Justice Guidance pertaining to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d, recipients of Federal financial assistance must take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to their programs and activities for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). For more information on the civil rights responsibilities that recipients have in providing language services to LEP individuals, please see the website at <http://www.lep.gov>.

Ensuring Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations

The Department of Justice has published a regulation specifically pertaining to the funding of faith-based organizations. In general, the regulation, Participation in Justice Department Programs by Religious Organizations; Providing for Equal Treatment of all Justice Department Program Participants, and known as the Equal Treatment Regulation 28 C.F.R. part 38, requires State Administering Agencies to treat these organizations the same as any other applicant or recipient. The regulation prohibits State Administering Agencies from making award or grant administration decisions on the basis of an organization's religious character or affiliation, religious name, or the religious composition of its board of directors.

The regulation also prohibits faith-based organizations from using financial assistance from the Department of Justice to fund inherently religious activities. While faith-based organizations can engage in non-funded inherently religious activities, they must be held separately from the Department of Justice funded program, and customers or beneficiaries cannot be compelled to participate in them. The Equal Treatment Regulation also makes clear that organizations participating in programs funded by the Department of Justice are not permitted to discriminate in the provision of services on the basis of a beneficiary's religion. For more information on the regulation, please see OCR's website at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ocr/etfbo.htm>.

State Administering Agencies and faith-based organizations should also note that the Safe Streets Act, as amended; the Victims of Crime Act, as amended; and the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, as amended, contain prohibitions against discrimination on the basis of religion in employment. Despite these nondiscrimination provisions, the Justice Department has concluded that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) is reasonably construed, on a case-by-case basis, to require that its funding agencies permit faith-based organizations applying for funding under the applicable program statutes both to receive DOJ funds and to continue considering religion when hiring staff, even if the statute that authorizes the funding program generally forbids considering of religion in employment decisions by grantees.

Questions about the regulation or the application of RFRA to the statutes that prohibit discrimination in employment may be directed to this Office.

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Enforcing Civil Rights Laws

All recipients of Federal financial assistance, regardless of the particular funding source, the amount of the grant award, or the number of employees in the workforce, are subject to the prohibitions against unlawful discrimination. Accordingly, OCR investigates recipients that are the subject of discrimination complaints from both individuals and groups. In addition, based on regulatory criteria, OCR selects a number of recipients each year for compliance reviews, audits that require recipients to submit data showing that they are providing services equitably to all segments of their service population and that their employment practices meet equal employment opportunity standards.

Complying with the Safe Streets Act or Program Requirements

In addition to these general prohibitions, an organization which is a recipient of financial assistance subject to the nondiscrimination provisions of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act (Safe Streets Act) of 1968, 42 U.S.C. § 3789d(c), or other Federal grant program requirements, must meet two additional requirements: (1) complying with Federal regulations pertaining to the development of an Equal Employment Opportunity Plan (EEOP), 28 C.F.R. § 42.301-.308, and (2) submitting to OCR Findings of Discrimination (see 28 C.F.R. §§ 42.205(5) or 31.202(5)).

1) Meeting the EEOP Requirement

In accordance with Federal regulations, Assurance No. 6 in the Standard Assurances, COPS Assurance No. 8.B, or certain Federal grant program requirements, your organization must comply with the following EEOP reporting requirements:

If your organization has received an award for \$500,000 or more and has 50 or more employees (counting both full- and part-time employees but excluding political appointees), then it has to prepare an EEOP and submit it to OCR for review **within 60 days from the date of this letter**. For assistance in developing an EEOP, please consult OCR's website at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ocr/eeop.htm>. You may also request technical assistance from an EEOP specialist at OCR by dialing (202) 616-3208.

If your organization received an award between \$25,000 and \$500,000 and has 50 or more employees, your organization still has to prepare an EEOP, but it does not have to submit the EEOP to OCR for review. Instead, your organization has to maintain the EEOP on file and make it available for review on request. In addition, your organization has to complete Section B of the Certification Form and return it to OCR. The Certification Form can be found at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ocr/eeop.htm>.

If your organization received an award for less than \$25,000; or if your organization has less than 50 employees, regardless of the amount of the award; or if your organization is a medical institution, educational institution, nonprofit organization or Indian tribe, then your organization is exempt from the EEOP requirement. However, your organization must complete Section A of the Certification Form and return it to OCR. The Certification Form can be found at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ocr/eeop.htm>.

2) Submitting Findings of Discrimination

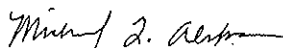
In the event a Federal or State court or Federal or State administrative agency makes an adverse finding of discrimination against your organization after a due process hearing, on the ground of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex, your organization must submit a copy of the finding to OCR for review.

Ensuring the Compliance of Subrecipients

If your organization makes subawards to other agencies, you are responsible for assuring that subrecipients also comply with all of the applicable Federal civil rights laws, including the requirements pertaining to developing and submitting an EEOP, reporting Findings of Discrimination, and providing language services to LEP persons. State agencies that make subawards must have in place standard grant assurances and review procedures to demonstrate that they are effectively monitoring the civil rights compliance of subrecipients.

If we can assist you in any way in fulfilling your civil rights responsibilities as a recipient of Federal funding, please call OCR at (202) 307-0690 or visit our website at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ocr/>.

Sincerely,



Michael L. Alston
Director

cc: Grant Manager
Financial Analyst

