



Pennsylvania
**Commission on Crime
and Delinquency**

Office of Justice Programs

FY25 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvements

Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Solicitation

Please Note: Applications are *only* accepted through PCCD's Egrants system. Applicants must register in Egrants prior to submitting an application. Applicants are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Egrants system and allow adequate time to prepare and submit an application.

Prior to starting an application in Egrants, your agency must be registered in Egrants, and at least two individuals from your agency must register as Egrants users and have Egrants user roles for your agency.

Every agency must also have at least one person with the e-signature role in Egrants.

Please refer to the [Getting Started in Egrants](#) page on our website for Egrants registration information and guides.

Release Date:

June 2, 2026

Egrants Application Deadline:

July 14, 2026

This funding guideline contains information not appearing in the Egrants application. Applicants are advised to review this document and refer to it while completing your Egrants application.

PCCD staff may only respond to questions to clarify the funding announcement. Questions must be sent via email to: ra-pccd-ocjsi@pa.gov with "FY25 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvements" in the subject line. All questions regarding this funding announcement must be received by close of business on **July 7, 2026**. PCCD staff will post responses to questions, as they are received, on [PCCD's website](#). Select the appropriate funding announcement to view questions and answers.

For any technical or system questions, contact and ask for the Egrants Help Desk at (717) 787-5887 or (800) 692-7292, or by emailing RA-eGrantsSupport@pa.gov.

PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY
Office of Justice Programs

Funding Stream: Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvements

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PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY
Office of Justice Programs

Funding Announcement Title: FY25 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvements

Funding Stream: Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvements

Submission Requirements for Applications:

- **Scoring** – All applications received will be [competitively reviewed and scored](#) based on the applicant’s adherence to the funding announcement guidelines and timely submission in the PCCD Egrants system.
- **Due Date** – Applications must be submitted electronically through PCCD’s Egrants system no later than **11:59 PM on July 14, 2026**.
- **Technical Assistance** – Grant application and administrative guides can be accessed on [PCCD’s website](#). Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the application and administrative guides before calling the Egrants Help Desk for assistance. The Egrants Help Desk is available to assist with technical or system questions Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, and may be reached by calling (717) 787-5887 or (800) 692-7292, or by emailing RA-eGrantsSupport@pa.gov.
- **Administrative Rejection** – An application that does not meet all the listed requirements in this funding announcement may be administratively rejected.
- **Corrections** – If PCCD returns an application for corrections, the final application (including all corrections and required documents) must be returned to and approved by PCCD for the requested funding to be awarded.
- **Non-supplantation** – Funding must not be used to supplant/replace state, federal, or local funds that would otherwise be available to provide for program-related services. PCCD funding is to be used in addition to other funds that are made available for services.

PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY
Office of Justice Programs

1. Overview:

The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) is now accepting applications for funding under the FY 2025 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvements solicitation. The primary purpose of Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement funds is to improve the quality and timeliness of forensic services throughout Pennsylvania, with an emphasis on combating opioids and synthetic drugs through laboratory accreditation, the certification of forensic scientists, and the purchase of laboratory equipment.

The anticipated impacts resulting from this solicitation include supporting Pennsylvania forensic crime laboratories with obtaining or maintaining accreditation and/or the certification of forensic science analysts in an acceptable forensic science discipline, with an emphasis on combating opioids and synthetic drugs. Additionally, funds may be used to eliminate a backlog in the analysis of forensic evidence and to train and/or employ laboratory personnel to eliminate backlogs.

The goals and objectives of the Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvements funds are:

- Reduction in the number of days between submission of a sample to a forensic science laboratory and delivery of test results to a requesting office or agency;
- Reduction in the number of backlogged forensic cases;
- Increase in the number of forensic science personnel who attend certification training;
- Increase the number of forensic laboratories participating in the accreditation process; and
- Improvement of forensic science operations related to combating opioids and/or synthetic drugs.

2. Funding Availability:

A total of approximately \$740,000 in federal Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvements funds is being announced to support this initiative. PCCD expects to fund four to six grants with budgets not to exceed \$200,000 over the 12-month project period.

PCCD is not liable for costs incurred prior to the official start date of the award.

3. Project Dates:

Applications approved at the September 2026 Commission meeting will be 12-month projects and have a start date of October 1, 2026, and an end date of September 30, 2027.

Applicants are encouraged to complete their applications in Egrants as soon as possible following notification of this funding announcement. **Applications that are not fully executed (i.e., that reach open-awarded status) within one year from the date the application/award was approved risk forfeiture of that award.**

4. Eligible Applicants:

Eligibility for these funds is open to state, county, or municipal forensic crime laboratories to support activities that improve the quality and timeliness of forensic services.

*Please note: Applications requesting funds for the certification of forensic analysts may only be submitted by an accredited state, county, or municipal forensic crime laboratory or a state, county, or municipal forensic crime laboratory currently engaged in accreditation activities. Any unaccredited laboratory receiving grant funds must achieve accreditation within two years of the award date.

Applicants must be in good standing with PCCD to be eligible for these funds.¹ The applicant and recipient agencies' historical success in implementing PCCD-funded programs/initiatives that met their intended goals will be considered in the review process. Applicants are not required to have a prior funding history with PCCD to be eligible.

5. Eligible Program Activities and Expenses:

Funds for the proposed program shall be used to support one or more of the following activities, with at least 59% of the budget dedicated to combating opioids and/or synthetic drugs:

- Improving the quality and timeliness of forensic science or medical examiner/coroner services;
- Eliminating backlog in the analysis of forensic science evidence;
- Training, assisting, and employing forensic laboratory personnel and medicolegal death investigators to eliminate backlog of forensic evidence;
- Addressing emerging forensic science issues and technology;
- Education and training of forensic pathologist; and
- Funding medicolegal death investigations systems to facilitate accreditation of medical examiner/coroner offices and certification of medicolegal death investigations.

Funds may be used for expenses related to:

- Forensic science or medical examiner/coroner office personnel, overtime, fellowships, visiting scientists, interns, consultants, or temporary staff;
- Upgrading, replacing, leasing, or purchasing computer hardware and software for forensic analyses and data management;
- Upgrading, leasing, or purchasing forensic laboratory or medical examiner/coroner office equipment, instrumentation, and supplies;
- Achieving initial accreditation or maintaining accreditation; and
- Education, training, and certification.

**Note on the use of funds to address opioid and synthetic drug-related challenges: The application must demonstrate, wherever applicable, how any proposed use of funds would address challenges that opioids and/or synthetic drugs have brought to the forensic science community. To facilitate this, an applicant must annotate each line item in the budget as "opioid and/or synthetic drug-related" or "non-opioid or synthetic drug-related."

All expenses must be described in the Justification box located in the Egrants Budget Detail section. PCCD has approval of all final budgets and may require budget adjustments.

6. Ineligible Program Activities and Expenses:

The following activities are not eligible for funding and shall be administratively rejected:

- Research;
- Drones or unmanned aircraft systems (UAS);
- Non-forensic or general law enforcement functions; and

¹ This may include, but is not limited to, compliance with PCCD program and fiscal reporting requirements, State and Federal funding guidelines, and acceptable risk rating as determined by PCCD.

- Purchase/lease of vehicles.

7. Required Egrants Sections/Documents:

- a. Required Egrants Sections – All sections identified in Egrants are required. Applicants will not be able to submit their grant application in Egrants until all sections are marked as complete.
- b. Required Signed Documents – A successful application must be accompanied by the following four documents in the Required Attachments section of Egrants:
 - Certification as to External Investigations;
 - Certification as to Generally Accepted Laboratory Practices;
 - Procedures and Certification as to Forensic Laboratory System Accreditation; and the
 - National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) checklist.

8. Scoring:

Applicants must submit the requested information for each section specified below within the defined response fields provided in Egrants. Responses should not be duplicated in multiple sections. The following application sections in Egrants have a point value associated with them and will be scored as described below:

a. **Executive Summary – Maximum of 5 points**

All applicants should fill out the following script and paste into the executive summary section:

The name of applicant is requesting \$_____ to [*provide a single sentence or two of what you are seeking to implement with your grant funding*].

These funds will be used for the following: [*provide bullet points of what the funds will be used for*].

b. **Budget Detail – Maximum of 20 points**

The budget details section should identify specific line items for which the funds will be used and how those costs were calculated. The justification sections should explain why each of the requested items is necessary to successfully implement the project and clearly describe how expenditures will contribute to completing project objectives.

For any budgeted cost that is not self-explanatory, clearly explain the relationship between the budgeted costs and the proposed project activities/operation. Describe how the item will be used to implement the proposed project. This section may include an additional explanation of the computations stated in the Budget Detail section; however, computations provided within the line items should not be replicated in the justification field(s).

** Items should only be listed under the Equipment category if the cost of one item is \$10,000 or greater. Items that cost less than \$10,000 should be listed under Supplies and Operating Expenses.

At least 59% of the total budget must be dedicated to combating opioids and/or synthetics. Applicants must annotate each line item in the budget as "opioid and/or synthetic drug-related" or "non-opioid or non-synthetic drug-related."

c. **Statement of Problem – Maximum of 20 points**

Identify the precise problem to be addressed by the project. Supporting data, facts, and figures must be specific to your project and relevant to the problem and your proposed request. Proposed projects should demonstrate consistency between the scope of effort and the resources to be used in the project.

d. **Project Description – Maximum of 40 points**

This section must outline a clear goal(s), with measurable objectives, that is realistic in view of your proposed project budget. Briefly describe your implementation plan and project activities. Applications must include a description of the activities, tasks, or training and how activities will improve the quality, timeliness, and credibility of forensic science services in the criminal justice system.

e. **Impact/Outcomes – Maximum of 15 points**

Describe how the proposed project will be measured (i.e., short-term, and long-term outcomes, data collection and analysis, etc.). Describe the alignment of the project with existing best practices or programs and provide citations as applicable. Describe the expected impact of the project. Describe any next steps you see your results having on the improvement of laboratory operations. Describe how you think you will sustain your project once PCCD funds expire, as appropriate.

9. Performance Measures:

Under this funding announcement, successful applicants are required to comply with all reporting, data collection, and evaluation requirements as prescribed by PCCD and federal or state guidelines. All grantees are to report on the following performance indicators on a semi-annual basis:

Case Analysis

- As of the first day of the grant period, report the average number of days between submission of evidence to a forensic science laboratory or a medical examiner's/coroner's office funded under this award and delivery of test results to a requesting office or agency (*This answer should not change over the life of the award*).
- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the average number of days between submission of evidence to a forensic lab or a medical examiner's/coroner's office funded under this award and delivery of test results to the requesting office or agency.
- Does your laboratory have the capability to test, process, and conclusively identify the presence of a controlled substance in evidence tested?
- Prior to the start of the award, what is the average number of days between submission of evidence to be tested for the presence of a controlled substance and the delivery of test results (*This answer should not change over the life of the award*).
- As of the last day of this reporting period, what is the average number of days between submission of evidence to be tested for the presence of a controlled substance and the delivery of test results?
- Of the cases completed during the reporting period, how many were sent for testing to identify any possible seized drugs based on funding from this grant?
- Of those sent to identify any possible seized drugs, how many identified the presence of controlled substances based on funding from this grant?

Certification – Forensic Personnel Certification

- As of the first day of the grant period, report the number of forensic personnel seeking certification (*This answer should not change over the life of the award*).

- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of forensic personnel that are supported by funding from this grant.
- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of certified forensic personnel that are supported by funding from this grant.
- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of forensic science personnel who initiated certification using funding from this grant.
- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of forensic science personnel that completed certification using funding from this grant.

Certification – Medicolegal Death Investigator Certification

- As of the first day of the grant period, report the number of certified medicolegal death investigators supported by funding from this grant (*The answer may be zero and should not change over the life of the award*).
- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of certified medicolegal death investigators that are supported by funding from this grant (*Answer may be zero*).
- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of medicolegal death investigators supported by funding from this grant (*Answer may be zero*).
- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of medicolegal death investigators that initiated certification using funding from this grant (*Answer may be zero*).
- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of medicolegal death investigators that completed certification using funding from this grant (*Answer may be zero*).

Equipment Procurement

- As of the first day of the grant period, did you procure/implement new technology or equipment using funding from this grant?
- If yes, describe any success stories related to the new technology/equipment.
- If yes, describe any challenges related to implementing the new technology/equipment.

Backlogged Cases

- As of the first day of the grant period, report the number of backlogged cases (*This answer should not change over the life of the award*).
- As of the last day of this reporting period, report the number of backlogged cases.
- During this reporting period, report the number of backlogged cases analyzed with Coverdell funds (*Answer may be zero*).

Training

- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of forensic personnel that attended training using funding from this grant (*Answer may be zero*).
- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of training hours that were completed by forensic personnel using funding from this grant (*Answer may be zero*).
- What training topics were covered?
- During the reporting period, were there any processes implemented or revised?
- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of medical examiners/coroners who attended training using funding from this grant (*Answer may be zero*).
- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of training hours completed by medical examiners/coroners using funding from this grant (*Answer may be zero*).

- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of forensic pathologists that attended training using funding from this grant (*Answer may be zero*).
- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of training hours completed by forensic pathologists using funding from this grant (*Answer may be zero*).
- During the reporting period, were there any processes implemented or revised?

Personnel

- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of forensic science personnel that were hired with grant funds (*Answer may be zero*).
- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of medical examiners/coroners hired with grant funds (*Answer may be zero*).
- As of the last day of the reporting period, report the number of forensic pathologists that were hired with grant funds.

Genealogy Testing

- Does your agency utilize Coverdell funds for forensic genealogy testing (*If yes, please answer the questions below*)?
- Enter the amount of federal funding used to conduct FGG/FGGS during the reporting period.
- Please identify the type of crime and enter the number of investigations initiated during the reporting period for which FGG/FGGS was utilized since the beginning of the grant program for each type of crime:
 - Homicide
 - Sexual Assault
 - Unidentified Human Remains
 - Other (provide details)
- During the reporting period, how many new forensic samples were subjected to FGG/FGGS?
- During the reporting period, how many new reference samples were subjected to FGG/FGGS?
- During the reporting period, please provide the following: the type of forensic sample subjected to FGG and a description of the total amount, condition, and concentration of the sample (e.g., single source, mixed profile, degradation status, etc.).
- During the reporting period, how many cases resulted in searchable profiles obtained from FGG/FGGS?
- During the reporting period, how many investigations resulted in a new arrest that relied, in part, on the use of FGG/FGGS?
- During the reporting period, how many suspects were identified as a result of the use of FGG/FGGS?
- During the reporting period, how many suspects were prosecuted as a result of the use of FGG/FGGS?
- Please identify the vendor laboratory/laboratories used to conduct FGG during the reporting period.
- Please provide the names of any genetic genealogy service(s) used to search the FGG profile(s) during the reporting period.
- During the reporting period, how many cases were closed or cleared by exceptional means through the use of FGG/FGGS?

Accreditation

- Is your agency currently accredited?
- Is your agency applying for initial accreditation using Coverdell funding?
- Which agency are you using for accreditation?

- Has your agency applied for accreditation with an appropriate accrediting agency during the reporting period?
- Was accreditation obtained from an appropriate accrediting agency using Coverdell funding during the grant period?
- During the reporting period, did your agency use Coverdell funding for fees to maintain accreditation?

10. Competitive Bidding/Sole Source Procurement:

All procurement transactions shall be conducted in a manner that provides open and free competition. Grant recipients must follow the Procurement Standards section in PCCD's [Applicant's Manual](#).

Procurements by noncompetitive proposal are strongly discouraged and must demonstrate an economic benefit or lack of alternate resources to be justified. If a request is made, the prospective applicant must identify the request as a procurement by noncompetitive proposal and provide a substantial justification for the request within their funding request (See PCCD's [Applicant's Manual](#) for Procurement by Noncompetitive Proposal Approval Procedure).

11. Administrative Requirements:

a. Egrants Agency and User Registration:

Prior to submitting a grant application, both the applicant agency and at least two users from the applicant agency must be registered in Egrants. Applicants are strongly advised to allow adequate time to work on application documents in Egrants prior to the submission deadline. Please go to the [Getting Started in Egrants](#) page on PCCD's website for further information.

b. Fiscal Accountability:

See the [Fiscal Accountability](#) page on PCCD's website for further information.

c. Time and Effort Reporting:

See the [Time and Effort Reports](#) page on PCCD's website for further information.

d. Grant Payments:

- Payments will not be released until all applicable special conditions on the grant award have been satisfied.
- All grantees are required, at a minimum, to submit quarterly fiscal reports. PCCD will only make payments to reimburse actual expenditures reported on the fiscal reports. An agency experiencing cash flow problems may submit fiscal reports monthly and PCCD will reimburse reported expenditures. Non-submission or late submission of the required reports will result in payment delays.
- ACH Payments:
 - All payments to grant recipients will be made through ACH.
 - Either before or at the time an application is submitted to PCCD, the applicant agency must [register as a Non-Procurement Vendor](#) with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

e. Federal Transparency Act Certification:

This section is required for both state and federal funding streams. See the [Federal Applicants](#) page on PCCD's website for further information.

- f. Reporting Requirements:
- Programmatic reports are due semi-annual.
 - Fiscal reports are due quarterly.
 - Late submission of programmatic and fiscal reports may delay payments.
 - All reports must be submitted through the Egrants system.
- g. UCR Reporting:
Every criminal justice entity which is required to submit Uniform Crime Report (UCR) data and is participating in this project must submit UCR data to the Pennsylvania State Police. If a required entity is not submitting UCR data, they may be ineligible for funding.

12. PCCD Contact Information and Resources:

- a. Staff Contacts:
Staff are only able to clarify the funding announcement and are not able to answer any questions about how a potential applicant should respond to any particular section. Questions regarding this funding announcement should be directed as follows:
- E-mail your funding announcement questions to RA-CD-OCJSI@pa.gov with "FY25 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvements" in the subject line.
 - Questions must be received by close of business on Tuesday, July 7, 2026.
 - All questions and answers will be posted under this funding announcement title on the [Funding Announcement Q&A](#) page of the PCCD website.
- b. Egrants Funding Announcement:
Log into the Egrants system and search under the "Funding Announcement" tab for FY25 Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvements.
- c. PCCD Guidelines and Documents:
Applicants should be familiar with the [Applicant's Manual](#), grant application and administrative guides, and other documents common to PCCD's grant application process, all of which are available on the [Funding and Grants Process](#) page of the PCCD website.
- d. Egrants Technical Questions:
For any technical or system questions, contact and ask for the Egrants Help Desk at (717) 787-5887 or (800) 692-7292, or by emailing RA-eGrantsSupport@pa.gov.
- e. PCCD Webmaster:
Please address any technical problems you may have with the website or online forms to the [PCCD Web Master](#).
- f. Reporting Potential Fraud, Waste and Abuse:
Information about waste, fraud, abuse, conflict of interest, bribery, gratuity, or other similar misconduct, or whistleblower reprisal relating to a PCCD employee, program, contract or grant, may be reported to the PCCD Fraud Hotline at (717) 525-5031. For more information, visit the [Reporting Fraud, Waste and Abuse](#) page on PCCD's website.

13. Submission Information:

The application must be entered into Egrants **no later than Tuesday, July 14, 2026 by 11:59 PM.**

Successful applicants will be required to sign the grant contract following PCCD's review of the application and after any identified issues are resolved. Applicants will receive an automated notification from Egrants when their grant contract is ready to be signed.

The grant application must be electronically signed within Egrants. To electronically sign the application, at least one person from your organization must have the e-signature role in Egrants. Please use the link below to access instructions which explain how to request the e-signature role.

[E-signature Access Request Instructions](#)

[E-signature Access Request Form](#) (This must be attached to your access request in Egrants)

Please note that you cannot request the e-signature role on behalf of someone else.