

E-SJI News

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KANSAS JUDICIAL BRANCH

COURT SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROJECT

The SJI-funded *Court Security and Emergency Preparedness Project* for the Kansas Judicial Branch is currently being finalized. This FY 2006 grant award developed security and emergency preparedness standards and trained Kansas Judicial Branch managers on how to conduct vulnerability assessments.

The Kansas Department of Homeland Security expressed interest in the project after the manager for the Vulnerability Assessment Team reviewed the initial RFP. They agreed to be adjunct consultants for the project, and participated in meetings with the Judicial Branch Advisory Committee in providing project oversight. Furthermore, the Kansas DHS agreed to conduct a vulnerability assessment on each court facility in the State at no cost to the Kansas Judicial Branch.

The Advisory Committee for the Judicial Branch was created in the



fall of 2005 to oversee the project. This committee included judges, court administrators, court clerks, court services officers, and representatives from the Kansas Association of Counties and the Kansas Sheriff's Association. The Advisory Committee worked closely with the National Center for State Courts and Kansas DHS throughout the project in conducting the vulnerability assessments, and then drafting security and emergency preparedness standards. Every judicial district in the state tasked at least one representative to review the proposed standards.

This project required an extensive amount of state-wide collaboration.

The proposed emergency preparedness standards cover five areas: 1) leadership; 2) security; 3) emergency preparedness; 4) information technology records and evidence; and 5) pandemic disease. The standards are currently under review and will undergo a final editing process before submission to the Kansas Supreme Court, with a request that the standards be adopted in the form of a Supreme Court administrative order. However, the requirements contained in the standards will not all be mandated to every court, or require counties to purchase equipment or services. The final standards will represent best practices in court security emergency preparedness and recognize the wide diversity in needs and resources among the courts in Kansas.

This project is the first phase of a continuing effort in court security

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SJI BOARD APPROVES GRANTS FOR THE 1ST QUARTER OF FY 2008

Although SJI is still operating under a Continuing Resolution for FY 2008, the Board of Directors has reviewed and given approval, subject to the availability of appropriations, for a number of FY 2008 grants. The SJI Board of Directors met by telephone conference on November 9, 2008, to review the applications submitted for the 1st quarter of FY 2008.

The 1st quarter grant awards included a Project grant to the Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts for the Council of Probate Court Judges to develop a video and handbook that detail the guardianship of incapacitated adults and minors, and the responsibilities that are conveyed to guardians.

A number of Technical Assistance (TA) grants were also approved for strategic long range planning efforts in the 16th Judicial Circuit Court of Jackson County,

Missouri, and the Florida Office of the State Court Administrator. The Montana Supreme Court received a TA grant to develop performance measures in conjunction with other court improvement projects in that state. The Puerto Rico Office of Courts Administration received a TA grant to support their efforts in developing a Mentoring Program for the judiciary, and the Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts will begin a state-wide court interpreter and language services initiative.

The Board also approved a Curriculum Adaptation and Training (CAT) grant for the 20th Judicial Circuit, Ottawa County Probate Court in Michigan, to provide a Court Management Program for court personnel.

Once SJI has its final appropriation for FY 2008, the official awards will be made for these projects.



STATUS OF FY 2008 APPROPRIATIONS

Congress has not yet approved a final version of the Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) spending bill, which contains SJI's appropriation for FY 2008.

House and Senate conferees were scheduled to meet on November 14, 2007, to resolve differences in the two versions of the bill. However, the conference meeting was postponed for reasons unrelated to SJI. For FY 2008, the House approved a total of \$4.64 million for SJI (H.R. 3093), and the Senate approved \$3.5 million (S. 1745).

The fiscal year started on October 1, 2007. However,

no appropriations bills (including CJS) had yet to be signed into law by that date. Therefore, Congress passed, and the President signed, a Continuing Resolution (CR) to avoid the shutdown of Federal agencies. The first CR (P.L. 110-92) expired on November 16, 2008, and the current CR (P.L. 110-116) continues SJI's funding at FY 2007 levels until December 14, 2007.

SJI will continue to provide updates on the FY 2008 appropriations process in future E-SJI Newsletters.

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The State Justice Institute is a private, non-profit corporation established by Congress in 1984 to provide support for projects to improve the quality of justice in State courts. SJI is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.



Kansas Judicial Branch

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and emergency preparedness in Kansas. Although the grant project goals are completed, the Kansas Judicial Branch is well aware of the need for continued activities in these areas. There have been a number of legal questions that still need to be resolved regarding the authority of

these standards across the varying court districts in the state. In addition, there are issues specific to pandemic disease, which still need to be explored by the Advisory Committee. Future activities will include training on court security and emergency preparedness. SJI is very excited that the initial grant goals have been achieved, and is eager to see the Judicial Branch continue building on these efforts.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next round of applications are due by **February 1, 2008**. February 1st is the due date, not the mail date, for the next Board review of applications. This includes applications for all grant types and scholarships. Feel free to contact SJI if you have questions about the application process.

Scholarship applications due by February 1, 2008, are for courses beginning after March 1, 2008.

The FY 2008 final Guideline has been sent to the Federal Register and will hopefully be printed December 5th. The Guideline will also be made available on the SJI website: <http://www.statejustice.org>.

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