

BRENNAN  
CENTER  
FOR JUSTICE

Brennan Center for Justice  
*at New York University School of Law*

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June 11, 2015

Via Certified Mail and E-Mail

Chaun Eason  
U.S. Department of Justice  
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services  
Attn: Legal Division  
145 N Street NE  
Washington, DC 20650

**Re: Freedom of Information Act Request**

Dear Ms. Eason,

This is a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request on behalf of the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law.

The Brennan Center seeks copies of the successful Grant Agreements and supporting documentation submitted to the COPS office by the World Organization for Resource Development & Education (WORDE), based in Montgomery County, MD. WORDE has been the recipient of at least one grant from the COPS office in FY 2014 (No. 2014CKWXK043).

**Formal Request**

According to the Grant Monitoring Standards and Guidelines issued by the COPS office for all grants, grant recipients are required to submit the following documents related to their grant at the time of application, and maintain these documents through the duration of the grant period:<sup>1</sup>

- Approved grant abstracts and supplemental appropriations
- Signed grant application and attachment

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<sup>1</sup> COPS Office, Grant Monitoring Standards and Guidelines for All COPS Grants and Cooperative Agreements, 10-11 (2014), [http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/e081420661\\_Grant%20Monitoring\\_Final.pdf](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/e081420661_Grant%20Monitoring_Final.pdf).

- Budget worksheet
- List of verifiable sources used to obtain financial information to develop budget (including current pay scale, fringe benefits, copies of current job announcements, locally budgeted sworn positions and supporting documentation)
- Worksheets and other supporting information to document points of contact and other sources used to develop application.
- Grant award modification requests and COPS office approvals
- Requests for budget modifications and COPS Office approvals for budget modifications
- General correspondence between the COPS office and the grant recipient (including general letters, emails faxes and scanned documents)

Through the course of the grant, COPS grant recipients are also required to submit the following documents on a quarterly basis to the COPS office for monitoring and evaluation purposes:

- Periodic programmatic progress reports
- Quarterly financial reports<sup>2</sup>

We therefore request the above-mentioned documents as they pertain to COPS funding for the following grants:

1. The COPS Office awarded WORDE a grant for “Countering Domestic Violent Extremism” for FY 2014, award number 2014CKWXXK043. We request a copy of the responsive fully-executed Grant Agreement, along with relevant supporting documentation as detailed above.
2. The Brennan Center also requests a copy of any other successful, fully-executed Grant Agreements between the COPS office and WORDE issued between 2001 and the present, along with relevant supporting documentation as detailed above.

## **Fees**

The Brennan Center is exempt from search and review fees as a noncommercial scientific institution, an educational institution, and a representative of the news media. 28 C.F.R. § 16.11(c)-(d). The Brennan Center is a non-profit, non-partisan public policy and law institute at the NYU School of Law that conducts research and disseminates to the public information about issues affecting justice and democracy. It is engaged in social science research and therefore meets the definition of a noncommercial scientific institution entitled to a waiver of search and review fees. In addition, the Brennan Center’s affiliation with NYU Law School, an educational institution, means that the Center is exempt from review or search charges. Finally, the Brennan Center qualifies for a waiver as a representative of the news media under 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(ii)(II) based on its track record of publishing reports and papers.

In addition, as a noncommercial requester acting in the public interest, the Brennan Center is eligible for a waiver of duplication fees, or at the very least, a reduction of these fees under § 552(a)(4)(A)(ii)(II). For the same reason, we are entitled to the first 100 duplicated pages free of

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<sup>2</sup> COPS Office, Grant Monitoring Standards and Guidelines for All COPS Grants and Cooperative Agreements, 20 (2014), [http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/e081420661\\_Grant%20Monitoring\\_Final.pdf](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/e081420661_Grant%20Monitoring_Final.pdf).

charge, 28 C.F.R. § 16.11(d)(3)(i), and to a waiver or reduction of any remaining duplication costs under 28 C.F.R. § 16.11(k).

### **Expedited Processing**

Please provide expedited processing pursuant to 28 C.F.R. § 16.5(d)(1). The criteria for expedited processing are satisfied because there is an “urgency to inform the public about an actual or alleged federal government activity,” *id.* § 16.5(d)(1)(ii), and the Brennan Center is primarily involved in disseminating information to the public. In this case, the grants identified above provide funding for state and local authorities in Montgomery County, Maryland to prevent acts of domestic terrorism by using a “countering violent extremism” (CVE) approach. Such an approach continues to be the subject of national importance and debate,<sup>3</sup> especially in the wake of reports concerning the “homegrown” threat posed by groups like the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.<sup>4</sup> The public has a significant and urgent interest in knowing how such CVE programs are funded, and how they will affect their communities and their lives.

### **Response Requested in 10 days**

Your attention to this request is appreciated, and I will anticipate your determination of our request within ten (10) calendar days pursuant to 28 C.F.R. § 16.5(d)(4). Should you have any questions regarding this request, please contact me by email at [meghan.koushik@nyu.edu](mailto:meghan.koushik@nyu.edu) or by phone at (646) 292-8382.

Sincerely,



Meghan Koushik  
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Brennan Center for Justice  
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New York, NY 10013  
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<sup>3</sup> *See, e.g.*, John Cohen, Acting Under-Secretary of Homeland Sec. for intelligence and Analysis, Dep’t. of Homeland Sec. Policy Forum at the Washington Institute: Revisiting U.S. CVE Efforts One Year After the Boston Bombing (Mar. 28, 2014) <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/revisiting-u.s.-cve-efforts-one-year-after-the-boston-bombing> .

<sup>4</sup> Transcript, Council on Foreign Relations, Homeland Security Secretary Johnson on ISIS, Ebola, and Preventing Homegrown Terrorism: A Conversation with Jeh Charles Johnson (Sept. 10, 2014), *available at* <http://www.cfr.org/homeland-security/homeland-security-secretary-johnson-isis-ebola-preventing-homegrown-terrorism/p33424>

