



NATIONAL DISTRICT ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION

THE VOICE OF AMERICA'S PROSECUTORS

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John R. Justice: Program Overview

History

First passed by Congress in 2008, the John R. Justice (JRJ) Grant Program provides loan repayment assistance for state prosecutors as well as state and federal public defenders. The JRJ program was created to encourage qualified attorneys to choose careers in public service through formula awards to state governments.

Request

Remove JRJ as a carve-out from the Byrne-JAG Grant Program and make sure the program **is a separate line** item in the FY22 CJS bill.

Support increased funding **at a minimum of \$10 million** to return the program to peak funding levels.

Current Administration

The program is administered through the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA).

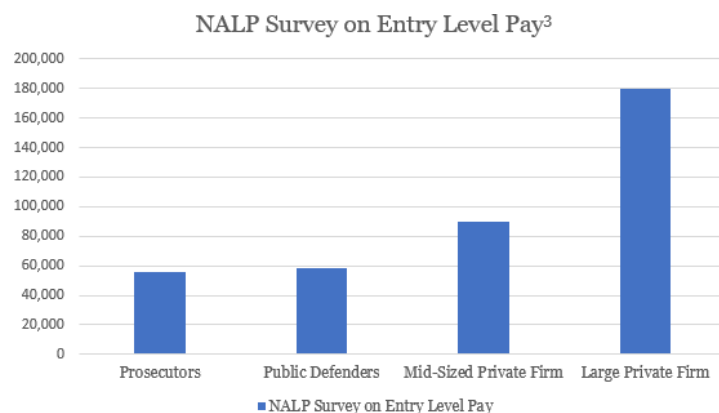
A beneficiary may receive up to **\$10,000 a year** and may not receive more than **\$60,000 in total lifetime benefits** provided by the John R. Justice Grant.

Funding Concerns

According to the 2018 BJA John R. Justice Allocation Report¹, the Department of Justice provided **\$1,817,067** in grant funding for FY18 to 42 states, the District of Columbia, and 5 U.S. territories.

According to an *Above the Law* and *U.S. News and World Report* study, the average law school debt for a graduate was a staggering **\$112,776 per student** in 2017.²

A 2018 NALP survey found that entry-level prosecutors earn an average of **\$56,200** while a new public defender earns **\$58,300** on average. In comparison, mid-sized private sector firms pay an average of **\$90,000** and large private sector firms pay an average of **\$180,000** to new hires.³



¹ <https://www.bja.gov/Funding/FY18JRJAllocations.pdf>.

² <https://abovethelaw.com/2017/09/will-you-ever-be-able-to-pay-off-your-law-school-debt/>.

³ <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/survey-finds-public-law-salaries-163056751.html>.