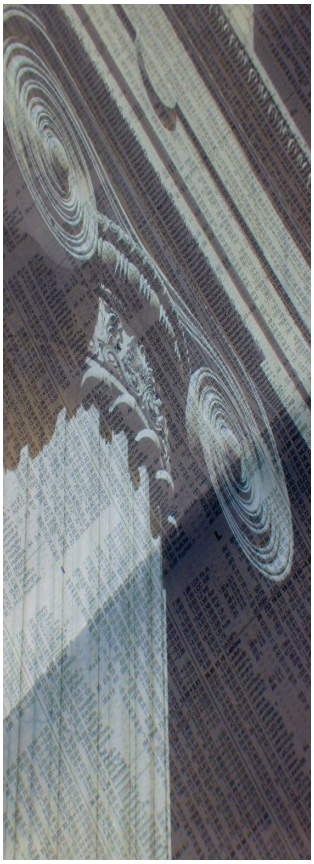

CONSORTIUM OF FORENSIC SCIENCE ORGANIZATIONS (CFSO)

SECOND BUDGET BRIEF

The mission of the CFSO is to speak with a single forensic science voice on behalf of its member organizations of matters of mutual interest regarding forensic science, to influence public policy at the national level, and to make a compelling case for greater federal funding for public crime laboratories and medical examiner and coroner offices. The primary focus of the CFSO is national, state, and local policymakers, as well as the United States Congress.

FY25 Proposed Federal Forensics Budget

The FY25 budgets were released on March 11, 2024. Due to the significant delays on the FY24 budget the process for consideration of FY25 is later than usual this year. The proposed budget for FY25 is close to the FY24 budget with modest increases. Beneath the chart is the language provided by the agencies with the budget. While much of it is an overview of the agencies proposals there are some provisions that are important for the community to recognize as these are the priorities of the current Administration. Specifically, note that ATF has proposed to hire more forensic examiners and that NIST plans to expand its forensic science program in four major areas: computational forensic science, forensic science data, forensic science quality assurance, and forensic science education for the legal community.

This proposed budget will move through the House and Senate for consideration and edit. The CFSO has taken direction from its Member organizations and will be working with Congress to ensure the priorities of the community are raised with the key decision-makers.

DOJ	Final FY24	FY25 Proposed
Program		
Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant		$524.5m
National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs)	$3m	$3.5m
Missing Persons and Identified Remains Act	$5m	$6m
Forensics Ballistic Program in Higher Education	$1.5m	0
National Center of Forensics	N/A	0
Forensic Science Research and Development Program (new program)	$8m dedicated to forensics	$60.3m No breakout for forensics indicated
Sexual Assault Survivors Bill of Rights		$4m
DNA Programs	$153m	$168
DNA Analysis and Capacity Enhancement Program-Debbie Smith	$120m	$130
Other Federal, State, and Local Forensic Activities	$15m	$19m
Kirk Bloodsworth Post Conviction DNA Testing Program	$14m	$14m
Sexual Assault Forensic Exam Program Guide	$4.0m	$5
Community Teams to Reduce the Sexual Assault Kit (SAK) Backlog	$51.5m	$55m
Regional Sexual Assault Investigative Training Academies/Access to Sexual Assault Nurse Exams	$20m	$20m
Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Grants	$34m	$35m
Forensic Support for Opioid and Synthetic Drug Investigations	No carve out	$17m
Forensics Training and Technical Assistance (new program)	0	0
CARA (Comprehensive Opioid Use Reduction Activities)		$443m
FBI 2nd DNA Laboratory	$30m	
Commerce: NIST		
Forensic Science Research	$22m	$22m
OSAC	$3.5m	N/A
Technical Merit Evaluations	$1.5m	N/A
SDO Grant	$1.5m	N/A
HHS: CDC		
Opioid Overdose Prevention and Surveillance	N/A	$505,579
National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS)	N/A	$24,500
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Program		
Public Health Data Modernization		$175,000

N/A=not available

DOJ

Byrne Justice Assistance Grants (Byrne JAG)— The Budget requests $524.5 million for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) appropriation in FY 2025, a decrease of $246.3 million below the annualized FY 2024 Continuing Resolution level. This reduction is primarily due to the elimination of $229.6 million in Congressionally- directed spending on one-time projects. Despite the overall decrease to the Byrne JAG appropriation, the net request results in a modest increase to the level of funding available to support JAG formula grant awards to state, local and tribal governments.

Finally, this Budget will propose a further $2.2 billion for the COPS Hiring Program as part of the Safer America Plan, $884.0 million for a Gun Crime Prevention Strategic Fund to invest in modern, data-informed strategies to prevent gun crime and reduce victimization, an additional $150.0 million in mandatory funding for Community Violence Intervention, as well as $1.2 billion in new mandatory funding for a Violent Crime Reduction and Prevention Fund. This five-year Fund will provide $602.5 million to allow communities across the Nation to hire 4,700 new detectives to increase their closure rates for homicides and other violent crimes, and will provide $633 million for the FBI to hire violent crime agents, for the ATF to hire violent crime agents and forensic examiners, for the DEA to expand its Operation Overdrive program in more communities, for the United States Marshals Service (USMS) to expand Operation North Star to capture more violent crime fugitives, and for the U.S. Attorneys to hire more violent crime prosecutors.

Combating Violent Crime and Gun Violence. The Department requests a variety of key investments to further the implementation of Executive Order 14092, *Reducing Gun Violence and Making Our Communities Safer* (March 14, 2023). The Department requests an additional $96.8 million for the ATF to support State, local, and tribal partners with critical National Integrated Ballistics Information System (NIBIN) service and through expansion of the National Services Center in Martinsburg, West Virginia, which provides analytical capacity and processing for crime gun intelligence. The ATF will make targeted investments towards combating gun violence, to disrupt trafficking of illegal firearms and prioritizing resources to areas experiencing the highest rates of persistent gun violence. Resources will also allow the ATF to fund the initial development of a high-throughput, rapid-processing unit for analysis of DNA from Fired Cartridge Cases (FCCs) and funding

([]8) $35,000,000 for Paul Coverdell Forensic Sciences Improvement Grants under part BB of title I of the 1968 Act;

([]9) [$147,000,000] *$168,000,000* for DNA-related and forensic programs and activities, of which—

(A) [$112,000,000] *$130,000,000* is for the purposes authorized under section 2 of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–546) (the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program): Provided, That up to 4 percent of funds made available under this paragraph may be used for the purposes described in the DNA Training and Education for Law Enforcement, Correctional Personnel, and Court Officers program (Public Law 108– 405, section 303);

(B) $19,000,000 is for other local, State, and Federal forensic activities;

(C) [$12,000,000] *$14,000,000* is for the purposes described in the Kirk Bloodsworth Post-Conviction DNA Testing Grant Program (Public Law 108–405, section 412); and

(D) [$4,000,000] *$5,000,000* is for Sexual Assault Forensic Exam Program grants, including as authorized by section 304 of Public Law 108–405;

([]10) [$100,000,000] *$55,000,000* for community-based grant programs to improve the response to sexual assault[and apply enhanced approaches and techniques to reduce violent crime], including assistance for investigation and prosecution of related cold cases;

NIST

Material Measurement Laboratory (MML): The Material Measurement Laboratory is the national reference laboratory for measurements in the chemical, biological, and material sciences. MML conducts research on the composition, structure, and properties of industrial, biological, and environmental materials and processes. MML develops tools such as reference measurement procedures, certified reference materials, and critically evaluated data and best-practice guides used by U.S. industry to assure measurement quality and improve process efficiency. This work improves U.S. competitiveness in an increasingly challenging global environment. MML enables measurements in areas of national importance, including:

o Safety, Security, and Forensics – Providing tools to help forensic crime laboratories validate their analytical methods and ensure accuracy in their results for DNA and biological evidence, fingerprint and pattern evidence, illicit drugs, digital evidence, ballistics, and trace evidence, developing metrologies for threat detection and protective materials.

Goal Statement : The primary goal of the Standards Coordination and Special Programs is to provide for NIST functions in both the management of cross-cutting laboratory research programs, and NIST's engagement in standards and conformity assessment policy, and documentary standards development.

Base Program : Standards Coordination and Special Programs house cross-cutting NIST activities managed by the Associate Director for Laboratory Programs (ADLP) that deal with select R&D programs, documentary standards coordination, and conformity assessment, and policy development.

1. The Special Programs Office (SPO) plans and manages high-profile programs that span the mission and expertise of multiple NIST laboratories to address critical national needs. To meet these needs, SPO works with and forges partnerships among government, private industry, academia, and professional organizations to provide world-class leadership in advanced measurement science, science-based standards, and data-driven technology innovations. SPO actively fosters communication and collaboration between NIST and external stakeholder communities, as well as agile collaboration across organizational boundaries at NIST. SPO's portfolio of programs includes the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Measurements Program, the Forensic Science Program, the Open Data Program, and other programs designated by the ADLP.

- The NIST Forensic Science Program is working to strengthen forensic practice through research and improved standards, conducting research in several forensic disciplines, including digital evidence, forensic genetics, biometrics, firearms and toolmarks, drugs and toxins, statistics, trace analysis, forensic algorithms and data, and quality assurance (which includes interlaboratory studies and proficiency
  testing). NIST provides physical reference standards and data that help forensic laboratories

validate their analytical methods and ensure accurate test results. The program also supports the Center for Statistics and Applications in Forensic Evidence (CSAFE), one of three *NIST Centers of Excellence*, which is working to develop new statistical methods for use in pattern and digital evidence examination.

Examples of Accomplishments

Through its work in this activity and subactivity, NIST has delivered significant impact to stakeholders in the Federal Government and industry. Programs managed by the SPO, and SCO have yielded significant impacts.

- The NIST Forensic Science Research Program facilitated the development, validation, and implementation of a Direct Analysis in Real Time – Mass Spectrometry method for the rapid screening of opioid drug samples. The research team worked closely with forensic scientists at the Maryland State Police laboratory to develop an optimized standard operating procedure for analyzing deadly street drugs like fentanyl and its analogs. The effort to transition this emerging technology to a fully validated method that can be used in crime laboratories has significantly reduced case turnaround times. It also led to a collaborative effort between NIST and the Maryland Department of Health to rapidly screen drug residue from paraphernalia obtained at Harm Reduction Sites and from law enforcement task forces across the state. This partnership will enable forensic laboratories and public health officials to better prepare for, detect, and track emerging illegal drugs and their potentially hazardous excipients.
- In FY 2023, the NIST Forensic Science Foundation Studies Program published reports on the scientific foundations of digital investigation techniques and bitemark analysis. These reports fill a need identified in a landmark 2009 study by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, which called for research to address issues of accuracy, reliability and validity in many forensic science disciplines. Work is ongoing to complete reports on DNA mixture interpretation and firearm examination.
- The NIST Forensic Science Standards Program, which administers the Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science, is currently facilitating the development of over 300 forensic science documentary standards. In FY 2023, the number of standards on OSAC's Registry recommended for adoption have increased from about 100 to over 140. Over 120 Forensic Science Standards Providers (FSSPs) have implemented standards from the OSAC Registry, improving the quality of forensic science practice in the United States.
- NIST updated its Public Access Plan, as part of its Open Data Program, in response to the 2022 OSTP public access memo that significantly strengthened requirements for agencies to provide public access to the results of Federally funded research. Currently, NIST makes more than 5,000 peer-reviewed papers freely available via PubMed Central and more than 15,000 NIST Technical Series publications and reports available via the Government Publishing Office. NIST is making about 100 terabytes of data available for nearly 900 projects collected in the NIST data repository, including forensic science and greenhouse gas data.

In Forensic Science, NIST is focused on:

- Advanced Forensic Science Research – NIST researchers work both on technologies for forensic analysis and the mathematical and statistical tools that help quantify confidence in

the results of a forensics test. To disseminate this work into the forensic science community, NIST develops measurement protocols, calibration systems, Standard Reference Materials and Data, authoritative guidelines, and works with standards-developing organizations to formalize many of these as consensus standards.

- Science-based Standards Development – Since 2014, NIST has administered the Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science Program which brings together over 500 members representing forensic science stakeholders from academia, Federal, state, and local government, and the private sector to facilitate the development of scientifically sound forensic science standards and encourage their adoption across the country. OSAC has over 90 standards listed on its OSAC Registry and has received declarations from over 80 forensic science service providers that have implemented standards listed on the OSAC Registry.
- Scientific Foundation Studies – NIST conducts in-depth reviews to identify priorities for future research, help laboratories identify appropriate limitations on the use of forensic methods, and suggest steps for moving the field forward. NIST recently published two of several scientific foundation reviews on DNA mixture interpretation.
- Operation of the NIST Center of Excellence in Forensics – CSAFE was established in 2015 and renewed in 2020 to help build a statistically sound and scientifically solid foundation for the analysis and interpretation of pattern impression and digital evidence. This multi-university *NIST Center of Excellence* is working to address the issues of accuracy, reliability, and validity of analyses in the examination of pattern and digital evidence.
- NIST plans to expand its Forensic Science Program in four major areas of computational forensic science, forensic science data, forensic science quality assurance, and forensic science education for the legal community.

CDC

- CDC launched the Collaborating Office for Medical Examiners and Coroners in 2022 to coordinate federal support for the medical examiner and coroner community, strengthening the reliability and validity of vital statistics and facilitating research for sudden and unexpected causes of death.