

Exclusive: US Justice Dept grant cuts valued at \$811 million, people and records say

By Sarah N. Lynch and Peter Eisler

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A woman walks past the U.S. Department of Justice Building, in Washington, U.S., December 15, 2020. REUTERS/Al Drago/File Photo [Purchase Licensing Rights](#) 

Summary

Cuts affect trauma centers, crisis hotlines and police training
Trump administration targets policies on diversity and inclusion
Funding restored for some domestic violence shelters after backlash

For a list of targeted programs, click:

WASHINGTON, April 24 (Reuters) - The U.S. Justice Department is terminating \$811 million in grants, including some impacting victim service programs ranging from trauma centers and sign language interpretation for domestic violence victims to police training, according to internal documents and two sources.

The [365 competitive grants](#) being terminated were valued at \$811 million when awarded, a total reported exclusively by Reuters. These grants are typically paid out over three years, though it remains unclear how much money was left unspent at the time of the cuts.

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The cuts affect awards managed by the Office of Justice Programs. As a measure of scope, the office received approval to award roughly \$3 billion in total competitive grants in the 2024 fiscal year.

After Reuters highlighted some of the cuts on Thursday, a Justice Department official said that seven of the victim services grants were being restored.

"We are confident that these cuts are consistent with the administration's priorities while at the same time protecting services that tangibly impact victims," a department official said.

Among those restored included a grant to the National Center for Victims of Crime to fund crime-victim hotlines, and a grant to the National Network to End Domestic Violence, the official said.

President [Donald Trump's](#) administration is engaged in a wide-ranging campaign to slash the federal government that is taking particular aim at policies he opposes, including those that promote diversity, equity and inclusion and refugee resettlement. Accounts from federal workers and experts depict the effort as [chaotic at times](#), with agencies in some cases laying off workers that they then [need to rehire](#).

The Justice Department told Reuters on Wednesday it was discerning in how it selected which grants to cut, with Attorney General Pam Bondi saying it would "continue to ensure that services for victims are not impacted."

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U.S. Department of Justice Grants Targeted for Termination

Following a Reuters report on Wednesday that referenced funding cuts to a program for pet-friendly domestic violence shelters, the department separately restored aid for some recipients. These included one of the only Connecticut providers accepting pets across all its shelters, along with a service provider in Maryland.

"Attorney General Bondi personally extends her appreciation to the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence for its steadfast commitment to domestic violence survivors and the professionals who support them," wrote Deputy Assistant Attorney General Maureen Henneberg in an email seen by Reuters that was sent on Wednesday night to the group, rescinding the termination of the grant.

A review of the cuts to grant programs from the Office for Victims of Crime shows that many provided a mix of direct and indirect assistance for domestic violence and trafficking victims.

'RECKLESS CUTS'

Activating Change, a nonprofit that supports domestic violence victims with disabilities, lost five federal grants totaling more than \$2 million, said Executive Director Nancy Smith.

One of those paid for American Sign Language interpretation services for domestic violence victims, while another trains police on how to investigate trafficking crimes against people with disabilities.

Another recipient that lost funding is the Central Iowa Trauma Recovery Center, which received support from Republican Senator Charles Grassley.

Other types of canceled grants, meanwhile, funded programs from criminal justice research, to efforts to help reduce recidivism and support people after they leave prison.

A Justice Department official said Thursday evening the grant to the Iowa-based trauma recovery center was being restored, but the department would not restore the grants to Activating Change because of its affiliation with the Vera Institute of Justice.

The Vera Institute of Justice, an independent nonprofit, was [recently targeted](#) by billionaire Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency as part of its cost-cutting effort.

"The DOJ's reckless cuts to their federal grants endanger these victims' safety," the Vera Institute of Justice told Reuters in a statement.

"It is unconscionable that this administration would put partisan politics over the wellbeing of victims of crime," the group added.

Smith, from Activating Change, said in a statement that terminating her group's grants represented a "political act."

"This punishes deaf and disabled survivors, silences marginalized voices, and dismantles vital support for those already facing the greatest barriers to safety and healing," she said.

Of the \$811 million in total cuts, about \$71 million comes from grants offered by the Office for Victims of Crime, according to a spreadsheet of the grants seen by Reuters.

DOJ cut roughly \$535 million to programs from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, which funds programs to support many local police departments and correctional facilities, the data shows.

The federal agency cut about \$136 million from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and terminated nearly \$59 million in research grants funded by the National Institute of Justice.

Reporting by Sarah N. Lynch and Peter Eisler; Editing by Scott Malone, Lisa Shumaker and Shri Navaratnam

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Sarah N. Lynch is the lead reporter for Reuters covering the U.S. Justice Department out of Washington, D.C. During her time on the beat, she has covered everything from the Mueller report and the use of federal agents to quell protesters in the wake of George Floyd’s murder, to the rampant spread of COVID-19 in prisons and the department’s prosecutions following the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol.



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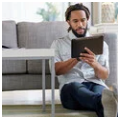
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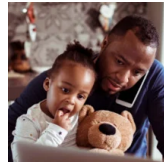


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