

**Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
Office of Grants and Research
Homeland Security Division**

2/9/09

Guidance on Developing Project Justifications

This document provides general information for the Councils and their Fiduciary Agent on how to develop a good Project Justification. It is our intent to provide clear guidance in this area to the Councils so that this exercise is understood and that the resulting product (the Project Justification) provides us with what we need and the Council with a management tool for the proposal. If you should have any questions or comments on this process, please contact your EOPSS Program Coordinator.

Please note that no project expenses shall be incurred or contract related activities undertaken (i.e., issue RFR or enter into contract) until written approval for a Projection Justification is provided by EOPSS.

The three most important items to utilize when developing Project Justifications are:

- the applicable Investment Justification Guidance;
- the applicable FFY HSGP application.
- the Project Justification Template.

If you do not have these documents – or have any questions about the documents – please contact your Program Coordinator.

The purpose of Project Justifications are to provide specific detail on proposed projects. Please note that changes can be made to projects after a Project Justification has been approved – your Program Coordinator can be contacted with questions on revisions.

The Project Justification Template (attached) must be used when submitting Project Justifications to EOPSS.

When reviewing Project Justifications, EOPSS looks for the following information:

- Specificity in your proposal. To the extent applicable -- follow the ‘Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How’ approach.

Who (specifically) is benefiting from this proposal, and who is implementing?

What (specifically) is being proposed? (Define the project and its scope)

When will the project(s) begin and end?

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Where will any equipment be housed?

Why is this project important?

How will the project be implemented?

Please note that these questions above are provided as an example to assist in Project Justification development. In addition, these questions are not a separate section of the Project Justification; rather they may be responded to within the existing sections of the Project Justification.

For instance, a proposal stating “two generators will be procured” does not provide enough detail. We would want to know who will own the generators, how was this number determined, how would the generators be used, etc.

- Plan by Cost Category Section: All costs must be allowable. It is fully expected this information is verified by the Council and Fiduciary prior to Project Justification submittal. Allowable cost information may be found in the respective DHS grant guidance and/or Authorized Equipment List. You may also contact your Program Coordinator for assistance. The information provided here must align with your Summary Detail section. For instance, if two generators are to be procured, this section would provide the total estimated costs
- Milestone section: these items must be specific to the particular Project Justification. Every step does not need to be listed; we are looking for the ‘major milestones’.
- Grammar counts. We are not requesting lengthy documents; rather we are requesting concise Project Justifications that provide adequate detail and are written clearly so we can easily review and approve.
- Length of review/approval process: It is our intent to have Project Justifications reviewed and either approved or not approved but with comments three weeks after they are submitted to us.