**JOHN R. JUSTICE GRANT PROGRAM**

**PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) is the designated State Administering Agency for the John R. Justice (JRJ) Student Loan Repayment Program grant, administered by the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance. Student loan debt is consistently cited as the overwhelming reason why attorneys decline or leave positions as prosecutors and public defenders, which has created challenges for the public sector to hire and retain capable attorneys. Acknowledging these challenges, the JRJ Program was codified at 2 U.S.C. §3797cc-21, and named for the late John Reid Justice of South Carolina, to encourage qualified attorneys to choose careers as prosecutors and public defenders and to continue in that service.

The JRJ Program provides loan repayment assistance for local, state, and federal public defenders and local and state prosecutors who commit to continued employment as public defenders and prosecutors. An attorney must not be in default on repayment of any federal student loans. State agencies administering the JRJ Program must ensure that funding for local repayment is allocated equally between prosecutors and public defenders.

Cal OES grants loan repayment disbursements to 188 beneficiaries, equally split between public defenders and prosecutors. The disbursements are paid directly to the beneficiaries’ loan servicer. Cal OES has partnered with the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) to administer the JRJ Program.

In FFY 2015, California received $62,340 for administering the grant and loan forgiveness. Cal OES provided loan repayment disbursements to continuing or newly admitted public defenders and prosecutors beneficiaries in the amount of $303 each.

In FFY 2016, California received $98,767 funds to administer. Cal OES will provide loan forgiveness to the same or newly admitted public defenders and prosecutors beneficiaries in the amount of $473 each, paid to their loan servicer. Cal OES continues to partner with CSAC in administering the JRJ Program loan disbursements.

**FUNDS AWARDED**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Fiscal Year** | **Types of Funding** | **Total Funding** |
|  |  |  |
| FY 2015-16 | John R. Justice (JRJ) FFY15 | $ 63,240 |
| FY 2016-17 | JRJ FFY16 | $ 98,767 |
| FY 2017-18 | Unknown |  |

**This program does not track performance statistics and will not have a recipient list due to confidentiality reasons.**