



**STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
STATE PROSECUTORS OFFICE**

Tony Evers, Governor
Kathy Blumenfeld, Secretary
Richard Rydecki, Administrator

**FY2026 JOHN R. JUSTICE STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS
(Please also refer to the Application Checklist)**

Introduction

The JRJ Student Loan Repayment Program provides funding for loan repayment for eligible Wisconsin prosecutors and public defenders who agree to remain employed in these positions for at least three years. This is a federal program within the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance and is administered by the Department of Administration – State Prosecutors Office (SPO).

The JRJ Program was 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 criminal justice system faces a challenge of retaining qualified prosecutors and public defenders who serve every day to ensure that our communities are protected, the rule of law is upheld, and the rights of citizenry are safeguarded. Student loan debt is consistently cited as the overwhelming reason why attorneys decline or leave positions as prosecutors and public defenders. The vast majority of law students borrow to finance their legal education, but public defender and prosecutor salaries have failed to keep pace with the escalating cost of education.

Funding Allocation

The Federal Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) has calculated a minimum base allocation for each state and the District of Columbia. This minimum base allocation is then enhanced by an amount proportional to each state's share of the national population. The State of Wisconsin received \$69,793 that can be awarded in FY2026.

The State agencies administering the JRJ Program must ensure that funding for local repayment is allocated equally between prosecutors and public defenders.

Selection of JRJ Recipients

Applicants who meet the qualifying employment criteria, have qualifying student loans and who meet all other program requirements can be considered for a JRJ award. Agencies administering the JRJ must give priority to those eligible applicants who have the least ability to repay their loans. A formula to determine those least able to repay their education loans will be used (*Appendix A*).

The minimum grant will be \$1,500 with the maximum to be determined based on the number of qualified applicants, but not to exceed the federal maximum of \$10,000 for any borrower in any calendar year.

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APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

Application Instructions

ALL APPLICATION MATERIALS, INCLUDING ATTACHMENTS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS, ARE DUE ON OR BEFORE February 1, 2026 at 11:59 p.m., CST.

Please submit your application electronically to ensure timely receipt of data. Please include your name and “FY2026 JRJ Application” in the subject line.

EMAIL: Amanda.mott@wisconsin.gov

Sections 1 – 3: Provide personal, law school and employment information.

Dependents

- May not include self as a dependent.
- Spouse may be included ONLY if not employed.

Qualifying Employment

Necessary documentation:

- *Employment Verification Form (Appendix B)*. This must include both the applicant and employer signatures.
- *Previous Employment Verification Form(s) (Appendix C)*. This must include both the applicant and employer signatures (if applicable). This form is only required if the applicant has been in their current position for less than two years AND their previous employment also met the definition of qualified employment for the JRJ program.

Eligible Attorneys

- State and federal public defenders and state prosecutors who have been employed for at least twelve consecutive months with the qualifying entity and agree to:
 - remain employed for at least three years, if new applicant;
 - remain employed for at least one year, for JRJ beneficiaries who have fulfilled the three-year service obligation and are selected again to receive additional JRJ benefits; or
 - a Service Agreement Acknowledgement of Benefit, for current JRJ beneficiaries who have not yet fulfilled their initial three-year service obligation, but remain eligible for JRJ benefits.
- Must be “continually licensed to practice law” in Wisconsin.
- Eligible prosecutors are full-time employees* of a state or unit of local government (including tribal government), who “prosecute criminal or juvenile delinquency cases at the state or unit of local government level.”
- Eligible public defenders are either full time employees* of a state or local government (including tribal government), who “prosecutor criminal or juvenile delinquency cases at the state or local government level or a full-time employee of a nonprofit organization operating under contract with a state or unit of local government, or a full-time federal defender attorney in a defender organization pursuant to [18 U.S.C. §3306A\(g\)](#), who provides legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases.

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- Attorney providing supervision, education or training of other persons providing prosecutor or public defender representation.

*Full-time employment is considered “not less than 75% of a 40-hour work week”

Attorneys NOT Eligible

- Cannot be employed as a prosecutor with the federal government.
- Attorneys who are in private practice (and not a full-time employee of a non-profit organization) are not eligible, even if providing public defense services under contract to the state.
- Attorneys who are in default on repayment of any federal student loans.

Section 4

Necessary Documentation:

- *National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) verification.* This must be submitted for each education loan listed in this section of the application.
- *Explanation of loan repayment assistance from another source.* If you are eligible for loan repayment assistance from another source, please include an explanation of that assistance, including the amount of assistance and supporting documentation (if applicable).

Report your current qualifying federal student loan information (see information on qualifying and non-qualifying student loans below). You must submit verification of all education debt listed in this section of the application. To obtain verification of qualifying student loan debt, go to the [U.S. Department of Education’s National Student Loan Data System \(NSLDS\) website](https://studentloans.gov/). Select “Financial Aid Review” and print screens detailing your loan information. Screen prints must be submitted by email (as a PDF) and via US Mail. It is *highly recommended* that you black out the first five digits of your social security number prior to sending.

Qualifying Student Loans

- A loan made, insured, or guaranteed under [20 U.S.C. §1071](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/01/18/2017-0118-federal-family-education-loan-program) (Federal Family Education Loan Program).
- A loan made under 20 USC Chapter 28, Subchapter IV, [Part D](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/01/18/2017-0118-federal-family-education-loan-program) (William D Ford Federal Direct Loan) or [E](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/01/18/2017-0118-federal-family-education-loan-program) (Federal Perkins Loans).
- A loan made under [20 U.S.C. §1078-3](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/01/18/2017-0118-federal-family-education-loan-program) (Federal consolidation loans) or [§1087e\(g\)](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/01/18/2017-0118-federal-family-education-loan-program) (Federal Direct consolidation loans).

Non-qualifying Student Loans

- All other student loans not identified above (e.g. private loans, bar study loans, etc.) Although non-qualifying loans cannot be paid back under JRJ, they will be considered in the “least ability to repay” calculation.
- A federal loan made to the parents of a dependent student (PLUS loan.) These loans are not considered in the “least- ability-to-repay” calculation.

Note: At a minimum, a standard ten-year repayment schedule for student loans is assumed.

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Section 5:

Necessary Documentation: Internal Revenue Service Form 1040: A copy of pages one and two of yours and your spouse's (if applicable) 2024 Federal 1040 is required.

Report your **gross salary** and, if applicable, your spouse's **gross salary** from the previous year's tax return. Report other income such as rental income, dividend or interest income, alimony, child support, other. Please provide a copy of pages one and two of your 2024 IRS Form 1040.

Section 6:

Necessary Documentation (if applicable): Written details/verifying documentation for consideration of exceptional financial circumstances (if applicable).

On a separate sheet, include written details and verifying documentation for consideration of any exceptional financial circumstances such as high medical costs for a family member not covered by insurance, child support (include number of children for whom you pay support), unreimbursed child-care expenses, spouse's loss of income/employment, or other unusual expenses. Consumer debt will not be considered. Narrative essays must be typed, one (1) page (front only) not including documentation, 1-inch margins and 12-point font (Times New Roman).

Section 7:

Necessary Documentation: Short essay explaining why you feel you should receive this grant.

Please write a short essay explaining why you feel you should receive this grant. Essays must be typed, one (1) page (front only) not including documentation, 1-inch margins and 12-point font (Times New Roman).

If you are chosen for an award, we will ask you to submit the following:

- ☐ W-9 Form: Completed W-9 form from your loan agency.
- ☐ A statement from the loan lender to which you would like JRJ benefits paid if selected for funding.
- ☐ A Service Agreement. First-time awardees will be required to complete the initial three-year service agreement. Awardees whose initial three-year agreement has not yet expired will be asked to complete an Acknowledgment of Benefit. Awardees who have completed the initial three-year service agreement will be asked to complete a Secondary Term of Service Agreement. (*Sample Service Agreement – Appendix D*).
- ☐ Any other documentation we may deem necessary.

Payment Information

Funds may only be paid to the institution holding the qualifying loan and may not be paid directly to the beneficiary. The subrecipient may hold more than one qualifying student loan, but funds will only be issued to one institution.

Please note that funds awarded under this program are a supplement to, not a substitute for, personal student loan obligations. Subrecipients remain responsible for making regular student loan payments and must continue to make personal payments toward their qualifying loan to remain eligible for the JRJ Program in the future.



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**FY2026 JOHN R. JUSTICE STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM
APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

YOUR NAME MUST BE ON EVERY PAGE OF EVERY DOCUMENT YOU SUBMIT.

Submit the completed John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment Program (JRJ) application via email to Amanda.mott@wisconsin.gov per the instructions on the application form. *Note:* Financial information provided will remain confidential.

Please submit the following via email to the addresses below (keep copies for your records):

- ☐ Completed JRJ application (same as emailed version) with your signature.
- ☐ Current and Previous Employment Verification Form with applicant and employer signatures.
- ☐ Previous Employment Verification Form(s), with applicant and employer signature, by US mail and email to the addresses below. This form is only required if the applicant has been in their current position for less than two years AND their previous employment also met the definition of qualified employment for the JRJ program.
- ☐ National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) verification for each education loan listed in Section 4 of the application.
- ☐ Internal Revenue Service Form 1040: A copy of pages one and two of your and your domestic partner/spouse's (if applicable) 2024 Federal 1040 is required.
- ☐ National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) verification for each education loan listed in Section 4 of the application.
- ☐ Written details/verifying documentation for consideration of exceptional financial circumstances (if applicable), as explained in Section 6 of the application.
- ☐ Short essay explaining why you feel you should receive this grant.

If you are chosen for an award we will ask you to submit the following:

- ☐ W-9 Form: Completed W-9 form from your loan agency.
- ☐ A statement from the loan lender to which you would like JRJ benefits paid if selected for funding.
- ☐ A Service Agreement. First-time awardees will be required to complete the initial three-year service agreement. Awardees whose initial three-year agreement has not yet expired will be asked to complete an Acknowledgment of Benefit. Awardees who have completed the initial three-year service agreement will be asked to complete a Secondary Term of Service Agreement.



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FY2026 JOHN R. JUSTICE (JRJ) STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM APPLICATION

PLEASE SAVE AND SEND BY EMAIL TO AMANDA.MOTT@WISCONSIN.GOV

APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN February 1, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. (CST)

1. Applicant Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Work Phone:** _____

County: _____ **Last 4 digits of SSN:** _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Email: _____

Law School Information

Law degree from: _____ **Law school graduation year:** _____

State of Wisconsin Attorney License Number: _____

Member in Good Standing with the Wisconsin Bar Association? Yes ☐ No: ☐

To be eligible for the JRJ Student Loan Repayment Program, an attorney must be licensed and practicing in the State of Wisconsin and in good standing with the Wisconsin Bar Association.

2. Number of Dependents

Number of Dependents: _____

Do not include self as a dependent. Include spouse ONLY if not employed.

3. Qualifying Employment

I am currently employed full-time (not less than 75% of a 40-hour work week) Yes: ☐ No: ☐

Employer: _____

Date of Hire: _____ **County of Employer:** _____

The employment noted above satisfies which of the following requirements (check one):

☐ I prosecute criminal or juvenile delinquency cases for the state, a local government agency, or tribal government.

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- ☐ I legally represent, supervise, educate or train others who legally represent indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases.
- ☐ I legally represent, supervise, educate or train others who legally represent indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases for a non-profit organization operating under a contract with the state or unit of local government providing such representation.
- ☐ I am a full-time federal defender attorney in a defender organization pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 3006A of Title 18, U.S. Code, which provides legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases.

NOTE: Supporting documentation as noted in the application checklist and instructions must be provided along with the application.

4. Education Debt Information (See Instructions)

If your loans are consolidated, or if you have multiple loans, you may report a single total for those loans included in the consolidation. If any grace periods are in effect, note when payments begin on those loans.

Federal Loan Type	Total Current Balance	Monthly Payment	If a grace period is in effect, note the payment starting date.
Consolidated Loans	\$	\$	
Stafford Loan (s)	\$	\$	
Perkins Loan(s)	\$	\$	
GradPLUS Loan(s)	\$	\$	
TOTAL	\$ 0	\$ 0	

Please provide the following:

1. Your non-qualifying annual education loan payment (See instructions): \$ _____
2. Spousal annual education debt payment, if applicable (See instructions): \$ _____

- ☐ Check here if you are eligible to receive loan repayment assistance from another source. (Attach explanation and amount of other loan repayment assistance).
- ☐ Check here if you are in default on repayment of any federal loans (applicants are disqualified if in default.)
- ☐ Attach [National Student Loan Data System \(NSLDS\) verification](#) of current status of each loan.

NOTE: Supporting documentation as noted in the application checklist and instructions must be provided along with the application.

5. Income Information (See Instructions)**Please provide the following:**

1. Applicant's current annual gross salary: \$ _____
2. Spouse's current annual gross salary (if applicable): \$ _____

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3. <i>Other</i> current annual income (from <u>all</u> sources including rental property, interest, dividends, etc.):	
SOURCE	ANNUAL AMOUNT
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$

NOTE: Supporting documentation as noted in the application checklist and instructions must be provided along with the application.

6. Other Considerations:

Number of Children in Daycare: _____

Annual Unreimbursed Daycare Costs: \$ _____

Additional Information:

Attach a sheet detailing any circumstances (i.e. high medical costs for a family member not covered by insurance, child support, spouse's loss of income/employment, or other unusual expenses) that you believe merit special consideration in determining your ability to pay. **LIMIT:** One (1) page (front only) not including documentation, double spaced, 12-point font (Times New Roman), one (1) inch margins.

NOTE: Supporting documentation as noted in the application checklist and instructions must be provided along with the application.

7. Essay

Please write a *short* essay explaining why you feel you should receive this grant. **LIMIT:** One (1) page (front only) not including documentation, double spaced, 12-point font (Times New Roman), one (1) inch margins.

NOTE: This is separate from the "additional information" requested above in Section 6.

CERTIFICATION

I declare under penalty of perjury that the information on this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. If asked by the JRJ Student Loan Repayment Program, I agree to provide additional verification of any information provided as requested.

Applicant Signature: _____**Date:** _____



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**FY2026 JOHN R. JUSTICE STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM
PAYMENT INFORMATION**

Funds may only be paid to the institution holding the qualifying loan and may not be paid directly to the beneficiary. The subrecipient may hold more than one qualifying student loan, but funds will only be issued to one institution.

Payments made on behalf of approved subrecipients cannot exceed the total qualifying loan balance. If it is determined that the payment amount exceeds the qualifying loan balance, the Wisconsin State Prosecutors Office and Wisconsin Department Administration will review the case and take appropriate action.

Please note that funds awarded under this program are a supplement to, not a substitute for, personal student loan obligations. Subrecipients remain responsible for making regular student loan payments and must continue to make personal payments toward their qualifying loan to remain eligible for the JRJ Program in the future. Neither the U.S. Department of Justice nor the Wisconsin State Prosecutors Office or Wisconsin Department of Administration will be held responsible for any late fees assessed by the lending institution. Therefore, the subrecipient will be responsible to ensure their monthly payment is paid in full and in a timely manner, especially if the payment is due on or before the Wisconsin State Prosecutors Office and Wisconsin Department of Administration issues the payment.



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**FY2026 JOHN R. JUSTICE STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM
REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

Proof of Employment

Beneficiaries of JRJ funds will be required to verify they are still employed as an eligible prosecutor or public defender for the duration of the project period. Beneficiaries of JRJ funds will also be required to verify they are continuing to make regular payments toward the qualifying loan for which assistance is awarded.

In order to verify this information, beneficiaries will be required to submit an annual Employment Verification Form (Appendix B).

Other reporting may be required at the discretion of the Department of Administration State Prosecutors Office.



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APPENDIX A
FY2026 JOHN R. JUSTICE STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM
LEAST ABILITY TO REPAY DETERMINATION

All information required for the least ability to repay determination will be collected in the application process.

Formula for Determination of Income Considered (IC) in Selection Process

Calculation Type	Income Type	Abbreviation	Resource/Comments
Base	Applicant gross annual salary and wages (Gross Income)	GI	Application/employer verification
Plus (+)	Spouse gross annual salary and wages (Spouse Income)	SI	Application
Less (-)	Spouse income set-aside	SIS	\$25,000 or income, whichever is less
Plus (+)	Other Income	OI	Application: alimony, rental income, interest/dividend income
Less (-)	IRS dependent allowance	DA	Application, dependents claimed x 2,000
Less (-)	Spousal annual education debt	SED	Application/NSLDS, annual payment amount
Less (-)	Non-qualifying education debt of applicant	ED	Application/NSLDS, annual payment amount
Plus (+)	Loan repayment assistance from other sources	LR	Application, annual amount
Less (-)	Cost of Living Allowance	COL	WI Department of Revenue/WI Department of Health Services/Other Sources
Equals (=)	Income Considered in Selection Process	IC	Calculation of Income Considered: GI+SI-SIS+OI-DA-SED-ED+LR-COL = IC

Additional Considerations for Determination of Least Ability to Pay:

- o Amount of applicants' eligible student loan debt.
- o Special Considerations submitted by applicant (e.g., childcare expenses, high medical costs for a family member not covered by insurance, child support, spouse's loss of income/employment, or other unusual expenses.)
- o Years of Qualifying Service.
- o Geographic Location of Employer.



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APPENDIX B
FY2026 JOHN R. JUSTICE STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM
EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION

Section A: To be completed by Applicant

Name: _____
Name of Employer: _____
Employer Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Job Title: _____

I authorize the above-named employer to provide the information requested in Section B of this form:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Section B: To be completed by Employer

The JRJ Student Loan Repayment Program requires information about the applicant's job history and certification of an applicant's employment. Please complete this section of the form and return it to the employee.

Job Title of Employee: _____ Name of Organization: _____
Office Location (city) of Employee: _____
Date of Hire: _____
Applicant's Current Annual Salary: _____

Is the applicant employed full-time? *

☐ YES ☐ NO

I certify that the information contained in this form is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Name of person certifying employment (please print): _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

*Pursuant to program guidelines, qualifying employment includes working as a full-time (at least 30 hours) prosecutor in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases for a state, local or tribal government; working full-time providing legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases for a state, local or tribal government, or a non-profit organization operating under a contract with a state or local government; or working as a full-time federal defender in a defender organization under 18 U.S.C. §3006A(g). Qualifying employment also includes working as a full-time employee who supervises, educates or trains other persons prosecuting or providing representation as described.



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APPENDIX C
FY2026 JOHN R. JUSTICE STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM
EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION

Section A: To be completed by Applicant

Name: _____
Name of Employer: _____
Employer Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Job Title: _____
Brief Description of Work: _____

I authorize the above-named employer to provide the information requested in Section B of this form:

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Section B: To be completed by Employer

The John R. Justice (JRJ) Student Loan Repayment Program requires information about the applicant's job history and certification of an applicant's employment. Please complete this section of the form and return it to the employee.

Description of Agency's Primary Function*: _____
Date of Hire: _____
Date of Separation: _____
Length of Employment: Years _____ Months _____
Name of person certifying employment (please print): _____
Title: _____

I certify that the information contained in this form is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

*Pursuant to program guidelines, qualifying employment includes working as a full-time (at least 30 hours) state or local government (including tribal government) prosecutor in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases; working full-time providing legal representation to indigent persons in criminal or juvenile delinquency cases for a state, local or tribal government, or a non-profit organization operating under a contract with a state or local government; or a full-time federal defender in a defender organization under 18 U.S.C §3006A(g). Qualifying employment also includes working as full-time employee who supervises, educates or trains other persons prosecuting or providing representation as described.