

# Review of External Programs Submitted - General

Each program submission will be reviewed to determine if (1) evidence of reducing recidivism is observed and (2) other BOP-relevant criteria are met. The BOP will decide what programs are included on the approved list based on the information from the independent reviews.

## Criteria for Reviewing Evidence

Each program study submitted will be reviewed to determine if the program reduces recidivism (i.e., results in a positive effect on recidivism). The review will focus on both study design and the study outcomes. See **Review of External Program Submitted – For Researchers** to review specifics regarding the evidence standards being used.

**Final Evidence Rating.** After reviewers calculate the criteria ratings for study design and outcome standards, they will use these ratings to assign the final evidence rating for the program, as described below.

- **Effective:** Well-designed and rigorous studies that *provide evidence of a positive effect* of the program on outcomes.<sup>1</sup>
- **Promising:** Well-designed studies, though slightly less rigorous or have identified limitations or inconsistencies, that *provide promising evidence of a positive effect* of the program on outcomes.
- **Ineffective:** Well-designed and rigorous studies that *provide evidence of a negative effect* of the program on outcomes.
- **No Effect:** Well-designed and rigorous studies that *do not provide conclusive evidence of a positive effect* of the program outcomes.
- **Inconclusive:** Studies that *do not provide conclusive evidence* to determine the effect of the program on outcomes.

Only those programs rated as “Effective” and “Promising” will be considered by the BOP for inclusion on the [First Step Act Approved Programs Guide](#).

## Criteria for Reviewing Programs

Each program submitted will also be reviewed to determine if the program meets BOP-relevant criteria based on information entered in the submission form. The results/recommendations from the external organization will be provided to BOP, where program oversight staff will determine whether and how to utilize the program. Staff will use criteria from the BOP to assess programs based on the following:

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<sup>1</sup> A positive effect on an outcome is determined by the statistical results reported by the study.

- **Requirements of the program and/or specifications** for delivery (e.g., staff/inmate ratio, sequence and length of sessions, and frequency and duration of the program).<sup>2</sup>
- **Populations or subpopulations** the program was designed for or used with including federal offenders/inmates, subpopulations of federal offenders/inmates, (e.g., women inmates, violent offenders), others with needs “similar” to the needs of federal offenders/inmates (e.g., those in need of drug treatment).
- **Criminogenic or other critical needs** of federal offenders/inmates or similar needs the program was designed to address (e.g., those in need of work/vocational training).
- **Program characteristics** including potential innovative solutions/efficiencies and similarity to current BOP programs delivering information/intervention to address a need. For example, the BOP currently uses cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) to address trauma but a program that addresses a gap in the CBT programming may be considered relevant.
- **Program costs/time** (e.g., purchase, training, delivery/implementation).

## Questions about submitting or the review process?

Questions should be submitted to [RSDFSAProgramSubmissions@bop.gov](mailto:RSDFSAProgramSubmissions@bop.gov). Questions about specific programs, studies, and review status **will not** be answered.

## Program Submissions

Each program submission must contain a completed Program Submission Form and at least one, but no more than three, program studies. Complete program submission packages can be emailed to [RSDFSAProgramSubmissions@bop.gov](mailto:RSDFSAProgramSubmissions@bop.gov). Hard copy submission packages can be sent to:

FSA Program Submissions  
 320 First Street NW  
 400 Building, Room 2054  
 Washington D.C. 20524

## DISCLAIMER

**This is a request for program submissions *only to review evidence to determine whether an effect on reducing recidivism is observed.***

- The ratings of evidence from the reviews do not constitute an endorsement of the program by the BOP.

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<sup>2</sup> Source: <https://aspe.hhs.gov/report/core-intervention-components-identifying-and-operationalizing-what-makes-programs-work>.

- The BOP will decide what programs are included on the approved list based on the information from the independent reviews.

If responses are requested by outside parties (i.e. Freedom of Information Act / FOIA request), this information is not protected as source selection information (Federal Acquisition Regulation / FAR 2.101 and 3.104). The submitter will be responsible for removing or identifying any proprietary or competition-sensitive information contained in their response. To aid the BOP, submitters that intend for their submissions to be exempt from disclosure under FOIA Exemption 4 should enter “proprietary information” when responding to “*Provide any additional relevant information about the program for the BOP*” on submission form. Otherwise, any information received will become the property of the Government.

BOP recognizes that new studies of previously submitted programs may be conducted. Programs may be re-submitted for review **only** if the following conditions have been met for re-review.

- New studies of program provide additional information **or** results were not already provided in a previously submitted study.
- Re-submissions of programs and the new studies are **at least** 180 days from the date of the prior submission.

This request for submissions does not constitute a Request for Proposal (RFP) or a promise to issue an RFP in the future. This request does not commit the Government to a contract with any agency or entity. The BOP is not seeking proposals and will not accept unsolicited proposals. Should an RFP be issued in the future, it will be posted publicly. It is the responsibility of the potential offeror to monitor these sites for additional information. Participation in this request for submission is not a requirement for any future RFP. Submitting or providing responses to questions will not result in preferential treatment or automatic consideration for any forthcoming RFPs or funding opportunities.