



Bureau of Justice Assistance  
U.S. Department of Justice

# Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program (PSOB)

Performance Measures Brief

January 2017

## Program Purpose

The purpose of the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program is to provide death benefits to survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other first responders, in addition to disability benefits for officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty, and educational assistance to spouses and children of public safety officers who were killed or totally and permanently disabled in the line of duty.

## Program Goals

The Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program's central goals are:

- To ensure that all death, disability, and education benefits claims are processed accurately and efficiently.
- To serve as a support resource for public safety officers and their families.

## PSOB Benefit Amount

Fiscal Year	Death and Disability Benefit	Educational Assistance Benefit
2017	\$ 343,589.00	\$ 1,024.00
2016	\$ 339,881.00	\$ 1,021.00
2015	\$ 339,310.00	\$ 1,018.00

The amount of the death and disability benefit is adjusted annually to reflect alterations to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index.

## Performance Measure 3: Active claims by level of review

	January	Percentage
PSOB Office	773	85%
Hearing Officer	100	11%
BJA Director	33	4%

Table 3.

Table 3 shows the total amount of active claims at the end of January 2017. The majority of claims were active at the PSOB Office level (85%), followed by 11% at the Hearing Officer level, and finally 4% at the BJA Director level. There were 906 total active claims at the end of the reporting period.

## Summary

The Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program Performance Measures Brief is prepared by the PSOB Office to track death and disability benefits claims, as well as evaluate program performance measures over time. All reported data represent the six-month period from August 2016 to January 2017, unless otherwise noted.

## Report Highlights

- At the PSOB Office level, four out of six months reported a higher number of claims received than determined, however during the overall reporting period more claims were determined (186) than received (183).
- While the average amount of time it took to determine a claim at the PSOB Office level increased over the six-month reporting period (36%), the average number of days to determine a claim decreased 42 percent at the Hearing Officer level and 31 percent at the BJA Director level.
- As shown below in Table 1, 186 claims were determined at the PSOB Office level over the previous six-month period, of which 82 percent were approvals and 18 percent were denials.

## Performance Measure 1: Number of claims determined by level of review

		Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.
PSOB Office	Determined	19	79	17	9	31	31
	Approved	15	73	9	7	20	28
	Denied	4	6	8	2	11	3
Hearing Officer	Determined	1	2	5	3	6	4
	Approved	1	0	0	1	2	1
	Denied	0	2	5	2	4	3
BJA Director	Determined	3	5	2	0	3	8
	Approved	2	3	0	0	3	3
	Denied	1	2	2	0	0	5

Table 1.

Table 1 shows both the total number of claims determined each month, and the number of approved and denied claims. While the number of determined claims was stable throughout the reporting period, September exceeded all other months because it was the end of the fiscal year.

## Performance Measure 4: Number of days pending for active claims

	Avg. Days	Max. Days	Min. Days
PSOB Office	774	3599	37
Hearing Officer	1035	3724	110
BJA Director	975	2954	84

Table 4.

Table 4 shows the average number of days that active claims have been pending at each level of review at the end of this reporting period, including the oldest and youngest claims. Pending claims at the PSOB Office level are in many cases awaiting the submission of documents or claim-related materials.

## Performance Measure 2: Average days to determine claims

		Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.
PSOB Office	Average Days	590	598	598	622	908	802
	Max. Days	1177	3050	1283	1872	3435	3009
	Min. Days	139	26	94	156	126	143
Hearing Officer	Average Days	2605	2677	1094	493	513	1497
	Max. Days	2605	1474	2014	565	724	2947
	Min. Days	2605	1203	516	433	337	434
BJA Director	Average Days	1100	1376	1266	N/A	64	756
	Max. Days	2501	2959	2140	N/A	135	2027
	Min. Days	315	189	392	N/A	7	6

Table 2.

The number of days it takes to determine a claim is the calculated duration between when a claim number is assigned and when a claim is determined. It is important to note, as older and more complex claims are determined, the average number of days to determine a claim will increase.

## Performance Measure 5: Claims received and claims determined

		Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.
PSOB Office	Received	40	22	40	23	33	25
	Determined	19	79	17	9	31	31
Hearing Officer	Received	0	2	0	2	0	0
	Determined	1	2	5	3	6	4
BJA Director	Received	2	1	0	3	3	1
	Determined	3	5	2	0	3	8

Table 5.

Received claims are the number of new claims that have been assigned a claim number during a reporting period, which subsequently become active claims. Determined claims are claims that have been adjudicated at the respective level of review, meaning a decision has been rendered on the claim.