



U.S. Department of Justice

Criminal Division

Washington, D.C. 20530

March 28, 2016

To State, Local and Tribal Law Enforcement Agencies:

The Department of Justice is pleased to announce that, effective immediately, the Department is resuming Equitable Sharing payments to State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies. As you know, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 included a \$746 million permanent reduction, or "rescission," that, when combined with the additional rescission of \$458 million contained in the Consolidated Appropriations Act signed into law in December 2015, reduced Asset Forfeiture Program funds by \$1.2 billion. Those rescissions threatened the financial solvency of the Assets Forfeiture Fund, and forced the Department to take cost-cutting steps across all discretionary programs, including on December 21, 2015, the deferral of Equitable Sharing payments.

It's worth repeating that we did not make the decision to defer Equitable Sharing payments lightly, and it was always our intent to resume payments as soon as it became financially feasible. Thus, in the months since we had to make that difficult decision, we explored alternative options, while also keeping a close eye on incoming receipts. And now, we are finally at a point where it is no longer necessary to continue the deferral. Therefore, effective immediately, we are resuming payments and agencies will receive the full amount of their share of any approved Equitable Sharing payments.

In order to help answer any questions you may have, I have attached a fact sheet explaining the resumption of Equitable Sharing payments. As always, the Department is available if you have additional specific questions or comments not addressed in this fact sheet. Please direct any correspondence to afmls.communications@usdoj.gov.

The Department is grateful to our partners for standing by us on our federal law enforcement task forces while the deferral was in effect. We understand this deferral has been difficult for many of you, as you depend on these resources for your critical law enforcement efforts to disrupt and dismantle criminal activity. The Department appreciates all the support and patience that you have afforded to the Department while we worked through this unfortunate, but necessary response to financial circumstances that were beyond our control.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Kendall Day".

M. Kendall Day, Chief
Asset Forfeiture and
Money Laundering Section