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### E113 National Institute of Justice (NIJ) Initiatives and Partnerships to Advance the Forensic Sciences

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**Learning Overview:** After attending this presentation, attendees will better understand the initiatives developed by the Department Of Justice (DOJ) and the NIJ to advance the forensic sciences at the federal, state, local, and tribal levels. Attendees will learn how coordinated efforts and new partnerships are providing resources to meet the needs identified by the forensic science stakeholder community. Attendees will also learn how to access these resources, including reports, webinars, and learning opportunities.

**Impact on the Forensic Science Community:** This presentation will impact the forensic science community by identifying resources developed through the work of several forensic working groups and will provide important information relevant to forensic science practitioners, medical examiners and coroners, forensic science stakeholders, and students.

The DOJ recently conducted a needs-based assessment of forensic laboratories that included public crime laboratories with medical examiner and coroner offices as an overview of academic forensic science resources. The NIJ supported this effort to learn from state, local, and tribal stakeholders about forensic services provided across the United States. Along the way, the NIJ learned critical information that is serving to enhance existing programs and foster new initiatives and partnerships. This presentation will discuss the NIJ's activities to identify key priorities and to develop practical solutions to support the forensic science community.

This presentation will discuss the NIJ activities to support the work of several working groups, including for the recently established Forensic Laboratory Needs-Technology Working Group (FLN-TWG), to help focus resources to achieve actionable results and the Office of Justice Programs/Department of Health and Human Services Federal Medicolegal Death Investigation (MDI) working group. This presentation will discuss recent developments from partnerships with the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), and the Office of Victims of Crime (OVC), including training and technical assistance opportunities. This presentation will highlight the NIJ's coordination with the DOJ Office of Justice Programs (OJP) partner agencies to coordinate activities that involve forensic science and the criminal justice system stakeholder community. The BJA is advancing public safety and public responses to the opioid crisis through the BJA Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Program. The BJS is developing survey tools to implement the Census of Publicly Funded Forensic Laboratories and the Census of Medical Examiner and Coroner Offices. The OVC has developed a Vicarious Trauma Toolkit and a Mass Violence Toolkit. This presentation will also impact the forensic science community by identifying resources developed through these working groups and that are available through the NIJ Forensic Technology Center of Excellence that is supporting the forensic science community to advance technology, share knowledge, and address challenges.

The NIJ is the research, development, and evaluation agency of the DOJ and is dedicated to improving knowledge and understanding of crime and justice issues through science. The NIJ provides objective and independent knowledge and tools to reduce crime and promote justice. The NIJ supports the DOJ's priorities on forensic science to improve capacities, increase coordination and collaboration at the Department, among Federal agencies, and with state, local, and tribal entities, and advance the reliability and sensitivity of forensic science testing. The OJP's mission is to increase public safety and improve the fair administration of justice across America through innovative leadership and programs.

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#### **Federal Initiatives, Partnerships, Resources**