FY2015
Highway Safety Concept Paper Instructions

Florida Department of Transportation
Safety Office
Highway Safety Grant Program

Revised 12/2013

Highway Safety Concept Paper Instructions

Introduction

The Florida Department of Transportation Safety Office (FDOT) funds subgrants that address traffic safety priority areas that include Impaired Driving, Police Traffic Services, Speed and Aggressive Driving, Roadway Safety, Occupant Protection, Child Passenger Safety, Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety, Motorcycle Safety, Traffic Records, and Community Traffic Safety. Subgrants may be awarded for assisting in addressing traffic safety deficiencies, expansion of an ongoing activity, or development of a new program.

Agencies Eligible to Receive FDOT Funding

Government agencies, political "subdivisions" of the state, local city and county government agencies, state colleges and state universities, school districts, fire departments, public emergency services providers, and certain qualified non-profit organizations are eligible to receive FDOT funding.

Qualified Non-Profit Organizations

Chapter 14-98, Florida Administrative Code, requires non-profit organizations to provide their **"Certificate of Status"** from the **Florida Department of State, Division of Corporations**, verifying their not-for-profit status when submitting their concept paper. The **"Consumer's Certificate of Exemption"** from the **Florida Department of Revenue** or a letter from the Department of the Treasury confirming Section 501(c)(3) status **is not sufficient to meet this requirement.**

If the non-profit organization's project is selected for funding, it must provide a financial statement showing the establishment of a special account designated for project activities, which contains funds equal to or greater than the amount of the subgrant award.

Funding Restrictions

Replacement of existing program expenditures, program maintenance, research, rehabilitation, and construction are not allowable costs. Other unallowable costs are dealt with on a project-by-project basis.

Project Funding Period

Subgrants are administered on a federal fiscal year basis (October 1 – September 30). Funding is approved on a yearly basis, and agencies can be funded for a maximum of three consecutive years in a given traffic safety priority area. (Projects that FDOT determines are statewide activities may be funded for a longer period of time).
Subgrants are intended to provide seed money to start new programs. Projects should become self-sufficient when subgrant funding terminates. To promote self-sufficiency, agencies are expected to provide a local match when funding for personnel is included in second and third year projects. The local match is normally 25% for second year projects and 50% for third year projects.

Selection Criteria

The FDOT Safety Office reviews all Highway Safety Concept Papers for compliance with state and federal regulations. Concept papers that comply with these regulations are prioritized using the following criteria:

- Does the concept paper request satisfy a specific traffic safety need identified by the Safety Office?
- Does the agency making the funding request serve a city/county ranked in the top 25% of its population group for the program area in which funds are being requested?
- Does the crash data supplied in the concept paper's "Statement of the Problem" document an existing traffic safety problem. (Citation data and survey results can also be used to document the problem.)
- Are the goals and objectives of the concept paper consistent with the goals of the Safety Office?
- How does this request for funding tie into the Strategic Highway Safety Plan?
- If the agency was funded in the past, did it submit reports and financial paperwork on a timely basis and implement the activities that were detailed in the subgrant agreement.

Notification

The FDOT Safety Office will send a letter of receipt to the head of the agency when a concept paper is received. All concept papers are reviewed and prioritized between April and July, and the head of each agency will be notified in August as to whether the concept paper was selected for inclusion in the annual highway safety plan. Agencies that are selected to be included in the annual highway safety plan will receive instructions on how to complete their Subgrant Application for Highway Safety Funds.

FDOT Funded Traffic Safety Priority Areas

Alcohol (Impaired Driving) – Includes impaired driving, youth alcohol programs, and community prevention/intervention programs. Concept papers should include one or more of the following activities: specialized enforcement, education, training, and public information efforts. Concepts including overtime enforcement efforts should utilize Countermeasures That Work. Items eligible for funding under this category may include but are not limited to: in-car video systems, public awareness materials, and DUI checkpoint equipment, including trailers, light towers, traffic cones, arrow boards, and generators.

Police Traffic Services – Includes training programs related to traffic enforcement, crash investigation equipment, and general traffic safety equipment. It may also include comprehensive traffic programs (a combination of traffic programs in one grant). Concept papers should address traffic enforcement training needs.
Items eligible for funding under this category may include: registration fees and equipment for training. Travel expenses and per diem to attend training activities are not normally funded.

Speed Control (Aggressive Driving) – Includes speeding, aggressive driving, red light running, and other traffic enforcement activities. Concept papers should address specialized enforcement, education, and public information efforts.
Items eligible for funding under this category may include: speed measuring devices, radar display trailers, and public awareness materials.

Roadway Safety – Includes efforts to assist public works agencies (city and county) and engineering departments in providing a safe environment for the growing traffic volume.
Concept papers should correlate crashes with traffic volumes and recommend remedial action.
Items eligible for funding under this category may include: reflectometers, sign-making equipment, striping machines, and computers for maintaining roadway databases.

Occupant Protection/Child Passenger Safety – Includes safety belt use awareness, safety belt enforcement, special needs, teens, minority programs, and other education programs. This area also includes establishing or expanding child passenger safety inspection stations, child passenger safety awareness training, school bus safety, special needs training, and other child passenger safety programs. Concept papers should address education, training, enforcement, surveys, and public information efforts.
Items eligible for funding under this category may include: educational materials, survey materials, child passenger safety trailers, and public awareness materials.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Includes programs to increase safety awareness and skills among pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists sharing the road. Concept papers should address education, training, enforcement, surveys, and public information efforts. Items eligible for funding under this category may include: public awareness materials, bicycle skills courses, and training for professionals involved with all aspects of pedestrian and bicycle safety.

Motorcycle Safety – Includes programs to increase safety awareness and skills among motorcyclists. Concept papers should address specialized enforcement, education, training, and public information efforts.
Items eligible for funding under this category may include: equipment for training, educational materials, and public awareness materials,

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Traffic Records - Includes the addition of crash, citation, roadway and EMS data to electronic record management systems, the development of comprehensive highway safety information systems, and the automation of analytical processes.
The Safety Office has fund the development of TraCS software at the FAMU/FSU College of Engineering. TraCS software includes the uniform citation form, DUI citation form, DUIPak, long and short form crash reports, and the update/continuation form. This software is available at no charge to all Florida law enforcement agencies. As a result, the Safety Office does not provide funding support for proprietary crash and citation software. The Safety Office will continue to support the maintenance and upgrade of TraCS software and training activities for agencies that implement TraCS.
Items eligible for funding under this category may include: computer software (other than citation and crash form software) and hardware needed to implement TraCS or traffic records management systems.

Community Traffic Safety - Includes traffic safety programs identified by local communities that address crash problems, establish priorities, and develop appropriate intervention techniques. Concept papers should include education, surveys, or public information efforts.
Items eligible for funding under this category may include: educational materials and public awareness materials.

Highway Safety Concept Paper Guidelines

Applying for Federal Highway Safety funds begins with submission of a Highway Safety Concept Paper under the following guidelines:

The Highway Safety Concept Paper must be submitted on the FDOT form 500-065-17 (revised 12/08). The print font used on the form must be no smaller than size 10. The Highway Safety Concept Paper submitted must be no longer than seven pages, including the cover letter from the Head of the Agency requesting funding. The Highway Safety Concept Paper must include the completed Informational Form, Statement of the Problem, Proposed Solution, Objectives, Evaluation, and Budget Form.

Additional pages, documentation, or letters of support will **not be considered**. However, not-for-profit agencies must include their "Certificate of Status" from the Florida Department of State with their Highway Safety Concept Paper.

A cover letter signed by the head of the agency must be attached to the concept paper. The cover letter must be typed on agency letterhead and must be signed by the head of the agency, stating that the agency head fully supports the proposed project.

Examples of an agency head: Sheriff, Chief of Police, Fire Chief, University President, County Commission Chairperson, Mayor, or Health Department Director

Highway Safety Concept Paper Mailing Address

Mail the original concept paper and cover letter to:
USPS, Fed Ex, UPS, or DHL

Kenneth L. Ellis
Traffic Safety Administrator
Florida Department of Transportation
Safety Office – Grant Section
605 Suwannee St., MS 53
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Highway Safety Concept Paper Submission Deadline

Concept papers are accepted from January 1 through March 31 for the next funding cycle. The Safety Office is requesting that concept papers be submitted by **February 28** if possible. Concept papers must be **postmarked no later than March 31** to be considered for funding.

The FDOT Safety Office will not accept Highway Safety Concept Papers that are postmarked after March 31. Concept papers that are received by fax or e-mail will not be accepted.

Highway Safety Concept Paper Format

The Highway Safety Concept Paper must contain the following elements: Informational Form (Page 1), Statement of the Problem, Proposed Solution, Objectives, Evaluation, and Budget Request.

Informational Form

Complete all of the following items on the Informational Form: Date, County, Agency, Concept Paper Title, Type of Request, Type of Funding, Priority Area of Request, Head of Agency and Project Contact.

Statement of the Problem

Identify the traffic safety related problem or deficiency that the proposed project is intended to correct. Is the problem identified in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)? (If yes, which emphasis area or priority area does it fall under?) Include crash data and a brief analysis of the data. The three (3) years most recent years of data should be provided and analyzed. When identifying the problem, take into consideration changes or projected changes in population, traffic patterns, and other demographic dynamics that may affect traffic safety. Citation and survey data can also be included in this section.

Examples:
Provide city or county alcohol-related crash statistics – crashes, injuries and deaths – for the past three years.
Compare local safety belt use rates to statewide rates.
Conduct and report the findings from a local bicycle helmet use survey. Discuss any comparison between your jurisdiction and similar jurisdictions.
Provide three (3) years of enforcement data that reflect the problem. (For example, show the number of citations, arrests, and special operations for your jurisdiction that reflect the problem.)

Proposed Solution

Explain how your proposed resolution ties into the Strategic Highway Safety Plan and what strategies/action steps you will be implementing to resolve the traffic safety problem(s) that you have identified. Your solution must show a logical relationship to your identified problem. Items in your budget must correlate to your statement of the problem and the proposed solution. Your proposed budget and purchases must also directly relate to solving your problem and implementing your solution.

Objectives

State the objective(s) of the project. At least some of the objectives must have measurable outcomes, and baseline data should be provided.

Examples:

- To reduce the number of alcohol-related crashes by 5% in 2013 compared to 206 crashes recorded in 2012 through high visibility enforcement.
- To reduce speed-related crashes in the city by increasing the number of speeding citations issued by 5% in 2012 as compared to the 465 citations issued in 2012.
- To reduce bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities in the city by 5% during 2012 as compared to the 128 injuries reported in 2012 by conducting public awareness programs at local high schools, colleges, and businesses.
- To increase safety belt usage at the county's five high schools to 87% by June 1, 2013, compared to the 76% usage rate determined through observational surveys conducted at the schools between May 1 – May 15, 2012.
- To conduct at least 60 fitting station appointments by September 1, 2013.

Evaluation

Provide the evaluation component(s) you will utilize to examine the achievement of the program objectives. This in-depth examination of program performance and context allows for an overall assessment of how the program is working and identifies adjustments that may improve results in the future.

Two typed of evaluations:

- **Administrative** (or Process)
    - Are we operating effectively?
    - Are we allocating resources appropriately?
    - Are we scheduling staff correctly?
    - Did we do what we planned?
    - How much did we do?
- **Impact**
    - How effective are we?
    - What changes has there been in the data?
    - Did our activities make that change?
    - Are the activities/results worth the cost?

Example:
The department will compare the number of speed-related crashes for the 12 months prior to the start of the project to the number of speed-related crashes for the first 12 months following the start of the project to determine the effectiveness of the program. Each countermeasure used during the project will be reviewed to determine which interventions were most effective in reducing crashes.

Budget Form

When preparing the proposed budget, care should be taken in estimating costs. Be sure to include tax, delivery, shipping, and set-up costs. Attempt to anticipate increases in costs that may occur between the time the subgrant is proposed and the subgrant start date.

Subgrant costs must be reasonable and proportional and directly related to the stated problem and proposed solution.

Budget Categories

Personnel Services - Costs must include the position title, the monthly salary, and percentage applicable to the project. If benefits will be reimbursed, those should be listed. A letter designating the percentage of those benefits will be required if the concept is awarded but are not necessary for the concept paper.

Contractual Services - Costs may include work that will be performed by each consultant firm or person secured on contract to work on the project. Do not list affirm, agency, or individual's name. Use descriptive titles such as "Data Consulting" or "Evaluation Services."

Expenses - Costs may include direct expenditures, such as bicycle helmets, child safety seats, promotional items, printing, educational materials, travel, portable breath test devices, etc. Do not use brand names. Enter only items that are less than $1000 per item. However, software is always an expense item, even if it costs more than $1,000.

Operating Capital Outlay – This section is for equipment costing more than $1000 per item. Enter the estimated dollar amount for equipment that costs more than the agency's established limit for Operating Capital Outlay items. Costs may include speed monitoring trailers, light towers, arrow boards, laser units, computers, and child passenger inspection station trailers. Do not use brand names. Include a separate line item for each piece of equipment that exceeds $5,000. Items that exceed $5,000 are considered "nonexpendable property."

Indirect Costs - Costs that cannot be charged directly to a project. Indirect costs are an allowable cost and are limited to 10% of the total cost. All indirect cost proposals must be submitted on the Highway Safety Concept Paper form. An agency that requests indirect costs must have adopted an indirect cost policy that conforms to either OMB Circular A-87 or A-122 and must provide a copy to the Safety Office. Indirect costs do not apply to all grants and subgrantees.

Forms Available on Internet

The Highway Safety Concept Paper form, the Highway Concept Paper Instructions, and Sample Highway Safety Concept Papers are available on the FDOT Safety Office website: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/safety/3-Grants/Grants-Home.shtm

Suggested Resources

Traffic Crash Facts: Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV). Reports from 1994-2010 are available at: http://www.flhsmv.gov/html/safety.html
Highway Safety Matrix: Florida Department of Transportation. The matrix is available at: http://www.dot.state.fl.us/safety/3-Grants/Grants-Home.shtm
Fatal Accident Reporting System: USDOT, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Reports are available at: http://www.nhtsa.gov/FARS
Florida's Integrated Report Exchange System (FIRES): Analysis tool of crash forms in the state crash form repository. https://firesportal.com/Pages/Public/Home.aspx