

# **HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAM GUIDE**

## **LOCAL, STATE AND NONPROFIT AGENCY HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAM GUIDE**

**A guide to applying for and managing Local, State and Nonprofit Agency highway safety grants from the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC). This information pertains to all GTSC grant programs. The structured grant programs of Buckle Up New York (BUNY), Child Passenger Safety (CPS), and Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) have additional reporting requirements and budget restrictions. Defer to those applications' budget guides and reporting schedules.**

### **GRANT PROGRAM BACKGROUND**

The Federal Highway Safety Program is a grant program from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). It is intended to support state and local efforts to improve highway safety by providing start up or "seed" money for new programs directed at identified highway safety problems. In New York State, this grant program is administered by the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee. The GTSC's grant projects are funded for one year periods, based on the availability of federal funding and the performance of the grantee. Applications must be submitted each year before the May 15 deadline.

All applicants must apply through the eGrants system available through SafeNY.com. All grant applications from local agencies MUST be endorsed by the Chair of the County Traffic Safety Board. Contact your County Traffic Safety Board as to the process for having your application endorsed.

### **HIGHWAY SAFETY GRANTS - GUIDELINES & REQUIRED ELEMENTS**

The GTSC uses strategic planning to help determine the state's priority highway safety problems and to develop program strategies for addressing these problems. The results of this process are reported annually in the State's Highway Safety Strategic Plan (HSSP). State agencies and nonprofit organizations can submit applications to receive funding for traffic safety projects directed at solving problems identified in the HSSP. The HSSP is prepared by the GTSC staff, based on input from the traffic safety community. The published HSSP is available on our website at <http://www.safeny.com>.

The GTSC has four grant programs. The structured programs of Buckle Up New York (BUNY), Child Passenger Safety (CPS) and Selective Traffic Enforcement (STEP) address specific statewide highway safety programs in a format prescribed by the GTSC and the NHTSA. In these structured applications, the GTSC has defined the problem area and the scope of the project activities that will be funded. The applications guide the applicant to provide some additional problem identification information. The budget requests are limited to certain items.

The general highway safety grant program for local, state and nonprofit agencies is to be used by any applicant to address any highway safety issue in the HSSP. The applicant must prepare a grant application narrative that states the problem to be addressed by the grant project and provides supporting data. The grant narrative must address all of the elements outlined in this guide to writing a grant proposal. The budget should be justified and reasonable and only include allowable costs.

## REFERENCE GUIDE TO WRITING A GENERAL HIGHWAY SAFETY GRANT PROPOSAL

The grant application must have a narrative that addresses the following components:

- I. Problem Identification
- II. Proposed Solution
- III. Goal (with objectives)
- IV. Operational Plan (Work Plan)
- V. Evaluation Plan

Use this guide when writing your grant to develop an acceptable application. Applications will be reviewed based on completeness, potential impact, reasonableness of the budget request and the past performance of the applicant. All proposals must address a problem described in New York's Highway Safety Strategic Plan. The Highway Safety Strategic Plan and accident and ticket data are found on the GTSC website, SafeNY.com.

### I. Problem Identification

In narrative form, describe the problem(s) that you have identified in your community. The problem(s) you describe should be identified through an analysis and assessment of data and information related to highway safety in your community. The data used in identifying the problem(s) must be included to support your problem identification statement.

### II. Proposed Solution

Describe the solution to your highway safety problem. Explain what you intend to do and how it will impact your problem.

Provide specific and measurable action statements that indicate what you would like to accomplish by the end of your project period.

Provide a statement for each problem that you will be addressing in the project.

### III Goal

Based on the problem(s) that you have identified and documented, state the goal and objectives of your project. Performance measures for monitoring and tracking progress toward your goal and each objective must be identified.

**Goal:** The goal of your project is the ultimate end result you hope to achieve over time. In highway safety programs, the ultimate goal is to reduce crashes, fatalities and injuries. The goal should be measurable; it should also be ambitious, but realistic. In stating the goal, include where you are starting from (baseline), the target you hope to reach, and a timeframe for achieving your goal. *(Examples: Reduce the number of pedestrians injured in crashes from 214 this year to 185 in three years. Reduce the number of fatal and personal injury crashes that are alcohol-related from 142 this year to 125 in three years.)*

**Objectives:** The objectives are the "action" steps you will take to achieve your goal and are related to the activities undertaken in your project. The objectives should also be specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, related to your problem and time bound. *(Examples: Conduct a traffic safety education outreach for senior citizens by September 30. Increase the number of tickets issued for speeding violations from 16,890 last year to 20,000 in this year. Increase the seat belt use rate from 70% last year to 80% next year).*

Describe the strategies you will use to accomplish your program's objectives. For each strategy, describe the specific activities or tasks that will be undertaken. Identify measures that will be used to document the activities that are implemented; this information must be collected throughout the project. (*Examples: number of pedestrian safety presentations to senior citizen groups, number of brochures distributed, number of seat belt road checks conducted.*) To the extent possible, measures for assessing the effectiveness of your activities should also be identified. (*Examples: change in awareness/knowledge of pedestrian safety, change in seat belt use rate linked to project activity.*)

**Performance Measures:** A performance measure is a quantitative indicator that can be monitored over time and is directly related to a goal or objective. Identify the measures you will use to track progress toward the achievement of your goals and objectives. (*Examples: number of pedestrians injured in crashes, seat belt use rate, number of speeding tickets issued*). For each selected measure, indicate the source or how you will collect the data. (*Examples: Department of Motor Vehicles, observational surveys, police agencies tickets issued.*)

#### **IV. Operational Plan (Work Plan)**

Provide a detailed description of how your project will be organized, including such things as staffing, location, schedules and frequencies. What are the specific activities that you will be performing, how will you do them, when, how often and to whom will they be directed? Provide a description of major activities or events (by month or quarter).

Your operational plan should, in a few paragraphs:

- Describe the activities that you will conduct to address each problem
- Address the solutions for each problem
- Include the names, titles, and duties of those who will carryout the project

*Example: We will present a bicycle and pedestrian safety school assembly to every grammar school in our county (8 schools) during the school year. Our traffic safety coordinator will organize and present the assemblies and will use the materials we order through our grant budget.*

**Milestones:** Establish milestones for your project. Provide a chronological list of the major events, activities or tasks that will be performed and designate a start and completion date for each task.

#### **Tip:**

- Your Operation Plan will help you define the scope of your project, organize your resources, provide direction to and motivate project participants.
- It will encourage long range planning throughout the project period.

#### **V. Evaluation**

To determine if the project will be doing what it is intended to do, describe how you will assess your accomplishments, its achievements or shortcomings. The evaluation should focus on documenting your activities and linking these activities to the achievement of your objectives. Did you conduct the activities you planned? If you did, were the activities effective?

You will also want to determine whether there has been progress toward the ultimate goal of your project. Because of the time lag in receiving up-to-date crash data, it will not be possible to link your project activities with any change in your measure. Rather, you should review the current status of your measure to determine whether there has been a change (compared to the established baseline) and if the change is in the right direction.

## **Conducting the Evaluation:**

Obtain or collect updated information/data for each of the performance measures related to your project activities, objectives, and goal. Establish a baseline for each measure.

Assess the implementation of your project by comparing the activities that were conducted with the activities that were planned. Include quantitative terms in describing your activities. (*Examples: number of presentations, number of participants, number of police officers, number of brochures distributed.*)

Evaluate the effectiveness of your activities by comparing the updated measure with the baseline measure related to each objective. Determine if each objective was “met”, “unmet”, or “exceeded”. Look for linkages between your activities and your objectives.

Finally, assess whether there has been progress toward your goal by comparing the current status of the measure with the established baseline.

## **Budget**

Be sure your request is reasonable and appropriate to the grant needs and follows the guidelines for allowable costs. When preparing a budget, keep in mind that federal guidelines permit the funding of some costs and specifically prohibit the funding of others. Also, keep in mind that some grant programs are restrictive when it comes to what is allowed in the budget request. Our BUNY (Buckle Up New York), STEP (Selective Traffic Enforcement Program) and CPS (Child Passenger Safety) grant programs are examples. Please refer to the specific application when preparing the corresponding budget request. Following are the general guidelines for our grant programs.

The general principals used by this federal program to determine if costs are eligible for reimbursement include the following. Costs charged to the grant need to be necessary, reasonable and allocable. Activities and items being charged to the grant must be directly related to the approved project's objectives. Cost must fall within the approved grant period, pre and post expenses are not allowable. The deadline for submitting vouchers for reimbursement of project costs is October 31. All allowable costs incurred during the grant year for use during the period October 1 to September 30, must be claimed on a voucher and submitted to GTSC by October 31. NHTSA will not reimbursement late claims. While we do not intend that costs go un-reimbursed, grantees must claim costs promptly or be subject to non-reimbursement. Vouchers must be submitted on a quarterly basis.

If you have any questions on allowable or unallowable costs, contact the GTSC while planning your budget and always check before incurring the costs. If an item is not listed in the table below, do not purchase it until you check with GTSC for prior approval. If you do not seek prior approval or purchase items not listed in your grants approved budget you do so at the risk of non-reimbursement. All purchases with grant funds are subject to prior approval from GTSC before reimbursement vouchers are paid. We strongly recommend that you receive prior approval from GTSC before making such purchases.

**Following are the general guidelines for our grant program budgets:**

**ALLOWABLE COSTS**

Contractual services	Printing and reproduction
Equipment <sup>1</sup>	Professional memberships & subscriptions
Fringe benefits, straight time only	Telephone calls (project related)
Materials and supplies	Transportation/mileage
Personal services	Travel
Postage	Training
Indirect costs (up to 10% of direct labor) <sup>2</sup>	PI & E materials and products <sup>3</sup>

**UNALLOWABLE COSTS (These items are NOT funded by GTSC):**

Accident reconstruction activities/total work stations	Interest and other financial costs
Advertising	Land
Blanket purchase orders	Large scale computer systems
Alcoholic beverages (including controlled training settings)	Legislative expenses (lobbying is prohibited)
Capital expenditures/capital construction	Maintenance and repairs to existing/non-project funded equipment
Cell phones and contracts	Office furniture, fixtures and equipment <sup>4</sup>
Commercial vehicle inspection and truck scales	Tint meters
Highway safety appurtenances (guard rails, utility poles, sign supports, etc.)	Contributions and donations
Entertainment	Police/emergency communications
Extended warranties/maintenance agreements	Pre-agreement costs (Costs incurred before the project begin date.)
Fines and penalties	Traffic signal preemption systems
Fringe benefits on overtime	Supplanting (Meaning grant funds cannot be used to support existing activities.)
Public Information & Education (PI&E) promotional material that does not have a traffic safety message and/or was not pre-approved by GTSC <sup>5</sup>	GTSC will not fund contest prizes of cash, services or goods. Safety equipment such as bicycle helmets or car seats may be distributed only in conjunction with an educational program. Promotional items of nominal value with the appropriate safety message, e.g. pens, pencils or key chains, may purchased and distributed to support program activities.

1. Equipment that costs \$5,000 or more per item needs prior written approval from the GTSC and the NHTSA.
2. Indirect costs are intended to cover related overhead associated with administering the project. Indirect costs will be permitted up to 10% of Direct Labor Cost. Not allowable for overtime. Must have prior approval from GTSC.
3. Public Information & Education (PI&E) materials, products or campaigns developed for this project must have prior GTSC approval for content and text or be subject to non-reimbursement. Materials must include the following acknowledgement: "Funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration with a grant from the New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee. (Examples: pamphlets, videos, handouts, public messages.)"
4. Desks, chairs, file cabinets, clocks, lighting, coat racks, drapes, shelves, floor covering, bookcases, etc..
5. PI&E items and activities must be directly related to the project objectives and have a highway safety message.

**Personal Services:** Enter the total amount of the GTSC funding requested for personal services costs, which are salary and fringe benefit costs. In the spaces provided, please list the title of the position(s) being requested. Indicate when overtime will be used. Please note that fringe benefits and indirect costs are not allowable for overtime.

**Other than Personal Services:** Enter a brief description of the major categories of non-personal service costs being requested. In the area provided, enter the amount of the GTSC funding that you are requesting to cover project related costs. These costs should be directly related to your project's objectives and justified in your grant narrative. Travel must be identified as in-state or out-of-state and justified in your grant narrative. Equipment must be related to your grant activities and is to be listed separately and itemized on the budget detail sheet.

**Grand Total:** The amount of the GTSC funding being requested will be calculated. This amount equals the total of your personal services and other than personal services categories.

**Local Match:** When required, please show the amount of local matching funds.

## INFORMATION REQUIRED ON THE APPLICATION

In addition to the narrative and budget, the applicant must provide the name and address of the applicant agency and its fiscal officer. **Also, nonprofit agencies must provide us their Federal ID number and NYS Charity ID number** from the NYS Attorney General's Charity Registration Bureau **when applying**. Applicants that do not provide this information on the application will not be considered for funding. If you need information about Charity ID, consult the NYS Attorney General's website at <http://www.oag.state.ny.us/bureaus/charities/about.html>.

## TIPS WHEN PREPARING YOUR GRANT APPLICATION:

- Remember to prioritize and limit the number of problems you address in your grant application. Resources are limited; be specific in your focus.
- If your grant application addresses multiple problems, you must include a project description for each problem to be addressed.
- Make sure that the project you are requesting funding for addresses the problem that you have identified in your application.
- Local agencies must allow time for the County Traffic Safety Board to review and endorse the application.
- If you have any questions, please contact the GTSC at (518) 474-5111.

## PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

### EQUIPMENT / PROJECT RELATED COMMODITIES

Large commodity orders and equipment required to conduct the project activities as described in the approved grant budget must be ordered and received by July 31. Equipment that costs \$5,000 or more per item needs written approval from the GTSC and the NHTSA **before** it is purchased.

## **REPORTING**

You will be required to submit a mid-year and final report. Your final report should include either your completed evaluation report or description of what will be evaluated and when it will be completed. The mid-year report is due April 15 and should describe the activities conducted, the milestones that have been met, and any problems affecting the implementation of the project. The final report is due October 15 and should summarize your accomplishments and present the results of the evaluation.

The structured programs of BUNY, CPS and STEP each have specific reporting requirements that are unique to that program. Be sure to follow the instructions on the application and report activities as required.

## **MONITORING**

The GTSC has the right to conduct on-site monitoring of grant funded projects, during the project period or within 3 years after the end of the project period. The staff of the GTSC will schedule on-site visits at the mutual convenience of the GTSC and the project director or designee.

During the on-site monitoring visit, the GTSC staff may ask to view: grant records, correspondence, financial records, traffic records, examples of work performed, appointment books, financial and payroll records and equipment purchased with grant funds.

It is expected that you document the work of your grant project. The GTSC may request proof of the work done under the grant. Scheduling diaries, correspondence, meeting minutes, media archives, reports and other materials will help to document your use of grant funding. For enforcement, projects surveys, ticket and crash reports should be maintained by the project director.

## **COUNTY TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD COORDINATION**

New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law § 1675 describes the functions of Traffic Safety Boards. They are authorized to promote and encourage street and highway traffic safety and to formulate highway safety programs and coordinate efforts of interested parties and agencies engaged in traffic safety education within such city, town, borough or county.

The GTSC encourages local coordination of traffic safety efforts and requires that the County Traffic Safety Board Chair endorse all local grant applications. The GTSC encourages that grant program participants be active in all of their community's efforts to promote traffic safety.

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS**

A project's promotional activities, which encourage or educate the general public to adopt highway safety practices, are an allowable cost.

Promotional items and activities must directly relate to the project objectives and contain a traffic safety message, for example, "Buckle Up Your Family" or "Head Out with a Helmet." Simply printing the name of your traffic safety program with no additional message is NOT acceptable.

Promotional items and educational material produced or purchased must include the following acknowledgement: "Funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration with a grant from the New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee."

All public awareness media or promotional campaigns and public information and educational (PI&E) materials developed using grant funds must be reviewed and approved by GTSC **BEFORE** they are ordered. This would include: brochures, posters, pamphlets, or other media messages. GTSC will review the message for accuracy and consistency with the state's safety goals. If the items are not pre-approved, GTSC may not reimburse you.

Please contact the GTSC for assistance on meeting these requirements before you order your materials.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANT PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

The following important information will help you understand the GTSC grant program. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in delays or rejection when processing your application, or may prevent reimbursement for project costs.

- The federal fiscal year runs from October 1 through September 30. Projects are funded for one year, and each project period must coincide with the federal fiscal year, with an October 1 start date and an ending date of September 30. Any late grant applications that we consider for funding will have a September 30 ending date, regardless of the start date. Time extensions will only be considered for unique circumstances.
- Applications must be submitted through the eGrants system on or before May 15. Incomplete applications cannot be accepted.
- Local grant applications must be endorsed by the County Traffic Safety Board chair. The signed endorsement must be sent to the GTSC.
- Highway Safety Program grant applications must clearly identify the highway safety problem(s) to be addressed and the solution(s) to be implemented. The problem(s) and the solution(s) must be consistent with New York State's Highway Safety Strategic Plan. This plan is published on the GTSC website, SafeNY.com.
- Any changes in the project's scope during the grant year must be submitted to GTSC for approval **before** those activities occur.
- This is a reimbursement program. The applicant incurs the costs of the project and is reimbursed by the GTSC according to the approved budget. All costs must be documented and vouchered. Any changes in the approved budget must be submitted to the GTSC for approval **before** the costs are incurred.
- If changes to the project are required such as time extension, scope change, or budget modification, the project director must submit a Project Modification Request.
- The deadline for submitting vouchers for reimbursement of project costs is October 31. All allowable costs incurred during the grant year for use during the period of October 1 to September 30, must be claimed on a voucher and submitted to GTSC by October 31. NHTSA will not reimburse late claims. While we do not intend that costs go un-reimbursed, grantees must claim costs promptly or be subject to non-reimbursement. You must voucher for your project costs on a quarterly basis, even if no costs were incurred that quarter (enter \$0). This facilitates the payment process at GTSC and generates a positive cash flow over the course of the grant.
- Grant projects are funded for one year periods. A new application must be submitted each year.
- If there is any questions about the management of a GTSC grant, contact the GTSC Program Representative for assistance.
- Any income generated from the activities of the project must be reapplied to the project.

## DATES TO KNOW

Our grant year corresponds to the federal fiscal year, October 1 through September 30. Know when your grant items are to be submitted. Special activity grants, like BUNY or child passenger safety, will have additional reports due and those dates will be noted in the application.

<b>April</b>	Local agencies, plan to have application endorsements submitted to traffic safety board so they may be endorsed BEFORE May 15, when they are due in to the GTSC. If you have questions about the grant application process or need assistance, contact the GTSC. Contact your County Traffic Safety Board as to the process for having your application endorsed.
<b>May 15</b>	Complete and endorsed grant applications are due in to the GTSC.
<b>October 1</b>	The beginning of the Federal fiscal year. GTSC grants begin on October 1
<b>April 15</b>	Mid year progress reports are due.
<b>July 31</b>	Large commodities and equipment must be ordered and received.
<b>September 30</b>	The end of the Federal fiscal year. GTSC grants end September 30.
<b>October 15</b>	Final report due.
<b>October 31</b>	Deadline for submitting vouchers.

**GTSC is online at <http://www.SafeNY.com>**

### Governor's Traffic Safety Committee Contact Information

Mailing address:

Governor's Traffic Safety Committee  
6 Empire State Plaza Room 414  
Albany, NY 12228

Telephone: (518) 474-5111

For Program Representative County Assignments see: <http://safeny.com/staff.htm>