

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY ADMINISTRATION  
Fiscal Year 2012

**Performance and Registration Information Systems  
Management (PRISM) Grant Program**

**Opportunity Announcement and Application Instructions**

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***Section I: Funding Opportunity Description***

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)'s Performance and Registration Information Systems Management (PRISM) grant program provides financial assistance to State commercial motor vehicle (CMV) registration and enforcement agencies that conduct two interrelated tasks to promote CMV safety. The first is by determining the safety fitness of a motor carrier when licensing or registering the carrier or by determining the safety fitness while the license or registration is in effect. The second activity is by denying, suspending, or revoking CMV registrations of a motor carrier that has been issued an operations out-of-service order by FMCSA.

FMCSA announces this grant opportunity based on authorities provided for in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy For Users, Pub. L. No.109-59, sections 4101(c), 4109, 119 Stat. 1144, 1715, 1720 (2005). PRISM grants are governed by Title 49 31106 and 31109, as amended. The Agency will inform applicants if new authorizing legislation changes its grant programs for fiscal year (FY) 2012.

***Change in Due Date***

All PRISM applications *must* be submitted through Grants.gov by **11:59 P.M. (EST) on December 12, 2011**. This date supersedes the December 12, 2012 due date shown in the published Federal Register notice, Vol. 76, No. 156 on August 12, 2011.

***Section II: Award Information***

For FY 2012, FMCSA anticipates awarding up to \$5,000,000 in PRISM funds to enhance State registration systems, administrative processes, and law enforcement encouragement to carriers to improve their safety status.

PRISM is a reimbursable grant program. The Federal share of funds under the PRISM grant program is 100 percent. There is no State matching or cost-sharing requirements. However, the State must provide the necessary management and technical resources, facilities, and training to meet all the operational, technical, and data processing requirements to implement an effective program.

## ***Priority Funding Requests***

Priority funding consideration in FY2012 will be given to applications that prepare for FMCSA's removal of the "registrant-only" USDOT number. On September 1, 2012, FMCSA will eliminate the registrant designation (Federal Register Vol. 76, 54288). FMCSA will maintain existing numbers as dormant registrant-only USDOT numbers within the FMCSA Motor Carrier Management Information System (MCMIS). PRISM program funding is available to State agencies to implement this change. In summary, eligible activities related to the removal of the "registrant-only" USDOT number include (but are not limited to):

1. **System Modification.** The State should modify the USDOT field at the registrant level to allow for a specific alpha designation; or States can add an indicator field for a check off for the registrant only.
2. **Administrative Clean Up.** Existing registrant only numbers should be replaced on the International Registration Plan (IRP) database with the corrected notation for such a registrant.
3. **Validation and Safety Edits.** The current validation and safety check edits should recognize the notation that is determined by the States to be used in place of the "registrant only" USDOT number. The validation and safety checks will no longer be done when this notation is encountered.
4. **Renewal applications/MCS-150 information edits.** Renewal applications should have programming edits modified to account for the notation that is not a USDOT Number for determining whether to print a pre-populated MCS – 150 and to allow renewal processing.
5. **State form/procedures changes.** States should modify instructions on the IRP forms, checklists, and in the manuals for the registrant and the IRP clerks for all of these changes.

## ***Other PRISM Program Priorities***

The intent of the PRISM program is to link Federal motor carrier safety information systems with State commercial vehicle registration and licensing systems. This connection enables a State to determine if a motor carrier or registrant has been ordered to cease interstate operations by FMCSA when that carrier or registrant applies for or renews vehicle registration, or while the registration is in effect and enables the State to take action on that information. Law enforcement activities are funded by PRISM grants as an enhancement to track and improve safety performance of carriers with demonstrated poor safety performance.

Other Agency PRISM priorities are described below as vehicle registration programs and law enforcement programs. State registration agencies and/or State law enforcement agencies may apply separately or together. The following is a list of specific requirements for State registration agencies to implement PRISM. Applicants are encouraged to submit performance-based proposals that represent strategies to support, enrich, or evaluate their existing PRISM program based on these criteria:

## Registration Program Requirements

1. Identify, collect and maintain the USDOT number and Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) for the registrant and motor carrier responsible for the safe operation of each vehicle being registered.
2. Print and barcode the motor carrier information on the cab card if the motor carrier responsible for the safety of the vehicle is not expected to change during the registration year.
3. Validate all the USDOT numbers before adding any USDOT number to the IRP registration files.
4. Have the capacity to issue USDOT numbers by online access to the MCMIS database using standardized procedures.
5. Incorporate PRISM requirements in temporary authority processes.
6. Have and exercise authority to suspend, revoke or deny registration if the motor carrier responsible for safety of the vehicle is prohibited from interstate operations.
7. Seek and implement authority to retrieve plates from carriers whose registration has been suspended, revoked or denied based on PRISM sanctions. (In some states this authority must be procured separately from the previous requirement)
8. Check carrier safety status before issuing credentials and deny the registration if the motor carrier is prohibited from interstate operations.
9. Maintain/update the USDOT Number and TIN for the Motor Carrier responsible for the safe operation of each vehicle being registered and require an update to the MCS-150 information at both the registrant and vehicle levels if not updated within the past year, prior to issuing registration credentials.
10. Update the PRISM Target File nightly with registration information for vehicles assigned to motor carriers in the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Process (MCSIP).
11. Provide the ability to query registration files by USDOT number of the registrant and motor carrier responsible for safety in order to obtain registration records details.
12. Provide assistance to FMCSA in finding correct addresses of motor carriers by inquiring registration files.
13. Provide motor carrier law enforcement with a report that lists vehicles and registration data for all vehicles assigned to a specific carrier upon request by the safety investigator/compliance review officer.
14. Ensure PRISM training is provided to all appropriate staff.

15. Ensure PRISM information / training is provided to motor carriers and other interested parties.
16. Ensure all appropriate staff attends MCMIS training.

### **Law Enforcement Program Requirements**

In addition to registration, the enforcement component of PRISM complements the program. Applicants are encouraged to submit performance-based proposals that represent strategies to support, enrich, or evaluate their existing PRISM program based on these criteria:

1. Seek authority to stop and inspect vehicles based on the safety fitness of the motor carrier assigned to the vehicle. This requirement applies specifically to *probable cause* states.
2. Provide the ability to identify vehicles assigned to carriers in MCSIP and give these vehicles priority for inspection.
3. States must coordinate picking up license plates with FMCSA Division Offices.
4. Implement procedures to determine how to correct the unassigned or incorrectly assigned safety events.
5. Ensure PRISM training is provided to all enforcement officers.
6. Improve the quality and completeness of data.

### **Section III: Eligibility Information**

States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands are eligible to receive PRISM grants. *Individuals or businesses are not eligible recipients.*

### **Section IV: Application and Submission Information**

To apply, the applicant *must* complete the Grants.gov registration process. To start registering, click [here](#) and follow the instructions found on the Grants.gov “[Get Registered](#)” website. The registration process can take as long as four weeks. Applicants are encouraged to register as soon as possible. So please register early!

The Grants.gov website provides customer support via (800) 518-GRANTS (this is a toll-free number) or through e-mail at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). The customer support center is open from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays, to address Grants.gov technology issues.

The applicant must [download](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp) ([http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply\\_for\\_grants.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp)) the grant application package from Grants.gov, complete it, and submit the completed application package with required attachments, through Grants.gov on or before the deadline of 11:59 P.M. (EST) on Monday, December 12, 2011.

Successful application processing depends upon the completeness and accuracy of the information provided.

## **Application Package – Standard Forms**

The following standard forms must be completed on line for inclusion in the PRISM application package:

1. SF-424, Standard Application for Federal Assistance
2. SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs
3. SF-424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs
4. Key Contacts Form
5. SF-GG, Grants.gov Lobbying form
6. *If applicable*, SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities
7. Attachment form (used to submit required additional or supplemental information)

Please note applications received without the complete set of required forms will not be evaluated until all forms are received. All standard forms are part of the application package available for download and completion in Grants.gov.

### ***SF-424 Instructions***

Block 1: Check “Application.”

Block 2: Check “New.”

Blocks 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7: Leave blank.

Block 8a: Enter the legal name of the entity to which the award will be made and whose name will appear on grant documents if funds are awarded.

Block 8b Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN). This number must be 9 digits long; and hyphens are optional.

Block 8c Organizational DUNS; This number must be at least 9 digits long, and may or may not include four ‘placeholder’ zeroes. For example, you may enter your DUNS number as either 123456789 or as 1234567890000 – either is correct. Hyphens are optional.

Block 8d Enter the address that will be appear on grant documents if funds are awarded. Do not use a PO Box number. Enter an actual street address.

Block 8e This field is optional and should be used to clarify the applicant’s legal name, if necessary. For example, if the legal name shown in Block 8a is “State of X,” you should use these fields to add additional organizational information, such as “Department of Transportation” or “Division of State Police” or “Office of Commercial Vehicle Enforcement,” and so forth.

- Block 8f: Enter the point of contact that should have actual knowledge of the program/project being applied for.
- Block 9: Select appropriate “Applicant Type” from drop-down menu.
- Blocks 10 – 13: These fields will be populated automatically.
- Block 14: Leave Blank.
- Block 15: Enter “[insert State name] FY 2012 PRISM Grant.”
- Block 16a: Enter the two-digit Congressional District in which the applicant’s main office is located.
- Block 16b: Enter all Congressional Districts affected by the proposed project. If all Congressional Districts throughout the State are affected, enter “ALL” for the District number.
- Block 17a-b: Enter the start and end date of the project period.
- Block 18a: Leave blank.
- Block 18b - f: Leave blank.
- Block 18g: Enter the project’s total estimated eligible costs, which will be the sum of Block 18a – f.
- Block 19: Check the appropriate box.
- Block 20: Check the appropriate box. *If the applicant is delinquent on any Federal debt, an explanation must be attached to the application, using the space provided on the last page of the application form.*
- Block 21: Read the certification statement. *You must check the “I AGREE” box if you wish to continue with the application process. Complete the information for the Authorized Representative. Fields marked with an “\*” are required. The last two boxes on the form, labeled ‘Signature of Authorized Representative’ and ‘Date Signed’ will be completed by grants.gov upon submission.*

## ***SF-424a Instructions***

### ***Section A – Budget Summary***

- Block 1a: Enter “FY 2012 PRISM Grant.”
- Block 1b: Enter “20.231.”
- Block 1e: Enter the estimated Federal funds budgeted amount (as in Block 18a of the SF-424).
- Block 1f: Leave blank.
- Block 1g: Enter the sum of Block 1e and Block 1f (as in Block 18g of the SF-424).

### ***Section B – Budget Categories***

Block 6: In Column (1), enter “FY 2012 PRISM Grant.” In sections a – k, fill in the total requirements for MCSAP Basic and Incentive funds budgeted (both Federal and State’s match) by object class categories.

***Sections C – Non-Federal Resources***

Block 8a: Enter “FY 2012 PRISM Grant.”

Block 8b - d: Leave blank.

***Section D – Forecasted Cash Needs***

Line 13: Enter the estimated amount of cash needed by quarter from FMCSA during the first year.

Line 14: Enter the estimated amount of cash from all other sources needed by quarter during the first year.

***Section E – Leave this section blank***

***Section F – Leave this section blank***

***Key Contacts Form Instructions***

Each applicant must submit a Key Contacts Form as part of its application for FMCSA grants. The form should be filled in completely. All fields marked with and with asterisk (\*) symbol are mandatory. Please use the following instructions when completing the Key Contacts Form:

Applicant Organization Name: In the “Applicant Organization Name” field at the top of the Key Contacts Form, please use the same organization name used in the SF-424.

Contact 1 Project Role: For Contact 1 Project Role, please include the contact information for the person in the organization who is authorized to sign the grant agreement on behalf of the organization. This individual is typically the head of the organization or a designee (ex: Colonel, Director, Commissioner, etc).

Contact 2 Project Role: In Contact 2 Project Role, please provide the contact information for the person in your organization who will have daily oversight over implementing the program. This role is typically performed by the project/program manager (ex: Unit Commander, Project Coordinator, etc.).

Contact 3 Project Role: For Contact 3 Project Role, please provide the contact information for the person responsible for monitoring grant program finances. This individual should be able to provide clarification on financial information such as budget details, Single Audits, invoice support documentation, and so forth. This role is typically performed by a grant, finance, or administrative/program specialist.

Additional contact information may be provided at the discretion of the applicant.

In addition to the above list of standard forms, the applicant must also submit the following required supplemental information:

## Mandatory Attachment #1: Program Narrative

The elements of a well-constructed narrative and their respective purposes are listed below:

1. The ***needs assessment*** discusses the existing situation and identifies the problems that the project will address.
2. The ***performance-based objectives*** describe priority activities and resulting outcomes that the applicant intends to accomplish during the funding period, as well as identifying the beneficiaries of the proposed program. These targets should support FMCSA's mission.
3. The ***activities description*** explains how the applicant intends to reach the stated objectives and thereby resolve or prevent the problems identified in the needs statement. All proposed tasks should be presented in a logical order and describe how they directly relate to accomplishing the project's objectives.
4. The narrative ***must*** identify ***resources and needs*** required for the proposed project, including equipment, facilities, and training, among others. Technology upgrades, such as automated license plate readers, USDOT Number readers, and associated systems are effective in satisfying the PRISM law enforcement requirements. To be eligible for consideration, requests for equipment should include the geographic location, traffic volume, number of Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program inspections to be performed, and the number of shifts per week that the equipment will be staffed. If applicable, contractor quotes should be included as discussed in mandatory attachment #2.
5. The program narrative ***must*** also describe the methods the applicant will use to ***monitor*** project progress and what accountability measures will be used to ***evaluate*** the project results, i.e., how the applicant will determine whether or not the project has achieved its stated performance targets and the extent to which achieving those targets can be attributed to the project.
6. The ***narrative and line item budget*** must explain/justify the direct costs included in the applicant's line-item budget (which identifies the proposed project costs). The budget narrative should discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocability of all proposed costs.
7. The ***geographic location*** of the project should be noted in the program narrative, and maps or graphic aids may be included with the narrative description.
8. The ***schedule*** ***must*** identify the major milestones for the project, with target dates for meeting each milestone.
9. The narrative ***should introduce the proposed project staff***. The introduction of the proposed project staff should consist of a biographical sketch of each key person who will be working on the project, including their relevant experience and particular qualifications for the proposed project.
10. The program narrative ***should*** provide an ***overview of the organization***. The organizational overview should ***establish*** the qualifications of the organization seeking the funds and may

include such information as a statement of legal basis, to emphasize prior record of achievement, and indication of cooperative relationships with other organizations, and other resources available to the organization.

11. The narrative *may* also provide a ***dissemination plan***, which describes the means by which the applicant intends to disseminate the project results to other interested parties.
12. Applications for continuation of a previously-funded program *should* also include a ***prior year budget by line item, showing expenditures to date***.

## **Mandatory Attachment #2: Line-item Budget**

In addition to the program narrative, the other substantive portion of the application is the budget. The budget identifies all proposed project costs (direct and indirect costs), including matching funds required, if applicable. Both cash and in-kind contributions are eligible as matching funds. Refer to [49 CFR Part 18.24](#) for more information related to acceptable matching and cost sharing.

Items that may be included in the budget as ***direct costs*** are:

- salaries and wages of the personnel associated with the project, including those of research assistants (graduate students, usually), fringe benefits such as contributions to employee benefits (e.g. social security, pension funds), and the amount of time their personnel will spend on the project;
- equipment, indicating whether it will be purchased or leased;
- materials and supplies;
- publication costs and document dissemination;
- travel, if it is related directly to project objectives (applicants should include information such as places to be visited, the purpose, and anticipated dates of travel);
- consultant services;
- items such as computer services, if not included as part of the indirect costs; and
- contract and/or subawards.

## **Mandatory Attachment #3: FMCSA Administrative Capability Questionnaire**

Every applicant must submit a completed and signed *FMCSA Administrative Capability Questionnaire*. The questionnaire is available for download in the “FULL ANNOUNCEMENT” link at the top of the FY2012 PRISM Grants.gov opportunity.

***For Continuation of a previously-funded Program Only***

## **Mandatory Attachment #3: FMCSA Administrative Capability**

Any application for funding that essentially continues a previously-approved PRISM grant must submit copies of the most recently filed SF-PPR (Performance Progress report) and SF-425 (Federal Financial Report) forms for that grant.

### ***Section V: Application Review***

Initially, all application packages will be reviewed for eligibility, timeliness, and completeness. Each complete application that passes these reviews will then be evaluated by a technical review panel. The panel will evaluate each proposal, based on the following factors:

- Prior Performance – Completion of identified programs and goals per the project plan submitted under previous grants awarded to the applicant.
- Effective Use of Prior Grants – The applicant has demonstrated timely use of available funds in previous awards.
- Safety and Cost Effectiveness – Applications will be evaluated and prioritized based on the expected impact on safety relative to the investment of grant funds. Where appropriate, costs per unit will be calculated and compared with national averages to determine effectiveness. In other areas, proposed costs will be compared with historical information to confirm reasonableness.
- Applicability to Announced Priorities – grant applications that specifically address these issues will be given priority consideration.
- Ability of the applicant to support the strategies and activities in the proposal for the entire project period of performance.
- Feasibility of overall program coordination and implementation based upon the project plan.

Additionally, the technical review panel will consider other objective and performance-based criteria that FMCSA deems appropriate, such as consistency with national priorities, overall program balance, past spending patterns, and unexpended funds information. Preference will be given to performance-based proposals that incorporate:

- A description of how the proposal contributes to achieving FMCSA's goal of reducing the rate of large truck and bus related fatalities;
- Specific objectives and goals that are supported by data analysis;
- Clearly-defined strategies, activities, timelines, and performance measures; and
- A commitment to monitoring and evaluating results to facilitate improved performance.

### ***Section VI: Award Administration Information***

Following final selection, all applicants will be notified of the panel's decision by their respective State's FMCSA Division Administrator. FMCSA expects to notify applicants within ninety (90) days of the submission deadline, and to release awards soon thereafter as is administratively practicable, subject to availability of funds.

### **Notifying Award Recipients**

Following the approval of the award recommendations, the Awardee will receive a Notice of Grant Agreement (NGA) directly from the FMCSA grants management platform, Grant Solutions. (Grantees will automatically be assigned a user account in GrantSolutions by the system.) Once established as a user in Grant Solutions, the Awardee will be notified by the system when the Grant Agreement is awaiting acceptance and ready for signature.

### **Notifying Unsuccessful Applicants**

Applicants not selected for funding will receive written notification and may request the return of their proposal by contacting their State's FMCSA Division Administrator.

### ***Section VII: Agency Contact***

The PRISM grant program is managed by:

United States Department of Transportation,  
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration,  
Associate Administration for Enforcement and Program Delivery

For more information related to this announcement or application submission, the applicant may contact the [FMCSA Field Office](#) in its State, or the appropriate program manager:

- Ms. Julie Otto  
***PRISM Grant Administrative Manager***  
Email (preferred): julie.otto@dot.gov  
Office: 202-366-0710
  
- Mr. Stephen Parker  
***PRISM Program Manager***  
Email (preferred): stephen.parker@dot.gov  
Office: 202-366-6407

### ***Section VIII: Other Information***

FMCSA Financial Assistance Website:

<http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety-security/GRANTS/financial-assistance.aspx>