

United States Department of Transportation Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Fiscal Year 2010 – Commercial Driver's License Program Improvement Grants **Supplemental Grants for High Priorities and Emerging Issues** Program Announcement and Submission Instructions

Thank you for your interest in the Fiscal Year 2010 (FY 2010) Commercial Driver's License Program Improvement Supplemental Grants for High Priority and Emerging Issues (CDLPI-HPEI). This document will assist you by providing important information about the CDLPI-HPEI grants, including the FY 2010 priorities and critical information related to preparing and submitting a grant application.

The submission requirements and instructions have changed for FY 2010. **Please** review this **entire** document before submitting an application through Grants.gov.

Section I – Funding Opportunity Description

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) authorizes the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) to award up to \$25,000,000 in grant funds as part of the Commercial Driver's License Program Improvement grant program.

Under this program, FMCSA awards \$20,000,000 to State agencies to assist that State comply with the requirements of 49 CFR Parts 383 and 384, and also generally improve the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) program in that State. Applications for State grants were due on November 1, 2009 and FMCSA expects to make all awards by March 15, 2010.

Pursuant to SAFETEA-LU, FMCSA will also award up to \$5,000,000 to State agencies, local governments, or other persons (entities, organizations, and/or companies) under this grant announcement (subject to the availability of funds). Of these supplemental funds, FMCSA will award up to \$2,500,000 for projects involving research, development, demonstration projects, public education, and other special activities and projects relating to commercial driver licensing and motor vehicle safety that are of benefit to all jurisdictions of the United States or are designed to address national safety concerns and circumstances. Additionally, FMCSA will award up to \$2,500,000 to address emerging issues relating to commercial driver's license improvements.

To achieve the goals of SAFETEA-LU and the FMCSA mission of reducing the number of crashes and fatalities involving large trucks and buses, the FMCSA will consider projects that address one or more of the following national issues:

- assisting States achieve compliance with 49 CFR Parts 383 and 384;

- preventing and detecting fraudulent activities through better implementation of CDL program management control and oversight practices (including, but not limited to, recognition of fraudulent document, monitoring and auditing of skills testing, and monitoring and auditing of issuance procedures);
- improving the accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of driver history and conviction information exchanged between law enforcement, prosecutors, the courts, employers, and State driver licensing agencies; this includes the timely transfer of licensing, conviction, and withdrawal information from one State driver licensing agency to another as required by 49 CFR Part 384 §§ 207, 208, and 209;
- improving the accuracy of data currently in driver history databases. Data accuracy and completeness is critical to a State's ability to comply with safety regulations;
- updating and improving States' administration of CDL knowledge and skills tests to ensure drivers of large trucks and buses possess the knowledge and skills necessary to operate those vehicles safely;
- increasing outreach and training to the criminal justice community on the importance of properly charging, adjudicating, and sanctioning CDL holders and CMV operators of those offenses listed in 49 CFR 383.51;
- addressing other problem statements identified by the applicant that will help commercial driver licensing and motor vehicle safety and that are of benefit to all jurisdictions of the United States or are designed to address national safety concerns and circumstances.

Proposed projects should provide a direct benefit to one or more of the following CDL stakeholders:

- State agencies responsible for the retention and transmission of driver history records (usually the designated State driver licensing agencies);
- Other State agencies responsible for all or part of the State's CDL program (ex: in some States the testing is conducted by a different agency than the one that issues the actual commercial driver's license);
- Law enforcement officers responsible for enforcing traffic violations or other offenses listed in 49 CFR 383.51;
- Officers of the Court responsible for prosecuting traffic violations or other offenses listed in 49 CFR 383.51;
- Judges that preside over traffic violations or other offenses listed in 49 CFR 383.51;
- Court clerks responsible for processing and transmitting to the State driver licensing agency information regarding the conviction of an offense listed in 49 CFR 383.51;
- Commercial Driver's License holders;
- Motor Carriers that use vehicles which require a CDL to operate.

To achieve these goals, FMCSA will consider applications from entities that can conduct programs on a national level that will provide widespread benefit to one or more groups of CDL stakeholders. These projects can include, but are not limited to:

- Training programs that address one or more of the above priorities. All training programs proposed should demonstrate a clear need for the training, a suitable method of delivery, a mechanism to track the number of individuals trained, and the expected benefit or outcome of the training. Training programs may be formatted to deliver content to CDL stakeholders:
 - through in-person, live delivery;
 - through a web-based training system (either live or through user-guided modules);
 - through printed material;
 - through a distributed electronic training format (ex: videos distributed via DVDs);
 - through a train-the-trainer system.
- Programs that provide direct technical assistance to CDL stakeholders in the form of verbal or written communication (including electronic mail) during normal business hours (including, but not limited to, a help desk).
- Programs that provide translation, delivery, exchange, and transmission of data directly related to CDL holders; this data can include, but is not limited to: driver history records, driver licensing status, conviction records, withdrawal records, information related to traffic crashes involving CDL holders or those required to hold a CDL.
- Programs that provide resource or reference material to CDL stakeholders that assist in the performance of the stakeholders functions related to the national priorities described above.
- Programs that provide direct, on-site guidance or consultation to CDL stakeholders that assist in the performance of the stakeholders functions related to the national priorities described above.
- Programs that provide for the direct exchange of information, guidance, and best practices, between CDL stakeholders (including, but not limited to: in-person or web-based meetings, forums, or symposiums).

Allowable costs under the CDLPI-HPEI grant awards include, but are not limited to expenses for computer hardware and software, publications, testing, personnel, training, approved travel, and quality control. Grants made under this program may not be used to rent, lease, or buy land or buildings.

Section II – Award Information

FMCSA expects to award as many as 20 grants to State agencies, local governments, or other persons (entities, organizations, and/or companies) in FY 2010, with award amounts ranging from \$5,000 to \$1,000,000.

FMCSA expects to announce awards within ninety days of the submission deadline (subject to the availability of funds). The grant period of performance will begin no earlier than the award date of the funds and will be determined by the project plan submitted with the application.

The Federal share of the funds under this grant program is established by SAFETEA-LU as 100 percent. There are no matching or cost-sharing requirements.

Section III – Eligibility Information

Eligible applicants include State agencies (including the District of Columbia), local governments, or other persons (entities, organizations, and/or companies) capable of conducting national programs involving research, development, demonstration projects, public education, and other special activities and projects relating to commercial driver licensing and motor vehicle safety that are of benefit to all jurisdictions of the United States or are designed to address national safety concerns and circumstances.

Important Note: The purpose of this grant program is to provide a benefit to the national CDL program. The FMCSA will not award funds to individuals for personal gain limited to themselves (ex: FMCSA will not award a grant to an individual to obtain the specialized training necessary to obtain a CDL). Further, the FMCSA will not award funds to private businesses for direct financial gain that does not provide a broader benefit to the national CDL program (ex: FMCSA will not award a grant to a driving school to purchase a new tractor-trailer for CDL training). The FMCSA will only award funds to projects that have the potential to provide benefits to one or more groups of CDL stakeholders on a national scale.

Section IV – Application and Submission Information

The FMCSA utilizes Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) as the primary tool for accepting discretionary grant applications. Except as described below, all FY 2010 CDLPI-HPEI applications must be submitted electronically through this site.

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number for this grant is 20.232.

All applications must be submitted through Grants.gov, except as described below, by 11:59 P.M. (EST) on March 1, 2010. Applications received after this time will be considered if funds remain available after the review process for timely applications. Due to unforeseen connectivity or technical issues associated with online submission, FMCSA strongly encourages all applicants to submit their applications well in advance to allow for additional time if needed.

If the designated grant official from an applicant requires special assistance or accommodation associated with submitting this grant application, methods other than Grants.gov are available. Please contact the agency personnel listed in Section VII of this notice if assistance is required.

Applicants should submit one CDLPI-HPEI grant application package through Grants.gov for each major project proposed for FY 2010. However, if the applicant is requesting funds for a large project that has several related components (or sub-projects), each major sub-project may be included within the single application package. For example, suppose an applicant proposes to provide training to a particular stakeholder group that includes three components: printed material, onsite training, and web-based training. While these are different efforts, they are all related to the same project (goal) and may all be submitted as one application. However, each

component (or sub-project) should be clearly explained. Further, the cost for each component should be clearly distinguished from the others. See *Supplemental Information* for further on this issue.

All CDLPI-HPEI Grant applications for FY 2010 must include the following forms as provided in Grants.gov:

1. SF-424 Standard Application for Federal Assistance

This is the standard application form for all requests for Federal assistance. When completing Section F, please ensure that the individual listed as point of contact will have actual knowledge of the project applied for and can answer relevant questions.

2. SF-424A Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs

This is a standard budget form for requests for Federal assistance. On page 1, the applicant may indicate up to 4 sub-projects requested. The applicant should clearly indicate the title of each project in the provided boxes of Column A. Because there is no State-matching requirement for CDLPI-HPEI grants, and because there are no-rollover funds available for these grants, please indicate \$0.00 in columns C, D, and F.

On page 1A, please clearly indicate the 4 projects listed on page 1 in Columns 1-4 and then fill in the appropriate object class categories for each project in rows A-K.

Please complete the remaining pages as appropriate. If the applicant feels that an additional budget worksheet is necessary to further explain estimated costs, please attach a budget document to the Attachments Form (#6 below). Any attached budget should be pre-formatted to be printed on standard, letter-sized paper (already in PDF format is preferable). If the applicant attaches budget worksheets for multiple projects under the same grant application, each project should be clearly distinguished in the document.

3. SF-424B Assurances for Non-Construction Programs

This is a standard assurances form associated with accepting Federal assistance funds. This assurances document indicates that the applicant-agency is in substantial compliance with various programs, regulations, and Federal laws. This document should not be completed without confirmation from the appropriate agency or State official that the applicant-agency is indeed compliant. The FMCSA and other applicable Federal agencies reserve the right to request further information and/or conduct an audit to confirm compliance as indicated on this form, as provided for in the United States Code or the Code of Federal Regulations.

4. Grants.gov Lobbying Form

This form requests information related to the lobbying activities of the applicant. Depending on the responses provided, the applicant may also be required to complete an SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities Form.

6. Attachment form

This document can be used to submit supplemental attachments to the grant application.

Supplemental Information

The applicant should attach any supplemental information that it believes will support the proposal. However, the applicant should limit the information provided to FMCSA to what is needed to evaluate the proposed project. Descriptions of problems and proposed solutions should not exceed several pages in length unless they involve the most complicated of issues.

So that FMCSA may conduct a fair and comprehensive evaluation of the grant proposal, applicants are **strongly encouraged** to consider the following:

- Submit one application for each major project or initiative.
- When requesting assistance for a project with several components that contribute to achieving the same result, discuss each component individually so that, if FMCSA is not able to award the entire requested amount, it may determine which components have the most merit. Provide a clear and concise problem statement, proposed solution(s), an explanation of the resources necessary to achieve the desired results, and expected timeline for each project component, then repeat the same for the next component and so on, keeping all relevant information separated by component. Each component may share the same problem statement, but this should be repeated in each section. By making clear distinctions, FMCSA is able to fully evaluate the merits of each project individually.
- While a comprehensive budget is permitted, individual components should be distinguished from other components so that if FMCSA is not able to award the entire requested amount, it may determine which components have the most merit. These budgets should be included in the individual sections described above. Applicants SHOULD NOT provide budget forms that group expenses from all projects according to its own internal budget categories or other general categories (personnel, programming, contracting, etc). This broad categorization of expenses is not helpful to application reviewers and can lead to a delay in grant awards while clarifying information is requested.
- Indirect cost rates should be included (and fully explained) in the application packet. A copy of the grantees approved indirect cost rates from the cognizant Federal agency should be included in the application if one exists. If the grantee does not have a cognizant Federal agency for indirect costs this should be noted.
- When preparing an application package, applicants should minimize the number of attachments by including as much information into a single document. However, if the application has multiple components, applicants should remember to clearly distinguish between multiple components as described above. This should not be construed to prohibit the applicant from preparing a project narrative in a word processing document and a project budget in a spreadsheet document, provided that the individual projects are clearly noted in the spreadsheet document.

- Budgets and other information in charts or spreadsheets should be pre-formatted for printing on standard copy paper.

Section V – Application Review Information

In reviewing applications submitted for this program, FMCSA will consider various factors, including:

- 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.
- Cost Effectiveness – Applications will be evaluated and prioritized 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.
- Use of innovative approaches in executing a project plan to address identified safety issues.
- Feasibility of overall program coordination and implementation based upon the project plan.

The FMCSA reserves the right to waive informalities in evaluating applications.

Section VI – Award Administration Information

Upon evaluation and award of funds under this grant program, the applicant will be contacted by the FMCSA's Commercial Driver's License Division. The applicant will be required to enter into a grant agreement with FMCSA obligating the funds awarded and outlining the terms and conditions of the award. In some cases, the applicant will be required to submit a supplemental budget or project narrative based on a partial or modified grant award.

Section VII – Agency Contact

This grant program is managed by:

Commercial Driver's License Division
Office of Safety Programs
Associate Administration for Enforcement and Program Delivery
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

United States Department of Transportation

For more information related to this announcement or application submission, the applicant may contact the FMCSA Division Office in its State, or:

Brandon Poarch
Lead Transportation Specialist
Email (preferred): brandon.poarch@dot.gov
Office: 202-366-3030
Fax: 202-366-7908

By Mail:
FMCSA
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590
ATTN: Brandon Poarch
MC-ESL W65-115

Section VIII – Other Information

FMCSA Website: <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety-security/grants/CDLPI/index.aspx>