



PARTNERING WITH STATE HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICES

Tips and Tactics for Success

GOVERNORS HIGHWAY SAFETY ASSOCIATION

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CHECKLIST FOR PARTNERING WITH STATE HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICES (SHSO)

1. Remember That Partnerships Are Two-way Streets

Successful partnerships don't always have to involve the granting of funds from the SHSO to an agency or organization. In a successful partnership, both parties bring something to the partnership and both benefit from it. Before you approach your SHSO, think about what you can bring to the partnership and what assistance you need from the SHSO.

2. Contact Your SHSO

If you want to successfully partner with your SHSO, first familiarize yourself with the SHSO in your State. Begin by looking at the web site of the State agency. The site may describe the types of programs funded, the planning time frame, the forms that need to be filled out, or other pertinent information. Look over the State Highway Safety Plan and Annual Report and find out what the State safety problems and priorities are. Attend State highway safety conferences or talk to other agencies or organizations that have worked with the SHSO in the past.

3. Ask About the State Planning Process

At State safety meetings or in your discussions with the SHSO staff, find out when and how the State conducts its annual highway safety planning process. What are the State's identified highway safety problems? What are the goals and objectives for each safety area? How does the SHSO allocate funds? What outreach is there to agencies and organizations? Remember, however, that there are limitations on what the SHSO can and cannot do.

4. Determine How Your Agency or Organization Can Help

Once you have a better understanding how the SHSO functions in your State, think again about how you can help the State reach its safety goals. Are there ways that you can help that do not involve funding?

5. If Appropriate, Apply for a Grant

If funding is needed, then work with the SHSO staff to apply for a grant. If the SHSO has a pre-application conference, be sure and attend that conference. Don't forget that Federal highway safety grants are on a reimbursement basis, so your organization and agency must have enough funding to start the project. Also, Federal grants can only be used for new activities or expansion of existing activities. Federal grants cannot be used to supplant existing funding. Once the grant is awarded, plan to meet with the SHSO to go over the rules and regulations that govern the grant.

6. Manage Your Grant Effectively

If you do receive a grant, make sure that you have adequate processes in place to track the expenditure of Federal funds and report progress on the grant activities. If you are having problems with the grant, be sure and contact the SHSO right away before the problems become unmanageable.

7. Evaluate the Results

In your grant application, include a process for evaluating the results of your project. Frequent evaluations throughout the project will alert you to potential problems so you can make mid-course corrections. When all results are in, share them with the SHSO and, together, report them to the media and State legislature.

8. Continue Your Relationship With The SHSO

Even after your grant has expired, continue to communicate with the SHSO. Stay abreast of developments in highway safety at the State and Federal levels. Offer to work with the SHSO on major safety problems or emerging issues in your State.

INTRODUCTION

More than 40,000 persons are killed and nearly three million injured on the Nation's highways every year. Reducing the number of deaths and injuries is such a big problem that it cannot be resolved alone by the State Highway Safety Offices (SHSOs) — the lead coordinator for traffic safety programs in each State. They need to partner with a variety of State and local partners in order to meet safety goals. And State and local organizations and agencies want to partner with the SHSO because they can receive information and support in return.

But what does it mean to be a partner? *Webster's New World College Dictionary* defines a "partner" as a person who takes part in an activity in common with another or others; the relationship of partners; joint interest; or association.

Partnerships have been the cornerstone of the highway safety movement for more than 30 years. When you **share a concern** about an issue and you **collaborate** with others who feel the same way, you are forming an important partnership. These can be formal or informal, but they are almost always more effective than working alone.

In a partnership, each side brings something to the table: knowledge, experience, technical assistance, access to decision-makers, motivated personnel, training, funding, an institutional infrastructure, etc. These shared resources allow the partners to work together more effectively on an issue or cause.

Each side also benefits from the partnership. For example, a State agency needs assistance addressing a specific issue or

problem. They may turn to another State agency, local government or nonprofit organization for program implementation. In turn, that organization may receive training, knowledge, experience, technical assistance, and other resources from the State agency that help ensure success.

A partnership is more than a State agency giving funding to another group in order to implement a specific program. **A partnership is a two-way street.** Successful partnerships are those in which organizations and agencies both share their strengths, experiences, and resources, and where both receive benefits.

In order to build a partnership with an SHSO, the organization or agency must understand the State program needs and show what it has to offer to get the job done. It also has to identify its own needs and where it fits in the State highway safety plan. The SHSO, in turn, has to determine how it can help the organization or agency meet its safety goals and satisfy its needs.

It is common for an organization or agency to approach the SHSO without fully understanding the State's planning and funding processes. Moreover, the organization's leaders may not have fully considered what they can do to help meet the State's highway safety goals and objectives. This guidebook was developed to help those organizations and agencies better understand how SHSOs operate, the kind of funding they administer, and the requirements that organizations must satisfy. The guidebook also identifies several different safety activities that organizations can undertake in partnership with their SHSO — not all of which involve the use of funding.



Chapter

Case Study # 1

MISSOURI

The President of the Gateway Chapter of MADD (formerly Mothers Against Drunk Driving) credits Missouri’s “incredible Highway Safety Coordinator” as a main factor in the success MADD has enjoyed in that State. During his term as President, he quickly realized the importance of developing a relationship with the Coordinator based on mutual respect. Such a relationship is crucial, as it opens opportunities that might not happen in a more traditional business arrangement.

The Gateway Chapter received minimal federal grant funding from the Missouri Highway Safety Office – \$10,000 – and made it grow. The organization turned to other sources of funding and, as a result, in-kind donations exceeded the Federal funding. “Look at how many people you can reach with just a little federal funding and by establishing good working relationships at the state and community level,” they note.

The guidebook is intended for use by the following:

- State and local chapters of national nonprofit organizations
- Local governments
- Other State agencies
- SHSO to provide to potential partners
- Community organizations.

For purposes of clarity, in this guide we will refer to these organizations and agencies as “potential partners” prior to receiving a grant and “grantee organizations” after receiving a grant. Potential partners may be organizations or agencies that

collaborate with the SHSO on issues in which no funding is involved.

After reading the guidebook, potential partners should have a better understanding of what an SHSO is, how it operates, and how to form linkages with it in a mutually beneficial and productive way to reduce deaths and injuries on the nation’s roadways.

It is important to note that this is a guidebook and not documentation of what occurs in each State. Planning processes and requirements differ from State to State. As you review the material, remember that your SHSO procedures may differ.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS USED IN THIS GUIDE

BAC:	Blood Alcohol Concentration
DOT:	U.S. Department of Transportation
EMS:	Emergency Medical Services
FHWA:	Federal Highway Administration
GHSA:	Governors Highway Safety Association
GR:	Governor’s Representative (or Governor’s Highway Safety Representative)
HSP:	Highway Safety Plan
IRS:	Internal Revenue Service
NHTSA:	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
PI&E:	Public Information and Education
Section 402:	the State and Community Highway Safety grant program (found in Section 402 of the U.S. Code)
SHSO:	State Highway Safety Office
States:	The 50 States, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Indian tribes, and the four U.S. Territories

HIGHWAY SAFETY TERMINOLOGY

Within the professional highway safety community, there are certain terms that are more accurate than phrases in common usage. The preferred terms are used throughout this guide, and you should learn and adopt these terms in your dealings with the State Highway Safety Office, and other highway safety entities.

- Crash – preferred over “accident” when dealing with motor vehicle collisions since most crashes are predictable and preventable and are not “accidental.”
- Safety belt – often used interchangeably with “seat belt” to describe occupant restraint systems. However, since most seating positions in vehicles now have three-point shoulder-and-lap belts, the term “seat belt” is a misnomer and “safety belt” is the preferred term.
- Impaired driving – preferred over “drunk driving” because it includes anyone who is using a substance (alcohol or drugs) that is negatively impacting their driving ability.
 - ▼ Driving while intoxicated (DWI) – in most States, DWI means the driver’s blood alcohol concentration (BAC) exceeds the State’s legal level; they are presumed to be impaired regardless of their actual driving performance.
 - ▼ Driving under the influence (DUI) – in most States, DUI the driver’s BAC is below the legal level, but their driving is still impaired and they have been observed driven erratically or have caused a crash.
- Countermeasures – specific safety strategies designed to solve a highway safety problem.

WHAT ARE STATE HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICES?

HISTORY OF THE FEDERAL PROGRAM

In 1966, 50,894 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes in the United States. This put the fatality rate at 5.5 deaths per 100 million miles of travel. Even worse, deaths were projected to go up dramatically. If Congress did nothing to address the problem, highway fatalities over the next nine years would increase to 100,000 a year.

Congress did do something: It enacted the Highway Safety Act of 1966, which established a new way of dealing with highway safety problems. The Act created a Federal highway safety grant program and required governors to be responsible for the administration of the Federal highway safety program.

Each State had to have a highway safety program approved by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation. Each governor was to appoint a **Governor's Highway Safety Representative (GR)**, to administer the Federal highway safety program.

Congress provided funding for every State under **Section 402** of the U.S. Code. Section 402 became the basic building block of every State highway safety program. The District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Indian tribes under the stewardship of the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, and four U.S. territories also receive Federal funds and are considered "States" under the law and by this guidebook.

To oversee the program, the 1966 Act also created the **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)**, an agency with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). In effect, the 1966 Act put the Federal government in a leadership position with respect to highway safety, but it kept the actual implementation of highway safety programs in the hands of the States. This State-Federal relationship continues today.

Since 1966, Congress has revised the Federal highway safety program a number of times, adding new incentive grants, penalties and sanctions. The basic structure of the program, however, has remained the same.

The **Federal government** oversees the Federal highway safety program primarily through NHTSA but with some program support from the **Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)**.

NHTSA's role includes supporting the States and their community programs by:

- Conducting demonstration programs
- Evaluating the effectiveness of specific highway safety programs
- Providing technical assistance to the States
- Developing safety products, materials and public information campaigns.

NHTSA also establishes program priorities, most of which focus on safer driving habits and changing unsafe behaviors.

Chapter



Case Study # 2

LOUISIANA

The South Central Planning and Development Commission (the Houma MSA Metropolitan Planning Organization) received four years of funding for its South Central Safe Community Program, through a grant from the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission. Most of the annual grant was used to fund sub-grantees for local projects that meet the region’s highway safety priorities.

The Safe Community Task Force meetings brought together highway planners, State and local enforcement agencies, health officials, emergency preparedness officials, and interested citizens across a six-parish region of South Central Louisiana to address traffic safety issues. The result improved communication between agencies, sharing of resources, and a unified approach in targeting traffic safety issues. The LHSC funding was essential to get the program started, but it was their technical expertise and participation in meetings and forums that kept the program

FHWA conducts safety research and also develops safety materials that can be used by the States. These are specifically targeted roadway-related safety issues such as red light running, bike and pedestrian safety, run-off-the-road crashes, and intersection crashes.

The State governments receive Federal highway safety grant funds, implement highway safety programs, and use the technical assistance provided by the Federal government. Program implementation is conducted either by their own staff, by other State agencies, or through local governments and nonprofit organizations. Before a State can use Section 402 and other grant funds, it must have a State highway safety program that considers the national highway safety priority program areas (see box). Within the program, the State must have an annual Highway Safety Plan (HSP) that sets performance goals and objectives.

NATIONAL HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAM AREAS

- 1) Occupant protection
- 2) Impaired driving
- 3) Police traffic services
- 4) Motorcycle safety
- 5) Bicycle and pedestrian safety
- 6) Speed control
- 7) Roadway safety
- 8) Emergency medical services
- 9) Traffic records
- 10) Elder roadway users

RESPONSIBILITIES

As a result of the Highway Safety Act of 1966, every State has a designated GR. In many States, the GR is the head of a large agency or department (such as the Department of Transportation or the Department of Public Safety), with responsibilities for many different issues and programs in addition to highway safety. In those States, the governor and the GR name a Highway Safety Coordinator to run the Federally funded highway safety program on a day-to-day basis. The Coordinator may be a bureau chief or division director — someone who reports to the agency or department head.

TIP #1

GET TO KNOW YOUR SHSO

Become acquainted with your SHSO by reviewing its web site. The web site of the Governors Highway Safety Association, www.GHSA.org, has links to all of the State web sites in the “State Information” section. After you have reviewed the web site, contact your State’s SHSO and ask to see a copy of the State’s most recent Highway Safety Plan (HSP). (A listing of SHSOs is in Chapter VIII, “Resources”.) Review the plan and follow up with the SHSO by phone, e-mail, or fax with your questions. If the SHSO has a conference on a highway safety issue or a pre-application conference, ask to be placed on the mailing list for the conference and be sure to attend. Consider a face-to-face visit if your previous efforts have not given you all the answers you need.

The GR or Highway Safety Coordinator has many responsibilities including:

- Gathering data which can be used to identify the State's highway safety problems
- Setting the State's performance goals and objectives
- Selecting countermeasures (strategies that will help solve a safety problem) to meet the State goals
- Preparing the State's planning documents
- Preparing grant documents
- Contracting with other agencies and organizations for program implementation
- Monitoring the contracts
- Undertaking selected highway safety programs such as Statewide educational campaigns
- Evaluating the results of Federally funded highway safety programs
- Conducting highway safety training or funding other agencies that conduct such training
- Convening highway safety conferences and meetings
- Assisting communities to organize highway safety programs
- Implementing State or other Federal programs, such as:
 - ▼ U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention underage drinking programs
 - ▼ State-funded impaired driving programs
 - ▼ State-funded motorcycle rider education and training programs
 - ▼ Other Federally- or State-funded programs.

In addition, the GR or Coordinator may be responsible for one or more of the following:

- Providing information to the governor's staff or State legislative committees about highway safety issues under consideration
- Coordinating on highway safety issues with a variety of State agencies or State and local chapters of a multitude of other organizations (e.g. law enforcement organizations, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), National SAFE KIDS Campaign, Emergency Nurses Association)
- Serving on a variety of State or local coalitions or task forces such as a Statewide impaired driving coalition or injury prevention task force
- Representing the governor at press conferences or meetings
- Coordinating with other State agencies to improve the collection and analysis of crash data and enhance the State's highway safety information system.

The SHSO is typically staffed with a small number of employees. The average staff is eight or nine persons,

going and on track in targeting problem areas and understanding possible resolutions. The LHSC Executive Director provided his and his staff's valuable time at the monthly meetings. The Safe Community Program was merged with the State Police Troop C Incident Management meetings and this helped the Safe Community Task Force focus its attention not only on the identification of the cause of crashes but also better ways to respond to incidents and avoid future mishaps.

With the support and encouragement from the LHSC Executive Director, the South Central Planning and Development Commission has sought other funding to address specific issues. To date, these include alcohol related crashes among 21 to 34 year olds (NHTSA grant), speeding (FHWA), and bicycle safety (the Gheens Foundation). Many roadway improvements also have been made through improved cooperation between the State's Department of Transportation and Development and local agencies as a result of their participation in the meetings.

with some as small as two or as large as 35. A small office means that the staff cannot do everything or work with every potential partner. They must set priorities when deciding what issues or projects they address.

TIP #2

CONTACTING THE SHSO

Be patient when trying to contact the SHSO. It may take several tries before you are able to make the connection. The staff may be busy addressing several competing demands.

The GRs and Coordinators belong to the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA), a nonprofit organization. GHSA represents the SHSO with Congress and the U.S. Department of Transportation and provides information, materials and training to help SHSOs meet their safety responsibilities.

WHAT DO STATE HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICES REALLY DO?

FEDERAL GRANT ADMINISTRATION

One of the most important responsibilities of the SHSO is to administer Federal highway safety grants.

Congress periodically enacts authorizing legislation to continue existing Federal programs or to launch new ones. When Congress reauthorizes Section 402 and other highway safety incentive grant programs, it establishes the purpose, parameters and eligibility criteria for Federal grants. NHTSA and FHWA then draft regulations that describe how the grant programs are to be implemented. The SHSO administers these grant programs in a manner that is consistent with Federal law and regulations.

States must also comply with certain requirements to avoid Federal penalties and sanctions. For a detailed explanation of the grant programs, penalties and sanctions, and a listing of funds each State has recently received under the grant programs, check these web sites: NHTSA at www.nhtsa.dot.gov or GHSA at www.ghsa.org.

TIP #3

FEDERAL GRANTS

Federal grant programs are usually authorized for a five- or six-year period. As a result, Congress must periodically reauthorize all highway safety grant programs, penalties and sanctions. They may eliminate or consolidate programs, create new programs, penalties or sanctions, change program eligibility criteria, change funding levels, etc. Additionally, States may be eligible for a grant in one year but not the next. The web sites listed above will have the most current information about Federal grant programs and State funding.

PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

States administer the Federal Section 402 and incentive grant program through their annual safety plans. States must submit plans explaining how Section 402 funding will be spent. Many States also incorporate plans for incentive grants funds into their annual plan as well. States make an educated guess about their eligibility for a particular incentive grant program and generally indicate how the incentive funds will be spent if they do qualify. Later, they submit a more detailed application for the incentive grant showing how they qualify. When States receive incentive grants, they must spend the funds in the manner indicated in their annual plans.

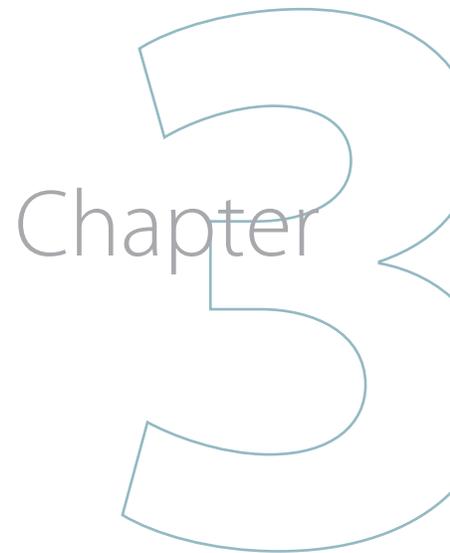
If a State is in non-compliance with certain Federal requirements, the penalty may be that they must transfer some of their Federal highway construction funds into safety programs. If so, the SHSO must include information in their annual plan on how they intend to use the penalty transfer funds.

Every State is required to submit two plans: a Performance Plan and a Highway Safety Plan. Many States submit the two required plans as one single document.

The **Performance Plan** must set measurable highway safety goals for the State. The SHSO must first identify and use reliable sources of data (such as crash, travel, population, location, or other data sources) to help identify its leading highway safety problems.

Not all States conduct problem identification the same way. Many States consider a variety of sources of information.

- Some States have elaborate systems for ranking safety problems by



Chapter

Case Study # 3

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma's Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) was the first FCA chapter to partner with a highway safety office. According to the FCA State Director, working with the SHSO "provided a good team opportunity" to promote traffic safety through an alcohol and drug education program. The State Director encourages other FCAs to contact their local highway safety offices.

Working with organizations such as FCA gives the SHSO an "in" with a target population that they might not otherwise be reaching (in this case, junior high, high school and college students). FCA's prominent members include local celebrities such as athletes and coaches, who serve as great role models and promote the safety message. The partnership between the two entities is mutually beneficial and allows for a more concerted safety effort.

jurisdiction in order to identify the jurisdiction (usually a city or county) that has the most severe problems.

- Some hire consultants (usually experts from local universities) to perform that function.
- Other States do all the data analysis internally using State highway safety staff.

TIP #4

SHSO PLANNING PROCESS

When you contact the SHSO, ask about how and when the SHSO plans its annual highway safety program, and where your agency or organization may fit into the planning process. Start with the problem identification process and review how the State identifies and targets its most serious problems. If a State has a pre-application conference, plan to attend that conference because it may answer your questions about the State planning process.

Once the State has identified its major problems, then it must consider highway safety performance targets such as:

- Reduced number of impaired driving fatalities, injuries, or crashes
- Increased safety belt use
- Reduced pedestrian fatalities and injuries.

The State identifies the direction in which it wishes to go and then sets relevant goals. These may include both interim and longer-term goals within the national priority areas

and any other program areas. Often a State will consider past trends and extrapolate into the future. The goals it sets may be "stretch" goals that are based on past trends but which require the State to work harder (hence "stretch") to reach the goals.

Each goal must be accompanied by a performance measure that will allow the State to track its progress in meeting the goal. For example, a State goal could be to increase safety belt use from 75 percent in 2002 to 79 percent in 2003, as measured by the number of restrained occupants in outboard seating positions in passenger motor vehicles.

The Performance Plan must also include:

- A description of all highway safety processes for:
 - ▼ Identifying problems
 - ▼ Setting goals
 - ▼ Setting performance measures
 - ▼ Selecting projects or activities
 - ▼ Involving constituency groups in the planning process
- A list of data sources and information used in its development.

States are encouraged, but not required, to involve constituency groups in the planning process. Constituency groups can be local governments, other State agencies, nonprofit organizations, community programs, State or local chapters of national organizations, or even members of the public at large.

Nearly every State works with organizations and agencies outside the SHSO, although the involvement of constituency groups varies considerably. An SHSO will contact the constituency groups that they have worked with in the past or those that they have identified for future involvement. A constituency group may be:

- Solicited to submit highway safety project proposals
- Asked to serve on panels or committees to help evaluate the project proposals
- Asked to be involved in the planning process
- Participate in outreach meetings regarding the proposed HSP.

TIP #5

SHSO AND CONSTITUENCY GROUPS

SHSO efforts to reach out to constituency groups present a good opportunity to become involved with the State planning process. When you contact the SHSO, be sure to ask how the office works with constituency groups in your State.

In addition, every State must submit a **Highway Safety Plan (HSP)** that describes specific highway safety programs and projects and relates how performance goals can be reached through these programs and projects.

The HSP functions as a State strategic safety plan or road map and describes how the State will reach its goals.

The HSP must, at a minimum:

- Include one year's worth of Section 402-funded projects
- Include a list of projects by program area (occupant protection, impaired driving, etc.)
- Indicate which organization or agency will receive funding
- Identify the funding amount
- Ensure that at least 40 percent of the 402 funding either goes directly to local governments or benefits local governments
- Be approved by the Governor's Representative.

States also have to submit multiple financial plans showing the division of Federal highway safety funds between the different program areas. In addition, States must submit statements providing assurances that they will comply with applicable Federal laws and regulations, financial regulations and other special Federal funding conditions.

Further details about the State planning process, particularly as it relates to project selection and grant applications, are discussed in Chapter 5.

WHAT CAN YOUR ORGANIZATION DO TO PARTNER WITH THE STATE HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICE?

Chapter

Now that you have a better understanding of SHSOs and their planning and funding processes, it is important to consider what your agency or organization can contribute to State highway safety programs) — not all of which involve the use of Federal highway safety grant funds.

EDUCATE DECISION-MAKERS

Effective laws are the foundation for every highway safety program. Potential partners should consider activities to educate decision-makers so that they will enact new highway safety laws or strengthen existing safety laws. Nonprofit organizations can help advocate for appropriate highway safety laws. However, local governments are often subject to ethical standards or limitations on lobbying by their employees. State agencies typically are subject to more stringent State lobbying restrictions. Additionally, Federal law restricts the lobbying activities of State officials whose salaries are supported, in whole or in part, by Federal funds and the use of Federal appropriations to fund lobbying activities. Consequently, it is important to explore Federal, State, and local lobbying restrictions before taking any action.

Direct lobbying occurs when an individual or organization:

- Urges a legislative official to take a certain position or action on a piece of legislation
- Encourages a specific position when elected officials, legislative staff or other government officials are drafting legislative language
- Expend funds to influence the drafting of or action on proposed legislation.

Grassroots lobbying occurs when an entity:

- Urges the public to contact members of Congress or a State or local legislature in an attempt to influence legislation
- Attempts to influence legislation by affecting public opinion or the opinions of a specific segment of the public
- Expend funds for that purpose.

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) laws allow nonprofits to lobby as long as “no substantial part” of the organization’s resources (e.g. no more than five percent) are expended for that purpose. Advocacy can be conducted by uncompensated board members without restriction and does not have to be reported to the IRS. In other words, a nonprofit organization can write letters to legislators, make personal visits to legislators’ offices, submit testimony, be part of a coalition that advocates for highway safety legislation, and do all the things that lobbyists do as long as the expenditures relating to the lobbying activities do not violate the IRS rule and the organization **does not** receive Federal grant funds.

Nonprofits and State agencies that receive Federal highway safety funds (grantees) are subject to **additional restrictions**. Federal law prohibits the use of Federal funds, either directly or indirectly, for the purposes of influencing a member of Congress, a State or local legislature, or an official of any government to favor or oppose legislation, whether or not the legislation is pending. This means that Federal funds cannot be used for grassroots lobbying of Federal, State or local

Case Study # 4

SOUTH CAROLINA

The South Carolina Office of Highway Safety funded a project from Fiscal Years 1997-2000 with the Babcock Center, a private not-for-profit agency providing services to people with mental retardation, autism, and head and spinal cord injuries. The agency's main focus is to help people with disabilities become more productive and independent, while attempting to prevent or reduce the occurrence of these disabilities where possible. As a result, Babcock Center staff created Buckle Down and Buckle Up to target the age group most at risk for head and spinal cord injuries resulting from motor vehicle use — drivers under the age of 21. The Buckle Down and Buckle Up program targeted 35 high schools in

legislators at any time. Federal law also prohibits the use of Federal grant funds to influence the award of a subsequent Federal grant, contract or other agreement. In other words, a grantee can't use his/her grant to obtain another Federal grant.

Additional lobbying restrictions prohibit the use of Federal grant funds to engage in direct lobbying of Congress or State legislatures targeted at specific, pending legislative bills. As a result, once a bill is introduced, grantees can no longer ask their legislators to take positions on specific legislation.

However, an organization or agency may address broad social or economic issues such as highway safety without urging action on specific legislation. It can:

- Educate decision-makers in general terms about a particular highway safety problem and what can be done to solve the problem
- Brief decision-makers on what activities have been undertaken to address the problem in the State
- Organize a coalition of like-minded organizations and individuals as long as that coalition does not take a position on a pending bill or endorse a specific legislative agenda
- Draft a letter to a newspaper or a decision-maker as long as the letter doesn't reference specific legislation or encourage members of the public to contact their Federal, State or local legislators.

- Provide technical information (data and research) to decision-makers
- Respond to inquiries from Congress or State legislators
- Present testimony requested by a Congressional committee or State legislature.

TIP #6**EDUCATING DECISION-MAKERS**

If your organization or agency plans to undertake educational activities for decision-makers, be sure and coordinate with the SHSO. You'll want to ensure that your activities and those planned by the SHSO complement each other.

Provided it does not engage in grassroots lobbying, an organization or agency also can get its message out through the media to:

- Raise awareness about an issue
- Identify shortcomings in current legislation
- Suggest options for strengthening current legislation
- Create public pressure to adopt new legislation or change current legislation.

CONDUCT PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Public information and education (PI&E) campaigns are also an important component of a State or community program, so potential partner

organizations should consider undertaking such efforts. These campaigns can serve a variety of purposes:

- Help raise awareness about a safety issue
- Influence behavior so that the public (or a specifically targeted group) changes behavior
- Bring a highway safety issue to the attention of decision-makers
- Inform the public about a new law or regulation that has recently been enacted or significant changes that have occurred in an existing law.

On its own, a PI&E program that only raises awareness of an issue has been shown to have little long-term effect on behavior. However, a PI&E campaign that is part of a comprehensive safety program can be effective. A PI&E program that informs the public of a new law or changes in an existing law has also been shown to be effective. A PI&E program will be approved only if it is compatible with the State's PI&E campaign.

Among the most effective PI&E programs are those that bring visibility to a law enforcement effort. In May 2004, 49 States participated in a high visibility enforcement mobilization to encourage drivers and passengers to use safety belts. The effort involved waves of enforcement, with publicity both before and after each enforcement wave. Thirty-nine States used the "Click It or Ticket" slogan, which conveyed the message that those not using safety belts would be ticketed. This is a good example of how to

coordinate highway safety messages with an overriding law enforcement theme.

PI&E programs that use social marketing techniques have also been found to be more effective than those that simply raise awareness. Social marketing is the use of marketing theories and techniques to influence behavior for a social end. The goal of social marketing is to change behavior in a way that will benefit society. Highly visible social marketing campaigns generally use a variety of communications tools such as media and public relations, issue advocacy, and advertising.

Potential partners that wish to do PI&E programs should develop a media plan that complements and supports the State safety goals and State media plan. To help formulate a plan, potential partners should address the following questions:

- What is the specific problem that you are trying to solve?
- How are different groups affected by the problem and what do they know about it?
- What are the key characteristics of the group(s) you need to reach?
- How can you best reach the targeted group?
- What message can most effectively influence the behavior of the targeted groups?
- In what forms should the message be delivered?
- What will it cost to market the message to the targeted audience?

eleven South Carolina counties, through the implementation of an educational and motivational program encouraging the use of safety belts and the avoidance of intoxicating substances while operating motor vehicles. A variety of activities were undertaken including a ribbon tree with a ribbon for each fatality, signage, a pledge program, and school presentations.

The Babcock Center had a lot of experience with injury prevention programs and was a good candidate for a federal grant. The work of the Center helped the SHSO in its effort to prevent traffic safety-related injuries. The Center, for its part, has benefited by receiving federal funds and the assistance of the SHSO.

- How will you know if your message has been received and accepted?

Additionally guidance on media relations can be found in NHTSA's *Community How To Guide on Underage Drinking Prevention*, which can be downloaded at www.nhtsa.dot.gov.

SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

Another key component of every highway safety program is enforcement of traffic safety laws. Unless a highway safety law is adequately enforced, it will have little effect because many drivers and other road users don't believe they will be apprehended if they violate the law. Visible enforcement deters potential offenders from breaking the law and it ensures that the law functions in a manner intended by its authors.

There are many types of law enforcement activities that can be undertaken by State highway patrols, sheriffs' departments or offices, liquor control enforcement agencies, local law enforcement agencies, or college or university enforcement offices:

- Sobriety checkpoints — concentrated enforcement efforts designed to stop impaired drivers
- Safety belt checkpoints — specifically set up to enforce a State's safety belt law
- Saturation patrols — roving patrols that enforce impaired driving laws
- Compliance checks — enforcement efforts to detect illegal sales of alcohol to minors by retailers
- "Cops in Shops" — programs that detect illegal purchase of alcohol by minors in retail establishments
- Speed or aggressive driving programs — either stationary or roving patrols that seek to apprehend drivers that exceed the posted speed limit or exhibit aggressive driving behavior.

Other safety efforts that involve law enforcement include:

- Roll-call videos for law enforcement officers that present safety programs or relay safety messages
- Training conferences on safety issues such as child passenger safety or impaired driving
- False identification programs using technology to detect fake or improper identification for underage drinkers
- Teen courts in which students, under the supervision of the schools and the courts, act as prosecutors, defense attorneys and jurors in cases in which their peers have been charged with alcohol-related offenses
- Juvenile holdover programs in which teens detained by law enforcement are held temporarily until an adult assumes responsibility or the teen can be moved to a juvenile facility
- Child passenger safety fitting stations.

Smaller law enforcement agencies that do not have the resources to undertake special traffic enforcement can team up with other agencies for a multi-jurisdictional effort. Small jurisdictions can also incorporate traffic safety enforcement into their regular enforcement activities that are conducted every day.

SHSOs may fund equipment purchases for law enforcement, such as laptop computers, breathalyzers, radar, video cameras, etc. However, the equipment purchases must be part of a project that addresses a specific highway

safety problem, the project has to relate to the State’s goals and priorities, and there must be a plan for how the equipment will be used. The grantee also has to maintain an inventory of the equipment for several years depending on State rules.

Even if the organization is not law enforcement related, it can support police traffic safety through such activities as:

- Writing letters to the editor, op-ed pieces, or news releases in support of specific enforcement activities (“endorsement for enforcement”)
- Participating in press conferences for law enforcement events
- Participating in newspaper editorial board meetings focused on enforcement activities
- Obtaining a supportive city council resolution
- Conducting interviews or helping publicize law enforcement efforts through their newsletters or at conferences.

CONDUCT PROSECUTORIAL PROGRAMS

Strong laws and highly visible enforcement are effective deterrents to unsafe driving behavior. It’s also critical that laws be properly adjudicated so that the deterrent effect is not diminished. As the level of law enforcement increases around the country, and as more focus shifts to hard-to-reach populations, it will become increasingly important for an SHSO to have partnerships with key members of the criminal justice system — prosecutors and judges.

In most jurisdictions, the chief law enforcement officer is the District Attorney, serving

as the gatekeeper and key decision-maker in the criminal justice system. Research shows that through plea negotiation, prosecutors make the decisions in 75 percent to 90 percent of all cases, and they present evidence and make recommendations to the court in the remaining cases.

The District Attorney sets the policy for the cases that are to be tried. This policy determines the type and quality of cases accepted from law enforcement officers. After an officer forwards an investigation to the District Attorney’s office, prosecutors assigned to the case review the evidence and determine what charge(s) to file. In instances where charges are filed directly by law enforcement, prosecutors may subsequently amend the charges, if necessary, to what the prosecutors believes the evidence will show in court.

To create a cohesive enforcement and prosecution approach, programs are available allowing prosecutors and officers to be trained together. An example of such training is the *Protecting Lives, Saving Futures* course taught at a number of venues around the country.¹ Other training courses on impaired driving are available for prosecutors from basic entry-level to special classes in prosecuting vehicular homicides. Training for prosecutors is something that some States fund as part of their HSP, so prosecutors should consider coordinating with the SHSO to support training that fits the State’s needs and plans.

CONDUCT JUDICIAL PROGRAMS

As an independent branch of government, the judiciary is in a unique position to ensure that traffic safety laws equally are applied. The majority of cases heard before the judi-

¹This training program places prosecutors and law enforcement officers from the same locality together to allow for an interaction between the two disciplines. This helps them understand the issues that they each experience in addressing impaired driving cases, to build better cases.

ciary concern traffic safety; as such, the judiciary must remain impartial and rule on the matters that are placed before them.

Judicial training is important to maintaining an effective judiciary. Programs provide an overview of legal or evidentiary issues related to plea taking, search and seizure, and arrests and confessions are already available to the judiciary. In addition, these courses also provide information on the role of the traffic court judge in the community, ethical judicial outreach and bridge building, and new approaches to sentencing traffic safety offenders.

Judicial outreach programs, such as the *Courage to Live* program developed by the National Judicial College to reach underage youth, can also make an impact by offering judges or prosecutors an opportunity to participate in awareness and prevention efforts. Agencies that represent a segment of the judicial community should make themselves aware of the educational, training, or outreach programs that are already available and collaborate with the SHSO to support training that is consistent with the State's needs, plans, and resources.

PROGRAM DELIVERY

If a highway safety project is proposed and funded, it can be delivered in various ways. The most common activities involve those conducted at the community level, in the workplace, and through schools.

Community highway safety programs are comprehensive in nature and focus on a number of highway safety problems. They may be part of a broader community-related injury prevention effort called Safe Communities that addresses a variety of unintentional injuries. More typically, a community pro-

gram focuses solely on motor vehicle-related injuries, addressing a variety of local highway safety problems.

There is usually a community coordinator or project director who is responsible for running the community program. The coordinator is supported by a community coalition with members from relevant sectors of the community:

- Local government
- Law enforcement
- Business
- Education
- Health care
- Criminal justice.

The coalition may be divided into committees to handle child passenger safety, underage drinking, bicycle and pedestrian safety, and other issues of importance to the community. The coalition may meet periodically to review problems, plan programs, and evaluate results. The community coordinator may implement programs with the help of members of the coalition.

The benefit of a comprehensive community highway safety program is that it provides the infrastructure for addressing highway safety problems at the community level. Currently, every SHSO supports community coalitions and many fund activities through those coalitions. Additional information about Safe Communities may be found on the Safe Communities section of NHTSA's web site, www.nhtsa.dot.gov. Information about comprehensive community underage drinking prevention programs may be found at www.stopIMPAIREDdriving.org. NHTSA's *Community How To Guide on Underage Drinking Prevention*, which can be downloaded from the NHTSA web site,

contains information that would be helpful for any community traffic safety program.

Another way to deliver highway safety programs is through employers. Many crashes occur while commuting to and from work, or while on work-related travel, and involve not just employees but their families as well. Employers want to reduce costs (insurance costs, time off, etc.) and increase the productivity of their employees. One way to do that is by reducing motor vehicle-related injuries and property damage that an employee or family member may face as a result of a motor vehicle crash. Fewer crashes mean more time spent on the job, a key benefit for the employer. Employers are a good delivery mechanism for highway safety programs because they have a controlled audience for their programs. The Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS) (www.netsnational.org) is an excellent resource for employer-based programs.

Schools are a great place to instill safety concepts in children at an early age. They are the single most important way to reach children and provide many opportunities for prevention programming. The idea is this: if

children are trained and acquire good safety habits at an early age, they will retain those habits for the rest of their lives. Materials and activities can be developed for the children themselves as well as for their parents. Some potential school-based activities include:

- Development of a safety curriculum
- School safety campaigns and pledge cards
- Safety assemblies
- School safety policies
- After-school safety activities
- Youth safety clubs
- Youth leadership training.

School-based programs work especially well for underage drinking prevention, child passenger safety, bicycle and pedestrian safety, and teen driving. There are many resources for school-based programs, including but not limited to, NHTSA, MADD (www.madd.org), Students Against Destructive Decisions (www.saddonline.org), the National Safe Kids Campaign (www.safekids.org), and the National Organizations for Youth Safety (www.noys.org).

HOW DOES THE GRANT APPLICATION SYSTEM WORK?

Chapter 5

Once you have developed a relationship with the SHSO and identified ways in which to assist the SHSO meet its State safety goals, you may want to consider a grant application. Each State has different procedures, but if you have established that relationship and have a better understanding of your State's processes, you will then be able to decide how best to share your organization's strengths, energy, and ideas.

PROJECT SELECTION

Once the State has set its performance goals, it must have a process for selecting the appropriate projects for solving the State's highway safety problems and meeting its goals. States use a variety of resources for selecting appropriate countermeasures:

- Reviewing data evaluating the previous year's projects
- Examining best practices
 - ▼ Those identified by NHTSA through the *Traffic Safety Digest* and other publications
 - ▼ Those identified by other organizations
 - ▼ Those based on neighboring States' successes
- Reviewing recent research results on highway safety issues and problems in publications such as NHTSA's Traffic Tech reports
- Receiving input from outside organizations
- Reviewing technical reports on topical highway safety issues published by
 - ▼ NHTSA
 - ▼ FHWA
 - ▼ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - ▼ Transportation Research Board (TRB)

- ▼ Other agencies
- Reviewing NHTSA's program advisories that outline the elements of an effective program.

Proposed projects generally fall into three categories:

- Enforcement
- Education
- Prosecution/adjudication

Other programs that may be considered are those that:

- Analyze roadway safety problems
- Provide training or other operational support
- Improve the State's traffic records system or other internal system
- Improve the State's emergency medical services systems.

Projects may be Statewide or local in nature. They may be projects that can be accomplished in a single year or may require multiyear funding.

SHSOs may look at a variety of alternative strategies for reaching their State goals. They select the project(s) with the fewest barriers and/or those most likely to succeed. SHSOs also examine whether the proposed project is technically feasible and politically acceptable to key stakeholders, and what kind of impact it will have.

TIP #7

SELECTING PROJECTS

Every State selects countermeasures differently. When you contact the SHSO, ask about the criteria the States use in selecting countermeasures.

What types of proposals get turned down?
Applications that:

- Are not performance-based and data-driven or will have little impact on the problem (“feel good” projects)
- Do not relate to the problems identified in the HSP
- Are of poor quality
- Submitted by organizations or agencies that have a poor track record in managing projects (except under special circumstances)
- Use Federal funding to replace existing State or local funding instead of funding a new or expanded effort (“supplanting,” which is prohibited by Federal regulation)
- Support the general operations of an organization or agency
- Fund staff positions that do not relate to a specific project
- Seek funding for too much travel relative to the size of the project, travel that does not relate to the purposes of the project, or travel that has not been approved by the SHSO
- Request equipment that is inconsistent with the purpose, size and scope of the project.

Some SHSOs are prohibited by State rules or policies from accepting proposals from nonprofit associations. In those cases, a grant must first go through a local government agency (e.g. local health department, law enforcement agency), which has to subcontract with the nonprofit.

Sometimes a highway safety problem may seem daunting at the local level but does not measure up when compared to other problems at the State level. For example, a community may be devastated by the death of a youngster in a bicycle crash. On a Statewide basis, however, there may be too few bicycle fatalities to warrant intervention

with Federal highway safety grant funds. The SHSO may not select the project but may direct the organization to other useful resources and information. An agency or organization needs to understand this perspective when proposing a project.

TYPICAL CRITERIA STATES USE IN SELECTING PROJECTS

■ Why is this project needed?
■ What is the purpose of the project and what does it intend to accomplish?
■ How does the proposed project relate to the State’s highway safety problems and goals?
■ Who is proposing the project and what has been the working relationship between the potential partner and the SHSO?
■ Who is being served by the proposed project and how does this relate to identified high risk groups in the State?
■ Where will the project be undertaken and how does it relate to identified high risk areas in the State?
■ What is the technical and political feasibility of the project?
■ How big is the funding request, relative to the size of the problem, and the available funding?
■ What is the potential impact of the project and how will it be measured?
■ Over what time period will the project be conducted?
■ Are the proposed costs reasonable and allowable?
■ What kinds of non-Federal support will be offered?
■ What is the plan for sustainability of the project?

Sometimes an SHSO may also require a “hard” dollar matching formula for any funding request. This generally means that a portion of the total funds must come from the grantee. The hard matching requirement may be applied every year or only during the second and third year of a grant.

Projects funded with Federal highway safety grant funds are generally funded on a three-year basis with a declining share of Federal funding each year. At the end of the third year, grantees are expected to achieve self-sufficiency. Operational projects, such as those involving training or improvements to the State’s highway safety internal systems (such as traffic records), may be funded on a longer-term basis.

Every project proposal is reviewed, discussed and evaluated by the SHSO. Some States assign scores to prospective applications. Others select projects based on a combination of specific selection criteria. In any case, SHSOs strive hard to ensure that their project selection process is fair, defensible and directly tied to the State’s problem identification and goal-setting processes.

TIP #8

IMPROVING YOUR PROPOSAL

If your proposal is not selected, meet with the SHSO staff to determine how you can improve it next time.

DEADLINES AND SCHEDULES

There are a number of different deadlines for highway safety grant programs. Current deadlines for Federal grant programs are on GHSA’s web site, www.ghsa.org. The States plan their programs on a continuous, yearlong basis.

TYPICAL PLANNING SCHEDULE

November - February:

- Review projects funded in the previous fiscal year
- Use the results as input for the next fiscal year’s plan
- Examine crash and other data to determine the leading highway safety problems

February – March:

- Develop State highway safety goals
- Solicit project proposals that meet State goals

April -May:

- Review and evaluate project proposals.

June – July:

- Select projects to fund with Federal highway safety grant funding
- Organize projects into priority program areas in the draft Performance Plan/HSP
- Submit plan for internal review in State

August:

- Continue working on PP/HSP and work out any remaining issues or problems

September 1:

- Submit plan to NHTSA for final review

October 1:

- New fiscal year – begin State implementation of approved projects if Federal funds are available
-

States typically start planning their upcoming fiscal year (which starts October 1) in the fall and winter of the previous year (e.g.,

Case Study # 5

VIRGINIA

Virginia's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Highway Safety Project is a unique collaboration with Virginia's Highway Safety Office (Department of Motor Vehicles.) This partnership serves as a model for other States that want to develop a successful, non-traditional partnership with a minority organization.

African-Americans were a high-risk group that had one of the lowest seat belt usage rates in the nation. The Virginia Historically Black Colleges and Universities Highway Safety Project is a multiyear effort established to help resolve the disparity in seat belt and child safety seat usage among African-Americans, and to address other safety and wellness issues within the community, such as drug and alcohol awareness. In addition, another major goal of the HBCU Project was to introduce students to careers in the transportation industry. This project includes all six HBCUs in Virginia: Hampton University, Norfolk State University, Saint Paul's College, Virginia Union University, Virginia University of Lynchburg and Virginia State University, with each providing valuable

Fiscal Year 2005 planning starts in September 2004). A State will review the projects funded in the previous year and use the results of that review as input for next year's plan, which will be followed by an identification and analysis of the State's problem and determination of goals for the next fiscal year. Once the State has performed its problem identification and goal-setting processes, it will then solicit project proposals. There are several different ways States may do this:

- Send out a blanket solicitation to agencies, nonprofit organizations, previous grantee organizations, or other potential partners
- Hold a conference and solicit applications at the conference
- Target certain jurisdictions, asking a jurisdiction to submit a specific project proposal because it is a high-risk area
- Accept unsolicited project proposals from potential partners or existing grantees with new ideas (some States, however, prohibit unsolicited proposals).

The State's process may involve some combination of these approaches.

TIP #9**PROPOSAL SOLICITATION**

When contacting the SHSO, ask how the State solicits project proposals and if they accept unsolicited proposals. If the State has a bidders list (or equivalent) for organizations or agencies that wish to bid for projects, ask to be placed on the list.

The project proposals will then be reviewed, evaluated, selected and assembled into the State HSP. Some States convene a multidisciplinary review team to assist in the process, while other States use their own staff to handle the evaluation without outside support and input.

Many States also have other persons or agencies that must review the selected projects before the State plan can be finalized (e.g. the head of the State DOT or public safety agency, a transportation commission, the State legislature). It is common for a State to have a three- or four-layered State review process before the draft plan can be submitted to NHTSA.

NHTSA then reviews the plan to make sure that it is consistent with Federal requirements. Once that review is complete, and Congress has made Federal funds available for the next fiscal year, then the State can begin implementing its plan.

The schedule and process outlined in the box above is a greatly simplified one. Some States conduct their planning process much earlier. Other States have a more complicated planning schedule. As with other aspects of the State planning process, it's important to remember that every State schedule is different.

TIP #10**FOLLOW THE SCHEDULE**

Potential partners often make the mistake of submitting a project proposal at the wrong time because they are unfamiliar with the State's planning schedule. If the potential partner submits a proposal too late in the process, it cannot be considered for the upcoming fiscal year. This may cause the State and the potential partner unneeded frustration. Every State develops its plan according to State-specific schedules that take into account Federal requirements. When contacting the SHSO, be sure to ask about the schedule for developing plans and submitting project proposals.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

Good project proposals:

- Have a clearly defined problem Statement that uses available crash or other data and relates to problems identified by the SHSO in its HSP
- Relate to the State annual and long-term highway safety goals
- Establish quantifiable, measurable objectives
 - ▼ Use action words
 - ▼ Use clear, understandable language
 - ▼ Establish a framework to evaluate project success (see evaluation section)
- Clearly define the scope of the project and the specific activities to be undertaken
- Include project milestones and deliverables (plans, reports, etc.)

- Make a funding request in proportion to the size of the highway safety problem
- Include a detailed project budget.

TIP #11**STATE CRASH TEST DATA**

If you are having difficulty locating the necessary data for your project proposal, ask the SHSO for assistance. Generally, State crash data can be dissected by: county or city, time of day, type of crash, and other factors. Many States employ data analysts who may be able to help.

A Typical Project Objective

“To increase safety belt use among youth aged 16-21 in XYZ County from 65 percent to 70 percent in 2005.”

Some States offer an option that requires less upfront work. Applicants submit a concept paper rather than a detailed project application. If the concept relates to the State problems, goals and priorities, then the State may accept the concept and prepare to fund the project. The potential partner may then be asked to submit a more detailed project application.

A number of SHSOs conduct workshops to help potential partners submit the best grant application possible. During the applicant workshop, the SHSO staff may:

- Review the role of the Federal government in highway safety
- Detail Federal goals and priorities

and previously untapped opportunities for collaboration at many levels on highway safety issues.

To date, this project has reached more than 20,000 students, faculty, and community leaders through activities such as individual campus/community highway safety events, highway safety campaigns with faith-based organizations within the minority community, an annual highway safety and careers symposium, an established transportation safety college course, presentations, studies, and focus groups conducted.

The project has received praise and participation from representatives of grassroots community organizations, the educational community, as well as individual health care professionals, state legislators, elected city officials, local public officials and public safety officers. The Virginia HBCU Highway Safety Project successfully demonstrates how creative management can expand and adapt funds allocated for specific purposes to build programs and institutions that serve a broad range of needs from highway safety, community health, institutional development and individual career growth.

- Explain the State planning process and highway safety priorities for the year
- Explain how projects are selected and when to submit applications
- Review guidelines for submitting grant applications
- Offer prospective applicants grant writing exercises
- Explain State and Federal rules and regulations, including those relating to the financial management of the grant and equipment guidelines.

Potential partners interested in working with their SHSO should contact the SHSO to find out when and where these workshops are offered.

Some SHSOs (particularly medium-and larger-sized ones) may involve program staff members who will provide technical support as you develop your grant application. They can explain State and Federal rules and answer your questions. Don't hesitate to ask questions if you are unclear about any aspect of the grant application process.

TIP #12

STATE FORMS AND REQUIREMENTS

Every State handles the grant application process differently. State forms vary, as do State requirements. Ask questions to help familiarize you with the process.

GRANT AGREEMENT

Once the application is approved, it is critical that the grant be managed effectively. The first step in the process is the completion of the grant agreement. The grant agreement is similar to a contract, and typically includes:

- Problem Statement that is based on a clearly identified problem
- Project goals and measurable objectives

- Project plan of action for reaching those goals
- Clearly defined countermeasures, project milestones and deliverables
- Project budget.

It may also require additional details, such as:

- Public information and education components
- Any training that may be required as part of the grant
- Plan for evaluating the project success
- Plan for achieving self-sufficiency
- Statements assuring compliance with Federal rules and regulations, such as
 - ▼ Federal lobbying rules
 - ▼ Drug Free Workplace regulations
 - ▼ American for Disabilities Act regulations
 - ▼ Other Federal requirements.

State project agreements vary considerably, so it is important to familiarize yourself with what is required in your State.

IMPLEMENTATION

Once the grant application is accepted, an agreement is executed and funds made available, the “potential partner” becomes a “grantee” and project implementation begins.

Many States contact grantees in the summer prior to the start of the fiscal year to begin the process of contracting with grantees to undertake specific Federally funded highway safety projects. The contracting process may take several months, depending upon the State agency, the grantee’s agency or organization, and the officials that need to sign off on the contract. Implementation can move forward only when the State receives its share of Federal funds (usually the start of the Federal fiscal year, October 1). Occasionally, Congress does not provide Federal funds on time, and grant agreements are held up until the funds are available.

Grantees usually have to meet with the SHSO staff to review the project agreement. A typical meeting includes the project director and the fiscal officer from the grantee organization, and the State program manager and State financial contact. Other participants may include any local official who may be involved in the project, and other key project personnel. The State staff will provide technical assistance on the project agreement and review Federal and State rules and requirements.

Many States conduct project management seminars to help grantee organizations understand what is expected of them. These seminars are highly recommended, as they provide grantee organizations with one-stop assistance in grant implementation.

After the contract is in effect, the grantee is required to submit progress reports (usually quarterly but sometimes more frequently). They will also need to do a final project report, and they may be required to collect evaluation data to show how well their program is working.

Grantees are also required to submit invoices or costs statements, usually on a quarterly basis. The Federal grant funds operate on a reimbursement basis. This means that the grantee has to cover all costs up front. After expenditures have been incurred, the grantee invoices the SHSO for a reimbursement. Expenditures on all invoices must be accompanied by proper documentation so that there is an adequate audit trail.

Grantees need to submit timely and accurate progress reports and invoices. It helps to communicate regularly with the State program manager or other SHSO staff, and to notify the State office immediately if there is a problem.

TIP #13

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Set up a financial tracking system so that grant-related expenditures can be tracked separately from non-grant expenditures. Detailed financial records and equipment inventories should be kept up-to-date and ready to be shared at any time with the SHSO staff, and/or State and Federal auditors.

The SHSO will periodically monitor the grant to make sure that the grantee is performing adequately. The monitoring activities may include telephone interviews, meetings with the State highway safety staff, and/or on-site inspections.

The SHSO will take note of potential problems such as:

- Late start
- Slow expenditure rate
- Low project activity
- Late project reports
- Report discrepancies
- Missing project records
- Excessive project personnel changes
- Too many revisions to the project agreement.

If any of these conditions occur, the SHSO may require corrective action. Grantees may have their grant restructured. If a project has significant problems, the GR or Coordinator and the NHTSA regional staff will be notified, findings will be issued and a plan to resolve the difficulties will be developed. In the most severe cases, funding will be withdrawn or legal action may be taken.

TIP #14

PROBLEMS

Do not wait until your grant problem gets so large that it is difficult to overcome. Notify the SHSO staff of the problem immediately and work to address it. In other words, do not be afraid to ask for assistance if you need it.

The project director is the steward of public funds. It is expected that he or she will effectively manage those funds and set up proper management systems. If that does not occur, it is likely that the grantee organization will not be allowed to retain the grant or receive a new grant in the future.

PROJECT EVALUATION

Every project funded with Federal highway safety grant funds should have an evaluation component to assess the extent to which the project accomplished its goals and objectives. Project evaluations do not have to be large and costly research experiments in order to be valid. They do, however, have to be built into the project design from the beginning. They have to be appropriate to the size and scope of the project and be carefully executed.

A good evaluation methodology begins with a clearly defined highway safety problem, specific project goals and specific, reasonable and measurable objectives. Once the objectives have been identified, the grantee organization should develop a plan for implementing the evaluation. The plan should define what is to be measured (and should be directly linked to the objectives) and how the results of the project will be measured. The plan should be implemented right from the start of the project, not at the very end. Once the data are collected, they should be analyzed and the results reported to the SHSO as part of the final project report.

A formative evaluation should be used to test the appropriateness and effectiveness of proposed project activities and materials. Its purpose is to determine whether the program, activities and materials will work as planned. Formative evaluations should be used with the development of a new program or when an existing program is being modified. Formative evaluations can involve personal interviews, focus groups, surveys, or other methodologies.

An administrative or process evaluation will help the grantee organization determine whether he or she has implemented the program as planned. It requires an understanding of what was supposed to occur in the project and a systematic way to track what actually happened. Direct and indirect contacts with the program and number of items distributed or collected are typical measurements taken during an administrative evaluation.

An outcome or impact evaluation will help the grantee organization determine whether the program has had an impact on the problem they are trying to solve. Impact evaluations are often difficult to conduct at the community level because the total number of crashes and fatalities may be low. However, it is possible to measure impact by examining:

- Changes in behavior (such as an increase in safety belt usage)
- Changes in public opinion about the identified problem
- Institutional responses to the problem (such as a change in the number of citations issued by the police, legislation enacted to address the problem, etc.).

The measurement can be undertaken through field observations or surveys, with data collection forms, or by analyzing archival data such as police accident reports, court files, etc.

Frequent evaluations will alert the grantee organization to potential problems with the project. With good evaluation data, the grantee organization can make corrections so that the project will achieve its objectives more effectively. Evaluation data will also provide information to the SHSO, the media, and the public that can help build support for the continuation of the project. Frequent evaluations will help build expertise and credibility with the SHSO so that the office may call upon the grantee organization the next time there is a funding opportunity.

TIP #15

EVALUATION ASSISTANCE

Larger SHSOs may be able to provide technical assistance with evaluations. Your local college or university may be able to provide assistance, as well. The NHTSA publication, *The Art of Appropriate Evaluation*, provides descriptions of each type of evaluation and step-by-step instructions on how to do them. The publication can be ordered from NHTSA's web site at www.nhtsa.dot.gov

ACCOUNTABILITY

States are required to submit an **Annual Report** outlining the State's accomplishments. These are due by the end of the calendar year for the fiscal year that ended on September 30. The report must describe the State's progress in meeting its goals and how the implementation of specific projects contributed toward the goal. The NHTSA Regional Administrators review the annual reports to determine whether the States are making adequate progress in meeting State goals. This may involve a review of grantee projects as well.

If the annual report indicates that little or no progress has been made toward a goal after three years, NHTSA regional office staff members are required to work with the SHSO to jointly develop a performance enhancement plan. The plan must describe strategies, program activities, and funding targets to meet defined State safety goals and may involve changes in grantee projects.

SHSO are also subject to State audits, as well as audits by the Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Transportation. Grant projects may be audited as part of these processes. Grantee organizations are required under Federal regulations to maintain records for at least three years and make them available for auditing purposes at any time.

States may also request NHTSA's Regional Office to conduct a management review. States typically do this when the director of the SHSO leaves and a new director comes on board. In addition, NHTSA will conduct management reviews of States every three years. The management review will help determine whether the SHSO has the proper systems in place to manage the Federal highway safety grants satisfactorily. The review may involve an examination of the manner in which the SHSO awards grants and keeps financial records. An unsatisfactory review may require that the SHSO have stricter oversight over the management of grants.

Grantee organizations need to be aware of Federal and State requirements and regulations, and must take every step to manage their grants properly. As noted previously, grantee organizations have stewardship over public funds and must be vigilant about how those funds are treated.

THE PRO'S AND CON'S OF WORKING WITH AN SHSO

Working with an SHSO can present many opportunities. But it is also important to recognize that there are limitations on what SHSOs can do. Potential partners need to have a full understanding of both in order to have a successful working partnership with an SHSO.

LIMITATIONS

Although SHSOs receive Federal highway safety grant funding, they are limited by the amount of funding they receive. They have to maintain a State office and fund many priority programs —something that is increasingly a challenge given all the demands on the SHSO. They cannot fund every proposed project, even if the project has merit. In order to use their Federal resources most wisely, SHSOs target the most significant problems as identified by the State's problem identification process and focus on those projects that reach the right populations and jurisdictions. Usually a substantial portion of a State's Federal safety funds are used for enforcement of State impaired driving, safety belt, and child restraint laws. Problems in which there are few fatalities at the State level (e.g. fatalities at rail-highway grade crossings) are less likely to be funded. Projects that are not data-driven and do not have a strong statistical justification are also less likely to be funded.

Further, the SHSOs are limited by the purposes of the grants they receive. Only the Section 402 program has the flexibility to fund pedestrian, bicycle and motorcycle safety, and EMS programs. The incentive funds are generally limited to impaired driving, occupant protection, or traffic records purposes. SHSOs do not receive discretionary grants (grants that can be used for any highway safety purpose at the discretion of the SHSO).

At the same time, there is increased competition at the State level for Federal safety dollars. It is common for a State to have two to three times the number of project applications than there are available funds. That means the SHSO has to say “no” to many potential partners.

SHSOs typically work with “traditional” partners such as:

- State and local law enforcement agencies
- Judges and prosecutors
- Other State agencies (e.g., a State education department)
- Schools
- Local nonprofits and grassroots organizations.

Increasingly, however, they are working with non-traditional partners such as:

- State and local public health agencies
- Hospitals and health care organizations
- Substance abuse agencies
- Organizations representing minority populations
- Many others.

This means that the available resources are being spread among more and different types of organizations than ever before. It's harder than ever to receive funding unless a project helps the State meet its goals.

Federal laws and regulations also limit what SHSOs are able to do. As noted previously, they cannot:

- Use any Federal funds to support coalitions that lobby on specific bills
- Lobby on Federal or State safety legislation after that legislation has been introduced (even if the legislation has been introduced by the State's own officials).



Chapter

Case Study # 6

MARYLAND

The Takoma/Langley Crossroads Development Authority Inc. of Takoma Park, Maryland initiated a Pedestrian Safety Committee to develop strategies to combat the high rate of pedestrian fatalities in an area of the Maryland suburbs of Washington, DC. Hispanic pedestrians have been found to be significantly overrepresented in pedestrian crashes in this area. The Maryland Highway Safety Office (MHSO) joined the Committee and helped leverage resources, such as graphic design assistance, and MHSO's Community Traffic Safety Program Coordinators provided educational and promotional items for press events to highlight pedestrian safety in this largely Hispanic community.

In addition, the Maryland Highway Safety Office (MHSO), the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) and Montgomery County, Maryland developed

SHSO normally do not take a position on an issue if it is different than the position the governor has taken. If the governor does not support a primary belt law, for example, the SHSO cannot support primary belt legislation even if the SHSO staff believes that a primary belt law would be beneficial. If the governor does not support Federal sanctions on States for failure to enact specific legislation, then the SHSO cannot support the sanctions, even if the required legislation would improve highway safety. As a result, SHSO sometimes cannot be as active on issues as they would like.

Federal rules also limit the type and amount of equipment that can be purchased with Federal funds. Federal highway safety funds cannot be used for highway construction, maintenance or design purposes, office furnishings, or fixtures for governmental buildings. Individual equipment purchases of \$5,000 or higher must directly relate to the project and must be approved by the SHSO and the appropriate NHTSA Regional Office. For example, while a State might have the funds to support the purchase of multiple computers, Federal rules may prohibit the purchase of such equipment if the project purpose does not require computers.

Federal rules limit proposed projects to new or expanded operations and activities. As noted previously, Federal highway safety funds cannot be used to supplant (replace) State and local expenditures. They cannot be used to cover general expenses -- costs required to carry out the overall

responsibilities of State or local governments or nonprofit agencies.

TIP #16

STATE LIMITATIONS

Often, State rules are stricter than Federal rules. When you are considering applying for a Federal highway safety grant be sure that you ask what State limitations exist. The State pre-application conference may provide an answer to this question.

OPPORTUNITIES

A successful partnership can benefit the SHSO in a number of different ways:

- **Messages:** Given that SHSOs are prohibited from lobbying under certain circumstances, a current or past grantee organization may be able to “carry the State’s message” and impact the State legislative process for the SHSO.
- **At Risk Populations:** A grantee organization may also help the State reach certain high-risk populations that it is having difficulty reaching. For example, if a State’s Hispanic population is not buckling up at the same rate as the general population, then a grant to a Hispanic group that can deliver a successful program may be in order. That potential grantee may have greater access to and credibility with the target population.
- **Supplemental Work:** A grantee organization may supplement the work of the SHSO. This is particularly true with respect to enforce-

ment and education programs. The State Highway Patrol or State Police cannot be everywhere to enforce State traffic safety laws. An SHSO may give a grant to a number of local law enforcement agencies to ensure that there is good coverage throughout the State. Similarly, an SHSO may give grants to a number of agencies or organizations to help develop public information campaigns that support State safety goals and objectives.

- **Local Expansion:** Grants to local governments or community non-profit programs help the SHSO get its “foot in the door” at the local level. State funding for a community highway safety program, for example, can link an SHSO with local businesses, local public health agencies, other prevention programs, local public works agencies and local law enforcement agencies. This can build a program in the community to address local highway safety problems — a program that may be around long after the Federal funding has ended.

Grantees working with an SHSO also benefit from the partnership in many ways:

- **Resources:** First and foremost, the SHSO provides resources to help the grantee organization address a specific highway safety issue. The SHSO can also provide training and equipment under limited circumstances so that the grantee organization will develop the skills and have the facilities that are needed to be successful.
- **Technical Assistance:** The SHSO also has skilled and experienced staff members who can provide technical assistance on a range of issues so that the grantee organization can conduct its program more successfully.
- **Pre-Proposal Assistance:** In many States, the SHSO organizes pre-application and application conferences, and some State staff may even provide assistance to potential partners in drafting grant applications.
- **Management Support:** SHSO staff can assist the grantee organization in managing the grant properly by ensuring that proper accounting systems are in place and informing the grantee organization of eligible expenditures.
- **Conferences:** Many States hold conferences on topical highway safety issues, either combined with or separate from meetings related to grant applications.
- **Data:** The SHSO has access to crash data and other databases that will help the potential partner pinpoint the safety problem and formulate objectives and performance measures for its program. As mentioned previously, in some of the larger States, the State staff may be able to provide assistance to the grantee organization in analyzing local crash data.

DEVELOP A RELATIONSHIP

State agencies, local governments or nonprofits often want to work with their SHSO because the State office has Federal grant money. Rather than approaching the SHSO as a partner

a productive and efficient partnership in the creation of a region-wide pedestrian safety outreach campaign, titled “Street Smart: Look Out For Each Other.” In 2002, Montgomery County was planning to use highway safety funding for a countywide pedestrian safety outreach campaign. At the same time, MWCOG was applying for funds to conduct a much larger region-wide effort to raise public awareness of pedestrian safety for the following year. MHSO was instrumental in prompting the two grantees to partner on the project, and Montgomery County was able to concentrate its funds to develop the media outreach materials while MWCOG’s grant funds were able to be used exclusively to place all the ads during the 2003 grant year. Thus funds for a single jurisdiction campaign were leveraged to benefit a region-wide campaign that recorded an 11 percent increase in public awareness of the pedestrians safety issue, according to post campaign evaluation.

and showing a willingness to share expertise, skills, or resources with the State agency, they treat the SHSO as if it were a bank and they are the bank customer ready to withdraw funds. When volunteer work or other efforts need to be undertaken, the potential partner may not offer to participate. SHSOs resent this approach because it is a one-way rather than the two-way relationship that is needed for a successful partnership.

TIP #16

MUTUAL CONCERN

In developing your relationship with the SHSO, offer to work with the staff on an issue of mutual concern in which NO money is involved.

A better approach is to build a long-term working relationship with the SHSO. Here are a few ways to work together:

- A nonprofit could help lobby the State legislature on a specific highway safety bill since the SHSO is not allowed to do so.
- An agency or organization can make an SHSO aware of an emerging highway safety issue.
- An agency can share a database with the SHSO so that a more complete picture of a highway safety problem can be drawn.
- An agency or nonprofit can lend personnel to the SHSO to help conduct a special event, support and participate in a press conference, and support activities such as a child safety seat check.
- An agency or organization can arrange for its director to speak at a general session of a State highway safety conference.

- A GR or coordinator can be invited to speak at a safety-related meeting of the agency or organization.
- A State public health or education agency can lend support for a traffic safety public information campaign that the SHSO has developed.
- A local public health coalition can make traffic related fatalities its priority for the year and focus its attention and non-highway safety resources on that topic.
- A coalition coordinator can invite an SHSO staff member to be represented on the coalition.
- An agency or organization can write a letter to the editor to support a special enforcement effort or special public information campaign.

The possibilities are endless and bound only by an organization's or agency's creativity and imagination. The SHSO will appreciate such efforts because they show that the potential partner is serious about highway safety, is willing to bring something to the table, and wants to support the State highway safety program. This kind of assistance will help the potential partner establish credibility with the SHSO, demonstrate that it is a willing partner, and create a good working relationship with the SHSO. When a specific funding opportunity does arise, then the SHSO is likely to go to a potential partner with whom it already has a good working relationship.

CLOSING COMMENT

After reading through this guidebook, a potential partner should have a better understanding of:

- SHSOs and what they do to address highway safety problems
- The opportunities and limitations of working with an SHSO
- The types of activities that can be undertaken.

The one lesson that should be very clear is that every SHSO is different, with different highway safety problems, planning processes, and opportunities.

The best way to work with the SHSO is to find out what those problems, processes and opportunities are in your State. Develop a relationship with the SHSO and offer to work with the office on highway safety issues of mutual concern and interest. Keep the channels of communication open with the SHSO. If you do all of this, then you and your SHSO will develop a highly satisfactory and successful working partnership, enabling both of you to tackle successfully the pressing highway safety problems of the day.



Chapter

RESOURCES

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has 10 Regional Offices that provide numerous services to the states and other public and private sector customers including technical assistance, grant program support, coalition building and training.

NEW ENGLAND REGION (Region I)

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS CENTER
Kendall Square Code 903
Cambridge, MA 02142
Phone: (617) 494-3427
Fax: (617) 494-3646
STATES – CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT

EASTERN REGION (Region II)

222 Mamaroneck Avenue, Suite 204
White Plains, NY 10605
Phone: (914) 682-6162
Fax: (914) 682-6239
STATES – NY, NJ, PR, VI

MID ATLANTIC REGION (Region III)

10 South Howard Street, Suite 6700
Baltimore, MD 21201
Phone: (410) 962-0090
Fax: (410) 962-2770
STATES – DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, WV

SOUTHEAST REGION (Region IV)

61 Forsyth Street, SW, Suite 17T30
Atlanta, GA 30303
Phone: (404) 562-3739
Fax: (404) 562-3763
STATES – AL, FL, GA, KY, MS,
NC, SC, TN

GREAT LAKES REGION (Region V)

19900 Governor's Drive, Suite 201
Olympia Fields, IL 60461

Phone: (708) 503-8822
Fax: (708) 503-8991
STATES – IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION (Region VI)

819 Taylor Street, Room 8a38
Fort Worth, TX 76102-6177
Phone: (817) 978-3653
Fax: (817) 978-8339
STATES – AR, LA, NM, OK, TX AND THE
INDIAN NATIONS

CENTRAL REGION (Region VII)

901 Locust Street, Room 466
Kansas City, MO 64106
Phone: (816) 329-3900
Fax: (816) 329-3910
STATES – IA, KS, MO, NE

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION (Region VIII)

12300 W. Dakota Ave., Suite 140
Lakewood, CO 80228
Phone: (720) 963-3100
STATES – CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY

WESTERN REGION (Region IX)

201 Mission Street, Suite 2230
San Francisco, CA 94105
Phone: (415) 744-3089
Fax: (415) 744-2532
STATES – AZ, CA, HI, NV, AMERICAN
SAMOA, GUAM, NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHWEST REGION (Region X)

3140 Jackson Federal Building
915 Second Avenue
Seattle, WA 98174
Phone: (206) 220-7640
Fax: (206) 220-7651
STATES – AK, ID, OR, WA



STATE HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICES

ALABAMA

**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**

P.O. Box 5690
401 Adams Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36103-5690
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Fax: (334) 242-0712

ALASKA

HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICE

3132 Channel Drive, Room 145
Juneau, AK 99801-7898
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Fax: (907) 465-4030

ARIZONA

**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY
AND HIGHWAY SAFETY**

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Fax: (602) 255-1265

ARKANSAS

HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAMS

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Little Rock, AR 72209
Phone: (501) 618-8204
Fax: (501) 618-8222

CALIFORNIA

OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY

7000 Franklin Boulevard
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Sacramento, CA 95823
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Fax: (916) 262-2960

COLORADO

**ENGINEERING DESIGN AND
CONSTRUCTION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

4201 East Arkansas Avenue
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2800 Berlin Turnpike
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DELAWARE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

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Dover, DE 19903-0818
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Fax: (302) 739-4874

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY DIVISION

Frank D. Reeves Center
2000 14th Street, NW
7th Floor
Washington, DC 20009
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Fax: (202) 671-0617

FLORIDA

**TRANSPORTATION SAFETY
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605 Suwannee Street
MS-53
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450
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Boise, ID 83707
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ILLINOIS

**DIVISION OF TRAFFIC SAFETY
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P.O. Box 19245
3215 Executive Park Drive
Springfield, IL 62794-9245
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INDIANA

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

State House
Room 206
Indianapolis, IN 46204
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Fax: (317) 232-3443

IOWA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Wallace State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319
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Fax: (515) 281-6190

KANSAS

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Docking Street Building
7th Floor
Topeka, KS 66612-1568
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KENTUCKY

STATE POLICE HEADQUARTERS

919 Versailles Road
Frankfort, KY 40601-2638
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LOUISIANA

HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION

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MAINE

BUREAU OF HIGHWAY SAFETY

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Augusta, ME 04333
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MARYLAND

STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

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MASSACHUSETTS

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MONTANA

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